

# Wrestlemania Count-Up – Wrestlemania VIII (2018 Redo): The Underrated Classic

## Wrestlemania VIII

Date: April 5, 1992

Location: Hoosier Dome, Indianapolis, Indiana

Attendance: 62,167

Commentators: Gorilla Monsoon, Bobby Heenan

This was one of the names mentioned for a possible redo so I'll throw it in as a bonus. On his podcast, Bruce Prichard mentioned this as one of the worst Wrestlemanias ever and I'm really not sure why. The show features a double main event with Ric Flair defending the WWF World Title against Randy Savage and Hulk Hogan's possible retirement match against Sid Justice. Let's get to it.

Vince McMahon gives us the big over the top introduction as only he can do. It only talks about the double main event but really, nothing else is worth talking about.

Gorilla and Bobby (with a VERY visible section of empty seats between their heads, which will be a recurring problem tonight) intro the show with Heenan looking for the pictures. Those would be promised "centerfolds" of Elizabeth, which Ric Flair has promised. More on this later.

Reba McIntyre sings the Star Spangled Banner. It's odd to hear anything but America the Beautiful.

### Tito Santana vs. Shawn Michaels

Tito is a bullfighter (it didn't work then either) and Heenan says he's McIntyre's sister. Heenan: "That's arriba McIntyre!" Shawn has Sherri with him and we get a cool shot from behind with Shawn looking up at the huge stadium. This is his first singles Wrestlemania so it's quite the

big moment for his career. Heenan thinks Shawn is a future Intercontinental Champion. He's a few months early but he certainly can call things.

We get a long stretch of Sherri leaving and some trash talk before we actually do anything because stalling is a thing on stadium shows too. They start fast (once they start that is) with Tito getting two off a crossbody and headlocking him to the mat. Shawn gets sent outside in a heap and that means it's time for the over the top selling. We hit the headlock again and MY GOODNESS there are some half empty sections very visible in the upper deck. If that happened today, the production staff would all be fired.

Tito pops him in the jaw and Sherri is panicking at the thought of Shawn's face being damaged. It's back to the headlock and Shawn can't even throw him off with a lift into the air. Heenan swears that he's won a match with a headlock and that someone even gave up during instructions.

Back up and Shawn finally throws him over the top for a huge crash to take over. A backbreaker keeps Tito in trouble as Sherri is taking her glove off for some reason. We hit the chinlock and even more of those empty sections are shown. There's almost no angle you can show here that doesn't display them and it's really distracting. Tito fights up but charges into the superkick (not yet a finisher) and Heenan declares no more tacos tonight.

The Teardrop Suplex is broken up and Tito scores with his flying forearm (Heenan: "That's the Flying Jalapeno!") to send Shawn outside. Back in and Tito slugs away, allowing Shawn to do the overblown Wrestlemania selling for the first time. El Paso Del Muerte (jumping forearm to the back) sends Shawn to the floor and Tito tries a suplex, only to have Shawn grab the rope and fall on top for the pin at 10:38.

**Rating:** B-. Good opener here as Tito is one of those guys who is always good for a solid performance. Shawn's star was clearly on the rise here (give someone Sherri if you need them to get a rocket attached to their back) and a win in a competitive match was a good start. Solid match here

and that's all it needed to be.

Gene Okerlund is on the platform and brings out the Legion of Doom for an interview, including manager Paul Ellering. Paul talks about the need to put the team together in the first place and now revenge has brought them back together. He's not here to get rich but to get even. Animal talks about facing and defeating adversity and now it's time to get revenge on everyone, including Jimmy Hart and Money Inc.

Hawk says they're a runaway train and now, look who's driving the train. Paul wraps it up by saying they're going to earn their money the old fashioned way: beating people for it. They want the titles back and don't care who they have to beat to get them back. Ellering was good for the team in the NWA but I have no idea why he was needed here. Or why he's somehow back in WWE twenty six years later.

