

Royal Rumble Count-Up – 2008 (2021 Redo): They Got Me

Royal Rumble 2008

Date: January 27, 2008

Location: Madison Square Garden, New York City New York

Attendance: 20,798

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler, Michael Cole Jonathan Coachman, Joey Styles, Tazz

This show is special for a few reasons, not the least of which is the fact that we are in the Garden. That alone is enough to get excited, but the other big story here is the Raw World Title match between Jeff Hardy and Randy Orton, which is so intriguing that it seems to have raised the buys of the show to its highest in a few years. I'm curious to see how well it holds up so let's get to it.

The opening video looks at the Garden and the history of the Royal Rumble. You can't ask for much more than that.

Ric Flair vs. MVP

MVP's US Title isn't on the line but Flair's career is, which is hardly a fair trade. Before the match, Flair talks about his history in this building and thanks the fans for all of the respect they have given him since his first match here in March 1976. Then MVP's music cuts him off because WWE knows how to disrespect legends.

Feeling out process to start with Flair working on the arm so MVP shoves him away. That just gets on Flair's nerves so he hammers away in the corner, earning himself a kick to the face. The chinlock goes on as the fans let MVP know that he sucks. That's broken up and Flair goes for the leg, only to get stomped down in the corner again.

A running boot in the corner gets three on Flair, but the foot is on the rope for the heart stopping moment. MVP suplexes him for two and superplexes him for the same. Flair gets in a double clothesline for a

double knockdown and some rollups get two each. MVP is back with a shot to the throat but the Playmaker is reversed into the Figure Four for the tap.

Rating: C. I'm not wild on the US Champion losing but there is nothing wrong with giving Flair one more win in Madison Square Garden. The Flair retirement tour was a good thing to see as he earned a lot of the respect and farewells, so MVP losing isn't the worst thing. I can't imagine MVP minded putting Flair over in this situation either so it isn't quite worth getting mad about.

Vince McMahon thinks Flair is rather lucky and explains the idea of the luck of the Irish to Hornswoggle, his illegitimate son at the moment. We hear a bit about the McMahon's history here in the Garden until Finlay comes in to get Hornswoggle out of there before Vince can....whatever Vince would do with a bearded leprechaun.

We meet the newest member of the Raw announce team: Mike Adamle. Oh boy here we go.

We recap Chris Jericho vs. John Bradshaw Layfield. Jericho returned with the SAVE US deal but JBL didn't like the idea and cost him the WWE Title. Now it's time to come out of retirement for the fight, with JBL even bringing Jericho's children into the trash talk to make it personal.

Chris Jericho vs. John Bradshaw Layfield

If nothing else, it's weird to see Jericho with the short hair and long tights. Jericho backs him into the ropes to start but JBL gets in a cheap shot as the referee pulls him away. That earns him a running forearm as Jericho is all ticked off here. The Clothesline From JBL misses so Jericho grabs the Walls, sending JBL straight to the rope. They head outside with JBL getting the better of things, meaning it's time to catapult Jericho throat first into the bottom rope.

The choking ensues, followed by the sleeper to go old school. That's broken up and Jericho hits his own running clothesline to put them both down. There's a big boot to drop Jericho again and JBL sends him shoulder first into the post. Jericho comes up bleeding so JBL stomps away at the

head in the corner. That earns him some running forearms to the head and the Lionsault connects. A Cactus Clothesline puts them both on the floor, where Jericho BLASTS him with a chair to the head for the DQ.

Rating: B-. This was as intense and emotional as I've seen from Jericho in a long time and it was actually a good brawl. JBL is much better suited for something like this and the ending sets up a rematch at No Way Out. Jericho needed this kind of performance to reestablish himself and the blood looked good too.

Post match Jericho beats JBL up even more and chokes him with a camera cord in a similar version of what JBL did to him a few weeks ago.

Ashley Massaro tries to talk to Maria but gets Maria's boyfriend Santino Marella again. NO, Maria is NOT posing for Playboy!

We recap Edge vs. Rey Mysterio. Edge has hooked up with Vickie Guerrero and has the Edgeheads behind him, making him all the more invincible. Rey Mysterio won a Beat The Clock Challenge to earn the show.

