

Smackdown – April 1, 2004: The Joke Is On Them



Smackdown

Date: April 1, 2004

Location: Nationwide Arena, Columbus, Ohio

Commentators: Michael Cole, Tazz

We're officially in the JBL Era here and that's going to go on for a long time. Last week we saw the debut of the new character, followed by him interfering in an Eddie Guerrero vs. Booker T. World Title match. I was hoping that it was just a bad dream but now it seems that we're going to be in for the long haul. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence, which STILL includes Rock.

Here's General Manager Kurt Angle to open things up. There's something behind him underneath a black blanket, which Cole thinks might be a surprise. Angle talks about sacrificing his in-ring career for the good of both the fans and Smackdown. He can't do it alone though and needs someone to step up and help him.

Tonight, someone needs to show that they've earned what is underneath the blanket: a trophy, which is the Kurt Angle Great American Award. Eddie Guerrero isn't eligible, mainly because the winner gets the next shot at Eddie's title. Tonight there will be a series of matches with the winners being the official nominees, with the first match beginning right now.

Great American Award Nominee Match: Big Show vs. Rikishi

Rikishi slugs away to start but gets knocked down with next to no effort. The slow beating begins, including the boot choke in the corner. One heck of an overhand chop puts Rikishi down but he superkicks Show in the corner. The Stinkface is broken up though and the chokeslam gives Show

the pin. They kept it short, as they should have.

Earlier today, JBL with the horned limo arrived, complete with him yelling at the Latino driver, especially for not speaking English. Cole hypes up JBL's portfolio beating the stock market SEVEN YEARS IN A ROW, which is now the way you push a top heel.

Rey Mysterio/Spike Dudley vs. Chavo Guerrero Jr./Chavo Guerrero Sr.

Chavo has new music. Rey and Jr. start things off with Mysterio's standing Lionsault getting caught, only to have him armdrag Jr. down. Everything breaks down and it's a Bronco Buster to Jr. and Spike's running corner stomping on Sr. Rey gets crotched on top though and Sr. comes in for a butterfly suplex.

The fans think Chavo sucks and Tazz wants to know which one. My money is on Jr., who comes in with a camel clutch to Rey. That doesn't last long and Rey sends Jr. into a right hand from Spike, who comes in for more offense than you're usually going to see from him. Jr. saves his dad from a 619 so Spike Dudley Dogs Jr. while kicking Sr. to the floor for the pin.

Rating: C-. It's a bad night for the champions so far and the match just wasn't working very well. I can certainly go for having Spike as a cruiserweight more than as the plucky underdog though and at least he's getting some more time. That being said, if you're going to use this to likely set up a title match, maybe you shouldn't have had Spike lose to Jr. last week.

Post match JBL comes in to beat up Rey and Spike, because cruiserweights mean nothing around here.

Great American Award Nominee Match: Rob Van Dam vs. Charlie Haas

Rematch from last week, though Haas now has new trunks. Haas tries to take it to the mat but has to avoid a kick to the face. Another attempt gets Rob on the mat, though jumping him from behind works. Unfortunately for Haas, the second attempt at kicking him in the face works as well but Haas is smart enough to start in on the leg. A headscissors sends Haas to

the floor and he picks up a chair. Cole: "Great Americans don't run around hitting people in the head with steel chairs."

Back in and more shots to the leg have Rob in trouble and Haas wraps it around the post a few times. Charlie pulls him down by the leg again and puts on a half crab, which works a bit better than last week. Van Dam still gets out in a hurry, but this time Haas doesn't get kicked in the face. A trip up top takes too long though and now Haas gets kicked in the head. Rolling Thunder (What leg injury?) gets two but the Five Star misses. Haas rolls to the floor and grabs the chair to knock the suicide dive out of the way, setting up the double countout.

Rating: C-. Not bad, Van Dam's selling issues aside. I can appreciate the idea of building Haas up though as you can always have a good technical guy on the roster to get a good match out there. Haas isn't likely to go anywhere and going 0-1-1 in two matches isn't the best start, but the talent is clear and with a few wins, he could be a fine midcarder.

Actually hang on as Angle comes out and says Haas wins because he was ahead on points. Well yeah, he certainly was. Cole, obviously lacking an eye for talent, freaks out.

Video on JBL's big promo and interference from last week. They're certainly going full speed ahead with this guy.

We look back at JBL getting out of the limo earlier and then beating up Mysterio and Spike.

Booker wants in on the Great American Award and gets a Nominee match with Hardcore Holly. So Booker is slumming it with Holly while freaking BRADSHAW is pushed as one of the top heels. Who writes this nonsense?

Video on the WWE getting an award from the USO.

Great American Award Nominee Match: Booker T. vs. Hardcore Holly

They trade shots in the corner to start as Cole talks about earning respect on Smackdown. You know, like Holly has done for all those years. Holly knocks him to the floor for a seven count so Booker comes back in with the hook kick to the face. A delayed vertical suplex gives Holly two

and it's off to the armbars.