Jake Roberts isn't bringing a snake back to the ring but he will recap his feud with Undertaker. He's gone full evil to go after Ultimate Warrior but since Warrior left the company, Undertaker turned face on Jake, setting up the match. Jake trapped Undertaker's hand in the casket on the Funeral Parlor and laid Bearer out with a DDT, followed by a chair shot to Undertaker. Evil Jake was awesome but this was a bit of a different kind of animal.

### Jake Roberts vs. Undertaker

I love that pulling himself up from the corner thing that Jake does. Diamond Dallas Page borrowed it from him and it's not all that surprising. Jake slugs away to start and reality sets in very quickly. A running right hand puts Undertaker on the floor but Jake gets pulled outside as well. The beating is on and the fans are WAY into a fired up Undertaker.

Back in and Jake's right hands still don't have much effect so Bobby starts making Munsters references. Better than the Addams Family at least. Undertaker starts choking but Jake grabs a quick DDT and you can feel the fans react. Then Undertaker sits up and it's very clear that this is something different. Another DDT drops Undertaker again but this time Jake goes after Bearer....as Undertaker gets up again. That means a

Tombstone on the floor and Jake is DEAD for the pin at 6:41.

**Rating:** D. This was around the time where the Undertaker would start to be the kind of attraction that the company wanted him to be. It's clear that there's something very different about him and beating a big name like Roberts was a great way to push him towards that goal. I mean, beating Hogan less than six months ago did it even more so but still, awesome booking here. This was Jake's last match with the company until 1996 as he was turned down for Pat Patterson's job and left as a result.

Roddy Piper and Bret Hart are in the back with Roddy talking about growing up together when Bret was a bit dumb. Apparently Mrs. Hart would make them sandwiches but Bret finally cuts him off. They're supposed to have a nice contest for the Intercontinental Title but Bret wants to be serious. That's fine with Roddy and the match is on. Bret lost the title due to wrestling with a high fever and Piper won it almost immediately. This is Bret's big rematch and one of the most intriguing matches on the show.

#### Intercontinental Title: Bret Hart vs. Roddy Piper

Piper is defending. The first minute is spent with Piper taking off his kilt and some instructions from the referee. Never let it be said that Wrestlemania doesn't know how to waste time. Piper armdrags him down to start as Monsoon actually analyzes the match, which isn't something you get from most other announcers. Heenan's idea: waffle the other guy with a tire iron.

Piper tries some amateur wrestling and is quickly sent outside in a huff. Back in and Piper spits at Bret and Heenan wants an apology right now. Bret wins a battle of the wristlocks and Piper can't chop his way to freedom. Monsoon says thirty countries are watching the show live, lists off three of them, and then stops for a good fifteen seconds of silence. A running dropkick drops Piper but Bret comes up holding his shoulder. Heenan sees right through it (Bobby: "WHAT A GREAT MOVE!") and Roddy is REALLY not happy.

Bret comes back with a running crossbody and they fall out to the floor at the same time. Piper is up first and holds the ropes for Bret but

naturally gets in a cheap shot to take over. Well you know he's the most natural heel ever so it's not exactly a surprise. A bulldog gives Piper two and Bret is busted open (which he lied about, claiming that it was a hardway cut to save his job) somewhere in there.

Bret is fine enough to get two off a sunset flip and Heenan is begging for some more violence. A slugout goes to Piper so Bret hits a running forearm to knock him outside. Back in and a double clothesline puts them both down with Piper's head landing on Bret. Heenan wants a count but Monsoon accurately says all four shoulders are down so there can't be a pin. So much for the Brain.

Bret is up first with the Five Moves of Doom but Piper blocks the Sharpshooter. The middle rope elbow hits a raised boot and Piper has an opening. The referee gets bumped though and Bret is sent face first into the steps. Piper grabs the bell but can't bring himself to do it (Heenan: "GIVE IT TO ME! I'LL HIT HIM!"), instead grabbing a sleeper. Bret climbs the corner and flips backwards onto Piper for the pin and the title at 13:52.

