

I Want To Talk A Little Bit About Building A Storyline

This is going to be shorter than most of the entries in this series I think. I'm watching Backlash 2004 and it has a Jericho vs. Christian/Trish Stratus match on it. This was part of the storyline the three had which turned Jericho face as he was in love with Trish but Trish turned on him for Christian, setting up a kind of a revenge feud. This is a good example of a well made storyline and I wanted to break it down to give you all an idea of how a good storyline is built.

Now to begin with, we'll start with how this story got going. As you may or may not remember, Christian and Jericho started hitting on Lita and Trish Stratus respectively. This went on for a few weeks and was almost instantly intriguing. Now why was this intriguing? In short, because it was something different. By that I don't mean something we had never seen before, but because it was something out of nature by Jericho and Christian. There's an expression in journalism that says "Dog bites man, not news. Man bites dog, news." In other words, we pay attention to stuff that is different.

Jericho and Christian had been jerks for months but now all of a sudden they were being nice. It got people's attention and you started wondering if it was because of feelings for the girls or because of some other reasons they had. The idea is that it made us want to keep watching because we had interesting people in these stories. That's a very necessary key. People like Jericho and Christian could read a phone book and somehow make it interesting. Throw in a couple of hot women and it's hard not to be interested.

Then we got the next step of the story, as Trish said that she was

starting to fall for Jericho. For a few weeks there was a relationship developing while Lita kind of faded away. The twist came soon after this, as Trish overheard Jericho and Christian talking about how this was all because of a bet between the two of them over who could get their respective lady in bed first. This makes sense as it's something evil that the two of them would do.

However, something very important is that we weren't told of it right up front. We had to wait awhile, which is something that makes a reveal all the better. We saw Jericho and Christian doing things and only after awhile did we find out that there was an ulterior motive to it. That's how you do a twist: not all at once before filling in the pieces later. You can do it that way, but it can cause more holes in a story. When you build up to it, the writers have had a better chance to fill in plot holes along the way.

Now once Trish was upset, Jericho revealed that he wasn't lying and actually did care for Trish. Trish of course didn't believe him, but Jericho kept at it. Through good storytelling, it became clear that Jericho really did have feelings for Trish and that he was sorry for his actions. Now THIS is where things get important: people can identify with that. Almost everyone has had their heart broken at some point and knows what it's like to want someone that you can't have for one reason or another. It builds sympathy for Jericho who is trying to change and is telling the truth after all his lies but it's not working.

Finally Trish seemed to come around but Christian wasn't happy. On Raw he hit Jericho in the head with a chair, saying that it was tough love. Trish was blamed for breaking up their friendship and changing Jericho, with Christian wanting the old Chris back. It's a natural story progression with the actions of each person connecting with other people and more actions spawning off that. That is what you call a story.

This leads us to Wrestlemania and a match between Chris Jericho and Christian. There was one very important thing about this match above all other things: it was good. You can have the best story in the world, the best promos in the world, the best build in the world and all that, but if your match sucks it brings things WAY down. See Dusty vs. Flair in 1985 if you want more details on that.

So anyway, the match at Wrestlemania was good and after Trish accidentally cost Jericho the match, Trish turned on Jericho after showing feelings for him in the previous weeks. This was a possibly nonsensical twist, but at the end of the day it extended the storyline and gave us another reason to side with Jericho. The idea here was that while Jericho wanted Trish, at the end of the day she wasn't someone worth wanting because she was actually evil.

We now had another reason to side with Jericho, because how many of you have had a crush on someone but they were a jerk and treated you like dirt? My guess would be more than one of you. Now how many people would love to have seen that person get what they had coming to them? This is a key part, as if you can't related to a story, it's hard to get into it. So anyway, they had their rematch at Backlash, which was a handicap match involving Trish as well. Jericho won to even up the score, so we had a blowoff match inside a cage (note that the gimmicks built up over time: non-gimmick, handicap, cage).

Now the problem was that Christian got hurt in the cage and was out for months. They had a ladder match at Unforgiven for the vacant Intercontinental title which could have come earlier, but it was a good cap of to the feud, even though it was late. So at the end of everything, it was Jericho that came out with revenge as well as a championship, giving him something to be happy with.

Let's take a quick look at a few other reasons why this story worked.

Most importantly: IT HAD TIME TO BUILD. This wasn't a feud that was settled in about five weeks. It had several months to get things set up and for the characters in it to develop. That's one of the big problems in a lot of modern wrestling angles: everything moves so fast that there isn't time for something to develop. This story started in late 2003 and wrapped up in May. It had some twists and turns in it, but for the most part they made sense and followed a coherent path.

