

Monday Night Raw – August 3, 1998 – Austin vs. Rock

Monday Night Raw

Date: August 3, 1998

Location: San Diego Sports Center, San Diego, California

Attendance: 9,703

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

We're that much closer to Summerslam now as I can actually see this year starting to wind down. The main event tonight is another tag title defense, this time against Owen/Rock which should be interesting. Other than that we have a very infamous scene involving a clothless Val Venis. Let's get to it.

Here's the Nation to open things up. Rock and Owen beat Mankind and Kane on the debut of Heat (it used to be a huge show) to get the shot. They're here to chat now though. Rock says the Nation is awesome and wants his title shot now but here's Sarge instead. Rock says go get the champs but Austin comes out on his own. Taker comes out as well but Kane pops up on the stage. Austin goes in and gets beaten down but Taker goes after Kane. Mankind jumps him. There's a referee here. Is this a match? Oh there are like five referees so this is just a brawl. Austin gets a chair and clears the ring.

Marc Mero vs. Golga

Now this is a strange choice. Sable comes out with Golga for some reason. She says she has a surprise for Jackie as well. Kurrgan and Silva come out in tuxedos and sing the Miss America song. It's Luna to cancel out Jackie. Sable jumps in on commentary. Ramming Golga's head into the buckle doesn't work and neither does punching him. Mero avoids a charge and takes Golga down with a middle rope clothesline. Jackie trips Golga so Luna breaks flowers over her back. Silva chokeslams

Mero and Golga wins with an Earthquake.

Rating: D. Bad match here but the Oddities would begin to get a moderate push. They would have the ICP do their intro at Summerslam which to be fair was pretty cool. Kurrigan dancing makes up for almost anything though and the Oddities theme was always kind of catchy so why not. This was always kind of a guilty pleasure for me.

Brawl For All Quarter-Finals: Godfather vs. Scorpio

Severn has pulled out so Godfather is back in. Severn says he has nothing to prove so there's no need for him to be in there. Godfather I think debuts the offering the women instead of fighting deal. Scorpio says let's fight and someone needs to check on Lawler. Godfather wins on points.

The Outlaws says they'll take out Kane and Mankind. Roadie gets in a good line: we're not afraid of you. We're afraid of what we'll do to put you do.

Kane/Mankind vs. New Age Outlaws

The Outlaws jump Mankind on the floor while Kane makes his entrance. Mankind and Billy start but it's quickly off to Roadie. The shaky knee gets two. The monsters take over with Kane pounding on Road Dogg. Billy comes in to try a double suplex but the Outlaws get dropped. Out to the floor and Mankind cracks Road Dogg with the chair. Billy hits Mankind and is clotheslined down by Kane. The Outlaws get Kane alone and hit the double suplex but Mankind uses the Claw on Gunn. This allows Kane to tombstone Roadie for the pin.

Rating: D+. This was more of a brawl and like last week, I don't think anyone gave the Outlaws a chance at all. That being said, last week was a much better match because it was more wrestling based, as well as having Undertaker sell some stuff. It's not a horrible match but it was pretty much an annoyance to the monsters rather than a competitive match.

Hawk apologizes to the fans for last week.

Hawk vs. Jeff Jarrett

Hawk starts off with his power stuff and Jeff doesn't really listen to Tennessee Lee. Hopefully that leads to Lee's dismissal. A charge misses and Hawk's shoulder hits the post. Jeff takes over and hits a Russian legsweep. Lee tries to get his belt buckle off for Jeff to use. The delay lets Hawk hit a neckbreaker for the pin. I don't ever remember Hawk winning a singles match without it being against a team they were feuding against.

Southern Justice jumps the LOD post match and Droz comes out to cancel out Jarrett.

Here's Vince with his goon squad. He talks about the paths of Austin and Undertaker intersecting at Summerslam. Tonight there's going to be a roadblock though as they'll lose the titles. Vince brings up the post main event attack last match, implying that Taker was in on it when Kane and Mankind jumped Austin.

Vince requests that Taker come out now to explain himself. Taker comes out to new music and Austin follows him before anything can be said. Austin says he threw Taker a beer because he looked thirsty. Austin has the Smoking Skull title now. I'm not sure if it made its debut here or not. I didn't notice it last week. Austin throws the mic to Vince and leaves the tag belts behind.

Taker shouts at Austin to come back and says that's what Vince wants Austin to do. He says Vince wants to drive a wedge between them, so come and take what belongs to Austin, meaning one of the title belts. Austin does so, ticking off Vince. He tries to leave again but Taker says that Austin is the safest guy in the company right now, at least until Summerslam.

Rock says he doesn't care what's going on with the tag

champions because they'll be winning the titles tonight.

HHH vs. X-Pac

Winner gets Rock, presumably at Summerslam, for the title. HHH is introduced as HHH rather than HHH Hunter Hearst Helmsley. Tilt-a-whirl gets two for HHH. HHH controls early with his power advantage, which is an interesting sight given that he's still skinny here. Pac comes back with a spinwheel kick to take HHH down. The Game comes back with a jumping knee (different than his usual one) which gets two. Neckbreaker gets two. Facebuster by HHH but Pac hits a great looking spin kick for two. Pac loads up the Bronco Buster but Chyna trips him. That lets HHH win with the Pedigree. Interesting plot twist.

Rating: C+. Not bad and HHH seemed to be surprised by that ending. I don't think they would fight or anything after this but it set up one of my favorite matches ever which launched both HHH and Rock about five levels up on the card. The explanation from Chyna should be interesting.

Pac gets in HHH's face post match but they don't fight.

Val Venis/Taka Michinoku vs. Kai En Tai

Teioh and Yamaguchi are with Kai En Tai here, along with Yamaguchi's wife. Val starts with Togo and it's time to bump and grind. Oh wait Teioh is on the team and not Funaki. Not that it matters as Taka turns heel, joining Kai En Tai and attacking Val. The match is thrown out.

Taka reveals that Yamaguchi's wife is his sister, which makes her a disgrace to him. Val is out so they carry him to the back.

Post break they're still carrying him.

European Title: D'Lo Brown vs. Dan Severn

Brown says he's wrestling this under protest because most of San Diego isn't from America. Brown controls to start and Henry comes out to second him. Blackman comes out as well. Severn starts slowly but hooks a few throws to take over. And here's Shamrock to beat up Brown for the DQ. Another unrateable match.

Edge jumps D'Lo as he leaves and then leaves as well.

Kai En Tai beats on Venis some more.

