

# Monday Night Raw – Stray Dogs, Superfly And Forced Evolution



IMG Credit: WWE

## Monday Night Raw

Date: March 8, 2004

Location: Arena At Harbor Yard, Bridgeport, Connecticut

Attendance: 7,000

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

It's the go home show for Wrestlemania and that likely means a slower than average night. In this case we do have the return of the Rock, which almost guarantees at least some energy. There's a good chance that there won't be much wrestling as WWE isn't going to want to risk an injury six days before the biggest show of the year. Let's get to it.

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

The arena is full of smoke and Gregorian chanting while a dirty casket is in the ring. I'm thinking the return of Mantaaur too.

Opening sequence.

Back in the arena, Lawler thinks Kane might have something to do with this and here's Kane to prove Lawler right. How nice of them to not keep

us waiting. His music is replaced by the chanting as he gets in the ring and turns the casket over, revealing the Urn inside. Kane throws the casket out (breaking the lid off in the process), leaving the mat covered in dirt and mud. He wants to know if this is the best Undertaker can do after weeks of teasing his return. An empty casket and an urn full of ashes?

The Urn is thrown out as well because it's going to take more than empty promises to defeat him. At Wrestlemania, Undertaker's Streak and his legacy are done, for good this time. Kane is NOT afraid of him...and there's the gong. Lightning goes off and the ring starts rising off the ground (you don't see that every day) and panic ensues. The screen says "This Sunday, it all begins again." The impressive part: even though it hasn't been full time in a good many years, the run that would begin on Sunday has gone on longer Undertaker's entire WWE run up to that point.

#### Rob Van Dam/Booker T./Dudley Boyz vs. Garrison Cade/Mark Jindrak/La Resistance

The Dudleys qualified for Sunday's title match after beating Lance Storm and Val Venis last night on Heat. Conway hits Bubba in the back to start as the fans already want tables. It's off to Dupree, who gets taken down by a neckbreaker because Bubba doesn't like French guys. Rolling Thunder gets two as JR and King list off other big shows to describe Wrestlemania.

Van Dam goes shoulder first into the post and Jindrak comes in for the armbar. A pair of kicks to the head eventually get Rob out of trouble and over to the corner for the hot tag to Booker. That means even more kicks and a Book End to Jindrak with everyone coming in for the save. Dupree gets in a shot to the back of Booker's head and Jindrak gets the pin with a clothesline. We're coming up on Wrestlemania, not Survivor Series.

**Rating:** D. I get what they were going for here but I'm not going to buy Jindrak and Cade as threats to anything, let alone the Tag Team Titles. I know Evolution wasn't exactly great with the titles but they were better than most of these goofs. This whole match shows how weak the division is as while the teams are at least different, I have no reason to care about

most of them. This whole thing could be left off of Wrestlemania and the only people who would care are these eight guys.

The winners argue over who should get credit for the win.

Chris Jericho is on the phone with Trish Stratus and does that weird kind of talking where he repeats everything the other person is saying that you would never do. He's going to take out some aggression on Christian this Sunday but Christian jumps him from behind. Christian says he left her boyfriend in Trish's favorite position: flat on his back.

During the break, Christian bailed in a waiting car.

King has a Wrestlemania pizza delivered as part of a sponsorship deal. Unfortunately they never actually say the name of the company that delivered the pizza so it's kind of missing the point.

Booker and Van Dam are upset about losing, but Van Dam manages to get in his pose.

Tonight: This Is Your Life Mick Foley. Therefore, we get a clip of This Is Your Life Rock. That still holds up, just from the chemistry between these two.

Rock arrives and runs into his biggest nemesis: Hurricane and Rosey. Hurricane brags about beating Rock, but that was just the Scorpion King. Tonight live though, it's the Rock. It's all cool though because he Hurricane liked Walking Tall. Rosey on the other hand got lost and wound up seeing Confessions of a Teenage Drama Queen.

Hurricane isn't wild on Rock's goatee because it reminds him of Coach, who is right behind Rock. Coach, whose height always surprises me, thinks Rock is stealing his look but Rock goes into a rant about Coach kissing up to Bischoff. Eventually Coach gets shoved away and Rock gives Hurricane and Rosey a pep talk.

