

Survivor Series Count-Up – 2008: It's Still Not That Bad

Survivor Series 2008

Date: November 23, 2008

Location: TD Banknorth Garden, Boston, Massachusetts

Attendance: 12,498

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler, Todd Grisham, Matt Striker, Jim Ross, Tazz

The other major story on the show is Team Orton vs. Team Batista. Randy Orton vs. Batista had always been a match WWE wanted to push on a big stage but this is about as high as they ever got. They would face each other at various other pay per views in singles matches, but none as high profile as this one. Let's get to it.

The opening video is the exact same thing it's been for two years. Literally, they're the same clips before we get to the stuff about the main events.

JR and Taz talk about the Hardy issue and say that ABC and TMZ picked up the story. I seem to remember that being a lie.

Team HBK vs. Team JBL

Shawn Michaels, Rey Mysterio, Cryme Tyme, Great Khali

John Bradshaw Layfield, The Miz, John Morrison, Kane, MVP

Shawn and JBL are feuding over Shawn being broke and needing money from JBL, Cryme Tyme (Shad Gaspard and JTG, two thug characters) are feuding with Miz and Morrison, Kane has been hunting Mysterio and Khali and MVP (in the middle of a massive losing streak that would result in a face turn and the US Title) are there to fill out the lineups. MVP and Mysterio get things going as all of the commentators are talking at once.

Rey hits a quick hurricanrana and a clothesline for two before it's off to JTG for a double dropkick. JTG hits a HARD right hand but MVP gets in

a shot to the ribs and hits the Drive-By (running kick to the side of the head) for the elimination. Khali immediately comes in and chops MVP in the head for the elimination to tie things up.

Kane comes in for the staredown of the giants and Khali clotheslines him down with ease. Khali slugs him down and easily breaks up a chokeslam attempt. There's the chop to the head and Rey climbs on Khali's shoulders for the splash and another elimination. Off to Morrison who speeds things up. Mysterio hits a quick kick to the head and it's time for Shad.

Now Cryme Tyme vs. Miz/Morrison was a feud ahead of its time: their internet shows got in an argument and a wrestling feud followed. Shad misses a charge into the corner and it's off to Miz. Since Miz isn't quite the worker he is at this point, it's back to Morrison very quickly. Shad runs over both members of the tag team and powerslams Miz down before hitting another overhyped elbow. Miz pops back up and hits the Reality Check (backbreaker/neckbreaker combo) to eliminate Shad.

It's off to Shawn who comes in via a slow, dramatic step. He gets to face the Miz, meaning that entrance was wasted. To the shock of almost everyone, Miz takes over and double teams with Morrison to work over Shawn's back. JBL, the slimmed down version, comes in to pound away and drop an elbow for two. Back to Miz who pounds away at Shawn's bad eye, busting it open again.

Morrison comes in again to crank on a headlock and send Shawn over the top. Naturally Shawn skins the cat to come back in, as he has for years. At least Morrison jumps him when Shawn gets back inside. A forearm puts Shawn down and Morrison nips up in a little jab at HBK. Morrison misses the top rope elbow and it's a double tag to bring in Miz vs. Mysterio. Rey hits a springboard hurricanrana into the 619 and the top rope splash puts Miz out.

JBL comes in and hits a hard shoulder to take Mysterio down. The crowd is WAY into Rey here. The fans think JBL can't wrestle. Off to Morrison with a European uppercut followed by a backbreaker. Rey gets in a kick to the face but it's off to JBL to hook an abdominal stretch with the leg being cranked on at the same time. Once Rey escapes, JBL uses something you

don't often see: a big boot to the back of the head. Rey blocks a belly to back superplex and hits a moonsault press to put JBL down and bust open his lip. There's the tag to Shawn who hits the forearm and nip up of his own to send Bradshaw to the floor.

Shawn dives out to take Bradshaw out and loads up the superkick to send JBL running away. With JBL running away from the kick, Shawn slides back in and beats the count by one second, meaning JBL is gone via a countout. Morrison tries to superkick Shawn but Shawn is like boy these boots are older than you and kicks Morrison's head off for the final pin and 3-0 victory.