Here's Tiger Ali Singh, basically Ted DiBiase Sr. but Indian and minus the talent and charisma. He offers any woman \$500 per piece of clothing they take off. His servant Babu gets to pick the woman, and of course she's rather manly looking. She takes off her top and it's disturbing. She goes to take her bra off and Singh says no. He'll give her \$500 for every piece of clothing she'll put on.

We cut to the back and Val is taken into a room with the chopping block and Yamaguchi has a sword. Uh...POLICE???

Tag Titles: Owen Hart/The Rock vs. Steve Austin/Undertaker

The Nation tries to jump them to start and it's a big brawl. Taker and Owen officially start and Owen goes down to Old School. Off to Austin who walks into a spinwheel kick. Rock comes in and you can feel the fans getting into it quickly. I wonder if they had any idea what they had here. Taker comes in and we go from some of the best chemistry ever to some of the worst. I never remember a very good Rock vs. Undertaker match.

Just like the Outlaws did last week, the challengers work over the knee of the Undertaker. Owen kicks his head off but Taker manages to bring Austin back in. Austin runs over Owen and even tries the Sharpshooter (BIG pop for that). Back to Rock and never mind as Owen comes in before anything happens. Owen tries a Sharpshooter but Austin kicks him off. Rock comes in and hits Austin low but the referee missed it. Austin and Rock

slug it out and clothesline each other. Double tag brings in Taker and Owen and a chokeslam gets two. Austin pulls Rock to the floor and a tombstone retains the titles.

Rating: C. Not as good as last week but there's no way you can screw up Rock vs. Austin. There's a chemistry there that might be the greatest of all time. The match was more of a brawl than a match but there was a better level of a threat this week than last week. It's pretty clear who will take the titles off Austin/Taker but it's still fun to watch.

Post match the monsters attack again. Kane swings a chair but hits Foley by mistake. Taker gets the chair but hits Mankind with it (poor guy) when he had a clean opening at Kane. Austin puts Rock through a table and the Outlaws runs out.

We cut to the back where the door is broken down. Val is sans clothes and Yamaguchi has the sword. He pulls it back and the lights go out. We hear a thud and the show is over.

Overall Rating: C. Not their best show again here but it has a pretty memorable moment. Also we got Rock vs. HHH set up. I think that could use a gimmick added on. Other than that there isn't much here, especially not in the way of in ring stuff. That's par for the course for the Attitude Era though so it's not a huge issue.

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Thought Of The Day

The Attitude Era Raw I'm watching (August 3, 1998, as in the one where Val almost has his Valbowski chopped off) is rated TV PG. Why is it then that the fans freak out when the most popular era ever was rated the same as it is today and what do you think their defense of the ratings being the same would be?

Superstars of Wrestling – January 16, 1988 – They're Talking About My Birthday

Superstars of Wrestling

Date: January 16, 1988

Location: Von Braun Center, Huntsville, Alabama

Attendance: 8,500

Commentators: Bruno Sammartino, Vince McMahon, Jesse Ventura

It's another show here but we've got a new location at least. This is where the first TNA show took place but that was about fourteen years from now. This is six days before the first Royal Rumble but we've got a few weeks of TV to get through before that's acknowledged, which will likely get on my nerves. Let's get to it.

The marketing boss of the arena welcomes us to the show. That's different.

As always, the announcers open the show and we get the opening sequence. Vince tells us who's coming today.

Strike Force vs. Dusty Wolfe/Iron Mike Sharpe

Strike force are tag champions but this is non title. Martel starts with Sharpe and we get to something very special to me. As usual we get a voiceover from the Fink talking about an upcoming house show, this one at a high school on Wednesday night, February 3. That night, I was being born. Tito vs. Wolfe now and the champs' dominance continues. Tito gets beaten down for a few seconds until it's off to Martel who cleans house with dropkicks and Tito's Figure Four ends this.

Rating: D. Boring match, but the announcement of the house show was really cool to hear. Strike Force is a team I've always liked and they were pretty underrated. For some reason despite holding the titles for six months, they're viewed as transitional champions. I've never really gotten that.

UPDATE! With Craig DeGeorge!

Hogan vs. Andre II is announced for February 5, LIVE on NBC. We look at Mania III and the controversy over the slam. Not the famous one, the one early in the match. Andre jumped Hogan on a SNME and beat him down.

Van Van Horne vs. Greg Valentine

Yes, that's the right name for the jobber. The squashing continues and we hear more about that February 3 house show. There's a butterfly suplex for two and we hear from some fans if Brutus Beefcake should be allowed to cut hair. Valentine pulls up off a pin and drops an elbow. Figure Four ends this.

House show ads.

Bam Bam Bigelow vs. Tiger Chung Lee

Bigelow is the second biggest face in the company at this point. A bunch of headbutts, a bunch of forearms, a few slams, slingshot splash and we're done.

Ron Bass vs. Rex King

Bass is an evil cowboy. He wears a black hat and names his rope. Scott Casey, a cowboy who wears a white hat, says that Texas doesn't like Ron Bass. Ok then. Bass allows a few free shots before finishing with more or less a Pedigree minutes the arm trap.

Hogan and Bigelow talk about being all ready to face DiBiase and Andre.

We get a clip of Matilda being dognapped.

British Bulldogs vs. Gino Carabello/Brian Costello

Costello is a long running Superstars jobber. Take a guess as to what happens in this one. Smith powerslams him but doesn't cover. Dynamite comes in for the delayed vertical and we cut to the platform for a shot of the Islanders and Heenan. Dynamite gets the pin with a belly to back superplex. Total squash.

The Islanders and Heenan have dog food. Heenan says Tunney knows where the dog is so go find him. The Bulldogs run off and Heenan says they're innocent.

Don Muraco vs. Dave Wagner

It's confirmed that Matilda's whereabouts are known but not her condition. Not much contract so far until he clotheslines Wagner in the corner and pounds him down like he owes Muraco money. Muraco goes up and drives his knee into Wagner's chest. Tombstone ends this squash.

Rating: D. Another dull match but seeing the tombstone in the 80s is interesting. Muraco wouldn't be around a ton longer before he headed to the indies like the dreadful UWF. Other than that, there's not much here but it's a squash so what exactly was I looking for in the first place?

Bad News is coming.

Ted DiBiase vs. Brady Boone

DiBiase says he's going to buy the world title. Boone gets some slams and the fans erupt. DiBiase was hated man. Ted slams him down, goes to the middle rope and falls backwards with an elbow for the pin. I like that.

House show stuff, including shows where DiBiase would team with Andre against Bigelow and Hogan. Ted would have the title at that point for all of one day.

