

Smackdown – May 15, 2003: One of the Only Times WWE Has Disgusted Me

Smackdown

Date: May 15, 2003

Location: 1st Mariner Arena, Baltimore, Maryland

Commentators: Michael Cole, Tazz

It's the go home show for Judgment Day and I have my notebook ready for all the questions I have regarding the Mr. America storyline. Given how little sense the whole thing makes if you listen to what everyone says, I'm likely to leave far more confused than I was when I came in. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Vince McMahon opens things up and he's SURE who Mr. America is. No one could possibly question the fact that Mr. America is Hulk Hogan. See, Mr. America doesn't uphold traditional American values because he's deceiving everyone around here. After pausing for the WHAT chants, Vince complains about Hogan getting two checks (which would likely be signed by Vince himself, making me wonder who he signs American's checks to) and on top of that, Mr. America doesn't care that he batters women.

We see a clip of America knocking Vince into Stephanie, though Vince blames her for it just as much. He's not going to deal with Hogan himself though because we're having an open contract at Judgment Day with someone getting to deal with Hogan him/themselves. Cue the FBI of all people with Nunzio offering their services to deal with Mr. America. He even has a video resume of their greatest hits and Johnny promises to be on Hogan like baked on ziti. They'll go talk about it over coffee while Palumbo has a match.

This was WAY too long and really just established that America will have a match on Sunday and the FBI of all people are getting involved. The FBI

isn't interesting and are just a step above a Three Stooges sketch. Ignoring the fact that they might make for a better match for Mr. American than Vince or Roddy Piper, this was a really long waste of time.

Chuck Palumbo vs. Rikishi

Palumbo stomps away in the corner but accidentally hits Johnny in the face. A belly to belly gives Rikishi two but Johnny trips him up again. The superkick gives Palumbo two, only to have Rikishi's version knock him into the corner. Johnny breaks up the Stinkface and gets pulled inside, allowing Palumbo to hit a second superkick (in just over three minutes) for the pin.

Rating: D-. So Rikishi is now dealing with the FBI and having bad matches at the same time. At least it's better than wasting people like Chris Benoit on them, though it would be nice if Benoit actually had anything interesting to do at the moment. At least he wouldn't use three superkicks in the same match. He's not a Young Buck after all.

Post match Brock Lesnar arrives and comes to the ring to give Palumbo an F5 in retaliation for last week.

Stephanie cuts Brock off in the back and explains a stretcher match to him in that classic Stephanie style of speech that no one ever uses in the real world. I know most wrestlers do that but no one can make it sound as robotic as she can.

Mr. America visited some wounded troops.

Torrie Wilson comes out to show us one bikini she's considering for Sunday. As usual she looks great but I still don't know why I'm supposed to want to pay to see her in another one when she's in Playboy at the moment.

Stephanie is admiring two sets of flowers (one red and yellow, the other red and white) when Vince comes in. He would have gotten Mr. America's mask off last week if not for her screwing up so he accepts her apology. She's not apologizing though because she's gotten flowers from Hogan and America. Stephanie is leaving because Vince has everything under control

tonight. Vince breaks both vases.

Clip of Rey Mysterio being injured at Backlash. He's back for an interview tonight.

Cruiserweight Title: Matt Hardy vs. Tajiri

Matt, who thinks Tajiri weighs too much to be a cruiserweight and can eat more sushi than him, is defending with Shannon Moore and Crash in his corner. Tajiri snapmares him down to start but gets jumped from behind. The kicks have Matt in trouble but Tajiri has to deal with Shannon, allowing Matt to hang him over the top rope. The Side Effect sets up an abdominal stretch from the champ, only to have Tajiri kick him down again. Rapid fire strikes have Matt in trouble and there's the handspring elbow for good measure. Crash breaks up the Tarantula though and it's the Twist of Fate to retain Matt's title.

Rating: D+. Perfectly fine match here but there's only so much you can do with four minutes and three people fighting Tajiri at the same time. Tajiri continues to be one of the most consistent guys on the roster and could do a lot more if he was given the chance. At least he did well while he was out there.

Matt says he has the Mattributes to take care of Mr. America because that story is now invading the cruiserweights.

Eddie Guerrero, wearing the gold medal, is talking to a framed Kurt Angle photo and talks about Chavo being injured in a match overseas. There's no reason to worry though because he's Latino Heat. He even puts a mustache and beard on Angle's face.

Stephanie runs into Mr. America as she's leaving and asks him to thank Hogan for him. She even throws in a kiss on the cheek.

John Cena vs. Chris Benoit

Cena wants to face Mr. America so he can turn him back into the Hulk so quick you'll think his name is Bill Bixby. As for Benoit, instead of the Canadian Crippler, he'll be the crippled Canadian. Benoit wastes no time in driving him into the corner before getting one off a backbreaker. A

heck of a chop has Cena clutching his chest but he's still able to send Benoit shoulder first into the post. The ensuing armbar makes sense but Benoit is right back up with a chop and a snap suplex.

