

Night Of Champions 2008 (2023 Redo): Gold Only Gets You So Far

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Date: June 29, 2008

Location: American Airlines Center, Dallas, Texas

Attendance: 16,151

Commentators: Jerry Lawler, Mike Adamle, Jim Ross, Joey Styles, Tazz, Mick Foley

We're done with the Draft and this is the final show before we enter the new reality, starting with next week's TV. Tonight has a pretty stacked card as the focus is on championships, including Edge defending the Smackdown World Title against Batista and John Cena challenging HHH for the Raw World Title. Let's get to it.

The opening video talks about how important it is to be a champion, with people promising this will be their night. We get more specific looks at the bigger matches as well.

Smackdown Tag Team Titles: Miz/John Morrison vs. Hornswoggle/Finlay

Miz and Morrison are defending. Finlay and Morrison start things off with an elbow dropping Morrison for a fast two. Back up and Morrison sends him into the corner and out to the floor, where Morrison and Miz grab Hornswoggle. Back in and Hornswoggle wants to fight but Finlay comes in to do it for him so house can be cleaned. Stereo seated sentons hit the champs but Morrison kicks Finlay in the head to take over.

The slingshot elbow/backbreaker combination gets two on Finlay but he's back with an atomic drop. Hornswoggle tags himself in to pick up the pace until Morrison cheap shots him down. A

double clothesline cuts off Hornswoggle's comeback attempt but Miz misses the charge in the corner. Hornswoggle kicks Morrison away and the hot tag brings Finlay back in. Everything breaks down and Finlay hits the Celtic Cross on Morrison, only to have Miz break up the Tadpole Splash. Morrison slams Hornswoggle off the top to retain.

Rating: C+. This could have been so much worse as Hornswoggle and Finlay worked well together as a team and at least it was a fresh set of opponents for Miz and Morrison. While there aren't a lot of options for challengers, they have more or less cleaned out the division and it was time to find someone new to come after the belts. Finlay and Hornswoggle did well for a one off challenge and it was a pretty nice match as well.

We look at John Cena beating HHH in the main event of Wrestlemania XXII. They really are making the rematch feel like a huge deal and that's great to see.

US Title: Chavo Guerrero vs. Matt Hardy

Chavo, with Bam Neely, is challenging. They fight over a lockup to start until Matt gets in a quick takedown. Chavo is right back with a headlock takeover, only to get backdropped to put him down again. With the grappling not working, Chavo starts in on the leg and wraps it around the ropes. Neely helps out by wrapping the leg around the post and Chavo cranks away back inside.

Matt avoids something off the middle rope though and hits a quick Side Effect. The middle rope elbow connects for two so Matt goes up again, only to get pulled into a half crab. That's broken up but so is the Twist of Fate as Chavo gets the half crab again. Matt makes the ropes so Chavo tries the Three Amigos. That's countered into the Twist of Fate to retain the title.

Rating: C. As you might have expected, these two worked a

completely fine match against each other but it wasn't the most thrilling. Chavo just isn't someone who feels like he's going to win that prestigious of a title, even if Matt is about to take it to ECW. Completely fine match, but nothing that stuck out in any meaningful way.

We look at the end of Million Dollar Mania.

ECW Title: Kane vs. Mark Henry vs. Big Show

Kane is defending and Henry was added after beating Kane on ECW. They start fast with Kane hammering away and avoiding a Henry splash in the corner. Henry is knocked outside, leaving Show and Kane to slug it out. Kane's running DDT gets two but Show knocks him outside again. Show and Henry get their big showdown, with Henry's running shoulder having almost no effect. A clothesline and slam put Henry down as trainers come out to check on Kane.

Show drops Henry again but it's too early for a chokeslam. Instead they collide again for a double knockdown, allowing Kane to come back in. Alternating corner clotheslines set up a whip to send Henry into Show's raised boot. The double chokeslam plants Henry but Show and Kane argue over who gets the cover. Kane hits an enziguri but Show knocks him out of the air for two. Something close to an Angle Slam gives Show two more so he goes up, only to get superplexed back down. Kane is down as well though and Henry hits a splash for the pin and the title.

