

Smackdown – July 8, 2004: For The Last Time



IMG Credit: WWE

Smackdown

Date: July 8, 2004

Location: Winnipeg Arena, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

Commentators: Michael Cole, Tazz

It's title night around here as John Cena is defending the US Title against Booker T., who earned his shot at the title by winning a triple threat match last week. Other than that it's time to build things up for next week when JBL defends the Smackdown World Title against Eddie Guerrero. Let's get to it.

Here are last week's results if you need a recap.

Opening sequence.

Rob Van Dam vs. Mark Jindrak

Rene Dupree is on commentary. I had forgotten Jindrak is a thing, though he's now called the Reflection of Perfection, meaning he has Lex Luger's mirror in the ring. He and Teddy Long have also split, but it's described as amicable. Jindrak knocks him to the floor at the bell and the beating is on in a hurry with some rams into the barricade. Back in and the choking continues with Jindrak nipping up to show off a bit.

Rob tries to go up top but Jindrak hits an awesome looking standing dropkick (at one point Jindrak had the highest vertical leap in WWE history) to knock him into the barricade. The reverse chinlock with a knee in the back has Van Dam in more trouble but Rob comes back with a kick to the face. Rob's rolling monkey flip out of the corner sets up another kick to the face but Rolling Thunder hits knees. A belly to back superplex is broken up though and Van Dam hits the Five Star for the pin.

Rating: C-. Jindrak was an amazing athlete and could jump like few others but everything between those jumps didn't work so well. At least he's a fresh name though as we haven't see him do anything in recent months. That's better than having Van Dam and Dupree fight each other time after time and a lesson that WWE could learn a lot from today.

We look back at JBL defending the World Title against Spike Dudley last week and Eddie Guerrero coming in for the post match beatdown. Eddie announced a cage match for the title two weeks later. Good ending after a dull match.

JBL talks about how much better a champion he is because Eddie didn't offer handshakes or come to Canada while he held the title. Eddie is no gentleman and he probably didn't even graduate from high school. JBL isn't worried because he's a champion's champion and a man's man who doesn't belong in a cage. The growing JBL fan club will carry him through though and he can hear the chants starting from here. Tonight, he's facing El Gran Luchadore, the champion of Mexico, who he's fought before and comes in to see him here (looks to be Shannon Moore this time around). This time, it's going to be a massacre.

Tag Team Titles: Paul London/Billy Kidman vs. Dudley Boyz

The Dudleys are defending and this is a rematch from Velocity where the champs had to get themselves disqualified to save the titles. It's a brawl to start with London hitting a top rope missile dropkick, followed by an assisted moonsault for two on D-Von. London unloads with right hands until Bubba low bridges him out to the floor. Back in and D-Von hits a Hennig neck snap of all things and it's Bubba coming in to stay on the neck.

Actually make that the knee as Bubba finally takes notice of the big brace. D-Von comes back in to grab the foot and...really that's about it. He doesn't twist on it or anything and is really just putting his hands on the foot. Bubba adds the apron legdrop and it's a reverse chinlock to keep D-Von in control.

The middle rope headbutt misses though and there's the hot tag to Kidman, in full accordance with the tag team formula. Everything breaks down and it's D-Von and London being sent to the floor. What would have been the longest What's Up ever is broken up so Kidman rolls through and lets London hit it on Bubba instead. London's superkick sets up the shooting star press to give Kidman the pin and the titles.

Rating: C. The title change is quite the surprise but the big deal here is how fast the Dudleys fell. They went from main eventing a pay per view to losing the titles completely clean here in about two weeks. That's an incredible collapse and really, something that needed to happen. Amazingly enough, that would be the team's last title reign in WWE. It's almost hard to believe that they never did it again but they would be gone in a few months and then left for about ten years. Quite the low key ending to their title years.

Post break the celebration is on, complete with champagne and congratulations from Billy Gunn. Well now it's certainly a big deal. The Dudleys come in and shake their hands and no violence ensues.

Kenzo Suzuki has Hiroko translate a promo for him. He doesn't like what John Cena has been saying about him lately and wants revenge. Kenzo is misunderstood and has great respect for America because it's the land of opportunity. Kenzo: "God bless of America!"

US Title: John Cena vs. Booker T.

Cena is defending but before the match he needs to remind us that the champ is here in Manitoba. Booker isn't getting the title back tonight because Cena is five times better and has five times the groupies. Cena isn't losing to a Whoopi Goldberg lookalike, which is a line that the fans rather like. Cue Kenzo Suzuki for a fight but Cena beats him down with ease. With Suzuki down on the floor, Luther Reigns comes in and lays

Cena out with the reverse swinging neckbreaker. I guess the match will be taking place later, because Kurt Angle will send his goon in to lay Cena out, but he's fair about things.

John Bradshaw Layfield vs. El Gran Luchadore

Non-title and JBL makes sure to shake hands on the way to the ring. It's such a relief to have this new "I love you people" gimmick than what we were getting before he won the title. It's still bad, but it's not insufferably bad and that's a step up. Hang on though as JBL needs to sanitize his hands. That's very important in a foreign company. Luchadore rolls away to start but gets caught with a right hand to the mask.

Back up and Luchadore poses a bit too much, earning himself another knockdown. A running dropkick has JBL in trouble and a moonsault press gets two. JBL has had it with this and sends him outside so the real beating can begin. The huge clothesline drops Luchadore and there's a second one to make it even worse as the fans chant for Eddie. Luchadore gets tied in the Tree of Woe with JBL ripping at his face for painful measure. A belly to back superplex makes things even worse and JBL kicks him out to the floor.

