

Monday Night Raw – May 2, 2005 (2019 Redo): My Favorite Match



IMG Credit: WWE

Monday Night Raw

Date: May 2, 2005

Location: FleetCenter, Boston, Massachusetts

Attendance: 6,500

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

It's the night after Backlash and Batista has vanquished HHH (again), meaning it's time to find someone fresh for him to beat up. Other than that...there isn't much going on after last night. Hulk Hogan and Shawn Michaels won Hogan's ONE MORE MATCH, which I'm sure will never be brought up again. Let's get to it.

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

In the back, Batista is hitting on a rather receptive Christy Hemme when Eric Bischoff interrupts. We're going to have a tournament for the #1 contendership to the World Title and he even has a name for it: the Gold Rush Tournament. No one will know who they are facing until the music hits. As for tonight, Batista can have the night off. Christy smiles but Batista wants to have a match tonight. He hints at wanting to face

Bischoff, who screams at the thought. Batista laughs, because he's an animal with a sense of humor.

Opening sequence.

Gold Rush Tournament First Round: Christian vs. Kane

Christian has Tomko with him so Kane counters with a limping Lita. One heck of a shove sends Christian to the floor and a big boot makes it even worse. Kane follows him but gets drop toehold into the steps to give Christian a breather. A crossbody off the steps gives Christian two back inside, though it just seems to annoy Kane even more.

The reverse DDT gets two with Kane launching him off for the kickout. Christian's raised boot in the corner earns him an attempted chokeslam but Christian escapes into a sleeper. That's reversed into a side slam but Christian gets smart by going to the eye. Tomko gets on the apron so Kane sends them into each other, setting up the chokeslam for the pin.

Rating: D+. Well so much for Christian being ready for the monster push. They seemed interested in going somewhere with him and then he loses to Kane in less than five minutes. There was no one else they could put into that spot? Or have Kane win by countout or something? Why give Christian pay per view time last night if this is what you have planned for him the next night?

Post match Tomko jumps Kane and gets beaten down as well.

Post break, Christian runs into Ric Flair in the back. Ric mocks him for losing and "raps" that HHH is winning the tournament.

We get part of the opening video from last night's show, focusing on the fans demanding ONE MORE MATCH from Hogan.

Here are Muhammad Hassan and Daivari for a chat. Daivari rants a bit before handing the mic to Hassan, who will not allow this injustice to continue. He is undefeated from Raw and yet he is still left out of the Gold Rush Tournament. It's prejudice, but it's also Daivari's fault. Daivari took the fall last night and that isn't cool, so Hassan beats him up. Hassan leaves and Daivari nearly crawls after him. Daivari is better

in the ring and the rants are always energetic but these two need some rebuilding.

Here's Viscera for a chat before his match. Last night he showed how physical he can be and his hunger for love. That brings him to Lilian Garcia, because he is a big man who likes to eat spicy. Lilian is a spicy Latina so Viscera wants to go south of the border tonight. Cue Simon Dean to interrupt to say women don't want men who are this out of shape. Dean calls himself a Greek god but everyone here in Boston is fat. Those are fighting words.

Simon Dean vs. Viscera

Viscera throws him around to start and hits a splash to break Simon out of the Tree of Woe. An elbow misses so Dean goes up, only to get chokeslammed out of the air, setting up the splash for the pin.

Post match Viscera tells Lilian that he's back on the market. The BLACK market.

Stacy Keibler and Candice Michelle oogle Stacy in Stuff Magazine, as good looking women tend to do. Bischoff comes up and likes the pictures before heading to his office. HHH is waiting on him and rants about the tournament, because he had Batista beaten last night. If we have to have a tournament, HHH better be in the thing. Bischoff can tell Batista that he is on borrowed time.

Shelton Benjamin isn't worried about who he has to face because that's what a champ does. Chris Jericho comes in to stare at the title but respect is shown. They're both in the tournament and wouldn't mind facing each other.