Evolution vs. Hurricane/Rosey

That better be a heck of a pep talk. Flair punches away at Hurricane in the corner and hits a quick belly to back suplex. Orton comes in to kick

at the knee and it's off to Batista for a spinebuster. The Batista Bomb finishes Hurricane before Rosey is ever tagged in.

Evolution beats up Rosey post match. Orton says this is Rock and Foley's life: two pathetic comebacks that end in embarrassment on Sunday. There is no stopping Evolution.

Video on the issues between Shawn Michaels and Chris Benoit, which resulted in HHH standing tall again.

### Chris Benoit vs. Matt Hardy

I wonder if Matt, who never irons his clothes and occasionally cheats on his diet, can last as long as Rosey and Hurricane. Matt talks trash and says Benoit winning the title doesn't matter because he's V1. That earns him a backbreaker and a snap suplex so Matt tries bailing to the floor. Back in and Matt grabs a Side Effect for two but gets caught in the rolling German suplexes. The Crossface makes Matt tap in a hurry. To recap: Jindrak and Cade are on Wrestlemania but Matt is stuck in this role?

Post match JR gets in the ring to talk to Benoit about how long he's worked to get here. Benoit is getting in the ring with two of the best ever and he's coming out on top. Cue Shawn to say he appreciates what Benoit has accomplished more than anyone, but for Shawn, it's about ending a "nearly ten year grudge with HHH".

Oh come on. HHH debuted in WCW in February 1994, didn't start hanging out with Shawn until the summer of 1997, and if you REALLY stretch and say their issues started the day HHH took over DX, it's less than six years. It's more like a year and a half, which is still way shorter than Benoit's 18 year path to the title.

Benoit doesn't want to hear it (good man) because Wrestlemania is about walking out as World Heavyweight Champion. Violence is teased but Shawn eventually wishes him good luck. They shake hands but here's HHH to interrupt. HHH thinks this whole thing is ridiculous because he shouldn't have to defend the title against two men in one night. The two of them made a pact to take the title from HHH so they need to get used to

disappointment.

HHH always overcomes the odds and manipulates the situation to always be in his advantage. He's always found a way to have an edge and this Sunday that's their egos. Shawn's ego isn't going to let him leave with the title because he'll have to be the best, which is all the edge that HHH needs. I know it's the main event of Wrestlemania but HHH almost didn't need to be here. The Shawn/Benoit section alone was quite good.

Foley runs into Spike Dudley for a preview of tonight's This Is Your Life. I have no idea why this needed to be included.

### Lita vs. Molly Holly

Molly is extra aggressive to start and chokes on the rope and gets two off a backbreaker. We're already in the chinlock as JR hypes up Wrestlemania as being over four hours long. I pine for those days. Lita fights up with a sloppy headscissors and the reverse Twist of Fate for a pair of twos. Back up and Molly gets a rollup, grabbing the rope for the fast pin.

Post match Molly goes for Lita's hair but Victoria runs in for the save as the rapid fire last second pushing continues.

We look back at Austin running over Vince's limo last week.

We recap Brock Lesnar vs. Goldberg. It started at the Royal Rumble when they stared and sneered a lot, followed by Brock causing Goldberg to be eliminated. Goldberg cost Lesnar the Smackdown World Title next month and the Wrestlemania match was made. Steve Austin was added as guest referee to try and keep things interesting, at least partially because Goldberg is only showing up for the big match and not TV. Lesnar must have been taking notes. With Goldberg gone until Wrestlemania, Lesnar F5'd Austin last week and stole his ATV.

Here's Austin for a chat and a beer. Austin has been speared and taken an F5 so he really doesn't care what happens. He'll be playing by the rules on Sunday but if someone wants to get physical, Austin is read to hand out knuckle sandwiches. Before we get there though, he needs to go to

Atlantic City for some drinking and gambling but he's also heading to Smackdown to get his ATV back. A quick recap wraps things up as Austin really didn't have anything to say here.