**Rating:** A-. This is the match that you point at when you need to prove that Piper can put on a good match when he's given the chance. Bret winning the title back here was all that this should have been and the classic made it an even better moment. That ending would be used several times over the years and is rather famous in its own right, which is rather fitting when it comes from a classic wrestler like Bret. Great match here and another example of how talented both of them really are.

They shake hands to make it clear that Piper is still on the good side.

Heenan sends us to Atlanta, Georgia and the home of future WBF Bodystars Champion Lex Luger. Lex is his usual smug self and praises Bobby while calling Gorilla fat. Luger takes off his shirt to reveal a muscle shirt and Heenan is WAY too excited. He has some milk to wrap this up with Monsoon not exactly being impressed. Monsoon: "You found someone even more conceited than you are!"

The Mountie, the Nasty Boys and Repo Man are excited for the eight man tag.

Sgt. Slaughter, Jim Duggan, Virgil and Big Boss Man are excited for the eight man tag. Remember that Slaughter was main eventing the show last year.

Comedian Ray Combs is guest ring announcer for said eight man tag and of course he has some jokes. Since we can't survey who will be good or evil (yeah you can), he's asked 100 people (the gimmick of his Family Feud game show) about some of the people in the match. The Mountie is dumb like the Three Stooges, Repo Man is ugly and looks like a girl and the Nasty Boys are only successful because they're lucky. With that he's chased off and we're ready to go.

### The Mountie/Nasty Boys/Repo Man vs. Sgt. Slaughter/Jim Duggan/Big Boss Man/Virgil

The good guys clean house with elbows and clotheslines as Heenan plugs some WWF names being on Family Feud. So there's your cross promotion. Hang on though: SHAWN MICHAELS HAS LEFT THE BUILDING! Monsoon: "WHO CARES?" Well Shawn might. Anyway we settle down to Sags vs. Duggan with Jim firing off some clotheslines. I mean, as much fire as Duggan is going to have.

Slaughter comes in for some clotheslines of his own to Knobbs before dropping to his knees for an elbow to the ribs. What an odd visual. It's off to Boss Man for a wind up uppercut but he misses a splash on Repo Man. Repo jumps onto Boss Man's back, shouts ONE MORE TIME, and jumps right into a low blow.

Virgil, with a broken nose, comes in and gets taken down without much effort. Even Heenan is running out of ways to make fun of the people in this match because Virgil is such a joke in the first place. Sags hits a pumphandle slam but Boss Man comes in with a spinebuster as everything breaks down. Some heel miscommunication sees Sags hit Knobbs to give Virgil the pin at 6:28.

**Rating:** D. Wrestlemania was different back then, which might be the biggest understatement of the wrestling year. This was a house show match to pop the crowd but here it served as a way to let them cool down a bit after the title change. At least it served a purpose, but it feels so out

of place on here.

Flair and his executive consultant Mr. Perfect look at the blown up picture of Liz (we can't see it of course) with Flair swearing it's real. Ric talks about the bright lights and the big city where Savage will try to reclaim the biggest trophy of them all. After Savage takes the beating of his life, Savage can look up and see the pictures just like everyone else. Then Liz has one more shot at Space Mountain. Perfect: "Can I come along with you this time champ?"

Savage won't grant interviews.

Since the company doesn't feel the need to explain the story, the idea here is Flair claimed to have been with Liz before she met Savage. As Savage is completely crazy most days and even worse when it comes to her, this sent him into the rage of all rages and set up the angle after the match was made, which is always odd. Anyway, Flair has promised to show some rather private pictures of Liz, which have only been referenced about a hundred times in the first hour and ten minutes of the show.

