

Monday Night Raw – March 19, 2007: The Slow Down Period

Monday Night Raw

Date: March 19, 2007

Location: Conseco Fieldhouse, Indianapolis, Indiana

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

We are less than two weeks away from Wrestlemania and that means it is time to really hammer things home. This time though it means that WWE is in a bit of a weird place as they have actually nailed the setup. Raw and Smackdown have both been feeling it as of late and they need to be careful not to screw up with four shows left. Let's get to it.

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

In Memory of Arnold Skaaland. The hits just keep on coming at the moment.

Shawn Michaels vs. John Bradshaw Layfield

This is part of Wrestlemania Reversal, as Shawn and John Cena will face the other's former Wrestlemania opponent. Hold on though as JBL comes to the ring in a suit after just flying in from New York City. No one tells him what to do or when to come out of retirement. If he does it, he will do it in his town by his rules. This match isn't happening, which is good for Shawn because he already has more problems with Cena.

Shawn is an egotistical ***** but he knows how to play mind games. This time though, Shawn is doubting what he can do because he knows he can't beat John Cena. Shawn has Everest right in front of him but he won't climb the mountain. But since Shawn has found religion and is such a nice guy, people won't boo him when he won't even try.

Shawn takes the mic and says he is here to fight, but he isn't worried about getting respect from everyone because he has already earned it. At Wrestlemania, he can and will defeat Cena to become WWE Champion. Nobody tells him what to do and when to deliver Sweet Chin Music. He'll do it when he wants and he'll do it when you least expect it....like he does right now to JBL. Shawn takes JBL's hat and leaves.

We get an updated Vince McMahon vs. Donald Trump tale of the tape, now featuring:

Family Ties

Children

Matches Fought Against Children

Phallic Symbol

Women Issues

Randy Orton comes in to yell at Edge over selling him out on ECW. They argue over the last chance battle royal for a Money in the Bank ladder match, because Edge has lost his spot over the two of them not taking out Bobby Lashley. Blows are about to be struck but Orton leaves and Edge yells a lot.

It's time for the Masterlock Challenge with Bobby Lashley accepting this time. For some reason Masters slaps Lashley in the back of the head, earning himself a slap in the face. The Masterlock goes on and, after some struggling, Lashley officially breaks the hold to win the challenge for the first time. Masters grabs a chair but things better of it. Lashley rubs his bald head as a nod to Vince McMahon.

Ashley's Playboy photographer had a good time with the set.

In the back, Bobby Lashley runs into Vince McMahon, flanked by Coach and a bunch of celebrities. Vince promises to have Umaga break Lashley and then he will break Donald Trump's spirit. As for tonight, these security guards are escorting Lashley out of the building. Vince and Coach run into Maria and seem to be impressed. They then run into Eugene, who spills his drink on

Vince's suit. A match with Umaga ensues and here is Ron Simmons for a low key catchphrase.

Tribute video to Arnold Skaaland, featuring some great old school footage and a bunch of people praising him.

Steve Austin is All Grown Up.

Money in the Bank Qualifying Match: Battle Royal

Ric Flair, Carlito, Edge, Viscera, Super Crazy, Val Venis, Shelton Benjamin, Charlie Haas, Johnny Nitro, Kenny Dykstra

It's a brawl to start and everyone gets together to toss Viscera in a hurry. Things slow way down as a result until Edge is sent outside (under the ropes) and comes up favoring his knee. The usual brawling continues until Haas and Benjamin pull Crazy out of the air and toss him out. We take a break and come back with Venis and Haas having been eliminated and Edge still down at ringside. Carlito saves himself on top but Shelton goes up to meet him. That takes too long though and Flair tosses Benjamin out.

Flair crotches Dykstra on top and chops him out as Carlito gets rid of Nitro. That leaves us with Carlito vs. Flair and they go straight at it, with Carlito not being able to toss him. Carlito hits the springboard back elbow and a running...I think knee lift to put Flair down again. Flair survives another toss attempt and gets in a poke to the eye. Carlito elbows him down out of the corner but charges into a backdrop for the elimination. Then Edge comes back in to toss Flair for the win.

Rating: D+. I still can't stand that finish but at least this was before it became a cliché. At the same time, this was quite the waste of time as Edge was in the ladder match last week and now is again after this show is over. It wasn't overly long but there were only a few potential winners here and it made for a bit of a lengthy path to the finish.

Here are Vince McMahon and Coach, plus a bunch of people bringing out a barber's chair and tools. Those things are going to be sitting at ringside though because it's destruction time.