Cue the FBI to distract Benoit so Cena can knock him outside, earning themselves a quick ejection. Back from a break with Cena holding a chinlock and getting two off a shoulder. Cena stomps on the leg but gets sent into the middle buckle off a drop toehold. There's the first German suplex into the Swan Dive but Nunzio runs in. Benoit gets rid of him in a hurry and reverses the FU into the Crossface, only to have Johnny the Bull come in for the DQ.

Rating: C. What does it say that this is pretty easily the best match I've seen on WWE TV this week? Above all else, it's two guys having a match and actually trying for a change, which is a lot more than you can say about almost anything that happens on Raw. Is it that much to ask for some effort in these matches?

Rhyno and Spanky come in to help Benoit clean house.

Video on the UK tour.

It's time for Piper's Pit with Sean O'Haire backing Piper again. Piper talks about the contract because this is the biggest story in the world at the moment. Some people want to collect the bounty for their careers and some people want to do it to suck up to Vince. Well Piper is going to do it because he hates Hogan.

This brings out Mr. America, who hands the flag to a guy in the front row, which sounds like a plot point. America gets why Piper has issues with Hogan because he remembers Hogan beating Piper up when he was a kid. He's cool with the match with Piper because I guess Mr. America gets to decide who collects bounties on him. Piper says Hogan has never beaten him 1-2-3 (yes he has) and goes on a rant about the kid waving the flag. Sean goes outside to deal with the kid, allowing Piper to jump America from behind.

America fights back but Sean makes the save, only to have the fan jump the barricade and prevent the mask from being taken off. A spear takes

the fan down and Piper chokes away, only to yank off his artificial leg. That freaks Piper out and the villains leave. Oh don't worry about it. Nash did it on purpose in 1996 and he's main eventing the pay per view on Sunday. Sean even yells at Piper because cheating on your wife or whatever his thing of the week was ok but attacking an adult fan who jumped you from behind? Not cool bro.

After the entrances to the next match, Vince yells at Piper and O'Haire for messing with a fan like that. Sean: "Mr. McMahon, I had nothing to do with this." YOU SPEARED HIM DOWN SO PIPER COULD BEAT HIM UP! Vince tells them to stay there while he makes up his mind about what he's going to do. Piper stands there, which is way out of character for him. Vince leaves and Sean blames Piper for what happened because his career is on the line.

Shelton Benjamin vs. Eddie Guerrero

Eddie has the picture of Angle and comes out in a sombrero. Shelton takes Eddie down and yells a lot before hitting a forearm to the face. A chinlock slows things down but Eddie is right back up with a middle rope hurricanrana. One heck of a powerbomb plants Eddie for two but also kickstarts his comeback with a couple of dropkicks. Right hands in the corner set up the rolling suplexes but here's Charlie Haas with a ladder. The distraction lets Shelton hit a superkick for the pin. That's totally different than the finish to the opener. This one had a ladder you see.

Rating: D+. Not enough time to mean anything and having the same finish used in two out of four matches is about as pitiful as you can get. Agents should be smarter than that and able to come up with a better finish. If nothing else just ask Eddie what he thinks would work here, as I'm sure he can come up with something other than distraction into a superkick.

Eddie fights them both off and busts the picture over Shelton's head.

Piper and O'Haire haven't moved when Vince comes back in. He buys Sean caring about what happened (as the most interesting part of his character is erased) but Piper doesn't care at all. That's just what Vince wants though and that's why he's facing Hogan on Sunday. My goodness they're

actually going there and Vince is actually saying Piper is better than John Cena, the Cruiserweight Champion (and his minions) or the FBI. And people wonder why the future was so bleak.

And now, the Miss Elizabeth piece from Confidential. She passed away from a cause that wasn't determined yet (because it was less than two weeks ago when this aired) and Vince says she was just a commodity in WCW. They talk about her career, the battery charges from Lex Luger, and then her death. In probably the lowest point since...oh I'd think the Melanie Pillman interview, we hear the actual 911 call of Luger saying she wasn't breathing. I'm not even sure how to respond to that so we'll move on. This is of course edited off the Network version.

And now, after hearing a 911 call of a woman dying earlier in the month, Sable comes out and shows off her own bikini. Now pay up if you want to see it again!

Pay per view rundown.

It's time for the Mysterio interview. First of all, he'll be back in the ring in a few weeks and he wants the Cruiserweight Title. He didn't think he'd be able to wrestle again and he wondered if that was it when he was laying in the ambulance. Rey isn't sure about ever facing Big Show again....and Big Show kidnaps him.

Post break Show brings Rey out to the ring while carrying a backboard in the other hand. Rey tries to fight back and manages a 619, only to get caught in something like a Samoan drop. Lesnar runs out to save Rey from the chokeslam and beats Show down with the board. The F5 connects but Tazz sees a problem: Show is too big to be put on a stretcher! HOW WILL BROCK SURVIVE??? Rey adds in a bulldog to drop Show and then hides behind Brock to end the show.

Overall Rating: D. I only have one question this week: how did the Mr. America storyline manage to take over even more of the show??? Lesnar vs. Big Show isn't interesting but I'll take it over America vs. Piper and Vince running down most of his heels to say that Piper is the best option he has to take Hogan out. There was some passable wrestling on the show this week but the stories are just killing anything that might be seen as

positive. Another bad show this week as Mr. America vs. Vince is swallowing the show alive.

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