

Smackdown – December 28, 2007 (Best Of 2007): The Best Of 2007

Smackdown

Date: December 28, 2007

Host: Michael Cole

It's the end of the year and that means we get another Best Of show, as should be the case for this time of the year. There was a lot going on this year and that means we could get a nice selection here. Odds are there will be some pay per view matches included as well to boost up the TV stuff a bit. Let's get to it.

As usual, I'll be posting the full versions of matches rather than the clipped ones shown on the broadcast.

Michael Cole (not shown) welcomes us to the show, which will feature the Top 5 Matches Of The Year, as voted on by the fans.

#5. From Wrestlemania XXVIII.

Edge vs. Jeff Hardy vs. Matt Hardy vs. CM Punk vs. King Booker vs. Finlay vs. Randy Orton vs. Mr. Kennedy

Money in the Bank as they're starting big this year. Everyone looks up at the briefcase to start and then it's already time to head outside for the fight. It's a brawl to start and Finlay dives off the top onto almost everyone else. Matt has to cut off Edge's climb, leaving Orton and Finlay to climb the ladder to no avail. Booker goes to pull out another ladder but finds Hornswoggle's stepladder instead, allowing Punk to knock him down.

Edge bridges a ladder between the apron and the barricade but

Booker starts cleaning house. There's the Spanarooni, only to have the Hardys run Booker over with ladders. For some reason Finlay saves Edge from the see saw ladder treatment and Edge suplexes Matt onto the ladder. Kennedy's Kenton Bomb onto hits ladder (with Kennedy landing HARD on the back of his head) and it's a Hardy slugout on top of the ladder.

Finlay breaks that up but gets speared down by Edge. More spears drop just about everyone else but Punk wraps the ladder around his head to knock out various people. Edge slides in the big ladder and climbs, at least until Orton shoves him over the top and out to the floor. Matt lays Edge over the bridged ladder and Jeff dives onto him, breaking the ladder to get rid of both of them. Both guys are taken out on stretchers and we're down to a six way.

Now it's time for the parade of RKOs and Orton climbs, despite not being underneath the briefcase. Punk breaks that up and climbs as well, only to get taken down with a super RKO for the huge spot. Booker grabs the Book End and goes up but Matt is there to catch him. Cue Queen Sharmell to grab Matt's leg but Booker gets distracted by Matt and walks into the Twist of Fate.

Finlay gives Matt a Celtic Cross onto the ladder, busting himself open in the process. Now it's Hornswoggle going up the ladder until Kennedy catches him for a super Regal Roll off the ladder. Punk dropkicks the ladder down to cut Finlay off and it's Punk vs. Kennedy on top of the ladder. Kennedy gets knocked down but comes back up and kicks Punk down, allowing him to grab the briefcase for the win.

Rating: B. I never know how to rate these things but it was another blast with everyone flying around and having one crash after another. This was a lot of fun and one of the right people won, which is what matters the most in a match like Money in the Bank. Everyone got a chance to shine here, even in a complete car crash match like this one. Rather fun

opener.

Great Moment: Beth Phoenix. No specific moment, but just her time this year.

Great Moment: HHH returns at Summerslam.

#4. From No Mercy.

Raw World Title: HHH vs. Randy Orton

HHH, with bad ribs, is defending in a Last Man Standing match. They stare at each other to start until Orton gets smart by going after the bad (and untaped) ribs. More shots to the ribs sent HHH outside, where his quick Pedigree attempt is countered with a legsweep to send the ribs into the ramp.

Back in and more shots to the ribs set up a belly to back drop onto the barricade for a six count. A whip into the steps gets six more so they head back inside. HHH manages a much needed facebuster for a breather but Orton's backbreaker puts him down for eight more. That just has Orton frustrated so he grabs a TV cord and chokes HHH into some nasty spitting.

HHH gets up at nine so the annoyed Orton sends him outside. The ECW announcers' table (with Joey and Tazz still there after their minute and thirty seven second match earlier) is loaded up and a monitor to the head rocks HHH. The RKO through the table is shoved off though and Orton crashes through the table hard. Orton is up at nine as well so HHH hits a spinebuster on the floor for another nine.

Some steps to the head get another nine count and they roll back inside. Orton manages a DDT onto a chair to stun HHH though and the RKO onto the open chair leave a bloody HHH down. The ropes get HHH back up and he throws in the crotch chop before falling to the mat again. Orton's Punt is blocked though and HHH makes the fired up comeback by taking Orton outside and sending him into various objects.

