

Monday Night Raw – August 1, 1994: Where Are The Ladders?

Monday Night Raw

Date: August 1, 1994

Location: Beeghly Center, Youngstown, Ohio

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Randy Savage

We are on the way to Summerslam and that means the big stories are Bret Hart vs. Owen hart and Undertaker vs. Maybe Undertaker. One of these feuds is a bit better than the other and I'll let you figure out which is which. Other than that, Vince McMahon's steroids trial is FINALLY over and somehow he escaped. I wonder how much that will be mentioned. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Razor Ramon vs. Shawn Michaels, including the ladder match from earlier this year. Diesel is facing Ramon at Summerslam, but tonight it's Ramon vs. Shawn.

Razor and Shawn are ready for each other.

Opening sequence.

Vince and Savage welcome us to the show, with Savage making it clear that Vince is COMPLETELY exonerated. Just in case there was any doubt you see.

Razor Ramon vs. Shawn Michaels

Intercontinental Champion Diesel is here with Shawn and it's almost weird to see these two having a regular match. They take turns missing each other to start until Shawn takes him down and walks over his back. That earns him a heck of a right hand and a big whip over the corner to the floor. Back in and Shawn dives into a fall away slam for two, setting up the armbar.

Shawn fights up and chokes a bit in the corner before a dropkick gets two. The chinlock goes on for a good while until Razor fights up. Another dropkick doesn't work so well for Shawn, as Razor catches the legs and catapults him over the top and down onto Diesel (in a great visual).

We take a break and come back with Razor grabbing an abdominal stretch until Shawn goes to the eye for the escape. The big backdrop sends Shawn flying again as commentary makes fun of the Goodwill Games. Razor grabs the bearhug for a good bit until Shawn elbows his way out. Shawn's back is still banged up though and Razor slaps it right back on. With Shawn escaping for good, they hit the pinfall reversal sequence, capped off by Shawn throwing him over the top.

Diesel gets in a clothesline on the floor as we take a break. Back with Diesel throwing Shawn back inside so Shawn can hit a jumping back elbow for two more. The sleeper puts Razor down for two arm drops until the traditional belly to back suplex to escape. Back up and Razor puts him on top for the belly to back superplex, which is broken up just as fast. Shawn's high crossbody gets two and the superkick (still not a big deal) gets the same.

With nothing else working, Shawn tries a Razor's Edge of his own but gets backdropped without much trouble. Diesel gets up for a distraction so Shawn can grab the title, which doesn't go right either. A second distraction, this time in the form of a big boot, does work though and Shawn grabs a rollup (with trunks of course) for the pin at 25:02.

Rating: B+. Oh yeah this worked, even though I spent most of the match looking around for the ladders. It's another great example of letting talented wrestlers go out there and do their thing, especially when they're motivated and showing chemistry. This is quite the hidden gem as you always hear about the ladder matches but they tore the house down with an awesome regular match instead. Check this one out if you get

the chance.

Post match the beatdown is on until the referees make the save.

We get the Summerslam Report featuring Todd Pettengill. Some matches for the card are listed off, with Todd thinking Razor Ramon will need some backup for his Intercontinental Title shot against Diesel. Just a thought of course.

Alundra Blayze vs. Bull Nakano

Blayze's Women's Title isn't on the line and Luna Vachon is here with the debuting Nakano. Blayze kicks away to start but gets taken down with one heck of a hair toss. A powerbomb is countered into a hurricanrana to give Blayze two and a spinning kick to the face drops Nakano again. As commentary make fun of Nakano's looks, she grabs a chinlock to keep Blayze down.

A piledriver gives Nakano two as she pulls Blayze up. Nakano powerbombs her for two more as commentary isn't sure what to make of this. Blayze gets two off a sunset flip and she gets away from the guillotine legdrop. Blayze's German suplex gets two (Savage says no one has ever kicked out of it before) and she dropkicks Nakano off the top to the floor. One heck of a dive to the floor takes Nakano down again but she posts Blayze hard. The brawl takes them to a double countout at 5:31.

Rating: B. This was a FIGHT and one of the best women's matches you will see in the company to date. It's amazing what happens when you give Blayze, who was a lot better in the ring than she was given credit for being, someone who can wrestle with any of them rather than the goofy old school stuff. I got way into this one and there's a reason why this feud is still talked about to this day.

Here's what's coming next week.

It's time for the King's Court with Bob Backlund as the special guest. Hold on though, as we first have a guy propose to his girlfriend in the crowd. Lawler isn't impressed and mocks them both, but we'll get the answer later. Apparently later means after the break, with the woman in the ring (and the guy in the crowd). First though, Lawler has a few questions/jokes and she finally says yes.

Lawler kisses her (the guy is mad) and then she leaves so here is Backlund for his interview. Actually make that the REIGNING WWF Champion Bob Backlund, as he never lost the title. Backlund talks about how he tried to help people throughout his career and his hiatus from wrestling. People have changed in those last ten years and he is very disappointed. Savage thinks Backlund has an attitude problem as he insists that he never gave up in 1983, so he is STILL the champion.

As commentary talks over Backlund, we see...nothing different, as Lawler talks about beating Bret Hart in the middle of the ring. Backlund calls Hart part of a horrible society as we go to a clip of Backlund snapping on Hart after their match. This was all over the place, as the proposal was long and commentary wouldn't shut up as Backlund talked.

Smoking Gunns vs. George Anderson/Tom Bennet

Joined in progress with Anderson coming in and getting kicked in the ribs by Bart. Billy drops a knee and we take a break, coming back with Billy hitting a dropkick setting up the Sidewinder for the pin at 5:24. We didn't even see two minutes of the match but we did get more of Savage praising Vince's legal team.

They're off the air literally five seconds after the match is over.

Overall Rating: B+. Until the goofy Lawler stuff, this was looking to be an all time episode and certainly one of the best of this era. The first half of the show is an awesome

match and the second match is very good in its own right. If you ignore it coming to a screeching halt with the proposal and the incredibly squeezed in (and nothing) tag match, it's a classic. Check out that opener and the women's match if it's your thing, as they're both worth seeing.

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