

Smackdown – February 3, 2005: Cena's Path Is Clear



IMG Credit: WWE

Smackdown

Date: February 3, 2005

Location: HP Pavilion, San Jose, California

Attendance: 9,200

Commentators: Michael Cole, Tazz

It's always nice to see a birthday show. This was taped after Raw on Monday so the fans are going to be a little more worn out than usual. We're coming off of the Royal Rumble where JBL retained the World Title, but now he has a barbed wire cage match with Big Show. Oh and John Cena, who was the runner up in the Rumble and clearly the next top challenger. Let's get to it.

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

We're not wasting time this week as here's Cena, with a censored hat, to open things up. Cena talks about this being a chain gang town before talking about being controversial. He references the hat (looked like the Ruck Fules hat) being controversial and throws it into the crowd. Since he's always involved in controversy, it makes sense that he was in the end of a controversial Royal Rumble. That's in the past though because Batista was the winner. Cena wants him to come to Smackdown because the champ is here.

Instead, here's Theodore Long for a chat. There is a chance that Batista is coming to Smackdown but just in case he doesn't, the WWE Champion will need a #1 contender. Therefore, tonight we're starting an eight man #1 contenders tournament. If Batista comes over anyway, the title match will be a triple threat. Cue a ticked off JBL to say that the champ is here now. JBL yells at Long about the cage match and takes credit for all of Smackdown's success. AND DON'T CALL HIM DAWG.

Long says the tournament is still on and next week it's Orlando Jordan vs. John Cena in at first round match. JBL: "You didn't tell me Orlando was in it!" Long: "You wouldn't shut up!" As for Cena, it's too bad that he doesn't make it beyond the first round but he doesn't deserve it anyway. The fans tell JBL to shut up but he goes on about how Cena will never get a WWE Title shot because he isn't in JBL's league. Jordan charges at Cena and gets thrown to the floor, followed by an FU to JBL. Just in case you needed to wonder who was winning the tournament.

Here's Kurt Angle for the Invitational, but first he talks about how much fun it was to beat up Shawn Michaels at the Royal Rumble. He stopped the Showstopper and made Shawn suffer so it was a good night. Next week his Road to Wrestlemania begins with a first round match in the tournament. As for tonight though, here's the hometown challenger.

Kurt Angle vs. Nunzio

Nunzio says he told the other kid to stay in the back because he wants revenge for Angle taking his spot. Angle is so intimidated that he pulls his straps back up before taking Nunzio down by the arm. Another takedown is reversed into a rollup to give Nunzio two and now Angle is annoyed. The first suplex sets up the ankle lock and the grapevine makes Nunzio tap in a hurry.

Video on WWE coming to Japan.

Angle is pleased with his win and is ready to face Mysterio next week. Then he finds out that his second round opponent could be the Undertaker, meaning it's time to talk strategy with Luther Reigns.

Carlito tells Long that he has sent in the petition, meaning Long will be

in Connecticut next week, explaining his actions to the Board of Directors.

Rey Mysterio vs. Mark Jindrak

Mysterio crawls between the legs a few times to start and makes Jindrak charge into some boots in the corner. Possibly inspired by Rey, Jindrak hits a boot of his own (the left leg for a weird sight) but has to block the 619. A hard whip into the corner has Rey down again and we hit the chinlock.

One heck of a left hand gives Jindrak two and we hit the hip swivel. That means a takedown and basement dropkick into the springboard seated senton for two. Jindrak grabs a pop up backbreaker for two but Mysterio starts kicking at the leg. Another dropkick sets up the 619 but the West Coast Pop misses. That's fine with Rey as it's a headscissors into the corner, setting up a rollup to finish Jindrak.

Rating: C. Better than I was expecting here as Jindrak's athleticism was on at least half display here. Mysterio was looking rather crisp here as well with someone different to work against. Having Mysterio beat one of Angle's lackeys makes sense as a way to set up next week's tournament match too.

Amy Weber gives Joy Giovanni a \$200 dry cleaning bill for ruining her dress last week. If Joy doesn't pay, the Bashams will make Big Show pay instead.

Wrestlemania Eugene/Forrest Gump ad.

