

Summerslam 2004 (2019 Redo): Two Halves Are Not Equal



IMG Credit: WWE

Summerslam 2004

Date: August 15, 2004

Location: Air Canada Centre, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Attendance: 17,640

Commentators: Michael Cole, Tazz, Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

It's the second biggest show of the year and that could go multiple ways. Smackdown has been getting better as of late but it's still not very good. Raw has had its moments, but with the second biggest match from the red show being HHH vs. Eugene, they're working underneath a pretty low ceiling. Let's get to it.

The theme is the Summer Games, giving us an Olympic themed opening. I've always liked these as they're actually rather entertaining.

The opening video looks at the big matches, but Diva Dodgeball is in the middle, even before the Intercontinental Title and Smackdown World Title matches. I'm thinking no on that one.

Dudley Boys vs. Paul London/Billy Kidman/Rey Mysterio

Spike recently joined his brothers and since there are no other teams on Smackdown, Kidman and London are still feuding with the Dudleys. Rey just

walks out to his music, which takes a lot of the impact away. D-Von hammers on Kidman to start but gets armdragged down for his efforts. London comes in for an assisted moonsault and the dropkick gets two.

A rather hard clothesline takes London down and it's off to Spike for some screaming stomps in the corner. Bubba comes in for the trash talking elbow drop and the villains start taking turns working on London. Straight right hands break up the comeback attempt but Bubba hits D-Von by mistake. Spike gets kicked away and that's enough for the tag off to Mysterio.

The springboard legdrop gets two on Spike and a hurricanrana out of the corner makes things even worse. A reverse DDT plants D-Von and it's back to Kidman for a top rope back elbow to Spike. Everything breaks down and a BK Bomb gets two on Spike. Bubba gets double dropkicked to the floor and Spike takes a Hart Attack of all things. The 619 sends Spike into the shooting star from Billy for two with D-Von making the save. Back in and Kidman walks into the 3D to give Spike the pin.

Rating: C. Well that was a dumb ending. You have Spike as Cruiserweight Champion and have him pin a Tag Team Champion to open one of the biggest shows of the year? You couldn't have Rey pin D-Von here to let the fans feel good? This didn't help anything other than building Spike up, which was done as well as it was going to be with the Cruiserweight Title win. Bad decision here, in a match that didn't need to have this kind of a finish.

We recap Kane vs. Matt Hardy. Lita slept with Kane to get him to leave Matt alone, actually being stupid enough to believe it would work. As a result Lita is pregnant but still loves Matt. Therefore, she's marrying the winner of this match. Somehow, not even the most bizarre stipulation in Summerslam history.

Kane vs. Matt Hardy

Matt goes straight at him to start and hits what I guess was a middle rope Side Effect for two. The middle rope legdrop to the back of the head gets the same and a weird looking tornado DDT (with Matt landing on his stomach) gets the third two. Kane finally hits a clothesline to take over

but a Lita distraction lets Matt low bridge him to the floor.

The slingshot dive sets up a Twist of Fate for nine and probably the best chance Matt had. Lita throws in the bell and distracts the very stupid referee so Matt can clock Kane for two. Kane kicks him in the face and goes up but gets caught by Matt. That's fine with Kane, who hits a super chokeslam for the pin and Lita's hand.

Rating: D. Short and bad here, with Matt having less than no chance throughout. Matt has been destroyed and turned into an idiot this whole feud and Kane winning in the end was the only way it could go. Now just get to the wedding, which is destined to be the most entertaining part of this whole thing. The match was nothing that couldn't have been done on Raw but with a nice looking ending. That's also Matt's last WWE match for about a year as he had a bad knee injury and was then released in April.

Randy Orton doesn't want to hear about anyone being upset because tonight is a night for celebration. John Cena cuts him off and promises him some merch. He's an Orton fan, but a quick fan poll seems to suggest that they don't agree with him. And so it begins.

Booker T. vs. John Cena

Match #1 in a best of five series for Booker's US Title. They slug it out to start with Cena hitting a clothesline for one. Cena gets in the Throwback for two so Booker crotches him on top to cut that off in a hurry. Booker throws in a You Can't See Me and drops a knee for no cover. A jumping kick to the face cuts off Cena's early comeback and it's a camel clutch to keep things slow.

That's broken up so Booker goes with a spinebuster and side slam to drop Cena again. The ax kick misses though and Cena hits his running clothesline out of the corner. That just earns him a flapjack into a Spinarooni but Cena hits a quick FU for the pin, ignoring Booker's shoulder being way off the mat.