Booker fights up and gets two off a side slam before dropping a knee. An elbow gives Holly two and it's back to the armbars. Back up and Booker's Cactus Clothesline puts them on the floor as we take a break. We come back with the side kick putting Holly on the floor but not being able to suplex him onto the steps.

Instead Holly suplexes him onto the floor and throws Booker back inside, only to have Booker get two off his twisting sunset flip out of the corner. Holly makes the fired up comeback and gets two of his own off a powerslam. The dropkick gets two but Booker Book Ends him for the same. With nothing else working, Booker grabs a rollup with trunks for the pin.

Rating: D+. The post break half was way better than the first but my goodness why is Hardcore Holly going move for move with Booker T. for more than fifteen minutes? I don't know who in the world thinks JBL is a better top heel than Booker (at least given their statuses at the moment) but we really are getting Booker as the midcard act who has trouble beating Holly while JBL gets to run people over.

Dudley Boyz vs. Akio/Sakoda

Bubba headlocks Sakoda to start and shoulders him down, only to have Akio kick Bubba in the back of the head to take over. The stomping begins, which makes sense given that Akio and Sakoda are just generic villains now that Tajiri is gone. Sakoda cranks on the neck but Bubba just blasts him with an overhand chop. It's off to Akio so Bubba hits a pretty good looking spear to cut him down as well. The diving tag brings in D-Von to clean house and the villains are sent into each other. A 3D finishes Akio in short order.

Rating: D. Just a short match here as the Dudleys are still getting settled in around here. That being said, the Dudleys vs. Scotty/Rikishi isn't exactly a big time match so I'd assume a title change before we get to the title showdown. Akio and Sakoda aren't bad by any stretch, but they're not going anywhere without a few tweaks.

We look at the nominees for the Great American Award.

The Dudleys check on Spike when Teddy Long comes in to offer his services. Well for Bubba and D-Von at least.

Raw Rebound looks at Chris Jericho ripping Trish Stratus apart and Shelton Benjamin upsetting HHH.

Eddie arrives and talks to the limo driver. Plans seem to be forming.

Rene Young and Fifi come out for commentary with Tazz interviewing the dog.

Great American Award Nominee Match: John Cena vs. Nunzio/Johnny Stamboli

Cena gets a heck of a reception as the star power is growing at a remarkable rate. He doesn't think much of the other nominees because that award is his. Cena also throws in an insult to Dupree and Fifi, suggesting that Cole is in love with him. I'll let you figure out who Cena is talking about. Cena easily pounds Stamboli down and knocks Nunzio off the apron before catapulting Stamboli into his partner. The Throwback and Shuffle set up the FU to put Stamboli away. I don't think Cena is even sweating.

Post match Cena gets in Dupree's face.

Angle recaps the Great American Award process and wants Eddie in the ring next.

Here's Angle with the trophy for an announcement. He's proud of the locker room because they've shown that HHH wouldn't have lasted five minutes here. The award will be given out next week because the fans can vote for the winner. Make your choice careful too, as the winner will be the new #1 contender to Eddie's title. This brings out Eddie, who cuts Angle off a few times to annoy the boss.

Eddie is ready to fight right now but Angle isn't going to do that because he's the General Manager. Instead, he wants someone skilled to take the title from Eddie. Someone who is as adept at the stock market as Eddie is at stealing cars. That would of course be JBL, who is now the fifth nominee for the Award. JBL comes out in the limo and climbs on top to thank Angle for the nomination. He can't wait to get out of here and

get back to New York City to his Central Park home.

We hear about all of his TV and radio show appearances, plus hear a plug for his TALK RADIO SHOW! As for Eddie, last week was just business and now he wants the WWE Championship. Eddie wants to make it personal and climbs onto the limo where he steals the hat as JBL goes back in through the moon roof. With JBL saying that the hat costs \$1000, Eddie passes it around the arena, telling fans to put whatever they want into it. Angry Texas ranting ends the show. I don't know about you, but I could really go for more from the #1 contender than "I wear expensive hats and talk about the stock market".

Overall Rating: D-. So, much like last week, we got to see the new names showing up and having matches that meant absolutely nothing because it's clear that JBL is getting the shot and didn't have to wrestle a match to get there. The wrestling ranged from pretty meh to bad and then you have the entire change of pace at the end of the show. Just a worthless show as you can see the cliff coming from here and that makes it really hard to watch.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up the paperback edition of KB's Complete 2003 Monday Night Raw Reviews (also available as an e-book) from Amazon. Check out the information here:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2018/07/23/new-book-kbs-complete-2003-monday-night-raw-reviews/>

And check out my Amazon author page with cheap wrestling books at:

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>