Smackdown World Title: Edge vs. Rey Mysterio

Edge, is defending and has the wheelchair bound Vickie Guerrero and the Edgeheads with him. Edge goes after the arm to start so Rey forearms him in the face for the break (the simple exits often work best). Rey dropkicks him down for an early two and Edge is looking frustrated. A toss to the floor sets up a baseball slide to Rey, meaning the Edgeheads can get in their cheap shots.

Back in and Edge kicks the leg out to knock Rey off the middle rope. That's enough to give Edge a target and we hit the half crab. Rey limps up for an enziguri before limping into a powerslam to give Edge two. Another leg crank goes on before Edge tries to expose the knee, allowing Rey to come back with the wheelbarrow bulldog.

The good leg kicks Edge in the face for two more and a seated senton gets two more. A top rope double stomp gets another two so Edge kicks him in the face. The spear misses though and it's a 619 into the frog splash, but Vickie gets up and pulls the referee. Rey tries another 619 but hits

Vickie by mistake. That's enough to distract Rey so the spear can retain the title.

Rating: C+. There wasn't much drama here but that's where the Royal Rumble title shot stereotype comes from. Rey did what he does best here by fighting from underneath and giving you some hope spots but Vickie interfering was the big surprise. She's a great heat machine and Edge surviving as champion as a result is about as good of a way as you could go here.

Mr. Kennedy comes up to a towel clad Ric Flair in the back. Kennedy suggests a match with Flair but here's Shawn Michaels to glare him off. Shawn: "Imagine a loud mouthed bleach blonde guy with a catchphrase. That'll never work. These kids today." Flair knows Shawn will win so here are Batista and HHH, the latter of whom tells Flair to put his pants on (HHH: "I know I've said this a million times before."). Anyway Shawn says the best man will win tonight, and he'll be wearing the brand new HBK t-shirt, available now at Shop WWE!

Here's Maria for the Kiss Cam, because that happens at the Royal Rumble. Cue Ashley to say Playboy wants Maria. Cue Santino Marella with someone wearing a sheet over their head. Santino says it's not happening and makes fun of the New York sports teams. With the LET'S GO GIANTS chant out of the way, Maria asks the fans if they want her to pose. Santino say no again, and brings the sheeted person in. Naturally it's Big Dick Johnson, in a New England Patriots jersey. Ashley beats him up anyway.

Mike Adamle throws us to a video on Randy Orton vs. Jeff Harvey.

We recap Randy Orton vs. Jeff Hardy for the Raw World Title. Orton was born to be a star and has every natural gift there is. He breathes wrestling and was destined to be the best. Then there is Jeff Hardy, who is more of a free spirit and rose to this level because he lives for the moment. There are some great old clips of both of them plus the rest of the Orton family. Hardy beat him in a tag match and keeps diving off of one thing after another, which has made fans believe he has a chance. I was right there with them because this was an excellent build.

Raw World Title: Randy Orton vs. Jeff Hardy

Hardy, the Intercontinental Champion (not on the line) is challenging and yes, he could win. A headlock takeover puts Orton down for a quick two and Hardy pulls back hard on the head. That's reversed into a headscissors but Jeff escapes and hits a basement dropkick for two more. A clothesline puts Orton on the floor and a slingshot dropkick sends him hard into the barricade.

Hardy hits a dive so Orton chills for a bit, only to have Hardy head outside to win a slugout. Back in and Hardy's springboard attempt is cut off with a dropkick to send him crashing back to the floor. Orton suplexes him on the floor as you can feel the pace slow in a hurry. The stomping and choking ensue back inside but Hardy knocks him outside again. There's the clothesline from the apron but Hardy misses a charge into the post. The chinlock with the bodyscissors goes on for a good while until Hardy fights up again.

Some running shot to the face set up the Whisper in the Wind for two on Orton and the slingshot dropkick connects in the corner. Orton rolls to the apron before the Swanton can launch and a missile dropkick puts him on the floor again. Hardy isn't waiting around and moonsaults down onto him for another double knockdown. Back in and Hardy tries the Twist of Fate but Orton reverses into the RKO for the fast pin to retain.

Rating: B. The more I see this match, the more I like it. Hardy was rolling with the high flying and risk taking but the ending made sense: Hardy tried to go with the wrestling and got caught because that's Orton's wheelhouse. This gave you the impression that Hardy could win and that was all they needed to do here. Nice job and you could tell that Hardy was more than just a challenger of the month at this point.

Jeff gets a kind of lukewarm standing ovation, but the Garden isn't the best indication of the masses.