The Bulldogs say Matilda is in bad shape.

Vince tells us what's coming next week and that's it.

Overall Rating: D. They packed in a lot of stuff but the announcement of Hogan vs. Andre II was bigger than anything else. The Bulldogs getting their dog back was a storyline development to end a quick story. Other than that though, there isn't much going on at all here but we'd be getting to the tournament stuff soon enough.

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Monday Night Raw – July 27, 1998 – You'll Chop WHAT?

Monday Night Raw

Date: July 27, 1998

Location: Arrowhead Pond, Anaheim, California

Attendance: 12,019

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

It's the night after Fully Loaded and we have new tag champions in Austin/Undertaker. We're officially headed to Summerslam now which I believe is in four weeks. They'll be defending tonight in the main event against the Outlaws. Other than that there isn't much else to talk about. Let's get to it.

We open with stills of Taker tombstoning Kane to win the titles and then leaving with both belts.

Here's Taker to open the show with both belts. He talks about beating Kane last night and now he and Austin are the champions. They'll be champions but they'll never be partners until Austin apologizes. That brings out Undertaker who doesn't believe what he just heard. Vince says that he believes there's a conspiracy because he would have done the same thing Taker had done last night if he was trying to screw Austin. It took three tombstones to beat Kane at Wrestlemania but one last night.

Therefore, if anyone deserves an apology, it's Vince. Vince is hurt after the chokeslam last week so Taker should apologize. Tonight the new champions defend against the Outlaws. Vince says he won't leave until he gets an apology. Here's Austin who tells Vince to leave because he's got nothing to say to him. As for the apology, here's a middle finger for Taker instead.

Vader vs. D'Lo Brown

Vader pounds him down to start and Brown looks for mercy in the ropes. Brown fights back with rights of his own and slams Vader like it's nothing. He does it again and hits a moonsault for two. They go to the outside and Vader takes off the chest protector. A splash on the floor is enough for the countout.

Rating: C-. It says a lot when you get slammed by D'Lo. I mean...he's D'Lo Brown. This went nowhere but I think the idea was to keep Vader strong so that when he's jobbing for everyone else there's still the tiniest bit of value to a win over him. The match itself was nothing though.

Here's Droz's World, which is a weird kind of reality show thing.

Brawl For All Quarter-Finals: Bart Gunn vs. Steve Williams

Bart knocks him out in the third round, thereby making WWF want to blow up the whole thing because Williams was the guy they wanted to push as well as making JR's soul die a little bit.

Ad for Sunday Night Heat in a mockup of the 60 Minutes clock.

Williams is helped to the back while Owen Hart comes out. Owen says he proved himself last night and issues an open challenge. Cue Jason Sensation in his Owen attire. He wants them to stand nose to nose, which means they'll be miles apart. Jason starts a nugget chant but when Owen comes after him, we get Owen's real opponent.

Owen Hart vs. Dan Severn

Owen hits him low and we're ready to go. Severn is in street clothes. Owen tries a quick Sharpshooter but Severn gets out. Shamrock runs in for the DQ after about 40 seconds.

Ken immediately starts choking Owen out and Severn has to put Ken in a Dragon Sleeper to break it up. Blackman comes down to break up the breaking up.

After a break, Shamrock doesn't want to talk.

Farroq/Scorpio vs. Disciples of Apocalypse

Bradshaw is on commentary and is very mad at Terry Funk.

Scorpio and 8-Ball start us off but it's off to Farroq quickly. Skull comes in and does about as well as his brother. JR has no idea which is which. The bikers get Farroq on the floor so Scorpio hits a huge dive onto both of them. Scorpio is in legal now and takes a tilt-a-whirl slam for two.

Lawler agrees with Bradshaw about Funk so Bradshaw grabs him by the throat and says call the match. Scorpio hits what we would call Trouble in Paradise to bring in Farroq. He knocks one of DOA to the floor and Bradshaw goes off. He jumps Farroq as well and it's a DQ. Too short to rate but it was there for Bradshaw.

A brawl breaks out post match and Bradshaw leaves.

Rock isn't worried about defending the title against HHH and X-Pac tonight.

Intercontinental Title: HHH vs. X-Pac vs. The Rock

It's a triple threat, not a handicap match. That's a new concept at this time so JR explaining it is more acceptable. It's HHH's birthday. DX double teams him to start and it's dominance. Rock manages to clothesline X-Pac down but gets taken down immediately by the future Game. There's the jumping knee to the face and it sounds like the fans are singing Happy Birthday.

Pedigree looks to pin Rock but Pac breaks it up because he wants to be the champion. I know it's a cliched path for these matches to take but it makes perfect sense. HHH is sent to the apron and Rock whips X-Pac into him, sending HHH into the table. It's basically a one on one now with Rock in control. Samoan Drop gets two. Rock hits the People's Elbow and the place comes unglued. You can see it coming.

It only got two so there's a Rock Bottom. Even JR wants to cheer Rock at this point but can't quite do it. Everyone is back in now and HHH takes Rock down. X-Factor looks to pin

Rock but HHH breaks it up. Rock rolls to the floor while DX implodes. He walks out and it's a countout, so we have two winners but no title change. All hail Russo?

Rating: C-. This was back in the day when they didn't have the idea perfected yet. Rock's popularity is scary and I don't think they knew what was coming when they finally turned him after Summerslam. Now they turned him right back at Survivor Series but I think it was more of a preview for his real face push in 1999.

The Outlaws say they're not concerned about what just happened. They are however concerned about getting the tag titles back.

Brakkus vs. Jesus

Brakkus is a German musclehead and I think you can make your own jokes about his opponent. Spinebuster ends this quick. Brakkus would never be seen on Raw again.

Val is in the shower with Yamaguchi-San's wife. She looks better with wet hair.

Val Venis vs. Brian Christopher

Before the match, Kai En Tai comes out...with swords. Christopher jumps him to start and does that evil laugh of his. Kai En Tai has salamis now. Brian tries a piledriver but gets caught in an Alabama Slam. Scotty distracts Val and Brian gets a DDT. Never mind as Val finishes with a fisherman's suplex. This was another quick match.

Too Much double teams Val until Taka makes the save. Kai En Tai challenges Val to a match and then says after that "I choppy choppy your pee pee." And yes, that's what he means. He cuts one of the salamis with the sword.

Godfather/Mark Henry vs. Legion of Doom

Godfather is officially a pimp. Hawk is stumbling around and not in his shoulder pads. He falls getting into the ring and is drunk. Animal and Henry start things off. Off to Godfather and Animal works his arm. Animal reaches for a tag but Hawk is asleep. Henry drops a leg for two. Animal powerslams Godfather for the same result. Back to Henry who can't even do a shoulder block right at this point. The Warriors try the Doomsday Device and Hawk falls off the top. Death Valley Driver pins Animal.

