

Bash At The Beach 1995: Uh...It Looks Nice!



IMG Credit: WWE

Bash at the Beach 1995

Date: July 16, 1995

Location: Huntington Beach, California

Attendance: 9,500

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Bobby Heenan

This is a pretty unique show as it is literally on a beach (and bashing is implied). The wrestling might be hit or miss, but it's one of the coolest visuals you'll see and that's the kind of thing that WWE never does these days. Mixing things up a lot can help and when you have a double main event of Ric Flair vs. Randy Savage and Hulk Hogan defending the World Title against Vader in a cage, we should be fine in the first place. Let's get to it.

The opening video looks at the main events, while also serving as a Slim Jim commercial.

Video on Meng, who has quite the match on this show as well. Meng is ready to destroy anyone in front of him to defend his honor.

Sting is all fired up to be in his hometown and his parents are in the front row. That's a death sentence in the WWF but maybe he can survive

here.

US Title: Sting vs. Meng

Sting is defending in a rematch from Great American Bash when he beat Meng in a tournament final to become champion. Meng has Colonel Robert Parker with him. Sting has to avoid the strikes to start and drives him into the corner with a test of strength. With that not working so well, they slug it out until Meng yells at him. Meng powers him into the corner and fires off some shoulders to the ribs. Choking ensues to put Sting down and a legdrop gets two.

Back up and they fight over a suplex as they're in a cross between first and second gear. A shot to the face just annoys Meng and you can see the reality setting in for Sting. Meng knocks him down again but misses the middle rope splash, meaning it's time for the early Scorpion Deathlock attempt. Sting actually gets it over but Parker's distraction breaks it up because, as usual, Sting is really stupid.

The distraction lets Meng hit some backbreakers, followed by a knee in the back while pulling on the legs. That's switched into the abdominal stretch but Sting fights up and gets two off a sunset flip. A double knockdown gives us a bit of a breather until Meng grabs something like a Boston crab. Heenan: "But we're not near Boston so it's just a crab."

Sting makes the rope and comes back with a belly to back suplex to start the comeback. A chop block into a Thesz press gets two, followed by a middle rope spinning crossbody for the same. The Stinger Splash is kicked out of the air though and Meng hits the middle rope splash for two. Back up and Meng misses a running kick to the face, allowing Sting to grab a quick rollup for the pin at 15:31.

Rating: C. Sting knows how to fight a monster and that's what he had going on here. It wasn't exactly a great match and I'm not sure how much drama there was over the idea of Meng winning the title, but Sting slaying a monster is going to work every time. It's almost weird to see Sting as a midcard guy, but he's going to bring credibility to the title and that's a good idea.

Post match Meng jumps him again but here's Road Warrior Hawk for the save as Tony and Bobby argue about the speed of the count.

Jimmy Hart says every wrestling magazine is talking about the Renegade (No Jimmy, they're not. For those of you lucky enough to not remember, Renegade was as blatant of a ripoff character as you could get, looking and moving like the Ultimate Warrior, with Hulk Hogan even calling him the ULTIMATE surprise when he debuted. The problem was he made Warrior look like Lou Thesz, turning it into one of the more infamously terrible WCW ideas, if that is possible.), who says Hart has programmed him to terminate on sight. Gene Okerlund thinks the California heat has gotten to them.

TV Title: Paul Orndorff vs. Renegade

Renegade is defending and they start fast with Orndorff knocking him down early. A knee to the ribs sets up a knee to the face but Orndorff stops to yell at Hart. That means Renegade can get a boot up to stop Orndorff coming off the top (with the sole purpose of diving into a raised boot) and hit a clothesline to the floor. Tony says that could get some sand on Orndorff's skin, with Heenan saying it could also break his ankle. These two have very different perspectives on injury risks.

Renegade pulls him back in by the head and then drops Orndorff face first on the mat. We hit the headlock and even that looks awkward, as Renegade just does not look comfortable out there. A running dropkick sends Orndorff outside again and this time it's a handful of sand to blind Renegade. Some shots to the face keep Renegade in trouble and Orndorff hits his own dropkick (Tony: "And that was a good one fans.").