#### WWF World Title: Randy Savage vs. Ric Flair

Flair is defending and wearing red, meaning he's likely losing (Look it up. He almost never wins a big match when he's wearing red.). Heenan instantly says that to be fair to Flair, you have to say that's a great robe, giving Monsoon one of his best ever WILL YOU STOP's. Savage jumps Flair in the aisle until Perfect drags him off the champ. Heenan sums things up very well: Savage wants to hurt Flair rather than win the title so things should be going fine for Flair (and Heenan, who was in full on Flair fanboy mode here).

Flair tries an atomic drop and gets his head taken off with a clothesline. A backdrop sends Savage to the floor with one of his trademark great bumps. Savage is already favoring his back so Flair stomps away as Heenan goes into one of the best, longest rants I've ever heard him give on Flair not losing. Flair gets two off a suplex (Heenan: "An eighty year old woman could have counted faster than Hebner!") and the belly to back version is good for the same. A chop takes Savage right back down and Flair drops him back first onto the apron.

Another suplex gets another two as they've moved to a rather slow pace. Savage manages to get in a neckbreaker and Heenan needs a drink. The required slam off the top keeps Flair in trouble and Heenan is begging for Flair to do something. I know I'm talking about Heenan a lot in this match but he's absolutely amazing here. The Flair Flip sends Ric to the top but he dives into a clothesline for two and Heenan....well I think you can figure this one out from here.

Savage sends him outside and hits an ax handle to drive Flair into the barricade. With Flair falling down, we get one of the most obvious blade jobs you'll ever see (nearly getting him fired in the process). Back in and Savage hammers away with another ax handle getting two. The big elbow connects but Perfect pulls Savage out at two. Thank goodness that wasn't a DQ or they might have burned the dome down.

Perfect gets dragged in and the referee gets bumped for a few seconds, allowing Perfect to throw Flair an object. That's only good for two as well so Perfect nails Savage in the leg with a chair. Cue Liz with a host of suits (including Shane McMahon in one of his first on-screen appearances) trying to stop her. Flair goes into his usual leg work routine and the Figure Four goes on. Heenan: "SHOW ME THE PICTURES!"

Perfect grabs the hand so the referee kicks it away, allowing Savage to turn it over and break the hold. A small package gives Savage two (and a GREAT false near fall with the crowd gasping) but Flair goes back to the knee. Savage blocks a right hand though and a rollup (with trunks) gives Randy the title back at 17:58.

**Rating:** A. I got WAY into this match watching it back and was having a great time with everything. The crowd completely bought into Savage's quest for revenge with the title just being a bonus prize. All the cheating was great stuff with Savage overcoming all odds, partially due to the inspiration from Liz. The match was even different from the usual stuff with Savage having long stretches of control, which you almost never see in a match like this. Really great stuff here and an underrated classic. If nothing else just listen to Heenan's commentary.

Post match Heenan bails from the booth and Flair tries to kiss Liz. That



earns him a bunch of slaps to the face as everything goes crazy. Perfect takes Savage down and Flair goes after the knee as all the suits are powerless to stop anything. Savage fights up and cleans house before finally being announced as the new champion.

Perfect claims a handful of trunks (accurate) and says that's not how a macho man would act. Heenan comes in and says there's nothing to worry about because it's all on tape. Flair says tonight, a man is going to walk around Indianapolis claiming to be the real World's Champion and to have the love of Liz. Perfect talks about Savage taking a shortcut, which Flair has NEVER done. Perfect: "Just like his old lady! A cheater!" Ric promises to get the title back and kiss Liz whenever he sees her.

Savage can barely walk and says this isn't done. Today was just a piece of what Flair has coming to him because he hasn't been beaten up properly. Flair has somehow made him even madder than he was so it doesn't matter where it is, but Ric is getting the beating he deserves. Liz isn't allowed to say if she's been vindicated as Savage gives her the belt, saying it's hers. Savage if Flairs though and this is just a piece. GREAT stuff here from Savage who can play the crazed man like few others (and I use the term "play" loosely).