We look back at Christian attacking Trish two weeks ago to put her on the shelf.

### Chris Jericho vs. Steven Richards

Before the match, we see Christian's attack earlier tonight, including him leaving after. Jericho has a cut on his head as a nice souvenir. Richards gets knocked down as he gets in with Jericho needing to blow off some steam. He's a little too hotheaded to start and gets sent into the post twice in a row, followed by a quite logical armbar from Richards. The comeback doesn't take long and Jericho tries the Walls but here's Christian to Trish's music. The distraction lets Richards grab the cheap rollup pin.

Post match Jericho sends Richards into the steps.

Hall of Fame video. It's still an interesting class but lacking a top name.

Wrestlemania rundown with Michael Cole and Tazz joining us for the Smackdown matches.

Stacy Keibler and Jackie Gayda are in the back to talk about their Playboy match (when you can't get in the arena on the go home show, it shows where you are on the card). After singing about bringing milkshakes to the yard (hence why this is off the Network), Johnny Blaze comes in but calls himself Johnny Spade (The multiple last names begin. Also of note: Johnny Spade was the name of a longtime Ohio Valley Wrestling mainstay so it's not exactly an original name.). He's willing to be their manager and even gives them a card. Johnny leaves and Eric Bischoff comes in, saying Johnny is made for this. And moving on.

Here's Rock for This Is Your Life. Rock promises to win on Sunday so let's get Foley out here right now. After a quick introduction, confetti falls and we get the famous video of Foley diving off of a house. The

first guest: the woman who owned the house, Mrs. Doris Snyder! Foley: "I remember her!"

It's a little old lady and Foley remembers eating milk, cookies and pie from her porch. A misunderstanding ensues with Foley saying all the kids, including the girls came up for pie. Foley: "Stray dogs too." Rock: "STRAY DOGS???" Snyder is no longer opening her porch for pie but she is leaving her back door open for strudel. Rock panics again and tells her to stand in the corner so she'll stop checking him out. I remember this one live and Rock's reactions are incredible.

Next up: the Snuka vs. Muraco cage match, with Foley hanging out with the other 184 future wrestlers who were all in the building that night. Therefore, our second guest is Jimmy Snuka himself. Foley is thrilled to see his idol and offers Snuka to come to Wrestlemania. Rock talks about Snuka's crazed 80s promos (the word he uses) where no one knew what Snuka was saying.

Snuka doesn't like that, but Snyder grabs Rock's arm. Rock: "Tell the Rock you are not looking at the Superfly's a\*\*!" Snuka: "Brother Rock, the Superfly loves pie!" Foley: "This is excellent!" Rock tells them to go get a room at Holiday Inn on her with Foley saying she was quite a gymnast in her day.

With the two of them gone, Rock talks about Foley's writing career. The third guest: Bob Thompson, the first person to ever review Have A Nice Day. Foley says cut the music because Thompson found the book boring because wrestling, and wrestling fans, were idiots. The fans are all over the guy (as they should be) but Rock says Thompson represents everyone who has ever told Foley no.

The critics have been wrong, just like the people who say they can't beat Evolution at Wrestlemania. Thompson criticizes Walking Tall and yeah there's the sock in his mouth. Dude had it coming. Cue Evolution for the brawl (without talking first, as it should be) but Rock breaks up the triple powerbomb. That's it for the comeback though as the Batista Bomb lays Rock out to end the show. This was long but Rock more than carried it, with his facial expressions over Snyder and Snuka being hysterical.

Check this out if you have the time.

**Overall Rating:** C+. The Raw before Wrestlemania is always a different kind of show and that has to be taken into account. This is a night where the wrestling isn't the point because it's all about hyping you up for the big show. They actually did that too, as I came into this not really looking forward to Sunday and came out wanting to watch it again, at least a little bit more than I did earlier.

The big stuff with Rock and Foley was great, the first half of the Shawn/HHH/Benoit segment was good and everything got a little time (save for Goldberg of course, but that match and story has been such a mess that it's not even a surprise anymore). As a stand alone show it doesn't work, but for a go home show it did what it was supposed to do.

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