

Royal Rumble 2006 (2020 Redo): Off To A Bad Start

Royal Rumble 2006

Date: January 29, 2006

Location: American Airlines Arena, Miami, Florida

Attendance: 16,178

Commentators: Joey Styles, Jerry Lawler, Michael Cole, Tazz

This is going to be an interesting one as the Rumble itself has received very little build. It has gotten about as little attention as I can remember in recent years, but things are in a weird place at the moment anyway. Other than that, we have Mark Henry challenging Kurt Angle for the Smackdown World Title and John Cena trying to get the Raw World Title back from Edge. Let's get to it.

The opening video looks at all three main events, which is covering all of the bases fairly well.

Cruiserweight Title: Cruiserweight Open

Kid Kash, Gregory Helms, Jamie Noble, Funaki, Nunzio, Paul London

Kash is defending, it's one fall to a finish, only former champions are allowed in, and if this was mentioned on Smackdown, it was in a one off statement. They go with the parade of rollups to start until the five Smackdown wrestlers jump Raw's Helms. Noble armbars Kash but it's broken up by London as this is more like a battle royal with everyone pairing off. London is sent to the floor and Nunzio hits the Sicilian Slice (middle rope Fameasser on Helms).

Noble hits a flying leg lariat on Kash with Funaki breaking it up at two. Funaki whips Noble to the ropes but Noble dives onto Nunzio instead. Kash and Funaki head outside and it's London hitting a shooting star onto the big pile at ringside. Back in and Helms hits a super swinging neckbreaker on London, followed by Kash hitting London with the Dead Level. Nunzio and Funaki make the save so Noble chops the heck out of Funaki. A

fireman's carry gutbuster sets up a dragon sleeper but Helms makes the save. Noble is sent outside and a Shining Wizard to Funaki gives Helms the pin and the title.

Rating: C+. This was the right call for Helms, who lost clean to Jerry Lawler on pay per view earlier this month. He needs to get away from Raw as fast as he can and this is as good of a way as he can do it. There are only so many spots for cruiserweights on either show but it's not like Kash was anything special anyway. Good move, and a nice choice for a start.

Teddy Long and Vince McMahon are ready for the Rumble but Vince is more excited that Torrie Wilson, Candice Michelle and Victoria are monitoring the tumbler. Randy Orton comes in to draw his number, as does HHH. Trash talk ensues and HHH asks Candice to hold his ball. HHH is really unhappy with his number, with Randy telling him that he's screwed.

Trish Stratus, refereeing the next match, is warming up when Mickie James comes in with something to tell her. It's not a good time, but Mickie says she loves her. Trish leaves without saying anything.

Ashley vs. Mickie James

Trish is refereeing and Lawler longs to be her shirt. Mickie and Ashley fight to the floor before heading back inside for an exchange of wristlocks. Ashley actually gets the better of it, with Joey calling her "technically sound". Mickie is sent outside for an apron clothesline from Ashley, followed by some technically sound right hands in the corner. Trish breaks it up so Mickie grabs a quickly broken half crab.

That's fine with Mickie, who gets to stare at Trish and beat Ashley up on the floor. A bow and arrow goes on with commentary pointing out that Mickie is trying to impress Trish. Ashley fights up and throws her down by the hair a few times before rolling Mickie up for two. Something like a spear drives Mickie into the corner as the fans are loudly booing Ashley. More right hands in the corner have Mickie in trouble but she uses the trunks to pull Ashley down with a powerbomb for a distressed three from Trish.

Rating: D. Ashley is trying as hard as she can but she's just not that good. It doesn't help when you have Mickie and Trish, two of the best of their generation, out there while we have to sit through Ashley's bad...well almost everything. They're stretching this out until Wrestlemania and putting Ashley in the ring on pay per view for nearly eight minutes is not the best way to go about it.

Post match Mickie hugs Trish, who still doesn't seem pleased.

Vince admires the women's tattoos, some of which are in some suggestive places. Big Show comes in to draw his number but can't get his hand in the tumbler. Rey Mysterio comes in and, after an Eddie chat with Big Show, draws his number. Rey: "Eddie, you got me man. You got me."