Rating: D. This was an angle that I was never comfortable with. It ended badly and naturally in Lexington because bad things happen in this town. Anyway, this was the start of the angle that more or less ended their careers and that's probably the best thing for them as their age had taken a big toll on them.

It's time for the trophy presentation for the bikini contest that Sable won last night. Lawler gets to present it of course. Mero and Jackie are here for this as well. Sable loses because body paint doesn't count so Jackie wins, so says Vince. Sable says she knows she won and she isn't surprised at this at all. She wishes Vince was man enough to tell her to her face. That brings out Vince who rips into Sable and calls himself a knight in shining armor. He can replace her but won't as long as she doesn't become ungrateful. Sable takes her t-shirt off and has on a bikini.

Tag Titles: New Age Outlaws vs. Steve Austin/Undertaker

Austin and Gunn start it and we've got a beach ball which Austin punts HARD. Billy tells Austin to kiss it, Austin flips him off. The first hard contact is a clothesline to take Gunn down but he bails to avoid the Stunner. Austin goes after him but Roadie gets in a shot. Off to Taker and Road Dogg the the Dead Man dominating. Old School takes the canine down.

He sets for the chokeslam but Billy chop blocks him. The

Outlaws work on Taker's knee with Road Dogg trying a stepover toe hold. Taker counters that into a leg bar in something modern Taker would use. He pounds Road Dogg in the corner but Roadie ducks a big boot and chop blocks the Dead Man down. After more work on the leg we get some heel (I guess?) miscommunication. Billy misses a splash and here's Austin. He cleans house and pins Road Dogg with a Stunner in about 20 seconds.

Rating: C. This was a much better match than I was expecting. The Outlaws worked a decent heel match here as they went after the leg as they probably should have. Austin and Taker were never in any real danger so this was more of a formality than a match, and that's ok.

Austin throws Taker a beer post match which he eventually drinks. Kane and Mankind run in to attack Austin and Taker helps his partner to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. Not a bad show but it's pretty clear that they're just going through onto the next week until we get to Summerslam. The whole conspiracy went on forever and never really had a definitive ending. It would result in Vince going super evil though which was pretty interesting in the latter part of the year. Not a great show but not bad.

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Clash of the Champions Count-Up – #22: It's WCW, It's From 1993 And It's... Good?

Clash of the Champions 22

Date: January 13, 1993

Location: The Mecca, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Attendance: 4,000

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jesse Ventura

Well this is it. This is the 9th level of torment. It's the absolute greatest form of torture in recorded history. This, is WCW in 1993. I'll wait for your hearts to start beating again. WCW was great at times, but when they were bad sweet merciful crap they were bad. This is some of their worst. The main event is an 8 man cage match pitting the evil team against the good team. That's not a simple way of putting it. That's what they say in the opening video. Let's get this over with so we can move on to something more pleasant like a root canal.

Tony and Cowboy Bill Watts open the show as Watts talks about the old days because having the actual boss on TV was something that WCW thought was a good idea for no apparent reason at all.

Van Hammer is hurt and off the main event tonight but there's going to be a replacement named Vinnie Vegas for the arm wrestling contest that Van Hammer is in. No mention is made of him not being in the main event. The arm wrestling thing is big news though baby!

Erik Watts, Bill's son, has been arrested. Dang they're not hiding anything here are they? Bill: Erik has always been like my son. Maybe because he is your son you stupid, stupid man. Erik is suspended tonight. He happens to be here for an

interview though and the booing is really loud. He was supposed to fight Cactus Jack and can barely talk. Erik was a guy that was supposed to be awesome, but only his dad thought that. He was absolutely terrible so Bill put him on the upper midcard because he could.

Ross and Ventura open the show and talk about the main event like sane people would do. This was one of JR's last major shows so Eric was about to take over.

Cactus Jack vs. Johnny B. Badd

Cactus, a heel, gets a noticeable face pop. Badd is rather effeminate tonight to put it mildly. This stems off of Starrcade 92 where they were Lethal Lottery partners and they brawled to lose the match. Jesse points out that there are signs for Cactus Jack everywhere and it makes him wonder what is wrong with these people.

Naturally Cactus makes it a brawl (aww why not MAKE IT A WIN?) but Badd wrestles him which works far better for him. Oddly enough he's a brawler by nature who is wrestling to his advantage. That says a lot about Jack's brawling abilities. Small package gets one for Badd. Top rope sunset flip doesn't connect and Cactus drops an elbow for the pin and a BIG pop.

Rating: C. This was confusing to say the least as Cactus had gotten very over all of a sudden and WCW wasn't exactly sure what was going on with it. Not a bad match but it was a very quick match so it's not like you could say much about it at all. Fun little match though and the face pop is interesting if nothing else.

There's a new NWA Champion and his name is the Great Muta. He won it at the WCW/NJPW Supershow III which I recently reviewed.

We get more or less a music video of 2 Cold Scorpio which shifts into a PSA and then back into a video. And hey he's in

the ring. Oh never mind it's a highlight video now. I won't get tired of Scorpio in the ring though so this is fine by me.

2 Cold Scorpio vs. Scott Flamingo

It's an ECW preview match here as Flamingo would change species later as he turned into Raven. Scorpio spins out of some stuff and we have an early standoff. He likes to use a lot of cartwheels. We head to the floor early with Flamingo taking a flying shot to the back. Back in with Scotty getting a nice running dropkick before a dive over the top to the floor, taking out the Cold dude.

Small package gets two for Scorpio but he's in trouble so far. We hit the chinlock as they need a bit of a break. Scorpio speeds things up a bit again and hits the Tumbleweed for two. A spinning legdrop in the corner sets up the original 450 to end this though. Far better than you would expect.

Rating: B. This was just four minutes but DANG it was a good four minutes. Scorpio is a guy I've always liked and this was no exception at all. He looked great out there and Flamingo was no slouch either. They were both MOVING out there in a match that would have been a good Cruiserweight match about five years later. Good stuff.

What the heck? This show was supposed to suck remember.

Video on Thundercage which is the main event tonight. In essence it's Hell in a Cell. We hear about how Rude is out with an injury and Team Vader needed a replacement. Cactus and Orndorff had a match with the winner getting the spot. Jack took out Vader's manager and got jumped during the match by Vader, more or less pushing him to the brink of a face turn without actually going the other way. Later in the night Cactus drilled all of them with a shovel. Dang I want to watch Halloween Havoc 93 and the Texas Death Match now. If you don't get it, Cactus in 93 was AWESOME.