Rumble By The Numbers time!

Rumble By The Numbers:

21 Winners

569 Wrestlers Eliminated

36 Eliminations for Steve Austin, the most ever

11 Royal Rumbles for Shawn Michaels, the most ever

11 Eliminations for Kane, the most in one match

10 Consecutive Royal Rumbles for Kane

3 Times Mick Foley entered in 1998

2 Feet that need to hit the ground for an elimination

1 Woman to have entered, with Chyna

62:12 for Rey Mysterio in 2006, the most ever

:02 For Warlord in 1990, the least ever

3 Wins for Steve Austin, the most ever

#1 Spot, which has produced more winners than #30

1 Winner from #30, the Undertaker in 2007

4 Winners from #27, the most of all time

73% Success rate for winners at Wrestlemania

1 Road to Wrestlemania

Dang I love that thing.

Royal Rumble

Ninety second intervals this year and Michael Buffer is the special ring announcer in one of (if not the) his only appearances for the company. Undertaker is in at #1 and Shawn Michaels is in at #2 because they're starting big this year (and with the final two from last year's Rumble). Granted Buffer doesn't actually say "Shawn Michaels", instead introducing him as the Heartbreak Kid. Shawn chops away to start but gets sent flying upside down into the corner. A shot to the face puts Undertaker on the

apron but he shoves Michaels away.

Santino Marella is in at #3 and lasts as long as you would expect for the first elimination. Shawn chops away even more and hits an atomic drop as Great Khali is in at #4. Undertaker goes straight for him but gets chopped down as the fans give Khali a YOU CAN'T WRESTLE chant. They fight over a chokeslam and Undertaker shoves him out to get us back to two. Hardcore Holly is in at #5 to stomp away at Undertaker in the corner. For some reason Undertaker can't eliminate Holly and it's John Morrison in at #6.

Undertaker and Shawn form the Texas Mega Powers but Morrison counters Sweet Chin Music to kick Shawn in the head. Tommy Dreamer is in at #7 and the fans are VERY happy to see him. Dreamer goes after Undertaker but Shawn takes his place to stomp the big man down. Batista is in at #8 to pick things up again, plus toss Dreamer for daring to break up a showdown with the Undertaker.

It's Hornswoggle in at #9 and he goes straight underneath the ring in a smart move. Everyone brawls around the ring and it's Chuck Palumbo, as a biker, in at #10. That gives us Undertaker, Shawn, Holly, Morrison, Batista, Hornswoggle and Palumbo for a rather eclectic group. Jamie Noble, currently feuding with Palumbo, is in at #11 and gets knocked out in less than thirty seconds.

Noble's banged up ribs need some help getting to the back and it's CM Punk in at #12. The pace picks up until Undertaker clotheslines Punk's head off. Palumbo and Morrison go after Punk until he tosses Palumbo to clear things out a bit. Cody Rhodes is in at #13 and saves Holly (his partner) and Batista backdrops Shawn. Umaga is in at #14 and tosses Holly in a hurry. Snitsky is in at #15 as they're flying through these entrants.

Everyone fights by the ropes and it's the Miz in at #16, meaning we have Miz and Morrison working together. Undertaker and Umaga kick each other on the mat as Shelton Benjamin is in at #17 to snap Miz and Morrison's throats on top. That earns him Sweet Chin Music for the elimination and it's Jimmy Snuka in at #18 for the nostalgia pop. Undertaker hurts

himself trying the headbutt and it's Roddy Piper in at #19 for the REAL nostalgia pop. Snuka looks stunned as everyone stops to watch the old guys fight.

Kane is in at #20, giving us Undertaker, Michaels, Morrison, Batista, Hornswoggle (still under the ring), Punk, Rhodes, Umaga, Snitsky, Miz, Snuka, Piper and Kane, which has to be one of the best collections of talent ever in a ring. Kane wastes no time in eliminating Piper and Snuka (they were just there for the one pop anyway so that was all they should have done), much to the fans' annoyance. Umaga saves Shawn from Undertaker's chokeslam for some reason and Carlito is in at #21. A Backstabber drops Punk but Cody bulldogs Carlito down.