Rating: D+. That's the third straight fast match here and that's not a good thing on a show like this. They didn't even have seven minutes here, which is the kind of match that could have been on Smackdown instead of

wasting it on this show. Cena is likely losing the next two matches to put him in a hole which is fine, but I could have gone for a better start to this thing.

Eric Bischoff ("the head cracker in charge of Raw") comes in to see Theodore Long and points out the revolving door to the Smackdown GM office. Bischoff advises him to enjoy it while it lasts but Teddy tells him to get to steppin.

Intercontinental Title: Batista vs. Edge vs. Chris Jericho

Hometown boy Edge is defending and Batista is on fire at the moment. Speaking of Batista, he knocks Edge off the apron during his entrance and we hit the Y2J chants early on. A hard elbow knocks Jericho down and a shoulder does it again. Edge comes back in with a chop block to break up the Batista Bomb though and it's time for some Canadian violence on Batista. Snake Eyes gets Batista out of trouble but Jericho grabs his boot to slow him down a bit.

A clothesline puts Batista outside and leaves Edge alone in the ring...where he's booed out of the building. Well that's rather surprising. Batista gets sent face first into the steps and we're down to Jericho vs. Edge in the ring. Edge gets the better of the fight but gets loudly booed when loading up the Edgecution. The Walls attempt gets a much better reaction, though Edge reversing into a small package isn't as well received. Back up and Jericho pokes him in the eye, setting up the full Walls of Jericho.

The hold is pulled back into the middle until Batista finally makes a save with the clothesline. Edge takes Batista down with an Edgecution for two as Jericho is banged up on the floor. The spear is loaded up but for some reason Jericho cuts Edge down on the way to Batista. A spinebuster gives Batista two on Jericho but this time it's Edge sending the big man outside. That gives us another battle of the Canadians and another loud Y2J chant. Batista gets dropkicked off the apron but the distraction lets Edge spear Jericho down to retain.

Rating: D+. The odd crowd reactions threw things off here, though they're not quite as out there as you might think when you remember Edge teasing

a heel turn as of late. Now that being said, you would think the hometown deal would be enough to overcome the recent cheating but that wasn't the case here. On top of that, the match didn't have a ton of heat and was a string of one on one matches instead of all three at once. Edge retaining is fine, though Batista is getting bigger and bigger every week.

We recap Eddie Guerrero vs. Kurt Angle in a Wrestlemania rematch. Eddie cheated (kind of) to win at Wrestlemania in Angle's last match for about five months. Angle is back now, though while he was on the shelf he cost Eddie the WWE Championship so Eddie is out for revenge and to prove that he can hang with Angle on an even playing field. This has been the best set up feud for the whole show and the match should be able to live up to the hype.

Kurt Angle vs. Eddie Guerrero

Angle has Luther Reigns with him. Feeling out process to start as the odd fans are cheering for Angle here. Shockingly enough Angle is more than fine against Eddie on the mat so Eddie tries for the ankle. He'll settle for a headlock instead so Angle reverses into a quick keylock. Eddie armdrags him straight into an armbars but it's time to start the rolling German suplexes. That doesn't work either as Eddie reverses the second into the ankle lock as the wrestling lesson continues. Angle reverses into the real thing but Eddie puts his own on at the same time. It doesn't last long, though cool idea there.

A rope finally saves Eddie so Reigns gets in a cheap shot like a good lackey should do. That means another ankle lock before Angle finally switches gears a bit for something close to an STF. With Eddie down, Angle starts untying Eddie's boot but the delay lets Eddie get in a kick to the face. It's right back to Eddie's ankle until Eddie gets in an Angle Slam of his own. Eddie makes his comeback with right hands but the ankle isn't exactly sturdy.

It's fine enough for the Three Amigos so Eddie goes up for the frog splash, only to get caught with the running belly to belly superplex. Angle's Angle Slam is countered into a DDT and another frog splash attempt misses. The Angle Slam gets two so Angle rips the boot off to set

up the ankle lock again.

The roll through sends Angle into the referee so Eddie hits Angle and Reigns with the boot. Of course Eddie throws the boot away and falls down instead of hitting a frog splash, which would have made more sense. Eddie hits the frog splash for two a few seconds later and yells at the referee on the kickout. That's enough for Angle to pick the ankle and put on the grapevine to make Eddie tap.