Rating: C+. They went with the straight up monster mash formula here and as luck would have it, the people involved know exactly how to do that match. This was a perfectly entertaining match with Henry getting the win that he has deserved after the last few weeks of being a monster. Good stuff here with the right result.

Batista is ready to move to Raw with the Smackdown World Title. John Cena comes in to say he's winning too, but here is

CM Punk to say the Money In The Bank briefcase is getting heavy.

Raw Tag Team Titles: Cody Rhodes/Hardcore Holly vs. Ted DiBiase Jr./???

Rhodes and Holly are defending and DiBiase's mystery partner is...not here yet, so maybe we can wait ten minutes. That won't happen so we'll start the match anyway. Cody starts for the team but DiBiase wants Holly...who gets dropped by Cody with a DDT. DiBiase announces Cody as his partner and gives Holly a cobra clutch legsweep for the pin and the titles. That's certainly the twist and my goodness it's better than Holly and Cody's lame team.

JBL, in a luxury box, is upset that he's not in a match on the show. Todd Grisham suggests it's because he isn't a champion so JBL goes into a speech about how he is successful while the American economy is crumbling. With Vince McMahon gone, he is the richest man in WWE (as we have back to back rich villain segments). He's also more successful than Mark Cuban (Dallas Mavericks owner) because he doesn't see any championship banners around here.

JBL mocks the Dallas Cowboys and praises HIS New York Giants, the Super Bowl champions. Everyone loves a champion, and that is why he is Texas' favorite New Yorker. He'll be getting a title soon enough. This was slow speaking JBL and that's not exactly an inspiring change of pace.

Intercontinental Title: Chris Jericho vs. ???

Jericho is defending against a surprise opponent, which will NOT be Shawn Michaels. Since Michaels can't make a thirty minute light, Jericho is here as an honest man to defend his title. Instead, he's facing...Kofi Kingston, who came over to Raw in the Supplemental Draft. Lance Cade is here with Jericho, who drives Kingston into the face to start. A headlock takeover puts Kingston on the mat but he's right back

up. Jericho knocks him down again and doesn't seem too worried to start.

Kingston picks up the pace with the rapid fire leapfrogs so Jericho bails outside, only to be taken down by a slingshot dive. Back in and Jericho dumps Kingston over the top for a big crash, followed by the stomping back inside. A suplex puts Kingston down for two more and Jericho bends his back over the knee. The abdominal stretch goes on but Kingston hiptosses his way to freedom.

Jericho's belly to back superplex is turned into a crossbody for two and Kingston starts striking way. A clothesline into the Boom Drop gets two on Jericho and a hurricanrana gets the same. Jericho is right back with a knockdown into the Lionsault...but here is Shawn Michaels to superkick Cade. Jericho decks Shawn off the apron but the distraction lets Kingston hit Trouble In Paradise for the pin and the title out of nowhere.

Rating: B-. That was a shock and that's what they seemed to be trying to do. Shawn costing Jericho the title makes all the sense in the world as it gives Jericho a reason to want to get revenge on him despite Shawn not being able to wrestle. Good match too, as Kingston has that unique offense that makes him fun to watch.

Post match Shawn seems pretty banged up so Jericho hits him in the eye again to leave him laying.

Vickie Guerrero wants to talk wedding flowers with Edge when Curt Hawkins and Zack Ryder come in. They say it's too bad about HHH, who had to help Batista on Smackdown. Otherwise he could have helped Edge tonight, an idea that Edge doesn't like. We hear Edge's resume and he promises to keep the title tonight.

Women's Title: Mickie James vs. Katie Lea Burchill

Katie, with Paul Burchill, is challenging and grabs a rollup for a very fast two. They get back up with Mickie pulling her down by the arm and going up, which sends Katie bailing to the floor. Back in and Mickie kicks her down for two but a trip to the floor lets Katie take over. Katie suplexes her onto the arm to put Mickie in trouble and said arm is sent into the buckle. We hit the armbars and a DDT to the arm gives Katie two. Mickie comes out of the corner with a hurricanrana though and some clotheslines get two. Katie grabs a Fujiwara armbars but Mickie fights out again. Another suplex is blocked and a MickieDT retains the title.