Mick Foley is in at #22 (big pop) and Undertaker hits a Last Ride on Batista, which isn't even acknowledged. Mr. Kennedy is in at #23 to a big reaction and some house cleaning. A bit too much trash talk earns him a chokeslam from Undertaker and it's Big Daddy V in at #24. Undertaker eliminates Snitsky but gets superkicked out by Shawn. Kennedy dumps Shawn and the ring is cleared out in a hurry. Undertaker drives Snitsky through the announcers' table (or mostly through it) to blow off some steam as Cody and Kennedy tease eliminating each other.

Mark Henry is in at #25 as Hornswoggle comes out to eliminates Miz (still without getting inside). ECW Champion Chavo Guerrero is in at #26 as Kane kicks Morrison out. It's nice to see the one in one out (or close to it) as it keeps things from getting too clogged up. Henry pulls Hornswoggle in so here's Finlay, presumably in at #27, for the save. Finlay and Hornswoggle leave without being sent over the top but Finlay is officially disqualified for using the Shillelagh.

Elijah Burke is in at #28 as Batista falls out to the floor without being eliminated. Chavo gets rid of Punk and it's HHH in at #29. Cody is gone, Big Daddy V is gone and Foley and Burke all go out together as HHH's hands. HHH punches at everyone he can find, including a Pedigree to Umaga.

The clock is on and.....JOHN CENA is in at #30 to blow the roof off the place because he was out with a torn pectoral muscle was wasn't even

certain for Wrestlemania. The Garden is stunned for about ten seconds before realizing that they're supposed to hate Cena (this really is one of the best surprises the Rumble has ever seen and I smile at it every time). That gives us a final group of Batista, Umaga, Kane, Carlito, Kennedy, Henry, Guerrero, HHH and Cena, which is not too shabby.

Cena goes after Henry and the fans are actually buzzing for a change. Carlito and Henry get tossed by Cena, who goes nose to (large) nose with HHH. The slugout goes to Cena until HHH catches him with a spinebuster. Batista is back in to get rid of Kennedy and Umaga. Kane is tossed out by Batista and HHH, leaving us with Batista, HHH and Cena. HHH tells both of them to suck it and the fight is on. Cena backdrops his way out of a Batista Bomb attempt and Batista is clotheslined out, leaving us with two.

The BOO/YAY slugout it on with Cena getting the better of it and initiating the finishing sequence. The AA is escaped and there's a double clothesline to put both of them down. Back up and HHH escapes another AA before grabbing a DDT for two. The Pedigree is countered so Cena tries the AA again. That's broken up as well so Cena grabs it one more time and finally tosses HHH to win.

Rating: B+. I like this one more every time I see it with the Cena return being one of the best things the Rumble has ever done. The rest of the match was very well booked with the big star, the great nostalgia for Piper/Snuka/Foley and enough top names throughout to keep anything from getting dull. They had the right balance here and I had a really good time with the whole thing.

Cena celebrates to end the show.

Overall Rating: B+. I've seen this one a few times now and I don't remember liking it this much. Maybe it's how bad the modern stuff would get but this was a show where they did their thing each time, had everything working as it should have and then finished it up with a really good Rumble. It set up an underrated Wrestlemania too and after this, I can't say I'm surprised. Very good show here and worth a look if you haven't seen it in a bit.

Ratings Comparison

Ric Flair vs. MVP

Original: B-

2013 Redo: C

2018 Redo: C

2021 Redo: C

John Bradshaw Layfield vs. Chris Jericho

Original: D+

2013 Redo: D+

2018 Redo: D+

2021 Redo: B-

Edge vs. Rey Mysterio

Original: A-

2013 Redo: C+

2018 Redo: B

2021 Redo: C+

Jeff Hardy vs. Randy Orton

Original: C-

2013 Redo: C+

2018 Redo: B-

2021 Redo: B

Royal Rumble

Original: C-

2013 Redo: C+

2018 Redo: C+

2021 Redo: B+

Overall Rating

Original: C+

2013 Redo: C-

2018 Redo: C

2021 Redo: B+

Well dang man. Was I in a really good mood today or something? And this is the first time I've ever liked JBL vs. Jericho? Really?

Here is the original if you are interested:

<https://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2021/01/18/royal-rumble-count-up-2008-original-the-big-surprise/>

And the 2013 Redo:

<https://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2021/01/18/royal-rumble-count-up-2008-2013-redo-it-keeps-getting-better/>

And the 2019 Redo:

<https://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2021/01/18/royal-rumble-count-up-2008-2019-redo-thats-a-trio/>

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