Rating: C+. What exactly are they saving all the time for on this show? That's the first match to break thirteen minutes and nothing else has even hit nine. There are three matches left on the card and nearly an hour and a half left in the show, but nothing has even hit fifteen minutes yet. Did Diva Dodgeball need the extra time?

Anyway, this wasn't all that great as the first few minutes were looking like the start of a thirty minute classic but then they just jumped the stolen finishers (which is becoming a rather tired trope) and had Angle break the ankle down for the win. This was dying for another eight minutes of build towards the finish but for some reason this show has to go as fast as it can because of reasons.

We recap HHH vs. Eugene. HHH found out that Eugene was his favorite wrestler and agreed to use him to help get the World Title if HHH could eventually make Eugene want to quit. In other words, it was a story that was way more complicated than it needed to be and Eugene, who started off as a very fun, unique character has turned into the clueless putz that cost HHH the title. Therefore, HHH must destroy him to prove that he's better than a mentally disabled person who doesn't know how to wrestle but imitates wrestling he watched on TV as a kid. In the second biggest Raw match on Summerslam. Of course.

HHH vs. Eugene

No one is at ringside for a bit of a surprise. HHH wins an early slugout but Eugene elbows him in the face so it's time head outside. That means a chance for HHH to hide behind Lilian Garcia, allowing him to take over again. It's time to load up the announcers' table but Eugene blocks a suplex to the floor. Some right hands in the corner set up a Flair Flop

and HHH has a bad knee. Believe it or not, it's a way for HHH to sucker Eugene in again and outsmart him for a cheap shot.

A backbreaker keeps Eugene in trouble as JR freaks out of the fake injury. He certainly must have loathed Bret Hart then. The fans think Eugene sucks so his comeback isn't exactly well received. HHH offers a handshake but this time Eugene is ready for him and pulls it into a Rock Bottom. The People's Elbow is countered with the spinebuster to a face pop as the trip into the bizarre continues. HHH chokes away and it's back to the floor for a whip into the steps.

Back in and HHH slowly beats on him, setting up the sleeper because this match needed a sleeper. Eugene escapes and hits a backdrop, followed by a middle finger and the Stunner. That's enough to send HHH outside for a breather though and here's Ric Flair because HHH is actually in trouble. The big boot into the legdrop connects but Flair gets knocked off the apron. Eugene goes up top and dives into the Pedigree but spins out, setting up a Pedigree on HHH instead. Flair puts his foot on the rope so it's just a two, earning an ejection. Cue William Regal to knock Flair cold with the brass knuckles as the Pedigree finishes Eugene.

Rating: D. Well thank goodness for that. After a few months of getting frustrated, the great and mighty HHH came back and beat the comedy act in a match at one of the biggest show of the year. All it cost Eugene was all of the good will he built up too, but at least HHH got the big win. This whole story was really stupid and a huge waste of time, which really doesn't work when it boils down to HHH needing almost fifteen minutes to beat a comedy guy. It was just bad all around and didn't help anyone other than HHH, who didn't get that much out of it anyway.

And then, Diva Dodgeball with the Diva Search girls basically in swimsuits while the Raw women are in matching gear. Before the game starts, Coach tells us about some trash talk that happened after Raw went off the air. They proceed to play dodgeball, which is in no way shape or form an excuse to have good looking women in barely existing clothing running around. The Diva Search girls dominate and win. Trish yells about the refereeing and then blames Victoria, triggering a fight. This took up nearly six minutes, which is about seven minutes too long.

Smackdown World Title: John Bradshaw Layfield vs. Undertaker

No recap for this one because the build hasn't exactly been thrilling. JBL won the title earlier in the summer and needed an opponent so Undertaker showed up. For some reason JBL decided he wasn't afraid of Undertaker and brought out a mini version, who Undertaker wound up beating up instead. Then JBL brought in Orlando Jordan as his Chief of Staff because he needed a designated lackey.

Undertaker knocks him to the floor early on and the beating begins, including JBL's arm going into the steps. Back in and JBL hits a quick swinging neckbreaker before going up top for a good looking top rope shoulder. An armbar doesn't get JBL anywhere so Undertaker pulls on the arm as well and hits Old School. Undertaker grabs an ugly triangle choke until Jordan pulls the foot under the rope.

With that not working, Undertaker hits a big boot to JBL but misses a running version in the corner to let JBL take out the knee. The leg is wrapped around the post and a Jordan distraction lets JBL smash the leg with a chair. Undertaker gets sent into the barricade so Jordan can get in a few shots before sending him inside. The fans start the Wave as the leg work continues.