John Bradshaw Layfield vs. Boogeyman

Jillian Hall is here with JBL. After cowering during Boogeyman's entrance, JBL hides behind Ashley and then bails to the floor. Boogeyman mounts her and spits worms onto her, which is finally enough to get us ready. JBL hammers away to knock Boogeyman outside before taking him inside for some choking with the tape. The Clothesline From JBL only hits the corner though and Boogeyman hits the pumphandle powerslam for the pin. I'm not sure if that's a good idea or not, as Boogeyman isn't exactly a main event star, but JBL isn't as much of one as he was just a few months ago.

Worms are consumed post match.

Mama Benjamin hits on Vince and Shelton Benjamin draws. That goes well for him but here's Melina to interrupt. Mama gets Shelton out in a hurry as MNM come in to draw. They seem rather pleased and Melina offers to have the two of them get rid of Shawn Michaels.

We recap the Royal Rumble, which is more or less "anyone could win". They haven't focused on it that much this year and that leaves some options open.

It's Royal Rumble time but here's the Spirit Squad to interrupt. After a cheer about the Rumble, we're ready to go. Glad we got that out of the

way, but it's certainly a unique gimmick.

Royal Rumble

Ninety second intervals with HHH in at #1 and Rey Mysterio, in a low rider, in at #2. Lawler: "If you're number one or two, you're screwed." This company really doesn't have much of a memory does it? Rey goes fast to start with a running dropkick to the knee and a headscissors. The right hands in the corner set up the missed 619 and it's Simon Dean in at #3. Dean stomps on Rey but can only send him to the apron. For some reason Dean thinks HHH will like him and that's good for an elimination in a hurry.

Rey hits the Bronco Buster on HHH and it's Psicosis in at #4. Psicosis goes after Rey as well and a swinging sitout faceplant drops him again. An attempt at a Razor's Edge over the top results in a hurricanrana to get rid of Psicosis. Before anything else can happen, it's Ric Flair in at #5 (Flair was in five Rumbles. In four of them, he was in the first five entrants.). HHH panics and the fight is on, with Flair grabbing him low but getting poked in the eyes.

A backdrop gets rid of Flair and it's Big Show in at #6. That means another beatdown on HHH, including the standing legdrop and an elbow. Jonathan Coachman is in at #7 and Big Show gets rid of him as quickly as you would expect. Show stands on HHH's head again and it's Bobby Lashley (a dark horse according to Cole) in at #8. A big right hand puts Lashley down but he backdrops Show in a nice power display.

Lashley kicks Show to the floor (not eliminated) and it's Kane in at #9 as they're stacking the first part of this thing. Kane and Lashley slug it out with Kane hitting a big boot. Lashley snaps off a belly to belly, knocks down HHH, and hits the Dominator on Kane. It's Sylvan in at #10, giving us HHH, Mysterio, Big Show, Lashley, Kane and Sylvan.

After Lashley dispatches him even faster than Show got rid of Coach, it's a double chokeslam to plant Lashley. Kane and Show get rid of him after a strong showing and it's the giant slugout. They choke each other on the ropes until HHH dumps both of them out (I'm shocked too) so here's Carlito at #11 to fill in the ring a little more. Carlito stomps on Rey

and HHH until a Roddy Piper style eye poke gets HHH out of trouble. Chris Benoit is in at #12 with Cole explaining about Benoit winning last year (hopefully jogging Lawler's memory a bit).

The Crossface has Carlito in trouble, with HHH making the fast save. That wasn't the brightest idea in the world but he sends Benoit to the apron where they fight over a suplex attempt. Benoit puts him down and hits the Swanton but here's Booker T. (back in the long tights) in at #13. Benoit gets rid of Booker in about 20 seconds (Booker was probably still injured) so it's back to chopping away at everyone else.

Joey Mercury is in at #14 and Benoit gives him a German suplex in a hurry. More chopping ensues as Tatanka of all people is in at #15 to go after HHH. The fans seem to remember him, but that might just be the Florida State Seminoles chant. Everyone pairs off and it's Johnny Nitro in at #16 as Benoit gets HHH to the apron. Trevor Murdoch is in at #17 (Lawler: "He looks like a big bottle of milk.") as the ring is getting full in a hurry. Rey is sent to the apron for the third time but is right back in with a basement dropkick to HHH.

