

Monday Night Raw – April 29, 2004: When HHH Sells



IMG Credit: WWE

Monday Night Raw

Date: April 26, 2004

Location: Landon Arena, Topeka, Kansas

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

They don't have to go far to beat Smackdown this week. We're still a week away from the big Shawn Michaels vs. Chris Benoit title match so you can probably bet on a lot of hype for that one tonight. Other than that Edge and Benoit are the new Tag Team Champions and Evolution won't be happy. Let's get to it.

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

We open with a recap of Shawn challenging Benoit last week and Benoit and Edge winning the titles.

Opening sequence.

Lita/Victoria vs. Gail Kim/Molly Holly

Lita is especially smiley this week while Molly's hair is now longer, brown and curly. Victoria and Gail start things off and it's a very early dancing moonsault (again with the camera facing Victoria's front) for two. Molly comes in for a quickly broken cravate so it's off to Gail to keep beating on Victoria. An elbow knocks Lita off the apron and Gail grabs a Black Widow to take Victoria down. That's broken up pretty quickly and the hot tag brings in Lita to clean house. A spinning belly to back suplex gets two on Gail and Molly loses the wig. Molly sends Victoria into the barricade, leaving Lita to DDT Gail for the pin.

Rating: D+. Not terrible as they take care of the issue from Backlash.

It's not like the women's division means anything at the moment (and it hasn't for years) so having the women trade wins don't exactly help or hurt anything. They kept it short here and nothing was terribly botched so that's about all you can ask for.

Post match Molly beats up Lita some more but here's Kane of all people to interrupt. Just like last week Lita isn't smart enough to roll under the bottom rope and get out so Kane strokes her cheek and smells her neck. She finally runs away and, after a break, runs into Matt Hardy in the back. Matt says he's facing Kane tonight and he'll take care of her. Kane shows up and beats Matt down as Lita wisely runs for a change.

Here's Kansas' own Coach for a chat. He brags about not choking like all of the Kansas college teams but here's Tajiri to interrupt. Tajiri calls him a liar and wants a rematch tonight. That's a no so Coach puts in an order for Chinese food. That means a kick to the head...and here's HHH to interrupt. HHH kicks him low and asks why Shawn is getting the title shot. It was Shawn who tapped out at Backlash and that's why HHH should be getting the shot instead. With Tajiri getting up, HHH says he's just like Shawn because he doesn't know when to get up. That means some green mist and the blind HHH freaks out as Tajiri runs.

Post break HHH goes into Bischoff's office and yells at a plant (as in a potted plant) about wanting Tajiri tonight. Eric leaves and HHH yells at the empty room. Because he can't see.

Rob Conway vs. Rhyno

Eugene and William Regal show up at commentary. Eugene: "French Canadians! Pat Patterson first Intercontinental Champion Rio de Janeiro 1979!" JR to Lawler: "You didn't even know that." The USA chants begin and Eugene joins in before heading down next to the Titantron for some cartwheels. Rhyno gets two off a belly to belly but gets thrown over the top.

Conway chokes on the ropes as Eugene has stolen some popcorn and come back to commentary. Regal: "No don't put that in your ear!" Conway gets two off a kick to the ribs and the referee is nearly jumping as he counts the two. Eugene is over in the tech area as Conway whips Rhyno into the

corner and gets two off a clothesline. Some pyro goes off thanks to Eugene pushing buttons, allowing Rhyno to hit a Gore (the only significant offense of the match) for the pin.

Rating: D. The wrestling was just a backdrop for the Eugene stuff but it feels like innocent, harmless fun. That's the way they should be treating him and Regal as the funny straight man is the perfect foil. This was a lot of fun and I'm starting to remember why I was a big fan of the guy back in the day.

Post break La Resistance wants to fight Eugene tonight but Regal says that can't happen. Johnny Nitro makes Eugene vs. Conway in two weeks.

Edge and Benoit are cut off by Shawn, who reminds him of their match next week. Shawn leaves and Edge wants Benoit to stay focused on tonight.

Here are Christian, Trish Stratus and Tyson Tomko for a chat before a match. Christian talks about Jericho being a problem and needing a problem solver.

Christian vs. Grandmaster Sexay

Sexay gets jumped to start as JR goes back to the 1800s for insults about Trish. A flapjack lets Sexay dance a bit and a middle rope dropkick gets two. The reverse DDT is broken up and a cactus crossbody puts them both on the floor. Back in and Tomko offers a distraction to break up the Hip Hop Drop. The Unprettier gives Christian the easy pin.

Post match Tomko kicks Sexay in the face but Jericho's music hits. Tomko is sent into the aisle but Jericho comes in through the crowd and gets Trish in the Walls for all of two seconds.

