

Monday Night Raw – March 29, 2004: He Won't Work Tuesdays But He'll Job Mondays



IMG Credit: WWE

Monday Night Raw

Date: March 29, 2004

Location: US Bank Arena, Cincinnati, Ohio

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

It's the first week with the new cast of characters and hopefully we can get something a little better than having the new wrestlers in completely run of the mill (at best) matches like last week's Smackdown. HHH is already back on Raw, having never actually gone to Smackdown in the first place. You can't have the company's diamond on the B show or something like that. Let's get to it.

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

We open with a recap of last week's Draft Lottery and the trade that brought HHH back to Raw while sending Booker T. and the Dudley Boyz over to Smackdown.

Opening sequence.

Here's Evolution, minus HHH, to open things up. Flair talks about being

thrilled to defend the Tag Team Titles against Chris Benoit/Shawn Michaels tonight but they're much happier about HHH being back in the Raw locker room. That's it for the good stuff though, as Flair is tired of the lack of respect around here. There's no respect for HHH and there's no respect for Randy Orton, who defeated the hardcore champion (little slip there) Mick Foley at Wrestlemania.

More respect is demanded and Orton, who had a tonsillectomy last week, says he knows that Foley is a coward. Cue Foley to say Orton proved himself at Wrestlemania. That match showed that in a 3-2 situation, Orton can defeat a Hollywood actor and a guy who writes children's books. That's why Foley wants a one on one chance to face Orton at Backlash for the Intercontinental Title in a street fight with Evolution banned from ringside. In other words, if Orton agrees, he gets hurt. Orton actually agrees and Flair starts the pep talking.

La Resistance and Garrison Cade (Huh?) tell Tajiri to mist the next guy who comes through the door as his welcome to Raw. Eventually Coach comes in so screaming and flailing can ensue. The French guys say he's in trouble because Coach is Eric Bischoff's boy.

Nidia vs. Molly Holly

Let's see how good Molly, who now has curly brown hair, really is. Molly takes her down with a judo throw and sends Nidia to the apron. That means a hard posting and Molly wraps the banged up arm around the ropes. The arm gets wrenched down some more but it's fine enough to catapult Molly into the corner. A northern lights suplex gets two so Nidia pulls off the wig, setting up a rollup for the surprise pin. Nothing wrong with this one, though I don't think anyone is buying Nidia as anything of note.

Clip of Edge returning last week and spearing Bischoff.

Bischoff isn't happy with the clip being aired, Edge not being here, or Johnny Spade calling him EB. Edge gets Kane at Backlash.

Hurricane comes out for a match but HHH jumps him from behind. HHH doesn't think much of the locker room being glad he was traded last week. Those people meant so little that Bischoff traded three of them to get

him back. Bischoff wants this show to be the biggest in the world, which is why he needs HHH right here.

Now that he's back on Raw (after being gone a total of zero weeks), Bischoff is going to come out here right now and give him the World Title shot at Backlash instead of Shawn Michaels. Bischoff comes out for some sucking up but since he's already given Shawn the title shot and doesn't want to annoy Steve Austin, he'll just make another triple threat match. I'm really not sure that they should be running a rematch just a month later with no changes. But hey, we wouldn't want to be without HHH.

Post break Batista yells at Shelton Benjamin for laughing at HHH last week. HHH knocks him into a cabinet and welcomes him to Raw.

Here's Lance Storm for a chat. Storm says cut his bad music because he can't stand it anymore. The having fun hasn't gotten him anywhere because everyone is still mocking him. Last week he could have been drafted to Smackdown and gotten a new beginning. Cue Rhyno and it's time for a match.

Lance Storm vs. Rhyno

Spinebuster and the Gore finish Storm in about thirty seconds.

Tajiri tries to apologize to Coach and Bischoff but Coach adds a few details to the story to get Tajiri a match with Kane instead. You kind of deserve it dude. Tajiri's panicking is funny.

The WWE received an award from the USO.

Tag Team Titles: Chris Benoit/Shawn Michaels vs. Ric Flair/Batista

Flair and Batista are defending. Actually hang on as we have a guest referee in the form of Johnny Spade. Actually hang on again as that's now Johnny Nitro. The threat of an early superkick sends Batista bailing to the floor, leaving Flair to have the Figure Four reversed into the Crossface. Batista makes a fast save so Shawn dives onto the two of them as the hot start continues. Somehow Batista is legal as Benoit starts in on his leg, followed by Shawn coming in for some splashes to the knee.

It's off to Flair but Shawn takes him down into a quick Figure Four. With Nitro not knowing what to do, Flair grabs the rope for the break. Benoit chops him down in the corner and it's already back to Batista. That doesn't go well either as Shawn hammers away in the corner, knocks Flair off the apron, and continues punching Batista. A spinebuster finally gets Batista out of trouble as JR talks about Trish Stratus.

Flair butterfly suplexes Shawn and now it's time for JR to complain about Nitro wearing a big belt buckle, suggesting that he's heading to a rodeo after the show. I'll let that one sink in for a second as the champs start in on Shawn's ribs. Shawn gets in some chops though and it's a double shoulder for a double knockdown. Flair goes up (JR: "Flair thinks he's in Kentucky somewhere.") and gets slammed down, allowing Benoit to come in and clean house.