Eugene is in at #18 for an airplane spin on Murdoch so Rey gives the two of them a double bulldog. Animal, with bright green shoulder pads, is in at #19. Things slow down again with the only thing between entrances being MNM failing to get rid of Rey. The returning Rob Van Dam is in at #20, giving us HHH, Mystério, Carlito, Benoit, Mercury, Tatanka, Nitro, Murdoch, Eugene, Animal and Van Dam. Rob goes after almost everyone, including a spinwheel kick to HHH. MNM goes after Rob but he shrugs that off and gets rid of Animal.

Orlando Jordan is in at #21 and doesn't even get a reaction in his hometown. There are WAY too many people in there and it's making it hard to do much. Van Dam manages a middle rope kick to Carlito's face and it's Chavo Guerrero in at #22. Rolling Thunder hits Jordan and Chavo gets to clean a little house, including Three Amigos to Nitro. For some reason Chavo goes up top and HHH shove him out without much effort.

Matt Hardy is in at #23 as there is only room for about two people to do anything at a time. MNM dumps Tatanka and it's Super Crazy in at #24. He

comes in with a very high crossbody to MNM and it's back to fighting on the ropes. Shawn Michaels is in at #25 and PLEASE GET RID OF SOME PEOPLE. Murdoch is Shawn's first victim and it's Chris Masters in at #26 because the ring MUST stay overly full. Mercury and Hardy both save themselves and HHH has to do it as well.

Viscera is in at #27 (lucky us) for a Samoan drop on Hardy. There's the Visagra and Hardy is out for daring to try a Twist of Fate on the monster. Shelton Benjamin is in at #28 as Benoit gets rid of Eugene. There's a Dragon Whip to HHH as Goldust is in at #29. Crazy seems to have been put out off camera and Randy Orton is in at #30.

Side note: Cole says Orton is coming off a phenomenal 2005. What exactly did he do? Lose the title match against HHH at the Rumble, lose against the Undertaker at Wrestlemania and in the Cell, and need his dad to help him beat Undertaker. Oh and be the sole survivor at Survivor Series (thanks to a distraction), which he had done twice before. That's phenomenal?

Anyway, the final grouping is HHH, Mysterio, Carlito, Benoit, Mercury, Nitro, Van Dam, Jordan, Michaels, Masters, Viscera, Benjamin, Goldust and Orton, or nearly half of the field. Orton gets rid of Benoit in a hurry to make up for Smackdown and Carlito/Masters dump Viscera. Carlito immediately turns on Masters to eliminate him as they're picking up the pace in a hurry.

Goldust hits Shattered Dreams on Carlito, and is quickly eliminated by Van Dam. Orton gets rid of Jordan (after a ridiculous sixteen minutes), leaving Shawn and HHH to do their big showdown. MNM breaks that up but Michaels breaks that up and sends Nitro into Mercury to get rid of Joey. Michaels clotheslines Nitro out and skins the cat back in but Shelton jumps him. Shawn superkicks Shelton out without much effort but here's Vince McMahon to order Michaels out.

Cue Shane McMahon from behind to dump Shawn, who charges back in, chases Shane off, superkicks HHH for old times' sake, and follows the McMahons to the back. Van Dam gets rid of Carlito and we're down to Van Dam, HHH, Orton and Mysterio. The tag match breaks out with Van Dam and Mysterio

getting the better of it. For some reason Rob goes up and gets crotched by HHH, who sends Rey into Van Dam for the elimination.

Rey has to knock HHH and Orton down at the same time, setting up a double 619. Orton clotheslines Rey down though and powerslams HHH for a bonus. HHH is back up with a spinebuster to Orton but Rey gets rid of HHH to bring the fans WAY back into it. Just because he's evil, HHH pulls Mystério to the floor and sends him into the steps. The EDDIE chants start up and Rey manages to slip off Orton's shoulder and a hurricanrana gives Rey the win.

Rating: B-. It's good enough, but the Eddie praise got a little rough to take as the match went on. The far bigger problem though was having so many people in the ring at once for long stretches, leaving the people to have to find what openings they could in their limited room. That's not a good setup for the Rumble and when it's for the sake of having people like Tatanka and Jordan in there for long stretches, they seem to be missing the point.

Mickie interrupts a Trish interview and says she understands what Trish had to do out there. It's because Trish loves her too! Trish follows her off to straighten things out.