We get a quick graphic acknowledging the passing of Chris Candido. That's better than they have done on some occasions.

We look back at Kane beating Christian.

Gold Rush Tournament First Round: Shelton Benjamin vs. Shawn Michaels

Non-title and this is a special one. Shelton's taken back look when

Shawn's face is great as he didn't expect something like this. JR loses it because this is going to be awesome, and yeah it's almost impossible for it not to be. Shawn tries to wrestle him to the mat and finds out that's not a good idea, meaning it's straight to the ropes for a break. A hammerlock works a bit but Shawn tries taking him down again for the exact same result. You can see the look of "well that didn't work" on Shawn's face, though the fans are still completely behind him.

A headlock takeover works a bit better but Shelton is right back up with some armdrags for the early standoff. Shelton headlocks him down for a change, with Shawn trying some rollups to keep things from getting dull (so many people forget to do that). Back up and Shawn goes with a forearm to the head for the first real offense but it's a Cactus Clothesline to put them both on the floor. Shawn gets the worst of it and we take a break with him still down.

Back from a break with Shelton reversing a belly to back superplex into a crossbody (a little better than coming back in a chinlock) to put them both down again. A Samoan drop gives Shelton a bit of an advantage but he can't get back up. Some running clotheslines have Shawn in trouble and a backbreaker gives Shelton two. Shawn comes back with the forearm into the nipup but Shelton does a faster one of his own, giving us a great "YOU GOTTA BE KIDDING ME!" look.

Some elbows break up the exploder and tries Sweet Chin Music but walks into the Dragon Whip (and a great one at that) for two. Shawn knocks him off the top and drops the elbow but can't cover. Instead he pulls himself up and tries the superkick again with Shelton blocking this one with a high kick to the head. Just to show off, Shelton jumps from the mat to the top for a spinning clothesline and another two. Back up and Shawn sends him to the apron so Shelton tries a springboard...to this day I have no idea what he was going for but it's superkicked out of the air for the highlight reel moment and the pin.

Rating: A-. This is my all time favorite match and there are a few different reasons. Starting with what you can see in front of you, these guys were tearing it up for about fifteen minutes with Shelton being a different level of athlete but Shawn hanging in there until he caught

Shelton trying for one big move too many and finishing him. Shelton's athleticism was on full display here (that jump to the top for the clothesline was nuts) and it's not like you lose much when you get pinned clean by Shawn after an instant classic. Outstanding match and well worth seeing if you haven't, or again if you have.

The other reason this match means so much to me is it served as a big step forward in my wrestling fandom. For years I had heard about the concepts of psychology and storytelling in matches but they never really clicked. I was watching this a few years after it aired and I thought it was like an older, smarter Shawn wrestling himself from ten years ago: the young, athletic phenom who would do these big things because he could rather than if it made sense.

It was like a light bulb went off over my head as it was the first time I understood the idea of telling a story with a match. I had never really gotten the concept but it started to make sense, which was something completely new for me. It helped me start looking for things like that in matches from then on and it made me into a different kind of fan. Not every match is going to have something that specific, but once it clicks like that, it can change everything for you. Anyway, great match, watch it if you have time.

Shawn shows some respect and it takes a good while for Shelton to get up.

Edge is asked why he's in the tournament when he already has a guaranteed shot. He brings up beating Chris Benoit last night so now he's the real toughest man in WWE. As for why he's in the tournament, of course he wants two title matches, because not even Batista can beat him twice in a row. The interviewer brings up an important point: if Edge gets drafted to Smackdown, he loses his shot because it's for the World Heavyweight Title. This seems to be news to Edge, but he'll be champion anyway. Edge leaves and goes to hit on Lita and Victoria, who aren't interested. This actually doesn't get a big chant/gasp from the crowd.

