

# Smackdown – October 23, 2003: A Breath of Used Air



IMG Credit: WWE

## **Smackdown**

Date: October 23, 2003

Location: Pepsi Arena, Albany, New York

Commentators: Michael Cole, Tazz

We're past No Mercy and that means it's time to get ready for Survivor Series. Thankfully it also means that Stephanie McMahon is gone after having been beaten by her father in an I Quit match. Since that's going to get some focus tonight, we'll move on to Brock Lesnar successfully defending the World Title against the Undertaker. Let's get to it.

[Here's last week's show if you need a recap.](#)

[And here's No Mercy as a bonus.](#)

The opening recap features the narration from Sunday's opening video and some audio from Vince defeating Stephanie when Linda threw in the towel. We need to keep Stephanie strong for the off screen wedding you see.

Opening sequence.

Here are Vince and Sable to open things up. Vince brags about his win and had a lot of fun stomping Stephanie into the ground. We're celebrating tonight, maybe even like he celebrated with Sable on Sunday. He didn't spare the rod with Sable because he used it all night long. On Sunday he did what he wanted by leaving Stephanie unemployed and making sure Brock Lesnar remained WWE Champion.

It was Vince who turned the lights out and sent the FBI out before he had to help things out himself. The new rule: don't cross the boss but do have sex with the man who signs your checks. I'm assuming he's talking

about Sable there but it's not clear. That brings us to the position of General Manager and it's not going to be Sable. Vince: "I have some other job positions in mind for you." No the new General Manager is...Paul Heyman. Vince is REALLY nice about forgiving past grudges.

Cole and Tazz panic but here's Undertaker to chase Vince and Sable off. Heyman says he's the only hope that Undertaker has because Vince is never going to help him. Tonight, Undertaker is going to have a match against Brock Lesnar and Big Show. If he can win that, he gets any match he wants. Undertaker promises to make this blow up in Heyman's face and get his revenge.

This is certainly a change of pace and odds are this is going to get rid of Vince, or at least lower the amount of time he'll be spending on TV. There's no need to have two heel authority figures and Heyman can more than hold his own with the talking. Undertaker vs. Lesnar continuing doesn't do much for me, but Vince vs. Undertaker does even less. Heyman being the new boss is interesting though and he's certainly an upgrade over Stephanie.

#### John Cena/A-Train vs. Kurt Angle/Chris Benoit

Before the match, Cena says it's time to shake Kurt's hand...but that's a b\*\*\*\* move. He's about to snatch his thunder back like a five finger discount and people need to get off of his...well you know. Angle headlocks A-Train down to start but some knees in the corner have Kurt down. Cena comes in with a Michinoku Driver (Where has he been keeping that thing?) for two before it's back to A-Train for a butterfly suplex.

A big German suplex gets Angle out of trouble and it's off to Benoit for a German suplex of his own. A-Train has to break up the Sharpshooter on Cena as everything breaks down. An Angle Slam drops A-Train and it's the ankle lock to Cena. A-Train is up way too fast for the save and the limping Cena grabs the chain. Benoit grabs a chair from A-Train but hits Angle by mistake, triggering a fight. Kurt gets caught in the Crossface and the match is thrown out. Why? It shouldn't be a DQ and the referee didn't see the chair shot.

**Rating:** C. This was fun while it lasted but there's not much you can do

with five minutes and getting in an angle at the same time. Benoit vs. Angle could be good, assuming it leads to someone getting a fresh shot at Lesnar. Brock is needing some new challengers right now and Benoit would be a better choice than Angle at the moment.

We look at Tajiri blinding Nidia last week.

Using a webcam, Jamie Noble is serious about fixing Nidia's sight. All the money he got from his aunt means nothing if she's not better. If Nidia doesn't come out of this ok, Tajiri will be paying. Serious Jamie actually worked, despite the thick accent.

Charlie Haas and Shelton Benjamin are excited about Paul Heyman being back when Heyman comes in. He calls them liars (oh the irony) for not calling after Brock Lesnar took him out. Therefore, the Basham Brothers are getting the Tag Team Title shot instead of Haas and Benjamin. They can have another match and that is next.

Vince and Sable are in a box and wave to the little people.

Video on Stu Hart. This one is narrated by Cole instead of Vince in a nice bit of continuity if you treat Raw and Smackdown as two completely different things.

### World's Greatest Tag Team vs. Rikishi/Scotty 2 Hotty

This is Rikishi's first WWE match since June and Scotty's first since April 2002. Scotty and Haas get things going with a quick takedown allowing Scotty to celebrate. A hiptoss drops Benjamin and we hit the Moonwalk. Benjamin gets in a shot from behind though and it's time to take over as we wait on the hot tag to Rikishi.

It's off to a chinlock for a bit before the jump over Charlie and onto Scotty's back keeps him in trouble. A clothesline gets Scotty over to the corner for the tag and Rikishi cleans house...until Shelton superkicks him down. Everything breaks down and Scotty brings back the Worm to Shelton. Haas gets a Stinkface and Rikishi sits on Shelton's chest for the pin.

**Rating:** D+. Uh, yay! I'm not sure who was wanting to see Rikishi and Scotty back but there are worse ideas out there. I'll take them over a

team like Garrison Cade and Mark Jindrak on Raw as Rikishi and Scotty at least have some charisma and have been successful at one point. There are worse ideas so I'll take what I can get.

Dancing ensues post match.

Vince and Sable join in on the dancing but Undertaker breaks into the sky box. After insulting Sable, Undertaker tells Vince to pray that he wins tonight. Otherwise, Undertaker will be back and there won't be any talking.