Rey celebrates in the back when Edge comes in to say Rey better not try Benoit's loophole by jumping over to Raw.

We recap Edge vs. John Cena for the Raw World Title. Edge cashed in the Money in the Bank briefcase after Cena survived the Elimination Chamber and went on to be a very different kind of champion. It was rather cool at times, but he doesn't have much chance in this one.

Raw World Title: John Cena vs. Edge

Cena is challenging and comes to the ring walking across a confetti shooting scaffold that was lowered from the ceiling. Joey says Cena is fresh here, rather than coming off a 45 minute Elimination Chamber. Why can no one in wrestling tell time? The match wasn't even 30 minutes long. Cena clotheslines him to the floor to start but Edge manages a trip into the middle buckle.

Back up and Cena grabs a side slam for two so Edge bails outside. That means it's already time for a Lita distraction and Edge spears Cena into the steps. Cena is sent over the barricade for a nine count and Edge mocks You Can't See Me. Some kicks to Cena's face get two and Edge suplexes him down to work on the ribs some more. Cena is sent outside this time and Edge follows to keep hammering away. Back in and Edge gets two off a missile dropkick, setting up a jumping clothesline.

Edge snaps off some jabs to the jaw but has to rake the eyes to get out of a quick FU attempt. Another boot to the face lets Edge go up for a high crossbody, with Cena rolling through for a quick two. A chinlock with a bodyscissors has Cena down again but he powers to his feet. Cena grabs a DDT and they're both down. The comeback is on and the Shuffle connects for no cover thanks to Lita. That doesn't really matter though as Cena hits the FU into the STFU to get the title back.

Rating: B-. The wrestling was good enough but the ending wasn't quite in doubt. As cool as it was to see Edge win the title, I don't think anyone was buying him as being the champion coming into Wrestlemania. Cena is still the biggest star in the world, despite the mixed reactions getting stronger. I'm thinking Edge will be fine though, as the ratings for his shows as champion are hard to ignore.

Post match, Edge doesn't want to talk and storms off. Jim Duggan comes up for the obvious Lita joke. I love that Duggan got into gear for the sake of the cameo. It's such a wrestler thing to do.

Kurt Angle is ready to beat Mark Henry. He's coming in as champion and leaving as champion. Oh and Mark Henry: YOU SUCK!

Smackdown World Title: Mark Henry vs. Kurt Angle

Henry is challenging and has Daivari in his corner. Angle goes for the leg to start and is shrugged off with ease. With the direct approach not working, it's off to some speed to make Henry miss. Henry gets hold of Angle's hand though and starts cranking, before dropping Angle ribs first across the top rope. After a trip to the floor with Henry wrecking the steps for no reason, they head back inside with Henry dropping onto his chest for two. The bearhug goes on but Angle slips out and goes for the

ankle lock. Henry powers out so Angle hits the German suplex.

The Angle Slam connects for two and the straps go down, setting up another ankle lock. Henry powers out again and the referee gets bumped. Angle goes for a chair, which he uses on Daivari for trying to cut him off. Henry takes the chair from Angle, so it's a low blow to slow Henry down. Two chair shots to the head give Angle two so he unhooks a turnbuckle pad. Henry goes face first and it's a rollup with a grab of the rope to retain.

Rating: D. Well that didn't work. Rey Mysterio got a better match out of Henry on Smackdown and Angle had to cheat over and over to survive here. They might have been able to do something with some more time, but at about nine and a half minutes, there wasn't much that they could pull off as Angle had to spend the last few minutes cheating to keep the title. I get protecting Henry, but dang this was a rough sit.

Post match Angle celebrates but the gong sounds. Flanked by druids, Undertaker comes to the ring in a horse drawn chariot before motioning that he wants the title. Some lighting goes off at the posts and the ring collapses to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. There's nothing on here worth seeing, as the Rumble is middle of the road at best, the World Title matches were never in doubt, and nothing was especially good. It's a weird time in WWE as they're trying to gear up for Wrestlemania but other than exploiting Eddie's death, there isn't much that can be done to fire up interest at the moment. Wrestlemania doesn't look promising, but it does feel like it's a long way off, which isn't a good sign either. The show isn't terrible, but it also isn't anything you need to see.

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