Brad Armstrong vs. Chris Benoit

This is more or less Benoit's debut. He had a one night appearance back in a tag tournament but that's more or less forgotten here. Armstrong is an incredibly solid wrestler that most people haven't seen much of which is a shame. We hear about how Benoit survived the Dungeon so they know he's good. To give you an idea of how good Armstrong is, he's not only keeping up with Benoit but he's even beating him to a degree in technical style.

To the surprise of no one we're on the mat with more or less a test of strength going on. Benoit powers up in a bridge and Jesse is impressed. Armstrong does the same thing as this is good stuff so far. Some moron shouts boring and is promptly booed out of the building. Armstrong gets a nice reversal to send Benoit to the floor. Back in Armstrong hits some more dropkicks and back to the arm. Basic stuff but well done so far.

Benoit gets the suplex drop onto the top rope as he's pretty firmly in control at the moment. Benoit gets a running springboard clothesline (think the dropkick that Jericho does and the cross body that Christian does) to Armstrong on the apron to take us to the floor. It's very clear that this is pre-steroids for the pre-Crippler. Snap suplex gets two.

Armstrong gets a knee in but it gets him nowhere as Benoit hooks a backbreaker to get himself out of trouble. Diving headbutt misses though and here comes Armstrong. And never mind as Benoit hooks the Dragon Suplex out of nowhere (full nelson suplex) to get the pin. Sweet bridge on the pin.

Rating: B. I really liked this one but then again when you have two talented guys out there this is what you get. Nice little story being told as Armstrong was able to beat Benoit with basic stuff but once they cranked things up Benoit was far too much for him. It shows that Benoit can turn on the

jets and blow people away, which is a good sign for him in this impressive debut.

We get some clips of the Rock N Roll Express in Smokey Mountain Wrestling which is pretty much brand new at this point. They're going to be at Superbrawl which is one of WCW's first steps into cross-promotional. We see them beating the Heavenly Bodies for the Smokey Mountain Tag Titles. Ok so we don't see the title change and the clip just kind of ends. Ok then.

Jesse is in the ring to do his arm wrestling thing. This was a worked tournament thing he did which went nowhere. Van Hammer, the winner of the tournament, is hurt though so it's Tony Atlas vs. Vinnie Vegas, more commonly known as Kevin Nash. Nash is allegedly left handed so we'll use the left arms. Atlas sounds like he's in labor and Nash wins after a LONG contest that the fans aren't exactly thrilled with.

Back from a break with Vader's challenge to Sting for the White Castle of Fear. This is just Vader standing in snow instead of the official video which is Sting in a helicopter and going to a party with more or less S&M, an orgy and midgets. It was indeed weird but it was WCW in 1993 so there you go.

Larry Zbyszko talks about the tournament for the #1 contender spot to the US Title. The finals turned out to be Dustin Rhodes vs. Ricky Steamboat but since Rude was injured the finals became for the title instead of the title shot with Rhodes winning the belt. We get clips of all four first round matches, none of which are anything special at all. We throw in clips of the semi-finals just because they can.

Wrecking Crew vs. Johnny Gunn/Tom Zenk

One of the Wrecking Crew is a dead ringer for Animal and upon further review yeah it's his brother. Gunn is Tom Brandi who some of you may have heard of but if not he's not worth

looking up. Rage starts for the Wrecking Crew against Z-Man. This is power vs. speed with speed clearing the ring to start. HUGE dive by Gunn to take down both guys on the floor. That was sweet looking!

Heel miscommunication gets a rollup for two for Gunn. The Wrecking Crew takes over with basic power stuff as this isn't much at all. A facejam by Gunn brings in Zenk. We get a really awkward spot as Fury was supposed to charge out of the corner into a backdrop but he just stopped, making Zenk look like an idiot. I mean more of an idiot than he typically does.

The referee ducks a clothesline and the Wrecking Crew continues to take over. Z-Man (they use that name and Zenk interchangeably) gets a boot up to block an axe handle off the middle rope and Gunn comes in. Forearm/clothesline takes down Fury who has been in there forever. And then a shot to the back of Gunn results in a move called the Wrecking Ball where Fury gets Gunn over his shoulder and Rage jumps off with a forearm smash to end it.

Rating: D. This was really rather weak and definitely the worst match of the night so far. This wasn't anything special at all with the Wrecking Crew more or less disappearing after this and Zenk/Gunn never meaning anything at all. Pretty weak match that went nowhere at all but at least it was only about six minutes long.

Larry Z talks to the Hollywood Blondes and their title match against Steamboat/Douglas up next. They aren't called the Blondes yet but it's coming.

Sting comes out and accepts Vader's challenge. Simmons and Rhodes, his partners tonight, say they're not worried.

Vader's team says they're ready for a handicap match. Race says they'll get back at Cactus Jack eventually, which resulted in a really stupid angle which resulted in a really good match. They beat up Barbarian because he's Jack's friend

to make it 3-3 because they're very stupid.

We get highlights from the first two SuperBrawls to give us a reason to buy the third one. The show wound up being not bad. This eats up a few minutes. Ok make that several minutes.

Steamboat and Douglas say they'll keep the titles. They're the Unified Tag Champions which was something far too complicated that crippled WCW in the second half of 92 but hey, whatever the NWA says goes right?

Unified Tag Titles: Shane Douglas/Ricky Steamboat vs. Steve Austin/Brian Pillman

Both teams are in the ring when we get back. The time limit is thirty minutes here instead of the usual hour which allegedly is going to cause faster pin attempts. Steamboat and Austin start us off and do I need to explain to you why this is awesome? Steamboat and Douglas send the Blondes to the floor almost immediately as this is going to be fast paced for sure.

Steamboat won't shake Austin's hand so Austin pounds on him. Off to Pillman and we unleash the chops. Shane comes in off the top as we talk about Bruno Sammartino for some reason. The champions tag in very quickly and Pillman hurts his knee on a leapfrog attempt. Stu Hart trained him though so of course he's faking. He tries a springboard cross body but gets the heck powerslammed out of him by Shane for two.

Shane works on Austin's arm as the future bald man is in trouble. Brian breaks up a pin as this is completely one sided. Steamboat throws Pillman onto Austin and Stone Cole is in trouble. Finally the challengers take over off a suplex and some double teaming. They work over Steamboat's back with a slam on the floor. Steamboat manages a sunset flip but Austin has the referee.

