

Smackdown – December 16, 2004: It Hasn't Been That Bad



IMG Credit: WWE

Smackdown

Date: December 16, 2004

Location: Gaylord Entertainment Center, Nashville, Tennessee

Commentators: Michael Cole, Tazz

We're done with Armageddon so now it's time to get to the Royal Rumble, but before that we have the real important thing to get through: the finals of Tough Enough. Normally I would say the competition hasn't been that bad, but some of the last few weeks have been such a mess that I can't bring myself to go there. At least it's wrapping up though and we can get back to something better. Like JBL. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Here's Orlando Jordan to welcome JBL to the ring. It's a special introduction this week with the limo decked out in bunting and JBL standing on top with Amy Weber, who is helped down by the Bashams. Naturally we get the red, white and blue balloons and confetti falling because that's the kind of thing JBL would do. JBL talks about some great moments in American history, such as the end of the Great Depression and

Ronald Reagan tearing down the Berlin Wall.

Those are the kind of moments that were joined by him defeating three challengers on Sunday, despite a General Manager being so biased and corrupt against him. How many people here bought a ticket to see a new champion here tonight? That's ok, because he has a Christmas gift for Amy. That would be a tiara, followed by JBL starting a chant of his own name.

This brings out Kurt Angle of all people and it's a staredown between Angle and company and the Cabinet. JBL hopes this is so Angle can offer congratulations but Angle is confused. He can't believe that JBL thinks he's the greatest champion of all time or that his victory was the greatest title win ever. Angle: "Are you out of your freaking mind?"

JBL wants his congratulations and an exit from Angle but instead it's Kurt saying that HE is the greatest champion of all time. Like when he beat Steve Austin, the Rock, Rikishi, Undertaker and HHH inside the Cell at Armageddon 2000. Angle: "I INVENTED the over the top championship celebrations bucko!" JBL: "You didn't just call me bucko." Angle affirms that he did call him bucko, bucko. JBL says the Cell match was four years ago, but this year he lost a 3-1 match to Big Show.

That doesn't matter because Angle could beat JBL without breaking a sweat BUCKO. JBL accepts a title challenge...but not for tonight. He implies that Amy wore him out after he retained the title so it's vacation time for the rest of the year. This brings out Theodore Long to say he'll make decisions about title matches. Therefore tonight, Angle vs. JBL is happening and the title is on the line. I'm sure Big Show is thrilled about this as WWE basically admits that Armageddon meant nothing.

Rob Van Dam/Rey Mysterio vs. Akio/Billy Kidman

Non-title. Rey and Kidman start (good idea) with Mysterio getting taken into the corner and stomped down. That's fine with Rey, who comes back with some kicks to Akio's legs but it's too early for the 619. Instead Rey is sent outside and knocked off the apron so Kidman can get in a great dropkick on the floor.

Rey fights out of a chinlock and grabs a reverse neckbreaker but spins around into a faceplant for a move I haven't seen before. Rob comes in to start clotheslining away, setting up Rolling Thunder for two. A monkey flip sends Kidman into the middle of the ring for a basement dropkick but Akio takes Rey to the floor. The BK Bomb plants Rob but Rey comes back in to break up the shooting star. The Five Star finishes Kidman.

Rating: C. This is the kind of match that the show could benefit from. Kidman and Akio aren't going to be a regular team and they're not the next big thing but it's cool to see them thrown together in a one off match like this for a fresh option. It's not a bad little match either, which is always a plus.

Here's Torrie Wilson in a rather revealing Uncle Sam outfit. She's proud of having helped entertain the troops last year and she'll be doing it again next week. This was just an excuse for Torrie to be in the outfit.

The announcers talk about Tribute to the Troops when Heidenreich raids commentary. With Michael Cole running away (makes sense), Heidenreich puts a chair in the ring and reads a poem about wanting to replace Undertaker. Can we please find something better for Undertaker to do already???

Eddie Guerrero say they're on the same page when another new woman named Lauren comes up. Booker hits on her and Eddie makes fun of him as she leaves. Eddie is ready to have a singles match next week for Tribute to the Troops, nearly triggering a fight. That might have been the most random cameo I've seen in years.

Michelle McCool says Theodore Long is meditating and can't see Orlando Jordan. She slams the door in his face so here's Luther Reigns to talk about hoe great Kurt Angle is. They go back and forth over how awesome their bosses are, down to Angle is nice to animals and JBL gives to charity. JBL offering medical care gets Reigns' attention but he gets back to his normal arguments. All this did was show how lame both guys' lackeys are.

Kenzo Suzuki/Rene Dupree vs. Eddie Guerrero/Booker T.

Booker and Rene start slowly as Tazz can't remember what kind of warrior Kenzo is. Eddie comes in and gets elbowed in the face as Booker is facing the crowd for some reason. Some stomping in the corner has Rene in trouble with some blood coming from the nose. Booker comes in and kicks Kenzo in the face for two as the announcers talk about anything but the match. The fast tagging continues with Booker sending Kenzo outside as we take a very abrupt break.