Basham Brothers vs. Big Show

Show chops and tosses Danny to start so Doug tries his luck instead. Show throws him around too but charges into some boots in the corner. A high crossbody gives Danny two and Doug hammers away in the corner to some avail. Danny tries to bring in a chair but it gets punched into his head. The chokeslam finishes Doug.

Rating: D. This wasn't as bad as Batista squashing the stuffing out of La Resistance but it wasn't much better. Big Show was never in any danger

here and he beat up the champs in short order. It's not like the titles are strong in the first place so why have them lose like this? Get jobbers, get another team, have Show fight them one at a time. Just don't have him beat them up this badly.

We get the announcement of some of the Hall of Fame Class of 2005:

Paul Orndorff

Iron Sheik

Nikolai Volkoff

Bob Orton

Jimmy Hart

Not a bad class, but it needs the big name.

Here are the tournament brackets:

Rey Mysterio

Kurt Angle

Undertaker

Rene Dupree

Orlando Jordan

John Cena

Booker T.

Eddie Guerrero

#1 Contenders Tournament Quarterfinals: Rene Dupree vs. Undertaker

Undertaker headlocks him to start as the announcers talk about writing on trunks. As Tazz decides that Cole's trunks would say Pony Pants, here are Luther Reigns and Mark Jindrak to watch from ringside. We take a break and come back with Undertaker working on the arm, setting up Old School.

Dupree manages to send him outside though and a bit of dancing distracts the referee long enough for Jindrak and Reigns to stomp away. An ax handle off the apron is countered into a ram into the post though and the apron legdrop connects.

The running big boot in the corner misses though and Dupree starts in on the leg. A scoop powerslam sets up the French Tickler but Undertaker sits up. Undertaker's running DDT sets up the triangle choke but he has to go after Jindrak and Reigns instead. Dupree falls outside as Undertaker beats the other two up. Reigns grabs Undertaker's leg to keep him from getting back inside though and it's a double countout.

Rating: D+. You know, this felt like a match that should have been boring but Dupree gave it everything he had and got as much out of it as possible. There is only so much you can do to make Undertaker vs. Dupree believable and they came as close as they could to making it work. The downside though: Undertaker vs. Jindrak/Reigns.

Big Show is looking forward to destroying JBL at No Way Out because JBL is right where he wants him. He'd love to face Batista at Wrestlemania.

Booker T. isn't happy with Eddie Guerrero for eliminating him from the Royal Rumble. He can make up for it by advancing in the tournament though.

New Wrestlemania ad with HHH as Braveheart. Ric Flair pops up at the end to pull a donkey.

#1 Contenders Tournament Quarterfinals: Eddie Guerrero vs. Booker T.

Cole: "Who will be brave of heart in this next match?" They take their time to start with Booker being kicked away from the leg. Eddie suplexes his way out of a headlock and grabs one of his own as they seem to have a lot of time here. A suplex gets Booker out of trouble as well and we hit the chinlock. Booker gets two off an elbow to the jaw but walks into a flapjack. It's way too early for the frog splash though and we take a break with Booker rolling to the floor.

Back with Eddie hitting the slingshot hilo but getting caught on top with

a superplex. A top wristlock is broken up with Booker being sent head first into the buckle so it's a sleeper to keep Eddie in trouble instead. Eddie fights up but misses a charge to send him crashing outside in a heap. Booker sends him into the steps and grabs the Book End back inside but Eddie gets a foot on the rope.

The comeback is on with some dropkicks and Three Amigos but the frog splash misses. The referee gets kicked down and Booker's ax kick gets a very delayed two. Eddie shoves Booker into the referee for a second bump before dropping to the mat, clutching his knee. Booker yells at the referee but smiles because he knows what Eddie is doing. Eddie's suplex is countered into a rollup with tights to give Booker the pin.

Rating: C+. This one took some time to get going and they were going slowly, but it was the kind of slowly that helped a lot when they got to the more intense parts at the end. The ending was rather nice too as I love when a wrestler thinks during a match. Booker was smart here and that's not something you get enough of in wrestling. He was smart enough to know exactly what Eddie was doing and caught him using his own game.

Overall Rating: D+. They're not hiding the fact that Cena is the next guy but it's going to take some time to get there. No Way Out is kind of a necessary evil at this point as the show isn't going to mean anything but it would be far too much waiting around to build Cena vs. JBL. That's where we're going, but it's going to take some time to get there, which isn't the worst thing in the world.

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