HHH vs. Tajiri

HHH, with a somewhat green face, is still wiping his eyes and hammers away to start. Tajiri gets choked on the mat as the fans remind HHH that he tapped out. Some kicks knock HHH down and the handspring elbow gets two as the fans are already into this one. That's enough to send HHH outside for a breather but Tajiri smacks him in the face and sends him head first into the steps. HHH gets back in at nine and the Buzzsaw kick

is blocked.

Tajiri kicks away even more but walks into the spinebuster as Lawler makes more and more jokes about Tajiri's accent. A hard whip sends Tajiri into the corner but he's right back with a spinwheel kick. The Octopus Hold is countered by a HHH hiptoss and the Tarantula doesn't go on full. Instead Tajiri goes with a missile dropkick that knocks HHH into the referee. The mist misses though and the Pedigree finally finishes Tajiri.

Rating: C+. This was much better than I was expecting with Tajiri working hard and HHH actually giving him a lot. You don't see a midcarder going move for move like this with a top star very often and it makes for a very refreshing match. HHH didn't lose anything here and Tajiri looked better than he has in a long time. Now why can't we get something like this a little more often?

We recap the Lita/Kane/Matt Hardy stuff.

Kane vs. Matt Hardy

Matt, who always meets his deadlines, can barely walk to the ring. Kane wastes no time in beating him down and chokes on the ropes. A whip sends Matt chest first into the buckle and there's the chokeslam. Kane chokeslams him again but Lita runs in to save Matt from the Tombstone. Lita lets him kiss her and Kane walks out. Angle instead of a match.

Victoria tried to get people to vote.

Lawler is in the ring to promote the Divas Magazine, because he's the only one you could get to talk about the thing. We see some shots on the Titantron and here's Stacy Keibler to help things out. What is she doing here you ask? Meeting Harley Race, sitting in the front row, of course. Therefore cue Randy Orton as JR panics. Orton says he's the only real legend around here and has already accomplished more than Race has in his whole career. Race shaking his head is worth a chuckle and Orton goes out to spit on him. That draws Race over the barricade but Shelton Benjamin (hey he's still here) to jump Orton for the save.

Smackdown Rebound. That show needs no more attention.

Batista and Flair want their titles back. Apparently Batista hasn't been able to sleep since losing the titles and that will NEVER happen again. He screams everything he says here but does earn himself a WOO.

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

Benoit and Edge are defending and Edge still has a cast on his hand. Flair and Benoit hit the mat for an early standoff with Flair slicking the hair back. With the technical stuff not interesting him, Benoit chops in the corner and hits a backdrop. Flair goes for the leg (well duh) and it's already off to Batista. Edge comes in as well and stomps the big man down in the corner until the running clothesline takes his head off.

Flair comes back in and gets taken down into a weird looking half crab (Edge is turned halfway around instead of facing backwards), followed by a Figure Four as tends to be required in Flair matches. Of course Flair knows the counter so it's back to Benoit for more chops and a Flair Flop (earning some appreciative applause). Benoit chops him so much that it's a second Flop but Edge walks into an atomic drop.

A knee to the back sends Edge hard into the corner and Batista sends the bad hand into the steps as we take a break. Back with Edge sending Batista face first into the buckle and the hot tag bringing in Benoit. They're not wasting time with this one. Everything breaks down and Flair is clotheslined to the floor, leaving Batista to take the rolling German suplexes. The Swan Dive sets up the Crossface but Flair is back in for the save.

We settle back into the standard operating procedure here with Flair tossing Benoit into the corner and Batista adds a suplex. The half crab keeps Benoit in trouble and Flair gets two off a chop. You don't chop with Benoit so Flair takes him down by the legs to bring Batista back in. An enziguri gets Benoit out of trouble and the hot tag brings in Edge. Everything breaks down again and Batista spinebusts Benoit. That allows Flair to load up the Figure Four, only to eat the spear to retain the titles.

Rating: B. Hot tag match here with a clean finish, which is a lot more than I was expecting. They're rolling with the idea of longer wrestling

matches at the moment and that makes for a very fun ending like this one. Edge and Benoit's roll continues and Edge's feud with Kane is forgotten more every week, thank goodness.

Post match HHH comes in to beat the Canadians down but here's Shawn for the save with a chair. He hits Benoit by mistake (dun dun dun) and that's not cool with Edge. They calm down but Benoit is up with the Sharpshooter to Shawn to end the show. Good way to set up next week's title match.

Overall Rating: B-. There's some stuff on here that isn't as entertaining as the rest but it's such an easy show to watch and they're making it a lot of fun every single week. Above all else they're not just focusing on one or two things and leaving the rest out to dry. Build up the entire show and the good parts will look even better as a result. If you happen to get something fun like Eugene as a bonus, it's even better. Another good show this week.

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