

# Smackdown – March 2, 2007: What's A Brand Split?

## Smackdown

Date: March 2, 2007

Location: HP Pavilion, San Jose, California

Attendance: 13,511

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield

We are about a month away from Wrestlemania and that means it is time for the big response from Undertaker. Batista attacked him at No Way Out and since this is wrestling, the two of them are taking turns in talking to each other. Other than that...well other than that, Smackdown needs another important story for the show. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Here is Batista, all in white (including a turtleneck), to get things going. Last week, he explained why he attacked Undertaker at No Way Out and he is honored to face Undertaker at Wrestlemania. Undertaker chose him because he wants the best competition as well. Then Undertaker chokeslammed him and now they know where they stand. Batista will not be intimidated....and there goes the gong. We cut to the graveyard, where Undertaker rises out of a grave and says all things must die. Some dirt is shoveled into the grave, with Undertaker promising to make Batista's title reign rest in peace.

Money in the Bank Qualifying Match: Matt Hardy vs. Joey Mercury

King Booker is on commentary and egads how weak is their roster to have these two fight this many times? The crowd does

seem invested as Booker won't let the other commentators get in a word. They trade headlocks to start until Matt hits a fireman's carry gutbuster for two. A sitout gordbuster gets the same as Booker keeps up the rapid fire talking. Mercury comes back with a Stroke for two and Hardy is sent shoulder first into the post.

We take a break and come back with Mercury dropping a leg on the arm for two. They head outside so the arm can be dropped onto the apron and we hit the armbar back inside. The arm is wrapped around the middle rope and Mercury gets two off of la majistral. Mercury gets tossed off the top for the crash though and the running clothesline into a one armed bulldog gives Hardy two. The Side Effect gets the same and Hardy rips off Mercury's protective mask. Mercury knocks him off the ropes but dives right into the Twist of Fate to send Hardy to Wrestlemania.

**Rating:** C. The arm work was a fine way to carry the story and I liked Hardy using the one armed version of his usual stuff. Much like most of the qualifying matches, there wasn't a ton of drama here but the personal rivalry helps a bit. At the same time though, I'm done with watching these two fight as it feels like they have been fighting for months now.

MVP says he is Money in the Bank and he'll prove it tonight.

Wrestlemania Recall: Bart Gunn is relieved of his consciousness by Butterbean.

Maryse tells us to keep watching.

Scotty 2 Hotty/Shannon Moore/Jimmy Wang Yang vs. Gregory Helms/Daivari/Chavo Guerrero

Moore and Helms start things off but Helms almost has to punch Chavo first. Helms sends Moore into the corner and hammers away as Cole touts the show's CW ratings. Chavo comes in and gets taken into the corner so Scotty can work on his arm. A

few distractions let Chavo uppercut away in the corner and the villains get to start taking turns on Scotty. Chavo gets in a kick from the apron so Daivari can knock Scotty down again.

Helms gets in a few shots and Chavo works on the arm. Scotty finally gets in a shot of his own and the hot tag brings in Yang to clean house. A top rope moonsault press gets two on Chavo but Helms jumps Yang. Scotty comes back in to load up the Worm, with the referee cutting it off as Scotty isn't legal. Everything breaks down with a brawl on the floor as Daivari misses a charge into the corner. Yang hits another moonsault press for the pin.

**Rating:** C-. This got better near the end but egads it was a rough watch for the most part. The heat segment on Scotty went on far too long and it made for a mostly boring match. I can get behind the idea of Yang as the next one off challenger to Chavo, as it isn't like there is anyone else. Technically fine, as usual, but not exciting.

Even JBL seems impressed with Yang after months of not being able to stand him.

Long video on the end of last week's show, with Vince McMahon ordering Umaga to destroy Rey Mysterio again.

Here is Vince McMahon to recap last week and promise to shave Donald Trump's hair at Wrestlemania. The match is about ego and embarrassment because there will be 80,000 people and a worldwide TV audience watching Trump get his head shaved. Vince can't wait for the headlines, as he might even become Time's Man of the Year.