The leglock goes on as JBL is smart enough to just throw on a hold and let the fans die down. It's not exactly thrilling for the fans at home but it's a smart idea here. Undertaker fights out and pulls JBL down into a quickly broken kneebar. They head outside again with Undertaker hitting the apron legdrop. The announcers start chanting for the Spanish table but JBL snaps the throat across the top for a breather. Again JBL takes too long going up though and it's a superplex for two.

JBL goes right back to the knee with a spinning toehold of all things but Undertaker hits a sloppy release spinebuster for two more. The jumping clothesline puts JBL down again and Snake Eyes into...a running clothesline instead of the big boot gives Undertaker another two. The chokeslam gets a delayed near fall, which seems to shock the announcers. Who hasn't kicked out of a chokeslam? Jordan gets up for a quick distraction and it's the Clothesline From JBL to give the champ two of his own. The

referee gets bumped though and it's a double big boot for a double knockdown.

Jordan throws the belt in for a shot to the head and the very delayed near fall with Jordan grabbing the hand to slap the mat. Undertaker finally beats up Jordan but eats another Clothesline From JBL. With the referee still down, JBL rains down right hands in the corner which is only done to set up the Last Ride. Jordan is back in with the belt so Undertaker takes it away and hits JBL for the DQ.

Rating: D. The thing is, it's not even the worst match in the world. It felt like it was straight out of the HHH/Ric Flair Greatest Hits playbook with Jordan being the worst Flair impersonator of all time. The leg work was fine and JBL still wasn't horrible yet, but the ending was pretty lame with Jordan being pathetic and JBL's finisher not being able to do much damage. It's not so much horrible or even bad as much as it is uninteresting and uninspired, which made for a very long seventeen minutes.

Post match the beatdown continues with the bloody JBL being chokeslammed through the roof of the limo. JBL does a stretcher job, guaranteeing a rematch. Of note: at some point during the match, a fan tried to climb onto the limo and security kept him from not only, you know, climbing onto the limo but also breaking the roof and injuring himself/ruining the spot.

Cole shows us a replay and tells us to listen. There's no sound.

Raw World Title: Chris Benoit vs. Randy Orton

Orton is challenging after winning a battle royal and pinning Benoit in a tag match. Here's your exchange that would never happen today: Lawler: "Hey JR you got a camera on you?" JR, dripping with sarcasm: "Yeah right here in my pocket." The fans are all over Earl Hebner with the YOU SCREWED BRET chants as they stare each other down at the bell. Benoit drives him into the corner and takes Orton down for a rather early chinlock. A test of strength goes to Orton but he misses a knee drop.

Benoit is right back with the armbars and armdrags him down into another

armbar. That's reversed as well with Orton grabbing a Sharpshooter of his own. Benoit slips out of that and tries a Crossface, sending Orton to the floor where he posts Benoit to really take over. A second posting keeps the champ down and Orton drapes him over the top rope for good measure.

Something like a DDT on the apron gets Benoit out of trouble but he misses a dive through the ropes, sending himself HARD into the barricade. Back in and Orton hits the over the shoulder neckbreaker for two, followed by the chinlock. Benoit fights up for stereo crossbodies but gets up first for a northern lights suplex. A release German suplex has Orton in more trouble and the Sharpshooter goes on.

That's good for two arm drops until Orton makes the rope so they're both exhausted. Some rolling German suplexes put Orton down again but he gets his feet up to block the Swan Dive (FREAKING OW MAN!). The cover is countered into a Crossface but Orton rolls out. Back up and Benoit tries it again but Orton spins him around into the RKO for the pin and the title.

Rating: B. It's not a masterpiece but it was a good, long, well put together match with a completely clean ending that made Orton look like the better man. The new heel on top is long overdue and it's nice to see Orton, who has gotten a lot better in a hurry, win the title here. Benoit's title reign was very respectable and he beat HHH a few times, which is about as good as you're going to get. It's a rather good main event, though not exactly a classic.

Post match Benoit gets back in and shakes his hand, demanding that Orton be a man. Orton shakes his hand and Benoit leaves in peace, allowing Orton to pose to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. This show is two different halves and it's as noticeable as you're ever going to see. The first four matches are all short and need more time while the remaining four, as in the big matches, either fail to live up to the hype or just aren't very good in the first place. This show needed to be reshuffled a bit with some extra time being given to a few other matches. Stuff like Diva Dodgeball and the opener could have been cut to give the time to other matches. It would have done

the show a lot of good, but there was only so much this show could do.

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