

Monday Night Raw – November 22, 2004: One Of The Funniest Things WWE Has Ever Done



IMG Credit: WWE

Monday Night Raw

Date: November 22, 2004

Location: HSBC Arena, Buffalo, New York

Attendance: 6,000

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

It's time to continue the Survivor Series fallout, this time with someone else running the show. Last week's Maven Show is going to be hard to beat as Maven challenging for the title wasn't fooling anyone. At least that's out of the way now and we can stop pretending that Maven is anywhere near that level. Let's get to it.

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

We open in the locker room with Shelton getting ready for his match when Trish Stratus comes in wearing a towel. She asks where he's off to looking so pretty. That would be a six man tag because William Regal and Tajiri need him. Trish asks about her needs but Shelton thinks she'll

find someone else. An aghast Vince McMahon comes in and freaks out because it's a woman in a towel. It's scandalous because the moral fabric of America is being pulled apart by the sexual and racial overtones. Shelton: "EXCUSE ME?"

Vince: "Well Shelton, you may not realize this but you're an African American. And everyone knows that African Americans are attracted to attractive white Canadian women with broken noses!" Vince goes on a rant about how this isn't the NFL or the NBA where such actions could send Shelton into the audience in a violent rage. Shelton tells Vince to lighten up and the towel comes down as the Monday Night Football theme plays. Vince can't kiss her because of the nose guard so he looks to the camera and asks if we're ready for some wrestling.

So for those of you who weren't watching American television in 2004, there was a Desperate Housewives vignette that aired before a Monday Night Football game, featuring Nicolette Sheridan and Terrell Owens doing the same thing. This was treated as the biggest disgrace in the history of television with people freaking out over a WOMAN IN A TOWEL (ok it was more her dropping the towel). It was stupid and completely overblown, though this opening has always been one of my favorites. Vince informing Shelton that he's African American cracks me up every time as Shelton just looks lost.

Opening sequence.

Here's Chris Benoit, who is in charge this week. He loves the idea of more wrestling and wants to simplify things tonight. There is a contract on his door and anyone who wanted a match tonight just had to sign up. Some people have already signed up so tonight it's Maven vs. Gene Snitsky, Batista vs. Chris Jericho, Trish Stratus defending the Women's Title against Lita and Molly Holly, and Jonathan Coachman against JR. We need a main event though and as luck would have it, there's a steel cage above the ring. As you might have guessed, Benoit himself will be challenging HHH for the World Title inside that cage.

Maven vs. Gene Snitsky

Maven is still banged up but is fine enough to snap Snitsky's throat

across the top rope on his way in. A dropkick sends Snitsky out to the floor and seems to annoy him more than anything else. Snitsky pulls him down and crushes Maven's head against the post for two as the announcers talk about how Maven should have joined Evolution last week (egads people let it go).

A half crab keeps Maven down and Snitsky slides him across the mat into the post. Maven can barely do that right as the slide is in slow motion. Snitsky misses a charge and Maven hits a high crossbody for two, followed by the top rope bulldog for the same. A big boot cuts Maven down though and it's the pumphandle slam to give Snitsky the pin.

Rating: D. What else were you expecting? Neither of these two are worth much in the ring, though at least Snitsky beat him pretty decisively. It's not working with Maven and WWE is right to move him back down the card where he belongs. Snitsky doesn't have the highest ceiling in the world, but it's a lot higher than Maven's, at least right now.

HHH is panicking over the cage match but Batista says they have his back. That doesn't work well because Batista has been screwing up left and right lately. Ric Flair tries to calm things down but HHH says the point of this team is to keep the title on him. HHH bets that Batista is losing tonight. They separate and things aren't good.

Here's Stacy Keibler to shoot t-shirts into the crowd. She pulls out a copy of the Rise and Fall of ECW DVD but that brings out Simon Dean to interrupt. He thinks the people need a DVD that they could actually use. It's a Simon System DVD, which the people need to protect themselves around Thanksgiving. Women like Stacy are interested in men like him, because he's actually in shape. Stacy says no because he looks in the mirror more than she does, which doesn't sit well with him. Threats are made so here's Hurricane for the save. Simon beats him down with the weightlifting belt so Rosey makes the real save.