Ricky drills Pillman to put him into the steel but Austin saves the tag with a suplex for two. Steamboat counters a body

vice but his back is hurt pretty badly at this point. Pillman sets for his springboard clothesline but down goes Austin as Steamboat ducks. A double chop STILL can't bring in Douglas but Ricky gets a belly to back to Pillman to put both of them down.

FINALLY the hot tag brings in Douglas and the beating is on. That's good as the roof is now off. Dropkicks and clotheslines all around as Steamboat is amazingly up after about three seconds. Belly to belly out of nowhere drills Pillman but Austin (illegally) comes off the top (screw you Bill Watts) but it only gets two. Austin is finally like screw this and drills Shane with the belt for the DQ and a bunch of blood. Big heel beatdown follows and they leave with the stolen belts. They would get them for real in a few months.

Rating: B+. Fun match all the way around as they played the NWA formula to the letter here. You can often tell how good someone is when they can have great tag matches and this is a great example of that. They put on a great show here and the whole thing worked very well. Fun match and more or less the first of the Blondes great matches.

We see a clip of Vader winning the world title back from Ron Simmons and messing up his shoulder. Jesse brings out Race and Vader who say Vader is awesome. Simmons comes out and says he's going to get his title back, which of course he never did. The fight is on with Simmons THROWING Vader down in a spinebuster. That was awesome looking.

Simmons goes after Race but Vader destroys Simmons and reinjures his shoulder with some shoulderbreakers on the floor. Sting and Rhodes come out for the save as it looks like it'll be 3-2 in the main event.

Sting/Dustin Rhodes vs. Vader/Barry Windham/Paul Orndorff

This is the Thundercage match which like I said is more or less the Cell without a top but it comes up at an angle so

it's more or less impossible to climb in and out. Sting vs. Vader is always awesome so this is going to be good. You can't be disqualified but you have to tag in and out. Sting and Orndorff start us off. Ok so only Vader is chilling on the apron. Ah there it is as the former tag partners in Rhodes and Windham start us off.

Everyone not named Vader is in street clothes here. Off to Sting vs. Vader which is one of those feuds that always worked very well. Sting hammers away and the Splash hits in the corner but Vader doesn't go down. Sting pounds him down into the corner and the fans are WAY into it. Everyone but Dustin comes in as he more or less lets Sting fight everyone off on his own.

The numbers catch up with Sting though as Vader goes up and half kills Sting with a shoulder block. A splash misses though and Sting sends him to the floor. Is Dustin allergic to HELPING HIS PARTNER or something? Off to Orndorff who hammers away on Sting. Windham comes in now as Rhodes has been totally worthless in this. Vader gets a corner splash on Sting who might have been in there seven minutes straight now or so.

FINALLY Dustin comes in and since he's a cowboy he can beat up anyone. And here's Cactus Jack with bolt cutters to break in and hit every heel in sight with a boot. Ladies and gentlemen, we have a face turn. Orndorff goes for the Piledriver on Dustin but gets popped by said boot and Cactus falls on him for the pin. Sting's music plays for some reason.

Rating: C+. The cage here meant a grand total of nothing. They beat Sting up pretty well but Dustin did nothing for the most part. Not a bad match and the crowd was way into it, but dude the whole cage aspect was completely pointless here. It set up Sting vs. Vader...somehow and I guess advances Jack vs. Orndorff which someone thought was a good idea. Anyway not bad but kind of a head scratcher.

Cactus says he's in over his head but not as much as Orndorff is. He's getting into that zone of his on the mic here.

Overall Rating: B. This was light years ahead of what I was expecting. You can kind of see how odd it is in the main event as Sting vs. Vader were about to feud or were feuding I guess but it was still pretty confusing. The NWA was clearly getting on their nerves here and when Flair came back the NWA's days were numbered. That being said, this wasn't horrible at all but it was a bit confusing and odd at times. Still though, good wrestling overrides that so definitely a good show.

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Projected Mania Card

We pretty much have a good idea of what the upper half of Mania looks like at this point.

Raw World Title: Jericho vs. Punk

Smackdown World Title: Sheamus vs. Bryan

Undertaker vs. HHH III

Cena vs. Rock

My take:

I'm worried about this year's show. Other than Jericho vs. Punk and maybe Rock vs. Cena, is there any real drama in most of those matches? The Streak will not end, Sheamus looks pretty much like a lock to win the title, and I'd be pretty surprised if Rock didn't tap to Cena to end the show.

What do you think of these so far? What do you think the rest of the card is going to look like?

Elimination Chamber 2012 – Oh Sorry I Have The Wrong Show. I Wanted The One About ELIMINATION CHAMBERS.

Elimination Chamber 2012

Date: February 19, 2012

Location: Bradley Center, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Commentators: Michael Cole, Booker T, Jerry Lawler

This is the final stop on the Road to Wrestlemania, or the beginning of the road, depending on how you look at it. The even money would seem to be on both of the champions retaining here but you can never be sure. I mean, Santino is scheduled to be in this match so how sure can you be? Let's get to it.

The opening video is exactly what you would imagine it is.

The Chamber is lowered.

Raw World Title: CM Punk vs. Dolph Ziggler vs. Chris Jericho vs. R-Truth vs. The Miz vs. Kofi Kingston

Jericho enters last due to winning a match on Raw two weeks ago. Punk and Kofi start us off. Naturally the two faces wrestle as faces. Also they're not going to use a lot of energy this early in the match. Kofi goes to the ropes but

might have slipped a bit. It was nothing bad though. They trade pinfall reversals and Kofi avoids the GTS. Punk avoids the Boom Drop and they go to the outside. Well as to the outside as you can go.

Punk blocks a kick and slingshots Kofi into the pod which has a great thud sound effect. Back into the ring but Punk has hurt his hip. It was probably due to that time when he got slammed out on the chain and landed on his hip, but that's just speculation. Here's the first pod opening and it's....a guy in pink trunks. The new idea they want to push is that it can go from a one on one match to a triple threat and so on. Great, another thing to have drilled into our heads.

Ziggler goes after Punk and does pullups on the Chamber wall. He splashes Kofi back in the ring and we're told that pins have to take place in there. Good thing to clarify. A splash attempt on Punk misses and everyone is in some trouble. Punk and Kofi double team Dolph and go to the outside for a double springboard. In a cool looking visual, they both dive at Dolph but collide in the air off the springboards due to Dolph ducking.