The piledriver is broken up with a backdrop though and the comeback is on, including another awful dropkick. There's a powerslam but Renegade isn't sure what to do next so Orndorff throws him outside instead. Back in and Renegade reverses a belly to back suplex into one of his own for the pin to retain at 6:08. Orndorff's shoulder may have been up but anything to get out of here is a good idea at this point.

Rating: D-. I've liked Orndorff more after I watch him over the years but DANG he was fighting a losing battle here. At the end of the day, there

was no reason for Renegade to be here other than he looked like Ultimate Warrior. The match was horrible because Renegade is so bad and there is no way around it. This shouldn't have been on pay per view, but that has never stopped WCW before.

Post match Orndorff gives him the piledriver but Renegade pops up and hits a high crossbody.

We see how Kamala was introduced to the Dungeon of Doom as Taskmaster's latest soldier against Hulk Hogan. Apparently he has walked the Sahara and climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro. Yet he still can't find shoes.

Jim Duggan is ready for Kamala because it's no more Mr. Nice Guy. Have we flashed back to Mid-South?

Jim Duggan vs. Kamala

Kamala, despite being a savage, knows to hide in the ropes when Duggan swings the 2x4 around. Duggan slugs away to start but can't get him down. A big shot has Kamala's arms shaking and a big right hand finally puts him down. The USA chant only works so well this time so Kevin Sullivan points to Duggan and shouts HULKAMANIA, which is enough to send Kamala over the edge.

Choking sets up a bearhug but Duggan uses the power of stomping on bare toes for the break. Kamala goes with the chest claw (as stupid as it sounds) but Duggan is right back with a slam. Duggan goes after Sullivan though, allowing Zodiac to come in with Kamala's mask to knock Duggan silly and give Kamala the pin at 6:06.

Rating: D. This was a way to introduce Kamala but that makes you realize that you are having to meet Kamala in 1995. I'm not sure how good of an idea that is, but at the same time I'm one of the few who liked the Dungeon of Doom. This stuff felt so out of place and Duggan as one of Hogan's proxy fighters wasn't quite enough to make a lot of people care. It would make for a good indy match, but not exactly on a major pay per view.

Randy Savage (I want that Slim Jim shirt) is ready to end things with Ric

Flair and wants those lifeguards to keep Ric Flair in person. He's from Florida and we're in California but the beach is what matters.

Diamond Dallas Page vs. Dave Sullivan

Page has Max Muscle (I think you can figure him out) and Kimberly (his pretty manager) with him. Dave Sullivan (with Ralph the Rabbit) is Kevin's nitwit brother and one of the all time worst wrestlers to be on a big stage. A kid gives Kimberly some flowers so Page destroys them, because he's quite the jealous guy (as he should be because he doesn't have much going for himself, outside of winning \$13 million in a Bingo game, because WCW was weird).

That's enough to have Sullivan run to the ring and jump Page as the beating is on early. An atomic drop into a running clothesline keeps Page in trouble but Sullivan stops to wave at Kimberly). Page gets in a few cheap shots but charges into the bearhug. That's broken up as well so Dave hammers away with his right hand/clothesline offense. The inverted bearhug (Dave lifts him up for a piledriver and squeezes, making it an inverted waistlock instead of a bearhug) goes on but Max gets on the apron for a distraction, allowing Page to hit the Diamond Cutter for the pin at 4:22.

Rating: D. Yeah what were you expecting here? Dave Sullivan is one of the worst mainstream performers you'll see in recorded history and you could see that on display here. It doesn't help that this was before Page got good, but he was certainly trying and improving, eventually setting up one of the most improbable main event runs of all time. Anyway, horrible match, but when you're flat out copying George Steele/Randy Savage/Elizabeth, what are you expecting?

Sister Sherri says she and Harlem Heat are ready for the Blue Bloods and the Nasty Boys in the triangle match. Harlem Heat is ready too and rant accordingly. This is back when a triple threat was a pretty rare concept so there is some actual intrigue here.