The Sharpshooter to Flair is broken up in a few seconds so Shawn jumps Batista. A staredown with Nitro takes us to a break pretty late in the match and we come back with Benoit hitting an enziguri on Flair. Shawn comes in and everything breaks down again, with the legal Batista being knocked to the floor. The Swan Dive sets up Sweet Chin Music on Flair for the pin and the titles. The celebration doesn't last long though as Nitro says Flair wasn't legal so the match restarts. Shawn wastes no time in punching Nitro down for the DQ.

Rating: B-. Kind of messy at times but at least they didn't go with the Tag Team Champions heading into a World Title match in a few weeks. The fans popped hard for the title change as you would have expected them to, though the match was nothing that hasn't been done better before.

Post match, Nitro gets beaten up before.

Shelton comes in to Bischoff's office and, thanks to an intervening Steve Austin, gets a match with HHH instead. I didn't realize this was so soon after the Draft. Unless there's a small cameo later, that's Austin's last appearance until next Wrestlemania.

It's time for the Highlight Reel with Trish Stratus as the guest. Before she comes out though, Jericho has to promise revenge. See, he can't do anything or he'll get fined and suspended, but tonight is all about an

explanation. This brings out Trish, doing the Jericho pose first. Trish says that Jericho can't touch her, even if he wants to. She talks about the knee injury that kept Jericho from saving her, even though "Hello, I'm Trish Stratus."

Christian was there for her at her hotel room though and he explained everything. Jericho just tried to use her like he used Christian. Trish is a three time Babe of the Year and he's not even in her league. She and Christian planned all night long, plus did something else all night long. I hope not at the same time. Jericho calls her the s*** of the century and Trish freaks, as she should.

Jericho: "All I did was put my foot in my mouth, and that's nothing compared to what you put in your mouth." Kurt Angle isn't the one who really sucks and Trish may be a three time Babe of the Year, but wasn't Babe a talking pig? Jericho congratulates the CLB and the FDDBBFTBH (filthy, dirty etc.) and even starts a chant of the second, which is enough to get Trish to leave. Trish's stuff was fine, even though it didn't really explain anything new. Jericho's response though was great as he had some hilarious lines and had Trish looking like she was going to kill him.

Post break Trish freaks out to Christian, who has gotten another match with Jericho at Backlash.

Tajiri vs. Kane

No DQ. Tajiri strikes away to start but the handspring elbow only knocks Kane back a step. The big boot puts Tajiri down but he ducks the top rope clothesline. The Tarantula attempt works as well as you would expect and they head to the floor. A posting has no effect so Tajiri mists him and dives back in for the countout win.

Post match Kane chokeslams Tajiri, taking away whatever limited benefit Tajiri got from the win. Edge runs in to spear Kane.

Benoit tells Benjamin to take HHH down because no one likes him. Hurricane and Mick Foley want him to do the same.

Smackdown Rebound, looking at Kurt Angle being announced as GM and the new talent making their debuts. JBL also gets a focus, because that's the world we live in.

Flair gives HHH a pep talk.

Shelton Benjamin vs. HHH

Shelton now has his own generic rock music. HHH takes him into the corner to start and offers a polite slap to the face for the break. Shelton easily wrestles him down twice in a row, with a little slap of his own after the second. A shoulder drops Shelton but he pops up before HHH can even try the knee drop. The Pedigree is escaped but HHH says it was that close. A backslide gives Shelton a very close two and he does the "that close" gesture right back to HHH (which was in Shelton's Titantron video for a long time).

HHH chops away in the corner as the fans remind HHH that he tapped out. The dragon whip gives Benjamin two and it's off to an armbar. Cue Flair to back HHH up but Benoit follows him out and we take a break. Back with Shelton holding another armbar until HHH sends him in for the jumping knee. Shelton goes shoulder first into the post twice in a row and you can hear the relief in Lawler's voice.

Right hands and the knee drop give HHH two and it's time for the sleeper. You can hear Benoit playing cheerleader (there's an image) until Shelton sends HHH face first into the buckle for the break. A jumping back elbow puts HHH down as he just can't put Shelton away. Lawler is starting to panic a bit but HHH suplexing his way out of a sleeper calms him down a bit.

HHH dives into some raised boots (still the least believable spot in wrestling) and falls to the floor, allowing Shelton to hit a clothesline from the apron. The top rope clothesline gets two back inside and a powerslam is good for the same. A Pedigree attempt is countered into a jackknife cover for two more but Flair gets in a cheap shot. Benoit goes after Flair to distract HHH and it's a Stinger Splash into a rollup to give Shelton the big upset.

Rating: B. So he won't work Tuesdays but he'll do the job on Mondays. This is the way you make someone look like a star and that's exactly what they did here. Shelton is a great choice for a major push and it's not like HHH is going to lose anything by putting him over here. It was even mostly clean with HHH getting distracted on his own and not being able to put Shelton away earlier. They did a good job here at making Shelton look good here though and that's the right idea.

Overall Rating: C+. There were two good matches on the show and while I'm not wild on the triple threat rematch at Backlash, it's hardly the worst decision in the world. Some of the weaker stuff here wasn't great but it was mostly fast enough that it wasn't that hard to get through. They've gotten rid of a lot of the worst stuff and that's always an improvement.

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