Rating: C. This was fine but the ending was kind of anti-climatic. They were trying to save the Shawn pin over JBL which was a good idea as they would have a solid feud in the next few months which resulted in Shawn being JBL's lackey because Shawn was poor. The guys other than the captains in this didn't do much of note but that's kind of the idea behind a match like this. Not bad but nothing great either.

HHH doesn't think he needs to give his opinion on the Jeff Hardy situation. Either way, Hardy will be back. Tonight it's going to be him vs. Kozlov and HHH promises to give the Russian his first defeat.

Team Raw vs. Team Smackdown

Raw: Beth Phoenix, Mickie James, Kelly Kelly, Candice Michelle, Jillian Hall

Smackdown: Michelle McCool, Victoria, Maria, Maryse, Natalya

Candice is a model who wasn't horrible in the ring, Maryse is a French Canadian bombshell and Natalya is a member of the Hart Family. Beth is the captain of Team Raw (and is dating Santino Marella) and McCool is captain of Team Smackdown. They're also Women's and Divas Champions respectively. For the sake of simplicity, only Michelle McCool will be referred to as Michelle. Beth and Michelle start things off with Beth controlling via a top wristlock. Michelle uses some decent chain wrestling to set up a dropkick to send Beth backwards a bit.

Maryse tags herself in and gets in a brawl with her own partner Michelle. Team Raw: "LET THEM FIGHT!" Good thinking. After the brawl is broken up, it's Beth vs. Maria with Maria avoiding a charge and hitting a slow motion headscissors. Off to Kelly vs. Maria and hopefully this doesn't last long. Victoria tags herself in and gets caught in a hurricanrana by Kelly for the pin. Kelly tries the same thing on Maryse for two so Maryse hits a backbreaker and gets the pin as well.

It's 4-4 now and Mickie comes in while swearing a bit. A Thesz Press puts Maryse down and it's off to Michelle again. They try to bridge into a backslide, fail miserably, and try again to a standoff. McCool hits a Russian legsweep for two and Mickie hits a clothesline for the same. Maria's save hits McCool by mistake, allowing Mickie to hit the jumping DDT and pin Michelle. Mickie gets in an argument with Beth and gets rolled up by Maryse to tie it right back up.

Off to Candice vs. Natalya and they trade some rollups for two. Natalya busts out a Sharpshooter (it is the Survivor Series after all) but Jillian makes the save. Candice hits a spear for a quick pin on Natalya and it's 3-2 with Jillian, Beth and Candice vs. Maria and Maryse.

It's Jillian vs. Maria with Jillian getting two off a Samoan Drop. Maria grabs a quick victory roll to eliminate Jillian and ten seconds later, Candice hits a northern lights suplex to put Maria out. Maryse hooks an inverted figure four on Candice and we're down to one on one. Maryse gets in a few shots and a rollup but the Glam Slam (double chickenwing slam) gives Beth the final pin very quickly.

Rating: D. As decent as last year's was, this felt like your traditional Divas match. You had some decent workers but most of the girls are models who are there because of how they look in swimsuits. I've seen worse matches and the right choice was the survivor, but this just didn't work for the most part.

Matt Hardy says that Jeff was hit in the back of the head with a blunt object, ending any drug speculation.

We recap Undertaker vs. Big Show. Show isn't scared of Undertaker so he'll win the casket match tonight.

Undertaker vs. Big Show

Casket match and the casket gets the full druid entrance. I wonder if those guys hang out at catering after this. They have a nice casket this year too instead of the normally generic ones. Show took all of 2007 off and lost a ton of weight so he's still kind of slim here. Well slim for him that is. I don't think the bell rang but Show starts throwing punches anyway. One misses though and Undertaker tries to dump him into the casket to no avail.

They head to the floor and Undertaker's headbutt has no effect. Show pounds away at the ribs and rams Undertaker face first into the announce table to daze the smaller giant. The announce table gets loaded up but Show headbutts him instead of putting Undertaker on the table. Undertaker grabs one of those big monitors WWE uses and bashes Show's head in a few times with it. A BIG leg to put Show through the table in the huge spot of the match.