Tag Team Titles: Blue Bloods vs. Nasty Boys vs. Harlem Heat

Harlem Heat is defending, the Blue Bloods are Robert (Bobby Eaton)/Steven

(William) Regal and this has some weird rules. There is a coin toss to determine which teams start and it's one fall to a finish, but you can be eliminated via DQ and turn it into a regular tag match. In one of the most "because WCW" moments in recent memory, they all flip the coins, but they have to do it again because they're all heads. So yes, WCW couldn't manage to rig/lie about A COIN TOSS WHERE YOU DON'T SEE THE COINS without having to try it again.

Booker and Knobbs start but it's a brawl in just a few seconds because of course it is. Regal takes the Pit Stop and sells it as only he can, falling all the way outside. There's another to send Eaton outside again and we settle down to Booker kicking Knobbs in the face. Regal tags himself in and stomps on Booker, who takes him down without much effort. The spinning kick to the face keeps Regal in trouble and it's Eaton coming in, only to get backdropped down.

It's off to Sags for a legdrop between the legs but Booker is up to forearm Regal as the fast tags continue. Tony points out the lack of logic in tagging another team in as the Nastys hit a double shoulder for two on Booker. Regal comes in to strike away on Stevie but then tags Sags in, causing Heenan to say the Blue Bloods don't understand the match.

The Blue Bloods start taking turns on Stevie but again Regal tags Knobbs in, completely missing the point. Knobbs hits a splash for two with Regal making the save, earning some rarely deserved praise from Tony. Booker comes back in for a knee to Knobbs and then hands it right back to Stevie for a knee of his own. The Blue Bloods take over on Knobbs again as Heenan gets confused on the rules again.

Stevie gets to choke on Knobbs in the corner but Regal tags himself in to break up the ax kick from Booker. Knobbs sits down on Regal's chest to break up the sunset flip attempt and everything breaks down again. Booker gets backdropped onto Regal and Knobbs adds a splash to give Sags the pin....on Booker, who is on Regal, meaning Harlem Heat retains at 13:09.

Rating: D+. They were trying something different here but at the end of the day, the teams seemed to get confused by the rules here and it was a big mess as a result. That being said, the ending was creative and I'll

take that over something that is done over and over again. They really needed to tighten up on the execution to make it work, but there was only so much you were going to be able to do with these three teams all at once.

Post match Sherri yells about how great Harlem Heat is and the team agrees. They aren't worried about Bunkhouse Buck and Dick Slater either.

Commentary talks about the upcoming match while everything is set up.

Ric Flair talks about how Elizabeth left Savage for him (Gene: "Did she go to Space Mountain?") and now it's time for Savage to understand what is going on (as we copy another WWF story). Flair is ready to make the girls in California cry again.

Some Baywatch women come to the ring so Heenan gets on his chair for a better look.

Ric Flair vs. Randy Savage

This is a Lifeguard match, meaning Lumberjack. You can tell Savage is serious here because he's throwing out Slim Jims. Savage punches him down to start and hammers away as commentary keeps talking about Savage's dad being in attendance. Flair gets sent outside and the lumberjacks are already getting in a fight over throwing him back in. An atomic drop out of the corner lets Flair chop away before sending Savage outside. The same kind of shoving match ensues but Savage sends him into the buckle a few times back inside.

The Flair Flip into the corner is enough for a trip to the floor but Flair is back inside in a hurry. Savage is sent to the apron, where he suplexes Flair over the top and back outside (near the sand for a change, which Tony thinks could be a problem). Back in again and Flair gets in a thumb to the eye, setting up an elbow to the face. The sleeper goes on until Savage sends him into the corner for the break.

Flair sends him outside for a few cheap shots and it's time to go for the leg. To really mix it up, Flair grabs the leg, goes to the middle rope, and flips forward to snap the leg (never seen him do it before or since).

It's enough to set up the Figure Four with Savage finally managing to turn it over. Flair gets two off a suplex but Savage is right back with right hands in the corner. Savage sends him outside with the lifeguards having to catch Flair from trying to escape.