Rating: C-. This could have been on any given Raw and it still would have been just as uninteresting. There is only so much to be gotten out of a match with a not so interesting challenger and such a basic story. It's far from terrible, but they shouldn't have even bothered if this was all they were allowed to do.

We recap Edge vs. Batista for the Smackdown World Title. Edge won the title at One Night Stand and Batista wants it. Violence has ensued.

Smackdown World Title: Edge vs. Batista

Batista is challenging and wastes no time in powering Edge down. They head to the floor with Edge being sent into the barricade and shouldered down back inside. A Jackhammer gives Batista two and there's a clothesline back to the floor as it's all Batista so far. Batista throws him back in but Edge manages a posting for a much needed breather.

Edge Chokes on the ropes and drops an elbow on the apron but Batista slugs his way out of trouble. A swinging neckbreaker puts his right back in trouble though and Edge grabs the chinlock. Back up and Batista gets sent face first into the buckle, followed by a neckbreaker (non-swinging edition). That means we can hit the chinlock again but Batista is back up

faster this time.

Edge gets taken down by a hard clothesline and we get a double breather. The spear gives Batista two and a powerslam puts him down again. Edge is right back with a much needed Edgecution but Batista knees the spear away. Batista goes up, only to get dropkicked out of the air to leave them down again.

Cue the Edgeheads with Vickie Guerrero as Batista hits the spinebuster, meaning Vickie has to make the save. Edge decks the referee so Vickie calls out another referee...and gets Chavo Guerrero (with Bam Neely). Batista grabs Vickie and throws her over the top and onto the pile, but Edge gets in a belt shot. Chavo counts the (actually not fast) pin to retain the title.

Rating: B-. The match was good for the most part, but then the ending was about as lame and uninspired of a choice as they could have had. It was just another La Familia run in ending, with the really slow count from the referee being the only thing missing. Granted almost none of this matters as Batista is on his way to Raw anyway, but I was hoping for more.

Batista gets the big emotional sendoff, which loses some of its impact when you keep in mind that he'll be back tomorrow night.

HHH is ready to right the wrong of two years ago.

We recap HHH vs. John Cena for the former's Raw World Title. This is billed as the biggest match Raw can have and goes back to HHH losing to Cena in the main event of Wrestlemania XXII. The build has gone well and it really does feel like a top level match.

Raw World Title: HHH vs. John Cena

Cena is challenging. HHH's headlock doesn't get him anywhere to start as Cena runs him over with a shoulder. A hiptoss works better for HHH so Cena grabs a headlock of his own. That

works just as well so Cena hits another shoulder and the release fisherman's suplex gets two. The flying shoulder misses though and Cena crashes out to the floor. Back in and Cena hits a suplex as the pace slows back down.

Cena fight back again and hits the ProtoBomb but the Shuffle is broken up. HHH hits the jumping knee but Cena is right back with the Throwback. Another Shuffle is cut off by another jumping knee but Cena sends him flying over the corner. HHH comes up holding his leg so Cena is right on it, including a wrap around the post. It's too early for the STFU as HHH makes the ropes so HHH hits a desperation Pedigree for a delayed two.

Cena grabs an FU for the same and they're both down. Back up and they slug it out until Cena hits another ProtoBomb. The Shuffle is blocked again and HHH tries a Pedigree, only to be reversed into the STFU. HHH goes for the rope so Cena pulls him back, allowing HHH to counter into a Crossface. Cena manages to stand but the FU is countered into the Pedigree for the pin.

Rating: B. This was a strange match as it sent over twenty minutes and definitely felt like a major fight, but it felt like they were only getting started when HHH got the pin. For once this could have gone for another five to ten minutes to really get going. The HHH leg stuff could have been something but it wasn't really given time to develop. It's not something that is said very often, but HHH needed more time for a change.

Replays and posing take us out.

Overall Rating: B-. It's a good show but nothing you really need to go out of your way to see. The main event is the best thing on the show and even then it's not a match you really need to see. They had an easy theme here with all of the title matches but even then, only the Tag Team Titles and the

Intercontinental Title changes felt like moments, and even they were on the lower end of things. Overall, it's certainly not a bad show, but they hyped it up as this major event and it just wasn't.

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