Dolph can't cover though so we open pod #2 after about three minutes. It's R-Truth who works on the pink one. He's no Bret Hart. Truth knocks Ziggler over the ropes to send Dolph leg first into the cage. Truth dives on top of him because he's not that smart all the time. Scissors kick gets two in the ring. Punk does his usual ramming his head into the other guy's ear to call a spot before superplexing Truth for two.

Trouble in Paradise misses Punk and Kofi gets thrown to the outside. Macho Elbow eliminates Truth but Ziggler grabs a rollup. Punk rolls through it and Kofi hits the kick on Punk (looked SICK). Ziggler goes after Kofi of course but Kofi fights him off. He can only get two on the champ though due to the delay. Kofi does the springboard into the Spider-Man cage grab then hits a tornado DDT Dolph onto the cage, basically

knocking him silly.

Here's Miz in fifth to clean house. Everyone is down now so Miz covers Dolph, getting two. Kofi gets up on the ropes and kicks Miz in the face but is knocked off and crashes into the cage. GTS and Finale are both blocked so Miz hits the short DDT for two. They head to the mat and Punk grabs the Vice on Miz, but wouldn't you know it, Jericho comes in to break it up before the tap.

Jericho and Punk square off with Jericho in control. Walls and GTS are both blocked but the Lionsault hits for two. Ziggler comes back in and walks into the Codebreaker to get us down to four (Punk, Jericho, Miz, Kofi). Punk catches a Jericho dropkick and catapults Chris out to the cage again. Jericho gets rammed into the pods so he gets a finger into Punk's eye and hides in the pod. That works for about two seconds as Punk follows him in.

Punk's arm gets caught in the door and Jericho pulls on it to ram Punk into the pod door. Kofi remembers that he's alive and tries the SOS on the cage, driving his own head into the cage. Miz and Kofi are the only ones up now but Miz misses the running clothesline and Kingston goes up. A superplex is countered as Punk powerbombs Miz for two. Kofi climbs to the top of the pod and dives onto both of them but can't pin Miz.

Jericho comes in and Liontames Kofi for the elimination to get us down to three. He beats on Kofi after the elimination and throws him out of the Chamber. Punk kicks Jericho out of the Chamber and he's unconscious. The referees say he's done and say he's not responsive. I'm REALLY not liking them doing this a week after what happened to Sorensen. The cameraman is down too but sits up a few seconds later.

Back in the ring Miz tries the Reality Check but Punk counters with a high kick for two. The running knee and bulldog get two but Punk springboards into the Finale for two. Miz freaks out

and talks a lot of trash in the corner but misses a charge, hitting his head on the pod. GTS puts him out at 32:39 and I guess Jericho isn't running in as a surprise since it's over.

Rating: C+. The Chamber is one of those matches that gets an automatic higher grade to start. This was one of the weaker ones I can remember. For me the problem is that the main feud in this, Jericho and Punk, has no heat on it and there's zero reason for this to be in the Chamber. They were the only two that had a chance in this but their feud has just begun with nothing but a run-in by Jericho, a promo and some staring. That's the problem that these calendar based PPVs present and that looks like how the future will be.

We recap Santino getting his spot in the Chamber.

Santino drinks Raw eggs to Eugene's music and with a towel that looks like it has the All That logo on it.

Remember those overly long videos on Rock and Cena? Here's another one, this time on Cena's training regimen and the gym he goes to. Some developmental guys work out there. This one wastes four minutes of PPV time.

Divas Title: Tamina Snuka vs. Beth Phoenix

Beth is wearing something inspired by Piper. This match could be subtitled "How many times can we remind you that Tamina is Jimmy Snuka's daughter in a last ditch effort to make you care about her". Tamina goes up quickly but gets knocked down to the outside. Beth pounds on her and Tamina barely gets back inside. Tamina gets up and hits a Samoan Drop but the Splash is broken up. Superplex gets two for Beth and Tamina chops her down. Superfly Splash gets two. Tamina goes up again but Beth brings her down, sends her into the buckle and the Glam Slam retains the title at 7:00.

Rating: D+. Call me sexist, call me a chauvinist, call me whatever you want, but I'm bored out of my mind every time the

Divas are on screen. They're waiting on Beth vs. Kharma which basically means they're spending a year putting the whole division on hold, but at the end of the day is anyone going to care? I mean, who is Kharma going to feud with once she beats Beth? The division means nothing and it's so uninteresting. The US Title can't get on PPV because we have to see this. Right.

Santino punches some meat.

Jericho can't talk.

Here's Ace for his big announcement. He's the Raw interim GM and he's heard complaints about Smackdown's GM Teddy Long. And never mind as here's Alberto Del Rio! He says Teddy is a dog and likes to play favorites. Alberto wants Ace to be permanent Raw GM and the GM of Smackdown too. That brings out Henry who Cole thought was suspended (wasn't he on Smackdown this week?).

Henry thinks Teddy is a bully who physically assaulted him. He supports the idea of Ace as permanent GM of both shows. Here's Christian in a hat. Christian says that Teddy has been negligent and Smackdown is an unsafe working environment. He endorses Ace for GM as well. Ace has a picture taken of all four of them and then a second one. Now one with Otunga in it as well. And that's that.

Santino runs some steps.

The Chamber is lowered. As in the ambulance match is main eventing ELIMINATION CHAMBER instead of an ELIMINATION CHAMBER.

Big Show says he has to win tonight.

Smackdown World Title: Big Show vs. Great Khali vs. Cody Rhodes vs. Daniel Bryan vs. Santino Marella vs. Wade Barrett

Barrett and Big Show start in the ring. Show runs Barrett over

to start but Barrett gets him down for one. They go outside and Show gets rammed into the cage door twice. Wade goes after the knee but Show kicks him off. We get a statement from Lawler saying that if you're knocked out (like Jericho was) that counts as a submission. Why do I have a feeling this won't be enforced later? Show wants Bryan as the buzzer goes off but gets Cody instead. Show is standing there waiting on him and things slow down a lot.

Cody gets thrown to the outside while Barrett is thrown back inside. Chokeslam to Barrett is countered and Wade chop blocks Show down. Cody and Barrett team up on Show and start fighting a few seconds later. Santino comes in fourth and after he hits his usual stuff, Show runs him over. Cody takes Show down by the knee though as the fans chant for Santino.

Barrett and Cody double suplex Show onto the steel to put him down. Cody hits the moonsault to Barrett and goes after Santino. No one is out yet. Rhodes rams the Cobra hand into the cage and Khali is in fifth. Chops and clotheslines for both heels and the Punjabi Plunge to Rhodes. One to Barrett as well and a chop to Santino. The giants face off and Show spears Khali for an elimination about 40 seconds after Khali entered.

