

Monday Night Raw – December 23, 1996: Find Something Already

Monday Night Raw

Date: December 23, 1996

Location: Ice Palace, Tampa, Florida

Attendance: 2,925

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

The Royal Rumble is still coming up and other than the show's namesake match, we also have Sid defending the WWF Title against Shawn Michaels in a rematch from the Survivor Series. The show is going to need a few more matches than that and we might find some of them out here. Let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

Intercontinental Title: Marc Mero vs. Hunter Hearst Helmsley

Helmsley is defending and can lose the title by DQ or countout. Goldust and Marlena are watching from the crowd as Mero slugs away to start. Mero chases Jerry Lawler (who helped beat him down last week) to the back before snapping off a Japanese armdrag to Helmsley. Back up and Helmsley sends him outside in a big crash for a ram into the steps.

Mero comes back in with a sunset flip for two and we take a break. We come back with Helmsley grabbing a delayed vertical suplex and dropping the knee for two. Mero is back with a running knee lift and a Samoan drop. The Merosault misses though and the Pedigree retains the title at 9:30.

Rating: C+. As usual, it helps to have a nice match with two people who know what they're doing in the ring. They got a bit of time as well and the story is tied together well enough

after the last few weeks. Helmsley is getting a nice rub out of this as well and that's the big idea of the whole thing.

Post match Mero has to be held back from going after Helmsley again. Helmsley grabs the mic and says this must mean he's facing Goldust at the Royal Rumble. He promises to show Goldust what it's like to be a real man and Marlena will see what it's like to be WITH a real man. That's enough for Goldust to chase Helmsley off.

We look back at Billy Gunn injuring his neck against Bart Gunn last week. Over the weekend, Bart Gunn called in to Livewire to talk about how sorry he was for what happened.

Rocky Maivia vs. Salvatore Sincere

Sunny (impressed with Maivia) is on commentary and Jim Cornette is here with Sincere. Maivia gets shouldered down and nips right back up to hammer away. Sincere's side slam gets two and Sunny is rather concerned about Maivia. That doesn't last long as Maivia fights up, hits a clothesline, and grabs the shoulderbreaker for the pin at 5:47. Sunny is VERY pleased.

Rating: C. Sunny was the star of this match as she had the charisma turned up to about an eleven. Her looks helped get her over but she was a star because she knew how to act in front of a camera. That was on full display here, with the match itself being pretty much nothing more than a way to get Sunny involved.

Here is Sid for a chat (with his always cool SID pyro) as Shawn Michaels is watching from the back. With his music playing throughout, Sid brags about his recent success and promises to keep the title.

Cibernético/Pierroth vs. New Rockers

Mil Mascaras is on Spanish commentary as Pierroth takes

Cassidy down by the arm to start. Back up and Pierroth runs him over and hits a running dropkick. Cibernetico comes in to take Jannetty down but Cassidy gets in a cheap shot from the apron to take over. A basement dropkick to the back of the head has Cibernetico in more trouble and we take a break. We come back with Cibernetico's sunset flip getting two and he raises his boots to cut Cassidy off. Pierroth comes back in for a powerbomb and Cibernetico dives onto Cassidy. A top rope splash gives Pierroth the pin at 7:23.

Rating: C+. Well they were different, but there is a reason that this AAA crossover isn't exactly well remembered. There's just nothing here that makes me care about them, as they're doing some cool moves but that's about it. Give me a reason to get behind them or go against them and it would be that much better.

Post match Mascaras talks about being excited for the Royal Rumble. Vince: "Another award winning interview by JR."

Various wrestlers are in the Royal Rumble.

Bret Hart vs. Razor Ramon

Honky Tonk Man is on commentary due to whatever reason. Hart works on the arm to start as Honky Tonk Man talks about looking for his new protege. Ramon fights back and stomps away, followed by a lifting choke. The reverse chinlock goes on, followed by a weird looking clothesline to the back of the head to put Hart on the floor. Hart wins a slugout on the floor and posts him as we take a break. We come back with the middle rope elbow setting up the Sharpshooter for the submission at 9:37.

Rating: C. Nothing to see here, which is the case with Ramon over and over. There is only so much you can get out of something like he and Diesel, because the two of them still feel like they're cosplays of famous stars. Hart is someone who can do a lot, but even he is limited with this situation

with the focus being on the Honky Tonk Man for a long stretch.

Shawn Michaels still isn't impressed and is coming for the WWF Title.

Overall Rating: C. Gah the Royal Rumble cannot get here soon enough as this was another mediocre, at best, show. They're trying whatever they can do at this point and almost nothing is clicking. The main event scene is working well enough, but that's nowhere near enough to carry a one hour show. More weak stuff here, and that's going to need to change.

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