

Monday Night Raw – December 30, 1996: The Golden Hour

Monday Night Raw

Date: December 30, 1996

Location: Knickerbocker Arena, Albany, New York

Attendance: 6,855

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Jim Ross

It's the last show of the year and we are closing in on the Royal Rumble. In this case that means we have a live show to close out 1996, which should be a decent one. Shawn Michaels is still after the WWF Title and Sid, but he doesn't think much of Bret Hart either. I'm sure nothing will come of that so let's get to it.

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

We open with a recap of Michaels and Hart's recent issues, including at It's Time.

Hart wants to see Michaels face to face.

Michaels says Hart is out of excuses.

Opening sequence.

Faarooq/Steve Austin vs. Jesse Jammes/Savio Vega

Hold on though as Austin jumps Jammes in the aisle (apparently not a fan of his singing). Vega slugs away at Austin and is willing to go it alone but can only get so far. Faarooq plants him with a spinebuster but walks into the spinwheel kick as we see Hart watching in the back. Austin stomps away in the corner and hits a running clothesline for two. Vega fights up again and rolls over for the tag to Jammes, who has managed to get back to his feet (if that wasn't clear).

Jammes gets knocked out to the floor and Austin beats him up even worse, apparently injuring him. Cue Hart in street clothes to take Jammes' place (which apparently he can just do) as we take a break. We come back with Faarooq holding Vega in a chinlock as Jammes has been taken to the back. Austin comes in for his own chinlock and cuts off the comeback with a shot to the face.

Faarooq plants Vega for two more and then does his cannonballs down onto Vega's back. Vega manages to reverse into an electric chair and Hart comes in to clean house. The Sharpshooter is loaded up on Faarooq but the Nation Of Domination comes in for the DQ at 13:30.

Rating: C. Well it was kind of a mess, but it felt like another case of "hey, you need to keep watching to see what is going on". That's a nice thing to see after so much dull stuff, though that doesn't really mean this was good. Hart was only involved at the end and the DQ saved Faarooq, who needs something to do at the moment.

Post match the beatdown is on but Ahmed Johnson, in some very striped pants, makes the save.

Intercontinental Title: Flash Funk vs. Hunter Hearst Helmsley

Funk, with the Funkettes, is challenging. We get a pre-match interview from Helmsley, who says Goldust doesn't deserve to be in the same ring as him. He'll be showing Marlana what a real man does. Speaking of Goldust and Marlana, here they are to watch in the crowd, just like last week. Helmsley jumps him to start but Funk takes him with a quick rollup.

A backdrop and right hand have Helmsley in more trouble but he ducks a spinning crossbody. Helmsley sends him outside as Goldust and Marlana don't look impressed. Back in and Helmsley stomps away before grabbing the reverse chinlock. We take a break and come back with Funk hiptossing his way out of an abdominal stretch but getting suplexed down.

A middle rope fist drop gives Helmsley two and he knocks Funk outside again. Back in and Funk grabs a belly to back suplex so Jerry Lawler gets off commentary to mock Goldust. Funk connects with a moonsault for two so he goes to yell at Lawler. That's enough for Helmsley to get in a belt shot for the win at 12:13.

Rating: C+. Another nice win for Helmsley here, as he's getting protected more often than not. What matters the most is that he is getting a nice boost and becoming a bigger deal. There are wrestlers who want the title and that's only going to make the championship feel that much more important. Keep doing that kind of thing and see where it goes.

Post match Funk beats Helmsley up and crushes him with a 450.

Here are Bret Hart and Shawn Michaels for a face to face chat. Jim Ross brings up that Hart is facing Vader next week, with Michaels saying that he'll be on commentary. Michaels mocks the idea of getting the first question, saying "the almighty" Hart can go first. Hart says that attitude is what he finds disrespectful. When Jose Lothario cost Michaels the WWF Title, he apologized the next day. When Michaels cost Hart the title at It's Time, there was no apology at all.

Hart brings up the Playgirl shoot and suggests it doesn't have much of a female audience. So whose man is Michaels? That's enough for Michaels to take off his jacket as Hart threatens to kick his "a**". Cue Sid, who wants competition, so cue the Undertaker. Vader comes out to jump Undertaker from behind but it's broken up, with Undertaker stalking Vader to the back. Sid and Michaels get into it as well and Pat Patterson, with that amazing sweater, tries to break it up.

Goldust vs. Jerry Lawler

Hunter Hearst Helmsley and Honky Tonk Man are on commentary. We're joined in progress with Helmsley distracting Goldust so Lawler can get in a cheap shot from behind. Lawler chokes away

on the ropes but Goldust fights up with a running clothesline. Helmsley gets up to kidnap Marlina but Marc Mero cuts them off. This leads to a big crash and the countout at 2:49.

Marlina is hurt to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. Definitely a somewhat better show this week, with the focus being more on the titles. If the WWF and Intercontinental Titles are treated as a bigger deal, the whole show is going to feel more important. That's what we need to be seeing here, especially with the Royal Rumble coming up so soon.

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