We recap Sid Justice vs. Hulk Hogan. Hulk had been named #1 contender and Sid wasn't happy. Therefore he turned on Hogan during a tag match and went on a major rampage, including destroying the Barber Shop set. That was enough to change Wrestlemania as Hogan wanted to fight Sid instead. Hogan has also teased that this might be his last match, which translates to "steroids are becoming a big issue and Hogan isn't the cleanest looking guy in the world".

Intermission keeps going with some members of Tatanka's tribe dancing in the ring.

Rick Martel has some reservations about Tatanka because he's still outside scalping tickets.

#### Rick Martel vs. Tatanka

Yes this is on Wrestlemania as it's just a different time. Martel knees

him in the ribs to start as Heenan issues a statement on it being a matter of time until they get the title back. He lists off all of his jobs in the Flair organization with Monsoon only responding with "YOU'RE A LIAR!" Heenan offers to put em up and Monsoon laughs it off.

Tatanka elbows his way out of trouble and sends Martel shoulder first into the post. A choke takedown drops Tatanka as we're still waiting on the announcers to acknowledge the match going on. Martel sends him hard to the floor as Monsoon says "Ric Flair" is giving a wrestling lesson right now. Rick heads up but gets crotched, setting up the comeback and a crossbody to pin Martel at 4:31.

**Rating:** D. Just a filler match here and there's nothing wrong with that. Today it would be a quick comedy match or something so it's hard to argue with something being in this spot on the card. Martel feels out of place here, though there's nothing wrong with having a solid hand like him on the roster. You're going to get least a watchable match out of him and this did its job, albeit not in the most entertaining way.

Tag Team Champions Money Inc. (Ted DiBiase and IRS with new manager Jimmy Hart) is ready to take care of the Natural Disasters. Hart jumped from the Disasters to Money Inc. and has told them all of the Disasters' secrets. It's not a bad idea and it's not like it's hard to boo Money Inc.

The Disasters (Earthquake and Typhoon) are ready for revenge and the titles.

#### Tag Team Titles: Money Inc. vs. Natural Disasters

Money Inc. is defending. IRS starts with Earthquake but bails in very short order as Heenan complains about all the noise here. Some hard shoves send DiBiase into the corner before the champs are rocked with some big clotheslines. After a meeting with Jimmy, it's IRS getting his arm hammered by Earthquake.

Typhoon comes in for a hiptoss and it's his turn to get tossed into the corner. Completely one sided so far as Gorilla keeps mocking Heenan over Flair's loss. Typhoon finally misses a splash in the corner and it's off

to DiBiase. We get an awkward looking sequence where DiBiase doesn't seem ready to low bridge Typhoon to the floor. No worries though as they do it again a few seconds later (erg) and this time Typhoon goes over.

A double clothesline (somehow to the back of the head as Typhoon can't even run the ropes properly) sets up a front facelock as this is dying before my eyes. Back up and Typhoon gets in a clothesline for his own for the ice cold tag to Earthquake. Everything breaks down and DiBiase is clotheslined to the floor. Earthquake loads up the Earthquake but IRS is pulled to the floor and it's an intentional countout to retain the titles at 8:37.

**Rating:** F. WOW this was terrible and the fans clearly didn't care. Can you blame them though? Not only was it boring but on top of that it was full of botches and had a house shoe level finish. Just horrible stuff here and in the running for worst Wrestlemania match ever. That's some rather elite company and I have no idea why they thought this was a good idea.

Brutus Beefcake is here to support Hulk Hogan because Hulkamania will live forever.

#### Owen Hart vs. Skinner

Oh come on GET TO THE MAIN EVENT ALREADY! Skinner jumps him from behind to start and hits a quick shoulder breaker. The reverse DDT gets two on Owen but he skins the cat and grabs an O'Connor Roll to pin Skinner at 1:08. Absolute filler.