They slowly start heading back to the casket but take a detour into the ring instead. Old School is countered and things slow down again. There's a side slam from Show as the crowd is a lot less interested than they were when Undertaker was on offense. The casket is opened and Undertaker is put inside but Show has to close the casket himself.

Since Show won't close the lid, Undertaker comes back with a bunch of punches and the jumping clothesline. Show hits a big elbow in the corner to slow down Undertaker (and the crowd) again. For some reason Show loads up a Vader Bomb when Undertaker is half up and gets chokeslammed down.

The casket is opened again and a big boot to the side of Show's head knocks him inside, but Show blocks the lid from being shut again. Back in and Show hits the chokeslam...then destroys the casket. Show starts walking away and there's a wall of fire to stop him from leaving. Well of course there is. Undertaker goes after him and gets punched down again, but here are more druids with another casket.

Show punches Undertaker a bit more and stands the casket up so he can ram Undertaker into it and knock both of them down. The casket is stood up again but it's open this time. Undertaker punches Show to the edge of the

stage before whipping Show into the casket, causing it to fall and shut to give Undertaker the win.

Rating: D. This is considered a horrible casket match by some people but it's really not that bad. It's certainly a bad match but the ending was kind of creative and what are you expecting from Undertaker vs. Big Show? They're going to hit each other a lot and it's going to be slow, so why do people act surprised when any match with either of these two or Kane is the same formula? Not a good match but it's definitely not terrible.

Carlito and Primo (cousins) hit on the Bellas but can't tell them apart. In something I never thought I'd have to say again, the Gobbledygooker pops up and the Colons think it's Charlie Haas, but of course he pops up in the room and the Gooker is played by the Boogeyman. This would be another pointless segment.

Randy Orton doesn't want to be team captain but his team will win anyway. He implies Cody is the weak link of the team. Cody says that if Randy is eliminated first, it's addition by subtraction. The team has to hold them apart.

Team Orton vs. Team Batista

Randy Orton, Mark Henry, William Regal, Cody Rhodes, Shelton Benjamin

Batista, Kofi Kingston, CM Punk, R-Truth, Matt Hardy

Cody is being mentored by Orton in a group called Legacy, Shelton is US Champion, Matt is ECW Champion and Punk/Kofi are Raw Tag Team Champions. Orton cost Punk the Raw World Title back in October, Hardy and Henry are feuding over the ECW Title, Truth is chasing Shelton's Title and Regal has been helping Orton against Batista. This is quite the intricate match for a change.

Punk immediately charges at Regal and hits the GTS for the elimination in about ten seconds. Shelton gets a very fast two on Punk before pounding away on his back. Off to Kofi who grabs a front facelock. Kofi is even more over here than usual as he went to college in Boston. Kofi tries a monkey flip but Shelton lands on his feet and brings in Henry to pound

away slowly.

Henry apparently gets tired after a few seconds so here's Cody. Matt comes in, does nothing of note, and tags in Truth who pounds away. Striker talks about what a killing Truth is making as we can hear a lot of spots being called here tonight. I don't know if the ring is mic'd loudly or what but you can hear all kinds of stuff here. Batista comes in and everybody runs until it's only Cody left to face him. Rhodes quickly tags out to Shelton but Batista takes him down with ease and gets two via a powerslam. Off to Matt vs. Randy as things speed up. A bulldog gets two for Matt but a moonsault misses.

It's off to Henry who lost the ECW Title to Hardy a few months ago. Cody comes in and chokes a bit but there's the double tag to Truth vs. Shelton. A victory roll gets two for Truth and he does his backflip into the splits spot. The spinning forearm misses completely and Paydirt (a jumping downward spiral) gets the pin for Shelton. Kofi immediately comes in with a springboard cross body for two and a dropkick to put Shelton down.

The Boom Drop gets another two for Kofi but Henry blasts Kofi in the back of the head. Henry comes in legally now for more quick pounding and it's finally off to Orton. Orton does his really slow stomp but the knee drop misses. Randy drapes him over the top rope and hits the hanging DDT for the elimination. Punk is immediately waiting on Orton, who gets beaten up for a few moments but gets in a rake to the eyes and tags out to Cody.