Eddie Guerrero is getting treatment for the injuries from Sunday when Chavo comes in and tells him to suck it up. Chavo: "THIS IS FOR GRANDMA!"

#### Tag Team Titles: Los Guerreros vs. Basham Brothers

The Bashams are challenging. A fired up Eddie hammers on Doug in the corner to start before it's off to Chavo for more of the same. Eddie comes back in with the slingshot hilo as this is completely one sided so far. It's off to Danny, who has ever worse luck as Chavo snapmares him into the champions' corner. Shaniqua grabs a foot though and the Bashams take over for the first time. It's off to the chinlock for a bit before Danny slaps on a full nelson.

Like a nitwit, Doug charges straight at the two of them and gets backdropped. A wristdrag/headscissors combination takes the Bashams down and the hot tag brings in Chavo. Danny gets planted with a running tornado DDT (looked good) as everything breaks down. It's back to Eddie for a slingshot hilo while Chavo holds Danny in a backbreaker (that's a new one). Shaniqua offers a distraction and the Bashams switch, allowing Doug to hit Eddie with a nightstick for the pin and the titles.

**Rating:** C. This screams long term booking to me and there's nothing wrong with that. Chavo getting on Eddie before the match suggests that the team is being broken up soon and if that means a big Eddie singles run, I'm rather pleased. The Bashams still need to drop Shaniqua but at least they had a few wins to set this up.

Post match Shaniqua says they're going to, ahem, celebrate.

During the break, Chavo berated Eddie for the loss and walked away from him.

### Tajiri vs. Zach Gowen

Non-title. Gowen is wrestling in a shirt this time around, which doesn't exactly hide the fact that he's the size of a middle school kid. Tajiri kicks him hard in the shoulder but gets armdragged down into an armbar. A tornado DDT is countered into a spinebuster and we hit the USA chant to annoy Tajiri. Zach avoids a knee drop (with Tajiri adding a high pitched squeal on the way down) and goes up, only to miss his moonsault. Tajiri kicks his head off for the pin.

**Rating:** D. That's Gowen's last match in WWE and I'm not going to miss him. He's the definition of a novelty act that ran its course and then stuck around even longer. There's no hiding the fact that most of his offense is built around fluke rollups and moves that wouldn't do a great deal of damage. Couple that with the constant "this kid has heart" and "he'll never give up" lines from Cole and the feel good story lost all of its charm in very short order.

Post match Tajiri's unnamed associates come in and lay Gowen out again on Tajiri's orders.

Lesnar tells Big Show to follow his lead tonight. That's fine with Show, who warns Brock that he'll be coming for the title soon.

Vince and Sable are still in the box.

Bob Holly is coming back after a year off with a neck injury. He's coming for Lesnar and wants to break his neck. That works very well aside from the being Hardcore Holly part.

Video on Hawk, who passed away earlier in the week.

### Undertaker vs. Big Show/Brock Lesnar

This has way more time than it needs so hopefully there's something after the match. Show starts for the very large team and drives Undertaker into the corner to start. Undertaker takes a rare powder when they both come

in at once and it's already chair time. Lesnar comes in for the shoulders to the ribs (a far too popular move) as Tazz thinks they might be working on Undertaker's midsection.

A suplex gives Brock two but as usual, Show screws up, this time by running into a big boot. Undertaker goes vintage with the jumping clothesline to both guys in turn but walks into a chokeslam from Show. It's Lesnar tagging himself in for a delayed two and ordering Show to go up top. The spike piledriver (that sounds like something you wouldn't see from the 80s) is broken up and Show gets slammed off the top for the pin. Vince is immediately on his feet and here's Heyman to say that this is 2/3 falls. Therefore it should be 0-0 as Show wasn't legal but Heyman never cared about rules.

Back from a break with Heyman in his office chair on the stage and Lesnar eating Snake Eyes into the big boot. Somehow the 7'2 500lb Show manages to sneak around the ring for a clothesline but Undertaker knocks him over the barricade. Some right hands to Lesnar are enough for the countout win...but Heyman says there are no countouts. Show chairs him in the back, there are no DQ's, and we keep going. This time Undertaker gets smart and grabs the chain to knock the both silly for the pin on Lesnar.

**Rating:** D+. Well it wasn't Austin vs. Love but it did the job. Above all else here though, was it really necessary to have Undertaker get two pins on the two singles champions, including the new US Champion? I'm getting rather tired of seeing Undertaker against these two but hopefully some fresh blood is on the way. Heyman screwing Undertaker over is fine for now, but having him lose this early on is more interesting. It's nice to have a boss who gets taken down a peg or two so soon.

Post match Show lays Undertaker out with a chokeslam and Brock adds an F5 into the post. Vince wants to come see this in person so here he comes after a break. With Undertaker rolling up the ramp, Vince screams about how Undertaker will never be WWE Champion. Vince asks what match Undertaker wants with Lesnar so Undertaker says it'll be at Survivor Series in a Buried Alive match...against McMahon. As usual, Vince does the cocky to terrified transition better than anyone. This was a good reveal too as there was no reason to think Undertaker wouldn't pick

Lesnar, but going with McMahon makes sense.

**Overall Rating:** C-. There was some change in here to make the show better (read as a lack of Stephanie) but they're continuing the stories that are still around as well. Heyman didn't really get to do much on his first night but he's a long overdue change in the power structure. Survivor Series is already starting to take shape, though there's a lot of work left to be done. They're off to an acceptable start, but there's a very long way to go yet.

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