Tag Team Titles: Hurricane/Rosey vs. La Resistance

Hurricane/Rosey are defending. Rosey shoves Grenier down to start but it's a quick low bridging to take him outside. That means a posting for

two back inside and the stomping is on again. Rosey gets beaten up in the corner for a bit but manages to elbow his way out of trouble. The rolling tag brings in the Hurricane to clean house, including a middle rope hurricanrana for two on Grenier. Conway gets sent outside and it's a side slam/Eye of the Hurricane combination to finish Grenier and retain the titles.

Rating: D. Hurricane and Rosey aren't great as champions but they're better than just about anyone else who could be in the spot. La Resistance has run its course and while they're still fine enough as midcard heels, we've covered everything that could be done with them and I'm glad that we seem to be moving on. The problem is who in the world are we supposed to move on to?

Smackdown Rebound.

Gold Rush Tournament First Round: Chris Jericho vs. Edge

Jericho goes after a wristlock to start but Edge powers out for a standoff. Slapping and chopping have Edge in trouble against the ropes and in the corner but he's fine enough to shove Jericho off the top. A ram into the elbow and an elbow to the back give Edge two and a backbreaker is good for the same. Jericho gets in a flapjack for the double knockdown and the running shoulders keep Edge in trouble. The running enziguri gets two but Edge gets in a shot to the face, meaning it's time to grab the briefcase.

Edge can't bring himself to do it though and Jericho dropkicks him to the floor. That means a slingshot dive but Jericho wastes some time by pulling the pad off the barricade. Some fans call this boring but seem pleased when Edge's spear hits buckle back inside. The Walls go on but Edge is too close to the rope. He's also close to the briefcase, which bashes Jericho in the head. A missile dropkick and the spear finish Jericho.

Rating: C+. Jericho is in a bit of a funk at the moment as his matches are still good but he doesn't seem to be going anywhere or doing anything important. Edge winning was the only choice here as he has a story with the potential to have two title matches at once. The briefcase works well

as a signature weapon too.

Happy Birthday Rock! I'm sure you'll be here soon!

Chris Masters, Masterlock Challenge (\$4,000, a Curt Schilling Red Sox jersey and an autographed Tom Brady football), plant, Masters wins. Takes about six minutes.

Gold Rush Tournament First Round: HHH vs. Chris Benoit

Benoit chops away and wins a slugout, setting up the first suplex. HHH bails from the threat of a Crossface and whips Benoit chest first into the buckle. A hard clothesline to the back of the head has Benoit's eyes bugging out in one of the most deeply disturbing images I can remember in a long time.

We take a break and come back with HHH getting frustrated and Benoit's eyes still all buggy, though not as bad as they were before. Benoit shrugs off a knee to the head and chops away again but gets pulled into a sleeper. The suplex gets Benoit out of trouble and, after ducking a clothesline (meaning we don't get the scary eyes again), rolls the German suplexes.

The Swan Dive connects for a delayed two and it's time to beat up an invading Flair. We get a ref bump and it's a low blow to Benoit, but here's Batista (in gear after being in a suit earlier) to lay out HHH and Flair. Everyone is down (with Benoit's eyes all over the place again) until Benoit slaps on the Sharpshooter for the (eventual) win.

Rating: C. The match was good enough but egads those eyes are hard to get out of your head. Even if you ignore what would be coming for Benoit, that was one of the creepiest things I've seen in wrestling for a good while. Benoit making HHH tap (or anyone making him tap for that matter) is almost hard to fathom but it's nice for a HHH break, as short as it is guaranteed to be.

Here are the updated brackets:

Kane

Chris Benoit

Shawn Michaels

Edge

Overall Rating: B-. This was actually a heck of a show with wrestling up and down the card (though the quality varies) with the instant classic being more than enough to carry it a long way. As overloaded as WWE has been with tournaments lately, this is a chance to give Batista a fresh challenger and that could help him a lot at the moment. Now granted it still looks like he's feuding with HHH, but I wouldn't put too much worry into something like that. Rather good show, with one match taking it to a different level.

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