Sid cuts off Gene Okerlund, calling him a short, bald headed little oaf. He's going to destroy Hulkamania once and for all. We go to a sitdown interview with Hogan where he says he's just not sure if this is his final match or not. Vince, conducting the interview, shakes his hand and thanks him for everything. Sid promises to destroy every Hulkamaniac because he rules the world.

#### Sid Justice vs. Hulk Hogan

Sid has Harvey Whippleman in his corner. Hogan gets the big entrance and

the fans are as into it as they've been in a good while but Sid jumps him from behind. In one of the most underrated Hogan sequences ever, he does a mini Hulk Up, punches Sid to the floor, and clotheslines him off the apron to send Sid outside. You can feel the power of Hulkamania and my goodness it works so freaking well all over again.

We settle down to Sid choking and hammering in the corner but Hulk is right back with more right hands. The fans are ALL OVER this and Sid bails to the floor for a minute. Back in and we hit the test of strength with Hogan going down. As the fans all reconsider their place in life, Hogan fights up but gets knocked into the corner. Hogan is in trouble again and gets sent to the floor for some shots to the back from Harvey's medical bag.

Sid grabs a nerve hold and it looks like Hogan is taking a nap. Sid's powerbomb sets up Hogan's fish out of water selling and it's time for the Hulk Up. Heenan: "THEY'RE BOTH NUTS!" The big boot and a slam (not exactly impressive on Sid) set up the legdrop....for two, as the scheduled run-in was mistimed (on purpose, as the company decided to make Hogan look bad in case it was his last match). Instead Harvey comes in for the DQ at 12:37.

**Rating:** D-. I know the wrestling is pretty terrible but my goodness some of those Hogan comebacks felt like the old days. The fans helped this one a lot and the opening was just too much to call this a failure. It felt like a house show match and that's completely unacceptable for a Wrestlemania main event, but at least it had some great moments.

Post match Papa Shango (the scheduled run-in) comes out for the double beatdown but the Ultimate Warrior makes his return after about eight months away for the save. A lot of posing ends the show.

**Overall Rating:** B-. This is all over the place as it goes from very good to horrible all night long. The ending with Warrior returning is more than enough of a combination with the two great matches to make the show work though and really, some of the bad matches are short enough that they don't mean much. It doesn't mean much in the long term as this was a VERY weak time for the company, but better times were coming in the forms

of Bret and Shawn. For one last hurrah for the old guard though, it worked as a fun show, albeit one that needed a very powerful fast forward button.

### Ratings Comparison

Shawn Michaels vs. El Matador

Original: B-

2013 Redo: C

2018 Redo: B-

Jake Roberts vs. Undertaker

Original: D+

2013 Redo: C-

2018 Redo: D

Bret Hart vs. Roddy Piper

Original: A

2013 Redo: B+

2018 Redo: A-

Mountie/Nasty Boys/Repo Man vs. Jim Duggan/Virgil/Sgt. Slaughter/Big Boss Man

Original: F

2013 Redo: D

2018 Redo: D

Ric Flair vs. Randy Savage

Original: A+

2013 Redo: A

2018 Redo: A

Rick Martel vs. Tatanka

Original: D

2013 Redo: D+

2018 Redo: D

Natural Disasters vs. Money Inc.

Original: D-

2013 Redo: D-

2018 Redo: F

Skinner vs. Owen Hart

Original: N/A

2013 Redo: N/A

2018 Redo: N/A

Hulk Hogan vs. Sid Justice

Original: D

2013 Redo: D

2018 Redo: D-

Overall Rating

Original: B-

2013 Redo: B-

2018 Redo: B-

Nothing really out of the norm there and I've liked the show every time.

Here's the original review:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/03/15/history-of-wrestlemania-with-kb-wrestlemania-8-hogan-who-needs-the-bald-man/>

And the 2013 Redo:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2013/03/17/wrestlemania-count-up-wrestlemania-viii-show-me-the-pictures/>

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