

Monday Night Raw – April 15, 1996: Death, Taxes, And Raw Disappointing



IMG Credit: WWE

Monday Night Raw

Date: April 15, 1996

Location: Orange Pavilion, San Bernardino, California

Attendance: 3,000

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Jerry Lawler

I can't believe it but this show is on a roll. They're doing good stuff both on the wrestling and storytelling sides of things and it has me wanting to see where some stuff goes. Having the show still at an hour means things are able to get some focus, which can be lacking if it's not done right. Hopefully the hot streak continues so let's get to it.

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

Tonight, Bret Hart breaks his silence about Wrestlemania, all of two weeks later!

Opening sequence.

Leif Cassidy vs. Marc Mero

Sable is here with Mero in her official debut as his manager while Cassidy has Marty Jannetty with him. They fight over wrist control to start with Mero going to the armdrags. A dropkick puts Cassidy on the floor and Mero gets to make his big screaming face which looks like Muhammad Ali when he made a similar face during his old WWF appearances. Mero rams Cassidy into Marty but gets posted for his efforts. Back in and Cassidy runs him over and grabs a chinlock as we take a break.

We come back with Mero being sent outside so Marty can get in some right hands of his own. It's almost weird to see Marty in the company this late. Cassidy does some dancing as Vince talks about how classy Sable is. Back in and a very fast headscissors with Mero walking around on his hands sends Cassidy to the floor for a big flip dive. Back in and the top rope sunset flip ends Cassidy without much trouble.

Rating: C. Both guys were perfectly fine hands in the ring but Mero isn't the most thrilling guy in the world. For a TV match this was fine and it makes perfect sense to put Mero over in a match against a low level name, but it's all about setting him up for the big match with HHH down the line. Not that that's the most thrilling thing in the world in the first place though.

Diesel calls in to blame Shawn Michaels for all of their troubles. Their match is going to be No Holds Barred and Diesel has a master plan. I think it involves pinning Shawn.

Bart Gunn vs. Steve Austin

They hit the mat to start, which is always so strange to see from Austin. He really was a different worker before his neck injury. Bart headlocks him to the mat and Ted DiBiase doesn't seem thrilled. Back up and Bart takes a very fast fall to the floor, barely clearing the top rope and sailing outside. We hit the stomping against the barricade before a hard clothesline gives Austin two.

The chinlock goes on as it's still weird to see Austin wrestling such a standard style. The aggression is there but this feels so strange for Austin. Back up and they both fall out to the floor and it's off to a break. We come back with Austin kneeing him down for two and the chinlock

goes on again. Back up and we get the BAAAAACK body drop on Austin, followed by the running bulldog for two. DiBiase offers a distraction but Austin gets rolled up for two anyway. A jawbreaker gets Austin out of a sleeper and the Million Dollar Dream is good for the win.

Rating: D+. Pretty easily the best Bart Gunn match I've ever seen and that covers...oh...I'm thinking nothing of note for the most part. Austin was such a different worker at this point and while he's still better than most people in the company, he still needs to change things up to really make it work.

Here are Jim Cornette and Vader with the former bragging about Vader destroying Gorilla Monsoon, which was really a lot more awesome than I remember. Now Vader has injured former WWF Champion Yokozuna (the crack on the leg sounded great) and Razor Ramon is up next at In Your House.

Sunny music video, for the sole purpose of having her in swimsuits.

Intercontinental Title: Goldust vs. Savio Vega

Goldust is defending and drops to all fours at the bell. The tongue is stuck out but Vega doesn't seem too disturbed. Things get a little heated and Goldust bails into the corner like a proper freaky villain should. They go into the corner together, this time with Goldust rubbing his hips against Vega's crotch. Goldust hides in the aisle so Vince asks if he wears boxers or briefs. Why do I have a feeling he really wants to know that answer?

Back in and a side slam finally gives us some offense, followed by a bunch of right hands to Goldust's head. We come back from a break with Vega hitting a running corner clothesline but Goldust drops him throat first across the rope. That means more crawling around and chest rubbing before we go to a more traditional reverse chinlock. Hang on though as Goldust grabs a mic and threatens to kiss every fan if they don't shut up. It was a very different time.

Vega gets up with a crossbody for two but Goldust punches him down. Some slaps and more gyrating are followed by a clothesline but Vega kicks him down on the top. Goldust headbutts his way out of a superplex and kisses

Vega to the mat, only to dive into a raised boot. Vega makes the fired up comeback and hits some running clotheslines for two as we take another break. Back with the ref getting bumped so Marlena throws Goldust the title. The belt shot misses though and Vega clocks him for the pin and the title.

Rating: C-. This took a long time to get going but worked well enough once they started trying. Vega was always good for an energetic effort and I liked him as a midcard guy. Goldust was all mental at this point and while he was good, the mind games were getting a little repetitive. That and trying to get past the horrible Hollywood Backlot Brawl at Wrestlemania was a tall hill to climb.

Hang on though as another referee comes out to raise Goldust's hand. President Gorilla Monsoon comes out to say that the title is being held up and there's a rematch next week. That's quite the fast paced story with the Goldust vs. Warrior match set up for less than two weeks from now. Vince saying that Monsoon's actions are wise in the vein of King Solomon is a little over the top too but that's Vince for you.

We get some behind the scenes post match footage from after the Iron Man match with Bret being distraught. By that I mean Bret not being willing to talk and leaving without even getting changed.

Earlier this week, Bret was in Germany and said there were a lot of things wrong with the match. He doesn't like the rule change with the time being added because Shawn made a mistake and was beaten but they paused so Shawn could have a breather. Bret won't be going to another wrestling organization, nearly flat out saying he's not going to WCW, which was probably done to calm down rumors at the time.

Overall Rating: C-. It's ok and that's as high as I can go with the whole thing as the hot streak hits a very firm wall. The lack of star power really hurts this one as it's mainly focused on the Intercontinental Title match, which was only just ok. It also did nothing for the pay per view, which isn't the best idea in the world with only one more show to go. Oh and that's going to be about the Intercontinental Title as well. No wonder Nitro was picking up steam at this point.

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