Orton cuts him off though and a catapult sends HHH head first into the post for another near fall. The steps are picked up but HHH cuts him off with a low blow. That leaves Orton's heads in the steps and it's a chair shot to crush him again. Orton gets up again and the Pedigree is loaded up, only to have him counter into the RKO onto the table for the ten count and the title.

Rating: B. They picked it up in the end but this was a lot of standing around waiting after someone does something big. In other words, it's a Last Man Standing match but it's a Last Man Standing match without a reason for these two to hate each other. I do like that they gave us the kind of match they advertised, but it was a weird position to be in after the Cena vs. Orton feud got so personal and HHH was just a last minute substitute.

Video on Vince McMahon putting HHH in a career threatening match against Ric Flair next week on Raw.

#3. From Raw, April 23.

John Cena vs. Shawn Michaels

Non-title and we even get an old school weapons check. Shawn takes him down by the arm to start but gets reversed into a headscissors for the early break. Back up and Shawn goes after the arm again so Cena tries an STF to send Shawn bailing again. Another STF attempt has Cena running into the corner so they go technical for a change. Cena doesn't care for that and powers him down to the mat, sending Shawn to the ropes again. They trade shots to the face and we take an early break.

Back with Cena grabbing a headlock takeover to grind Shawn down for a change. It works so well that Cena does it again and Shawn can't get out of it in his first few attempts. Shawn fights up again and tries a hiptoss, only to get blasts with a clothesline to set up the chinlock again. The next escape attempt actually works and Shawn hammers away to take over for

the first time. Cena gets a boot up in the corner though and a heck of a clothesline gets two.

A Sweet Chin Music attempt is countered into an AA attempt but Shawn bails out to the floor as we take another break. Back with Shawn elbowing away in the corner until Cena catches him with a World's Strongest Slam. The release fisherman's suplex gets two and the Throwback is good for the same. Shawn comes back with a quick swinging neckbreaker and they're both down for a breather. Back up and the flying forearm drops Cena so Shawn can nip up.

The top rope elbow connects but Cena is ready for Sweet Chin Music. The big flying shoulder misses and Cena falls to the floor...where he is fine enough to pull Shawn's dive out of the air. A posting is countered into a ram into the steps to leave Cena down as we take another break. Back again with Cena down on the floor, seemingly with a bad shoulder, so Shawn takes him back inside to crank on the arm. Cena fights up and initiates the finishing sequence, including the Shuffle. The FU gets two and that brings the fans back into things as we take a fourth break.

We come back again with Cena throwing him hard to the floor to bang up Shawn's back even more. A posting gives Cena two back inside and the kickout has him a little stunned. Cena scores with a suplex (with Shawn still holding his back for a nice touch) for two and it's off to the rather wise bearhug.

Shawn fights out so Cena dumps him over the top for the crash to the floor, setting up the top rope legdrop for two back inside. The super FU is countered into a powerbomb but Shawn can't follow up. Another STF attempt earns another block and Shawn knocks him off the apron, into the announcers' table. A piledriver onto the steps, ala Wrestlemania, is blocked and we take another break.

We come back again with Cena unloading on Shawn on the

announcers' table and NOW the STF can go on inside. The long form crawl gets Shawn to the rope for the break but he has to slip out of the FU...and hit Sweet Chin Music for a very delayed two. Shawn is whipped hard into the corner so Cena tries the FU again, only to have Shawn get out and hit the superkick, this time falling on top for the pin (after about 55 minutes, a Raw record for a one fall match).

Rating: A-. What else is there to say about this? It's one of the best TV matches of all time as it is both very long and also high quality throughout. You almost never get to see that and they made it work very well here. It's an excellent match and felt like a Wrestlemania worthy main event. You could go back and forth on which was better, but this is going to be very hard to top for a long time to come.

Shawn says something to Cena and holds up the title to end the show. Edge vs. Orton didn't happen, which I'm assuming has something to do with Orton being sent home from the tour. Good chance that's why this match had to go so long.

Video on Tribute To The Troops, featuring Hilary Clinton.

Here's a highlight reel of some of the best moments of the year.

#2. From Survivor Series.

Team Umaga vs. Team HHH

Umaga, Mr. Kennedy, Finlay, Big Daddy V, MVP
HHH, Jeff Hardy, Kane, Rey Mysterio

Matt Striker is here with Big Daddy V. Rey and Kennedy get things going and it's an early exchange of arm cranking. A running headscissors takes Kennedy down and a Code Red gives Rey two (so based on the previous match, Trevor Murdoch is better at Code Redding than Rey Mysterio). Hardy comes in and gets blasted by Kennedy so MVP comes in for a front facelock.