Rhodes works on the arm for a bit but gets caught by the knee and bulldog combo for two. Punk goes up but Manu (the other member of Legacy who didn't last long) distracts him long enough for Cody to shove him off the top. A DDT eliminates Punk quickly and we're down to 4-2 with Batista/Matt vs. Orton/Cody/Henry/Benjamin. Matt comes in and hits a quick Side Effect for two on Rhodes but it's quickly back to Henry. Matt hits an elbow to the back of Henry's head and manages to pull off the Side Effect for two. That's about it for Hardy as the World's Strongest Slam takes him out, leaving Batista all alone.

Batista immediately spears down Henry to make it 3-1 as Shelton comes in.

Benjamin gets caught in a spinebuster almost immediately and the Batista Bomb gets is down to 2-1. Cody comes in and peppers Batista with some right hands before charging into a boot. Batista powerslams Rhodes down and says Orton is next. Batista hits the Bomb on Rhodes but Randy made a blind tag while Cody was in the air. The RKO gets the elimination and win for Rhodes and Orton.

Rating: B. This was a kind of throwback to the old school Survivor Series matches where the numbers finally caught up with the big face and he got beat. Orton vs. Batista was one of the big matches that WWE never really got to do on the scale I think they were hoping for. They would have a long match next month at Armageddon but that's hardly the second main event at Wrestlemania which they were capable of having. Still though, good stuff here and the best match of the night by far.

Kozlov says he'll win.

Hardy is officially out of the title match tonight.

The recap video is pretty pointless now because the video is mostly about Jeff. Kozlov is here because HHH wanted to have some big epic match with him that no one but him was interested in. Jeff is here because he keeps getting so close to winning the title so EVIL Vickie wouldn't let him in the match. Jeff invaded the contract signing and beat up a lot of people until he was put in the match.

Smackdown World Title: Vladimir Kozlov vs. HHH

HHH is defending. After the big match intros we're ready to go. The fans chant USA of course and for once it's actually appropriate. Kozlov, the amateur wrestler/combat sports expert, takes it to the mat with amateur stuff. Now remember that, because it'll become important later. HHH gets on the mat with him and hooks a headlock. The fans now chant boring as we hit a standoff. Now they want Hardy.

They trade arm holds on the mat and then trade even more arm holds on the same mat. Back up and HHH hits the high knee and a facebuster followed by the DDT for no cover. The fans chant for TNA before HHH hits the spinebuster. Kozlov counters the Pedigree and hits the headbutt to the

chest to take HHH down. Vladimir sends HHH into the corner and out to the floor where very little happens.

Back in and a fall away slam gets two for the challenger and he fires some shoulders to the ribs. A powerslam gets another two and it's off to a body grip to slow things down even more. Kozlov hits a pair of backbreakers for two and it's back to that grip. HHH comes back with some right hands but gets powerslammed down for another two. A comeback by HHH is countered into a belly to belly as Taz says Kozlov is going to win, further dooming him to lose. HHH hits a Pedigree out of nowhere and here's Smackdown GM Vickie Guerrero.

She says he's here and makes it a triple threat, with the third man being the returning Edge. Edge does the psycho eyes on the way to the ring and I think a cameraman fell off the ramp as he was filming. Edge spears down HHH and here's Jeff Hardy to destroy the Canadian. His chair shot hits HHH though, allowing Edge to steal the pin and the title.

Rating: D. There's a lot to say here. First and foremost, as usual I disagree with anyone who said this was the worst match of the year. It's arguably not even the worst match of the show, but think about this for a minute: are you telling me there isn't some terrible Divas match somewhere in the year worse than this? Or that Honky Tonk Man vs. Santino Marella at Cyber Sunday was indeed better?

This match was indeed bad, but let's think about this for a minute. Kozlov is supposed to be a combat sports expert and an amateur wrestler. So what did he do? He wrestled like his character was supposed to. Now was it boring? Absolutely. Was it a REALLY stupid move to put him in a World Title match? Absolutely. Were the fans interested? Not at all. If you want proof, back at Cyber Sunday the options for the title match were HHH vs. either guy, or a triple threat. The results were as follows:

Hardy – 57%

Triple Threat – 38%

Kozlov – 5%

Based on that alone, it's clear that almost no one wanted to see HHH vs. Kozlov one on one. The interest just wasn't there, so they booked a triple threat instead which there was interest in. Then they screw the fans out of their money by taking Jeff out of the match because of whatever their reasoning was. Then they flip the fans off AGAIN by having Hardy run in at the end. Hardy would pin Edge in another triple threat the next month to win the title in a shocker. Why this match didn't happen here is beyond me, but again it's screwing the fans out of what was advertised until the night before the show.