Show keeps staring at Bryan and then even tries to reach in and grab him. He breaks the chains on the pod and has broken through. Bryan demands the door be opened but Show has broken in and climbed through the top. The place ERUPTS for this. The clock goes off to release Bryan but they're both inside the pod. Bryan manages to get out but Show does the required breaking the plexiglass spot. You know, THE SAME THING THAT HAPPENS EVERY YEAR.

Into the ring now and Show loads up the right hand. Oh wait it's the chokeslam instead but Barrett kicks Show in the face before there's a cover. Santino pops up for a quick rollup for two on Barrett but is then thrown to the outside. Cody hits

two Beautiful Disasters to Show followed by a DDT. Barrett hits a middle rope DDT and Big Show is gone to a big reaction. So it's Cody, Barrett, Bryan and Santino to go.

Make that three as Santino rolls up Cody to pin him. Cody hits Cross Rhodes to Santino. There's Cody's next feud I guess. Barrett covers Santino but it only gets two. Barrett hammers on him and ties Santino's arms in the Chamber wall. The beating continues on Santino for awhile until Bryan gets back up with a flying knee to Barrett. Bryan goes up but Barrett knocks him part of the way into it again by the back of the head.

Barrett loads up Wasteland off the middle rope but Santino breaks it up because he's an idiot. Santino tries a superplex but gets shoved off. He avoids an elbow and Bryan hits a top rope headbutt, allowing Santino to steal the pin, meaning he's eliminated Cody Rhodes and Wade Barrett. Bryan is very happy to see what he's up against as it's one on one now. It turns into a cat and mouse game and Santino even gets the Cobra for two. The LeBell Lock goes on and Santino taps at 33:57.

Rating: B-. Better match with better drama, but at the end of the day this wasn't that great. Khali being out quick was fine but I have some real issues with them jobbing out their heels AGAIN for the sake of a one off thing. Barrett was this evil violent and cunning man and he loses to Santino. The same for the longest reigning IC Champion in 8 years. And for what? A pop because they can't put the freaking US Champion in there? Ok I'm shutting up before I go too long with this. Match was ok, but nothing great.

Here's Sheamus post match who takes Bryan out.

Time for unfunny comedy with Natalya. Cheese is present. Horny says that jack cheese is his favorite. Jack Swagger gets a cameo with Vickie, prompting a cottage cheese line. Justin Gabriel gets in Jack's face so Teddy makes our filler match.

Jack says that one man should run both shows. Teddy agrees but says it should be him. The match is for the title.

Buy Rock's new DVD!

US Title: Jack Swagger vs. Justin Gabriel

Please change the title. Swagger controls to start and hits the Vader Bomb for no cover. Gabriel gets in some basic offense but Swagger grabs the ankle lock and wins by submission at 3:00. Of all the matches I've ever seen added to a PPV to fill in time, this was one of them.

Undertaker will be on Raw tomorrow.

We recap Cena vs. Kane. Kane wants Cena to embrace the hate, Cena says no. Kane does something bad to Cena to get him to embrace the hate, Cena says no. Kane does something bad to Cena then hurts Ryder to get him to embrace the hate, Cena says no. Kane does something bad to Cena then hurts Ryder then makes Cena make out with a hot woman to get him to embrace the hate, Cena says no. Conclusion? Ambulance match, duh.

John Cena vs. Kane

You win by putting your opponent in the ambulance and having it driven out of the arena. You know Walt Disney was an ambulance driver in World War I when he was about 14. True story. Kane's broken leg by Henry has been changed into a self imposed exile. Ok then. Cena charges to start and they head to the floor. They fight by the ambulance and use some of the stuff inside it as well.

Back to the ring and Kane goes into the steps but takes over anyway. Kane hits the side slam but Cena ducks the clothesline. He hits some of his signature stuff but the AA is countered into a smother. Cena goes down and is out cold so Kane throws him to the floor. He goes under the ring and pulls out a wheelchair. Well at least he's making sure Cena is

comfortable.

Cena escapes the chair and they fight to the ambulance again. Kane gets slammed into the vehicle and put into the chair. Cena rolls the chair into some production stuff. They fight into the tech area and Cena goes all beast mode. He asks Booker if this gets him a spot in the Fave Five and rams the steps into Kane's head. John sets up the steps and tries to AA Kane through the table but Kane reverses into a chokeslam through it instead.

Kane goes up to the ambulance and gets a stretcher on wheels. Kane gets him in the ambulance but can't close the second door. Cena kicks it into Kane's face and they fight to the cab of the ambulance. John climbs onto the roof of the cab and then on top of the ambulance. They slug it out up there and Cena AA's Kane off the ambulance into a conveniently placed area we can't see. At least you couldn't see the crash pad. He puts Kane in, closes the doors and it's over at 21:21.

Rating: C+. The match was ok but it wasn't great at all. Why this finished the show rather than one of the title matches is beyond me, unless something changes after the match. Cena winning was obvious and that's fine. At least it ends this horrible storyline for good (in theory).

Overall Rating: D. Let's see. The namesake match didn't main event the show, the world titles didn't change, the presumptive Mania matches are exactly what we thought they would be, and Cena wins again. Why exactly did this show exist again? I really didn't like this one at all and it feels like WWE is being dragged into Mania instead of hitting it head on. They really need to crank things up before the PPV because in my eyes, what they're doing heading into it isn't working.

Results

CM Punk b. The Miz, Dolph Ziggler, Kofi Kingston, Chris Jericho and R-Truth – Punk last eliminated The Miz after a GTS

Beth Phoenix b. Tamina Snuka – Glam Slam

Daniel Bryan b. Great Khali, Big Show, Wade Barrett, Cody Rhodes and Santino Marella – Bryan last eliminated Marella with the LeBell Lock

Jack Swagger b. Justin Gabriel – Ankle Lock

John Cena b. Kane – Cena put Kane in the ambulance

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Bryan Wins, Both Champions Retain

Bryan won, basically making the whole PPV pretty pointless. Sheamus came out post match and laid out Bryan, basically confirming their Mania match.

Thoughts on this?

The Elimination Chamber Isn't Main Eventing The Elimination Chamber PPV

And they wonder why people think they're running around like a chicken with its head cut off. Is there some law saying SD

can't main event a PPV?

Punk Wins Elimination Chamber

Punk won the Raw Chamber match, last eliminating Miz. Jericho was knocked out of the cage and "unconscious." You know, seven days after Sorensen had his neck broken. Not sure I'm ok with that. I'd assume it's Jericho vs. Punk at Mania.

Thoughts on this?