Cue a second El Gran Luchadore from underneath the ring to throw JBL outside and leave a banana peel on the mat before hiding again. The referee is so confused that the Luchadores are able to switch and the Eddie Guerrero dance might give you a clue as to what's going on (in case you're REALLY slow). Three Amigos (Cole: "That's Mexican!") have JBL bailing to the floor and it's a countout as Luchadore says there's no running next week.

Rating: D+. This was an entertaining squash until the angle, which went on a little longer than it needed to. JBL not taking a pin is a good idea as he doesn't have the highest standing in the world at the moment and having him get beaten so soon would have been a bad idea. Not as bad of an idea as making him champion in the first place, but a bad idea nonetheless.

Luchadore says play Eddie's music because they're close.

Booker says he'll win the title because he's better than Cena. That's about as to the point as you can get.

Raw Rebound.

Rey Mysterio, Scotty 2 Hotty and Spike Dudley are ready for their six man tonight when Bubba and D-Von come in to talk to their cousin. Scotty and Rey leave and advise Spike to help defend the family name tonight because he already let them down last week. Spike says he didn't want their advice last week when they were champions. Why would he want it now? Sick little burn there.

Rey Mysterio/Scotty 2 Hotty/Spike Dudley vs. Chavo Guerrero/Akio/Jamie Noble

What a random match. Akio and Rey start things off with Akio taking him down in short order, allowing Chavo to come in and stomp away. The chinlock goes on Noble throws Rey into the hands in front of Chavo's raised boot but Rey snaps off an armdrag. Scotty tries to come in and the distraction...lets Rey beat up Chavo and Noble at the same time without too much effort. Why does Rey need partners in the first place?

It's off to Scotty to clean house and everything breaks down. Spike drops a top rope double stomp to the ribs and stomps on Chavo in the corner. The Dudley Dog gets two on Noble with Chavo making a quick save. That earns Chavo the Worm but Akio knocks Scotty outside. Chavo ducks the 619 so Rey catapults him outside, setting up a top rope Asai moonsault onto Chavo and Akio. Back in and Noble tiger drives the heck out of Spike for the pin. Like I said: Rey didn't need partners.

Rating: B-. This was a heck of a fun little match with all six guys going out there and getting in everything they could in a little bit of time. Mysterio needs a fresh challenger though and it would make sense to have Noble (or anyone for that matter) come after the title. They could have had something special with more time, but what we got was quite good.

Paul Heyman doesn't care about the Dudleys losing the Tag Team Titles because he has to worry about the Undertaker. Fair point actually. Heyman needs to say something to Undertaker and he'll do it in the ring tonight.

We look back at last week's completely unshocking moment with Undertaker announcing that with Paul Bearer gone, he's going to destroy Paul Heyman.

Speaking of Heyman, he's in the ring, with the Urn, to address Undertaker. He pulls out a statement, which says that everything that happened to Bearer was the Dudleys' fault. Then the Dudleys got what they deserved so now Heyman wants to make a peace offering: the return of the Urn. Near tears, Heyman gets down on his knees and begs for a pass, rather than begging for forgiveness. No one is backing him up out here and he's a little lamb lost in the wilderness, begging the reaper to pass on by. If Undertaker lets him live, Heyman will cross his path no more. And that's it as I guess we'll get to that later.

US Title: John Cena vs. Booker T.

The banged up Cena is defending. Hang on though as here's Kurt Angle, still in a wheelchair but now carrying a cane. The distraction lets Booker get in a cheap shot and the beating is on in a hurry. A superkick gets two and it's off to a top wristlock instead of staying on the bad neck. Cena starts the early comeback with a powerslam and hip toss for two each, followed by the Shuffle for two more.

The FU is blocked with the grab of the rope and Booker dumps him. Angle gets to his feet for the first time in months and limps over to Cena for a cane shot (breaking the cane) to the back. We take a break and come back with Booker dropping a knee and grabbing the chinlock. What a change of pace to coming back to the chinlock. Totally different you see. Cena fights up like a good guy fighting out of a chinlock but walks into a spinebuster.

The jumping kick to the face gets a delayed two and it's right back to the chinlock. Cena kicks out of three straight covers and, you know it, back to the chinlock again. Back up yet again and Cena grabs a DDT for two of his own. Booker's snap suplex gets the same and a Cactus Clothesline puts them both on the floor. Cena isn't done and clotheslines Booker into Angle. Back in and Cena hits the FU but Reigns comes in for the DQ.

Rating: D. Quite the slog of a match here with Booker using a ton of

chinlocks and Cena's neck injury not having much to do with the match. With Booker jumping Cena from behind, you could have written the Reigns attack from earlier out entirely and not changed a thing. These two should be capable of so much more and that's kind of a shame given how the match had been set up.

Post match Reigns beats Cena down but Angle says bring the title with him. Cena causing Angle to be knocked over is enough for him to be stripped of the US Title. Angle is very happy to end the show.

Overall Rating: C-. Not a very good show here with the six man tag being the only really strong part. The Eddie/JBL segment did its job but took too long to make it work as well as it should have. Other than that, the show was pretty mediocre at best and that's not enough to make a full show work. That being said, I'll take this over the horrible shows they were putting on just a few months ago any day.

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