At the end of the day though, no one bought Kozlov as a real threat to the title. The guy just wasn't going to be WWE Champion with the response he got, which is why Hardy was the interesting factor in this match. Without him, you have twelve minutes of your time being wasted until the ending, which should have been Hardy. Anyway, nothing to see here but it's not the worst match of the year.

We recap Jericho vs. Cena. Jericho snuck into the Championship Scramble match last month at Unforgiven and stole the World Title while Cena was on the shelf. Tonight, Cena returns from a neck injury to try and get his title back. In his hometown. Against a guy that has literally only beaten him once. And we're supposed to expect Jericho to have a chance because we're supposed to ignore all that stuff.

Raw World Title: Chris Jericho vs. John Cena

Jericho is defending of course. Cena almost immediately tries the FU but Jericho bails to the apron. Jericho comes back with a headlock which works on the neck followed by a shoulder block to take Cena to the floor. John holds his neck a lot and looks shaken. Back in and Cena pounds away in the corner as they're hitting hard but the pace of the match is pretty slow if that makes sense. Jericho takes over and things continue to go slowly.

Cena comes back with the Throwback and goes up for the Fameasser, only to come down because that's the move that hurt his neck in the first place. Jericho takes over again and things go slowly. A kick to the side of Cena's head puts him on the floor for a nine count. Back in and Cena

slugs away but gets sent right back to the floor. Jericho throws him into the steps and heads back in for a neck crank.

After the hold is broken, it's time for more choking followed by a full nelson. The hold lasts almost a minute and a half but Cena blocks the bulldog. A shoulder puts Jericho down but the second shoulder connects. Jericho misses the Lionsault but the Shuffle is countered into the Liontamer (kneeling Walls of Jericho)! He hasn't used that in years but it looks awesome. Cena escapes the hold so Jericho puts on the regular Boston Crab instead. Cena, after being in the hold over a minute straight, grabs the rope to escape. Back up and Cena hits an FU out of nowhere but can't follow up.

Both guys head up to the top with Cena slamming him to the mat, followed up by the top rope Fameasser. Cena is all fired up now but Jericho breaks up the FU and hits a Codebreaker for a delayed two. Jericho takes over and hits a clothesline followed by an EVIL smirk. He smirks a bit too much though and Cena grabs the STFU. Cena has to try to pull the hold back to the middle of the ring and Jericho kicks him away. The champ tries a small package but Cena pulls him up into the FU for the pin and the title.

Rating: C+. The match itself was fine but there was less drama in this than in a Donald Duck cartoon. At the end of the day, Cena does not lose to Jericho and he does not tap out no matter what. The wrestling was fine and it told a story and all that jazz, but I'd rather have a main event where I wasn't sure what was going to happen than a match being designed for Cena to have everything come together and win and then everything coming together to win.

Cena celebrates to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. I don't know if it's because I've been doing so many of these lately, but this wasn't the most interesting show in the world. It was dull at times and almost felt like a chore to sit through. The first hour or so is WAY worse than the rest of the show, but even the last two thirds aren't all that great. This didn't work that well and it's not something I want to see again.

Ratings Comparison

Team HBK vs. Team JBL

Original: B+

Redo: C

Team Raw vs. Team Smackdown

Original: D-

Redo: D

Undertaker vs. Big Show

Original: D+

Redo: D

Team Orton vs. Team Batista

Original: C-

Redo: B

Edge vs. HHH vs. Vladimir Kozlov

Original: D+

Redo: D

John Cena vs. Chris Jericho

Original: B

Redo: C+

Overall Rating

Original: C-

Redo: D+

I've flipped on the two male Survivor Series matches but other than that it's about the same.

Here's the original review if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/11/17/history-of-survivor-series-count-up-2008-let-jericho-beat-cena-once-just-one-time/>

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