Umaga vs. Eugene

Non-title and Vince sits at ringside as Umaga runs Eugene over and stomps away. The running hip attack in the corner crushes Eugene and the Samoan Spike is good for the fast pin.

Post match Vince says keep it up and has Eugene strapped into the chair. Umaga chokes him out and Vince cuts Eugene's hair. Vince is way too happy with this and we even get a Billionaire B**** Slap! They'll finish the shaving in the back, with Vince promising to shave everyone in the arena.

Here is Candice Michelle for a chat. She has been reading Melina's WWE.com blogs about how the Playboy cover girls can't make it in the ring so Melina can come out here and do something about it. Cue Melina, who says Michelle has her job because she can take her clothes off. Melina does her own version of the Go Daddy dance and goes on a rant about how none of the Playboy women have any talent. She has turned Playboy down over and over because it is beneath her. Candice says Melina doesn't turn anyone down and has been underneath everyone in that locker room. If Melina won't take off her clothes, Candice will.

Candice Michelle vs. Melina

Non-title bra and panties match and we're joined in progress with Candice, minus her shirt, ripping off Melina's pants. Melina headscissors her down and they go into a rather suggestive roll around the ring. That's enough for Melina to get rid of Candice's pants for the fast win.

Post match, here is Ashley to yell at Melina and rip off her top. Cue Great Khali of all people to go after Ashley so Jerry

Lawler goes in for the failed save attempt.

More celebrities offer Trump vs. McMahon picks.

Randy Orton vs. Jeff Hardy

Toddy Grisham has replaced Lawler on commentary. Jeff avoids some right hands in the corner to start and snaps off some armdrags into an armbar. That's broken up and Orton grabs his backbreaker and we hit the Liontamer to put Hardy in trouble. A rope is grabbed so Hardy comes back with more right hands into the Twist of Fate. Cue Edge to throw in a ladder though and Orton blasts Hardy for the DQ.

Rating: D+. Not time here and the match was little more than a way to set up Money in the Bank. Hardy and Orton are capable of doing a lot more than this but you can only get so far given these circumstances. Rated-RKO's days seem to be numbered if they aren't already out, but at least they are going to be in a big match on the way out.

Post match Edge yells at Orton so Hardy gives Orton the Twist of Fate. The legdrop over the ladder crushes Orton as Edge is rather pleased.

Here's a look at Steve Austin's new movie, the Condemned.

Wrestlemania rundown.

Vince McMahon is on the phone with someone who is going to drop a bomb tonight. He has a bomb of his own: he is facing Bobby Lashley next week. Coach isn't sure about this but Vince guarantees a win.

Eugene, now bad, cries WHY ME into a mirror.

John Cena vs. Chris Benoit

Non-title and Shawn Michaels is on commentary. They go with the hard lockup to start until Benoit takes him into the

corner for the knees to the ribs. The fight goes outside with Benoit not being able to hit a German suplex. Cena almost clotheslines Shawn but pulls back in time, allowing Benoit to jump him from behind.

Back in and Benoit hits a running elbow for two before it's time start in on Cena's leg. A dragon screw legwhip sets up the Sharpshooter but Cena crawls over to the rope. Benoit rolls the German suplexes (to quite the positive reaction) but the Swan Dive misses. The comeback is on and Cena hits the Shuffle, setting up the FU into the STFU for the tap.

Rating: C+. Another match where it was good while it lasted but it didn't get to last very long. Cena beating Benoit clean in about six minutes is a bit hard to take but at least Benoit lost to someone a little higher up on the food chain. Shawn wasn't much of a factor here, but most of the good stuff has already happened in their buildup and it is time to get to Wrestlemania for everyone involved.

Post match, Shawn gets inside and teases the superkick but smiles at Cena. They point at the sign and Cena loads up the AA but puts him down instead. Cue JBL to say that next week, Cena and Michaels will face Undertaker and Batista.

Overall Rating: C. You can tell that they have moved into the final push towards Wrestlemania, meaning you aren't like to get big names in longer matches. It might be a little annoying, but it makes sense to keep things as safe as possible on the way to Detroit. Not a great show, but it did its job of staying the course for one more week as Wrestlemania gets closer and closer.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and head over to my Amazon author page with 30 different cheap wrestling books at:

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

AND

[Remember to check out Wrestlingrumors.net](http://Wrestlingrumors.net) for all of your [wrestling headline needs](http://Wrestlingrumors.net).