Back with Kenzo still in trouble until a tag to Rene lets him get beaten up instead. A cheap shot lets Rene take over on Booker though and it's Kenzo grabbing the nerve hold. That's broken up and Booker hits a nice flapjack to drop Rene face first. That's enough for the hot tag to Eddie so the pace can pick up but Kenzo blocks the third Amigo. Everything breaks down and it's a Book End to Suzuki. Hiroko's kendo stick interference is broken up so it's an ax kick to set up the frog splash for the pin.

Rating: C-. Kind of sloppy at times here but it's nice to see Kenzo and Dupree going away already. There isn't anything special to them and getting them out of the title picture is the best thing that can happen for everyone involved. They're fine as jobbers and little more, but having them as champions for two months was a chore. Eddie and Booker don't seem like a long term solution, but at least they had a watchable match.

JBL is fine with Jordan not getting the match called off. He's not happy with getting to go wrestle in the Middle East next week though and backtracks in a hurry. Carlito comes in and suggests they get together to deal with Theodore Long. JBL is interested.

And now, here's the full John Cena vs. Jesus match from the pay per view, complete with black and white shots when Jesus was bleeding. For the sake of filling in some space:

US Title: John Cena vs. Jesus

Cena is defending and it's a street fight with falls counting anywhere. Just to rub in the awful of this show, Cena debuts the spinner US Title design which would beget the most annoying title in wrestling history.

Jesus, still carrying Cena's chain, and Carlito mock Cena's kidney injury because they're not that bright. Cena starts before the bell and hits one of the longest strings of punches I can remember to knock Jesus silly early on.

Carlito slips Jesus a kendo stick for a shot to the bad kidney but Cena takes it away and beats on Jesus even more. The stick is broken over Jesus' arm and Cena glares Carlito up the ramp. A busted open Jesus is kicked into the crowd and Cena knocks him around the arena as this is completely one sided. Carlito runs back in for a cheap shot to save Jesus from being thrown off a balcony but Cena doesn't seem to mind. The beating takes Jesus back to ringside and some metal shots to the head make things even worse. The FU finishes Jesus in a complete squash.

Rating: D. This was a squash that just happened to go about eight minutes. It was smart to have Cena pushed this hard because it's not like anyone was buying Jesus as a threat to the title at all. After a performance like that, there is no way you can hold him back from the main event much longer and I think WWE knows it. This was it for Jesus too, as there wasn't much you could do with him at the moment without a big repackaging.

Here's Al Snow for the Tough Enough finale. Daniel Puder and Mike Mizanin come out and Puder is announced as the winner, which should have been the case given how much charisma he showed. Nearly making Angle tap on TV helped too. Puder talks about how hard he trained to get here and he isn't done yet. Snow has another surprise: Puder is officially in the Royal Rumble. That comes off as an actual surprise as Puder looks stunned. Mizanin doesn't get to say anything, but he does congratulate Puder on his win.

Angle rants about the state of American sports today and says America needs him. Reigns hints at Angle giving him healthcare for a back injury but Angle shouts him down instead.

Theodore Long is on commentary for the main event but first he has an announcement: next week it's Heidenreich vs. Undertaker.

Here's Joy Giovanni in a rather nice Santa outfit to throw candy canes to

the crowd.

Smackdown World Title: John Bradshaw Layfield vs. Kurt Angle

Angle is challenging. JBL accepts a candy cane from Joy and Amy doesn't like it, meaning the catfight is on with both of them losing their tops. Joy runs when Reigns gets too close and everyone is ejected for the sake of some sanity. We take a break and come back joined in progress with JBL giving us a clean break out of the corner. Angle takes over on the arm until a right hand takes care of that.

A belly to belly works a bit better for Angle but JBL runs him over and drops three straight elbows for two. The chinlock goes on for all of a few seconds before Angle escapes into the ankle lock. That's enough to send JBL to the ropes and then the floor, with Angle being whipped into the steps. Back from a break with JBL shouldering Angle down again and grabbing an armbar of his own.

That's broken up so JBL grabs a powerslam, which is countered into a reverse DDT for a double knockdown. JBL gets in the fall away slam but the Clothesline From JBL is countered into the rolling German suplexes. The ankle lock goes on so JBL kicks away, setting up the Angle Slam for two.

JBL pulls Angle down by the bad shoulder but a powerbomb is countered into another ankle lock. Cue the Bashams/Reigns/Jindrak for the brawl on the floor as JBL taps but the referee is distracted. Jordan comes in with the belt shot for a close two and Angle grabs the ankle lock again. This time Jordan comes in for the DQ to save the title.

Rating: B-. This wasn't a bad match at all with both guys looking pretty good, even with the obvious ending taking place. JBL's matches continue to be pretty decent most of the time, but that doesn't make him the most exciting champion in the world. This is likely going to set up the Royal Rumble title match, though it's going to need a little more.

Post match Big Show runs in to clean house and motion that he wants the title to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. It was a pretty tame show this week with that Cena vs. Jesus match in the middle being rather weird. Maybe Cena went ahead overseas and wasn't available for the show? Anyway, the rest of the show wasn't terrible, but it was also nothing very interesting. At least Tough Enough went by quickly and didn't take up a lot of time. We're starting to gear up for the Rumble though and that's the best thing that can happen to the company at the moment. Not a very good show this week, but they at least have a direction for the time being.

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