Two women (Candace Michelle and Melina) are in the back talking about Batista and HHH when Batista and Flair (Flair: "Maybe later ladies.") come by with Batista ranting about how he can beat Jericho and he'll prove it tonight.

Batista vs. Chris Jericho

Jericho stops an early charge in the corner with an elbow to the face but Batista runs him over without much effort. A running dropkick in the corner sets up a springboard dropkick to put Batista in trouble again. The high crossbody gets two but Batista is right back with a side slam. The Batista Bomb is countered into a rollup for two so Flair gets on the apron for the distraction. Batista gets in the spinebuster and ties Jericho in the Tree of Woe for a choke...and it's a DQ at the five count.

Rating: D+. This was starting to get somewhere but they were smart to end it that way. Batista looks like the monster who was out to prove himself at all cost, which is exactly what they should have done. Jericho didn't get squashed, but the point here was to make Batista look like the Animal and that's what they did.

Post match Batista lays Jericho out with the big clothesline to the back of the head.

Post break, HHH sarcastically claps for Batista and asks for his \$100. Batista doesn't want to hear it because he walked out while HHH got carried out. HHH doesn't like it because he wanted Batista to win. Batista has a million dollar body and a ten cent brain and if HHH needs to find a replacement, he'll have no problem getting one. Flair is sent to talk to the livid Batista, but he tells HHH to back off.

Edge looks at a clip of him attacking Christian last week while shouting that it wasn't his fault. He's a lone wolf now and deserves a shot at the World Title, but Benoit is getting his own shot. Everyone knows he's earned a shot so let's take a poll of people in the back about whether Edge should get a shot at the title. Christy Hemme says no so Edge tells her to apologize to her mirror every morning. A production guy says no because he voted for Shawn Michaels at Taboo Tuesday. Edge is about to kill him so here's Benoit to break it up. Edge storms off instead.

Jonathan Coachman vs. Jim Ross

Hang on though as Benoit pops up on screen to say that there has been a misunderstanding. See, Coach wrote JR on the signup sheet, which Benoit

thought meant Just Rhyno.

Jonathan Coachman vs. Rhyno

Coach gets in a microphone shot and some right hands before the Gore finishes him in less than thirty seconds.

Women's Title: Trish Stratus vs. Lita vs. Molly Holly

Trish is defending in fallout from Lita getting beaten down by the two of them. The heel alliance starts early and they take turns choking Lita on the ropes. Lita slips out of a double suplex and grabs Trish's mask. A double clothesline in the corner has Molly and Trish in more trouble but Trish is right back with a middle rope clothesline.

Lita gets in a quick rollup for two before hammering on the champ in the corner. Trish's face is slammed into the mat but Molly throws Lita outside. The Molly Go Round connects with Lita diving back in for the save, followed by the hard DDT to Molly. Trish makes her own save and steals the pin to retain.

Rating: C. The match might have been a little sloppy and short, but they were showing an extra fire that you don't often get from the women's division of this era. Trish vs. Lita is building up rather well and as soon as Lita can keep her head on straight, she should be running through Trish for the title in a nice moment.

Post match Lita chokes Trish out and grabs at the mask again.

Flair tries to calm Batista down again as Batista gets his arm wrapped up, saying everyone goes through something like this. When HHH is ready to leave, Batista is ready to be the man. That's not worth it to Batista, who is tired of waiting his turn. Flair: "I'VE BEEN TIRED FOR THIRTY TWO YEARS!" Flair doesn't want this to turn into another Orton situation, but Batista says he wouldn't regret it.

Video on Shelton Benjamin's hometown, which included a lot of drug dealings and violence. Shelton got into trouble when he was in high school and was even a shoplifter who carried a gun with him to school. He got expelled, but he's not proud of it. Rather random video, but these

are effective most of the time, which was the case here.

Shelton Benjamin/William Regal/Eugene vs. La Resistance/Christian

Tyson Tomko is here with the villains. Regal gets taken into the wrong corner to start but Grenier is right back with a snapmare to take over. It's off to Eugene for a headlock but he's taken into the corner as well, allowing Christian to snap the back of his neck across the top rope. The choking begins and Conway makes it even worse by grabbing Eugene in a reverse chinlock (like a neckbreaker but with pulling instead of dropping).