We see the Bobby Lashley vs. Umaga brawl from Raw, plus Lashley diving through the cage to knock Umaga over on ECW. Vince talks about how we are going to have a guest referee named on Raw, but here is Lashley to interrupt. Vince doesn't like Lashley interrupting him but offers him twice whatever Trump is paying him. Lashley says it was an honor to be chosen

and it will be an honor to beat Umaga. That means it's a NO to Vince, which sends him over the edge, including a slap. Lashley's eyes bug out and Vince wisely runs.

Post break, Mr. Kennedy comes in to see Vince and says he wants Lashley tonight. The match is made and we'll make it for the ECW World Title, no holds barred. Actually we'll make it no holds barred for Kennedy only, because he'll lose the title if he gets disqualified or counted out.

### Ashley vs. Jillian Hall

The Playboy cover poster drops down over the entrance. Hold on though as Jillian has to sing her song before the bell. Ashley jumps her to start and grabs some rollups for a few fast near falls. Jillian gets in a few shots of her own and sends Ashley into the corner. A rollup with a grab of the rope gets two on Ashley, who kicks Jillian back down. Ashley drops a middle rope elbow for the fast pin.

### Money in the Bank Qualifying Match: Finlay vs. Chris Benoit vs. MVP

Non-title and here's the Leprechaun to jump commentary. Finlay pulls him off and tells Cole that his name is HORNSWOGGLE. Commentary is far too excited over this being the first ever triple threat qualifying match. It's a brawl to start with Finlay getting the better of things, including dropping Benoit. MVP sends Finlay outside to hammer away but Benoit dives onto both of them.

We take a break and come back with Finlay elbowing Benoit down into a chinlock, which always feels weird in a triple threat. Benoit fights up but MVP comes in to start the double teaming. MVP hits the Ballin Elbow on Benoit but Finlay hits him with a clothesline. The distraction lets Benoit come back with the German suplexes, setting up a Sharpshooter to MVP.

Finlay makes the save but gets pulled into the Crossface for

his efforts. That's broken up as well so Benoit knocks Finlay outside and hits an enziguiri. Back in and MVP knees away at Benoit's head, only to get caught in the rolling German suplexes. The Swan Dive misses though and here's Hornswoggle for a distraction. Finlay is smart enough to club both guys down and get the pin on Benoit.

**Rating:** C+. They kept things moving here and the ending was hardly a stretch. Finlay would want to get into the title match by all means and this time it involved interference and cheating. Good match here, with everyone working until the end. You could have gone with anyone winning here and it would have made sense, so well done.

Next week: Undertaker vs. Finlay and Batista vs. Kane. Cool.

ECW World Title: Mr. Kennedy vs. Bobby Lashley

Lashley is defending and can lose the match via DQ or countout, while Kennedy is wrestling in a no holds barred match. Before the match, Kennedy takes off the turnbuckle pads and promises to win the title but Lashley cuts him off. Kennedy goes after him to start but gets taken into the corner for a powerslam. Back up and Kennedy sends him hard into the exposed buckle a few times to take over.

We take a break and come back with Lashley being sent outside, followed by a dropkick off the apron. Lashley beats the count back in so Kennedy chokes away with his wrist tape. Kennedy grabs a chair and blasts Lashley in the head for two. Lashley shrugs them off and grabs the chair, only to realize he can't do that. Instead it's a clothesline into a powerslam to retain Lashley's title.

**Rating:** C. This was similar to the Hardcore Holly vs. Lashley match on ECW, as Vince McMahon keeps finding ways to stack the deck against Lashley. The good thing is that the matches are not exactly against powerhouses so Lashley overcoming the odds isn't that horrible. Good enough main event here, as Kennedy

is moving on to Money in the Bank.

**Overall Rating:** C+. Obsession with Battle of the Billionaires (which does make sense) aside, the best part of this show is how much it feels like a Wrestlemania season event. Stuff is happening, the Brand Split doesn't mean as much, and the card is feeling bigger every day. They're starting to feel it here and that is a great thing to be able to say at the right time.