It's off to V and the big beatdown ensues, only to have Hardy dive over for the tag to Kane. V belly to belly suplexes him down but Kane is right back up with a top rope clothesline. That doesn't seem to bother V though as he hits a pair of drops (Samoan and elbow) for the elimination. HHH comes in to slug away on V but a clothesline puts him straight down. Umaga comes in with a belly to belly of his own but misses the middle rope headbutt.

That means Rey can come back in and the basement dropkick gets a quick two. The 619 into the springboard seated senton for two more but the springboard crossbody is countered into a wicked release Rock Bottom. The Samoan Spike gets rid of Rey and it's 5-2. Kennedy tags himself in for some reason and misses a charge into the corner. Hardy misses the slingshot dropkick in the corner though and it's MVP coming in with a chinlock. MVP misses a running kick though and the Twist of Fate gives Hardy a fast elimination.

HHH comes back in for a clothesline on Kennedy and the spinebuster follows. V comes in for the save but elbows Kennedy by mistake, allowing HHH to steal the pin. That doesn't work for V, who pulls HHH outside and posts Hardy for a bonus. Back in and a double DDT plants V and HHH evens it up at 2-2.

Finlay starts dropping elbows on HHH before dropping some elbows on HHH. Back up and HHH makes it over for the tag without much effort and Hardy comes in with the slingshot dropkick in the corner. The Whisper in the Wind hit Finlay and the mule kick hits Umaga, allowing HHH to come back in. There's the spinebuster to Finlay and the Pedigree leaves us with HHH/Hardy vs. Umaga. HHH avoids the running hip attack in the corner and it's the Pedigree into the Swanton for the final pin.

Rating: B-. Not one of the all time classic Survivor Series matches but they set up HHH and Hardy as a pair of buzzsaws to

run through the rest of the team. The HHH vs. Umaga feud has been pretty much decided multiple times now so the ending wasn't exactly in doubt. This was more or less the Raw main event and it could have been worse, but I could have gone for a lot better for the one elimination match on the show.

#1. From Wrestlemania XXIII.

Smackdown World Title: Batista vs. Undertaker

Undertaker is challenging and Teddy Long handles the introductions for a bit of a weird moment. We get the full druid entrance for Undertaker, which will never stop being awesome. Batista spears him down at the bell and it's time to trade right hands in the corner. It's actually Batista getting the better of things and the fans are not too thrilled with that. Undertaker pulls him outside for a ram into the apron but Batista is right back for a hard whip into the steps.

Back in and Batista nails a top rope shoulder (dang) for two and a heck of a clothesline cuts Undertaker off again. Undertaker slugs back from his knees and punches Batista into the corner for the running clotheslines. Snake Eyes into the big boot sets up the legdrop for two as we're back to mostly even. Old School looks to set up the chokeslam but Batista powers out and knocks Undertaker down.

Undertaker doesn't seem to mind as he sends Batista to the apron for the legdrop. There's the Taker Dive and they're both down on the floor. Back up and Batista drives him HARD through the barricade and hammers away as things have cranked up in a hurry. The announcers' table is loaded up and a running powerslam drives Undertaker through it for the big crash. That's only good for two back inside so Batista punches away even more.

The Batista Bomb is broken up with a drive into the corner but Batista is right back...with right hands from the middle rope. I guess HHH didn't teach him that one and it's the Last Ride

for two. The frustrated Undertaker gets caught in a spinebuster but pops back up with a chokeslam for two. Batista slips out of the chokeslam and hits the spear into the Batista Bomb for two as the fans are WAY into these near falls. Undertaker backdrops his way out of another Batista Bomb and sends Batista into the corner. The Tombstone is enough to give Undertaker the pin and the title.

Rating: A-. This felt like a Wrestlemania level title match between two monsters. These two beat the fire out of each other and didn't bother with anything other than the big power moves. They were trading bombs throughout the whole match and it was a question of who would survive, which made the whole thing world. It helps when Undertaker was motivated by being put in the middle of the card and cranked it up a notch, as both guys felt like they were on another level here.

We look at Edge returning and winning the World Title to end the show.

Overall Rating: B+. There was a lot here and it was an entertaining show, mainly because they shows almost the full matches instead of trying to cram in as much stuff as they could. It felt like a Best Of show instead of a timeline of the year and that is a good thing. Pretty awesome night and I liked what we got here, especially when it was more about filling in the TV requirement and taking a week off than doing anything else.

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