There's the top rope ax handle to the head but Savage has to knock Arn Anderson off the apron. Flair gets sent over the top and the referee is distracted, allowing Arn to come in with the DDT. That's good for two, as is Savage's backslide. Flair is slammed off the top and there's another ax handle to the head. Savage heads up top again and does the fingers in the air (with the huge crowd and ocean behind him for a REALLY cool visual) for the elbow and the clean pin at 13:57.

Rating: B-. Savage vs. Flair is always worth a look but this was a pretty paint by numbers version of the match. The lumberjacks didn't do much of anything aside from the Arn DDT, making it more of a gimmick than anyway else. It felt big because of who was in it, but there are roughly 14 better versions of this match available.

Post match Savage hugs one of the Baywatch women, who manages to not be physically ill on camera.

Video on Vader's Road Kill Tour, which has involved him destroying everyone on the way to a cage match against Hulk Hogan here. More paint by numbers stuff, but it's Hogan vs. a monster in a cage. Why mess with what works?

Vader breaks various things and promises to show Hogan who the man is, because Vader fears nothing. While Hogan was out there tanning on the beach, Vader was growing up in the toughest parts of Los Angeles and there is nowhere for Hogan to hide. Vader was extra fired up here.

Commentary hypes up the main event, with Tony calling Heenan a blathering idiot.

Video on Collision In Korea, which is almost hard to fathom these days.

Hulk Hogan, with Jimmy Hart and Dennis Rodman, talks about how they were looking for people to beat up last night. Now it's time to make Woodstock

look like a backyard barbecue while he throws Vader over the top of the cage. Uh, you can win by escape here Hulk. Rodman is going to be guarding the cage door.

WCW World Title: Vader vs. Hulk Hogan

Hogan is defending in a cage and I'll never not be a bit disturbed by Vader's helmet. It's pin/submission/escape to win here. Hogan goes right for him to start and the right hands in the corner have Vader in early trouble. The fans are into the counting here as Hogan can't elbow him down. They both block rams into the cage and slug it out with Vader getting the better of things and sending him into the steel first.

Hogan sends him face first into the big helmet and then puts it on (Blasphemous!) for a disturbing visual. With that nonsense out of the way, Hogan rips at his face, only to be sent into the cage. The Vader Bomb gets no cover so Vader does it again for the near fall. There's another ram into the cage and a release suplex drops Hogan again. Vader goes for the door but gets sent into the cage, only to knee Hogan in the head. The top rope backsplash (that's a new one) misses but Hogan falls down on a slam attempt to give Vader two.

The chinlock goes on and Jimmy Hart instantly goes into cheerleader mode, as he is known to do. Hogan fights up and hits the slam, only to hurt his back. Vader's middle rope splash gets two and it's time to Hulk Up. Hogan isn't having any of these forearms to the back or a ram to the cage, as Heenan is all "oh here we go again". Vader is sent into the cage over and over and it's a big boot...as Kevin Sullivan and Zodiac come out. Rodman dispatches them in a hurry as Hogan drops a pair of legs. That's not enough for Hogan to escape (oh come on) so Hogan knocks him off the top and escapes at 13:13.

Rating: C-. This was as by the book of a Hogan cage match as you were going to get and there was absolutely no drama to the whole thing. Hogan beating a giant is one thing but could they at least make you believe the title was in the slightest bit of jeopardy? That being said, there is a reason that this formula worked so well for so long and the match wasn't horrible, with the unique setting helping a lot.

Heenan is disgusted as the show ends...in theory at least, as Flair comes into the ring to yell at Vader. Tony isn't sure if we're still on the air as Arn Anderson has to come in to save Flair. Vader chases them both off without much trouble and shouts that Flair needs to stay out of his business.

Commentary recaps the cage match and post match shenanigans to wrap things up.

Roll credits.

Overall Rating: D. The two main events were upgrades, but there is a reason that this is such a dark period for WCW. The wrestling wasn't very good, the stories were about as basic as you could get, and nothing is worth seeing. At least the visual was really cool though as going somewhere else for a special show like this does help. It was clear that they needed to change something up here though as this was a really rough one to sit through.

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