Since it's another chinlock, Eugene gets out without much effort and brings Shelton in to clean house. The top rope clothesline gets two on Conway with Tomko breaking up the cover. La Resistance hits a Hart Attack for two on Benjamin but Regal wrecks both of them. Eugene Stuns Conway into the exploder to give Benjamin the pin

Rating: C-. Completely watchable match here with the two feuds (Are these feuds?) being thrown into a single match for the sake of simplicity. Regal and Eugene are a fun team and while they're not going to hold the titles very long, they're a nice pickup every week. Benjamin on the other hand is looking like a star every time he's out there.

Eugene brings the kids in for the post match dance.

Muhammad Hassan and Daivari complain about travel and threaten to beat respect into anyone who gets in his way.

Smackdown Rebound.

The cage is lowered.

Raw World Title: HHH vs. Chris Benoit

HHH is defending inside a cage...or at least he would be if he was here. We cut to the back where Flair is freaking out at Batista, who he thinks has attacked HHH. Benoit runs to the back as Flair keeps blaming Batista. The doctors want an ambulance but Benoit comes in to say he'll drag HHH's unconscious body to the ring for the title match if he has to. Edge

laughs at Benoit for losing a title shot so Benoit says Edge can take HHH's place.

Chris Benoit vs. Edge

Inside a cage. Benoit starts swinging right away and takes Edge into the corner for the chops. A hard whip takes Benoit down though and Edge gets a chance to hammer away for a change. Edge starts going after the back so Benoit sends him face first into the cage. There's a baseball slide to drive Edge into the cage as this is more about the violence so far than the win. Edge slips out of a Crossface attempt and sends Benoit shoulder first into the post.

Benoit is right back with a catapult into the buckle for two as JR compares this to being trained in the Dungeon. Something tells me there weren't a lot of catapults into buckles in there. A good crotching slows Benoit down and Edge kicks away in the Tree of Woe. They collide in the corner as Batista is shown watching in the back. We come back from a break with Edge chinlocking a bloody Benoit.

With that not working so well, Edge hammers away with right hands and sends him into the cage again. It's still too early to escape though as Benoit pulls him back down, sending Edge face first into the buckle. The rolling Germans are on with Benoit hitting five in a row this time. Now it's Benoit's chance to go up but Edge makes a save of his own.

Naturally he's only going up for the Swan Dive for two, meaning it's off to the Crossface. That's broken up as well and Benoit goes into the cage, allowing Edge to return the favor on the earlier baseball slide. They fight over to the door, which is slammed onto Edge's head. Since Edge isn't that bright, he gets back up and spears Benoit...right out to the floor to give Benoit the win.

Rating: B-. Nice cage match but going from what was supposed to be a World Title match to this didn't do it any favors. Edge messing up again and costing himself the big win will fuel his rage all the more, but does this really change anything? There's no storyline advancement for this and Benoit winning is just a consolation prize.

Batista tells Flair he's going to the ring and wants to see HHH out there. Flair needs to decide whose side he's on.

Here's Batista in the ring to say he's not coming for the title (yet) because he wants HHH man to man right now. HHH comes to the ring against the doctor and Flair's orders to go face to face with Batista...and then tells Batista well done because HHH IS SMARTER THAN YOU! HHH: "I'm a genius."

They even pay off the doctor, who HHH says was worth every penny. HHH wasn't going to fight in a cage because Benoit was running the shoe. He explains the entire play (which doesn't have that many steps) and gives the MVP award to Batista. That was a performance worthy of an Academy Award (IT'S AN EMMY BECAUSE IT'S ON TELEVISION!!! STOP GETTING THAT WRONG!!!). HHH: "Or at least a Slammy!"

After posing with the title, HHH calls out the women but gets Randy Orton instead. He's in charge next week, which doesn't scare HHH because Orton can't get a title match. Orton has two options for HHH: they face off one on one next week and if Orton wins, that stipulation is gone. HHH cuts him off before the second option is read and says no, so Orton goes with option #2: HHH defends the title in a battle royal. The roster comes out to the stage so the champ can panic to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. The matches did get better as the show went on, but there is no hiding the fact that nothing is happening at the moment. We've literally gone two weeks and the biggest development is Regal and Eugene winning the Tag Team Titles. HHH has had to defend the title against Maven and tonight he gets to be the genius who keeps the title again. You know there are going to be shenanigans next week as well, because that's what this show is all about anymore. Nothing happened on this show, and that seems to be by design.

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