Second, it had a good conclusion. Jericho winning wasn't required, but it was definitive and there was no doubt as to who won. In other words, we didn't feel like we wasted our time with the story. It had romance, intrigue, twists and a conclusion, all tied together with good wrestling matches. Those are all parts of a good storyline. That leads me to the final part of this.

The feud was ENTERTAINING. Like I said, Christian and Jericho could do almost anything and it would be entertaining. Trish was great in the evil chick role and looked great in the part too. There was nothing in this angle that wasn't at least passable, which helped even more. The matches worked well too, meaning that in total there was nothing wrong with this storyline.

All of the parts worked and had the right people in the roles, which is what makes a great story.

I Want To Talk A Little Bit About Forcing Evolution In Wrestling

A few days ago, Hulk Hogan went on a big rant on Twitter about how TNA needs to fix a few problems and then it'll find the next evolution in wrestling or be the next evolution of wrestling or whatever nonsense Hulk was raving about this time. Anyway that's beside the point. For the life of me I can't remember where I saw this title at but it wasn't from me so don't credit me with it, but it said something about Hogan wanting to reinvent the wheel. This got me to thinking.

The term "the next evolution of wrestling" is thrown around a lot, be it EVOLVE focusing on wins/losses (isn't that how wrestling has always been?) or Wrestling Revolution Project with a beginning, middle and end to a season or ECW being extreme and counter culture or whatever. At the end of the day though, all you have there are gimmicks to distract you from the fact that you have a product that people aren't that interested in anymore. It's all about putting decorations on what is still wrestling.

This is where I think so many companies get lost. Hogan's comments and the title of that article are yet another example of someone looking for a quick fix to far more major problems. If you listen to Hogan, going live would solve 75% of TNA's problems (his words). How? All that means is you get to watch a flawed show live rather than on tape.

Now before I get on an anti-TNA rant, that's not what this is meant to be about. Goodness knows I could and already have

gone on for months about some of the stupid stuff they've done and how they keep shooting themselves in the foot. What I want to get into here is how you don't need a gimmick or something to hide the fact that you're a wrestling company. Over the years, this concept of wrestling evolving has only meant what are we disguising the wrestling as this week. Let's take a look at some examples of good and bad of this. We'll begin with celebrities. Let's flash back to the 2001 Royal Rumble.

Low Down, perhaps the dumbest idea ever, (D'lo Brown and Mosh as Arabs) argue with their manager about who should be in the Rumble. It doesn't matter as Drew Carey gets their spot. Now this is an important point. Let's compare this to WCW and David Arquette. Both Carey and David are about the same level of celebrity status and they're here to promote something that not a lot of people are going to watch anyway (Drew was there to promote a comedy PPV he was going to be on). What does the WWF do?

They replace a jobber in a match where he absolutely won't be missed. Think about it: what would Brown or Mosh do in the match? Hang around for about seven minutes and be destroyed by either Taker or Kane or someone like that. Would anyone really miss either of them being in there? Not in the slightest. Instead, you get a celebrity in the match where he might bring in a few fans to the show. See, that's how you use celebrities.

You put them in a place where they don't make a big difference at all, but they seem like they do. That's smart business. You give up a little something and while you likely won't get a big payoff, you might get a decent one. If not, you lost Mosh or D'Lo for one night. That's something you can live with and if nothing else, Drew gets publicity and you look like nice guys. Now on the other hand you have WCW, where a celebrity of about equal status was there trying to promote something.

What does WCW do? THEY MAKE HIM WORLD HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION,

thereby making the wrestlers look pathetic, the title look like a joke, their PPV look like a bigger freak show than a pro wrestling show normally is, and more or less drive yet another spike into their own coffin. Instead of having him do something stupid with Disco Inferno or something for like 5 minutes on Nitro, they said that this actor is on equal footing with the champions of the other major company at the time, which at that time would have been HHH. See why they went out of business so fast?

Another example of the same kind from WCW is in 1998. Actually let's start at Bash at the Beach 1997 with Hulk Hogan/Dennis Rodman vs. Luger/Giant. Rodman was there to show how widespread the NWO was and how popular Hogan was with celebrities or something. The match sucked, I'm sure you're not shocked. Flash forward to BATB 1998 and WCW thinks "since one basketball player worked wonders, TWO will be even better!" So they had DDP/Karl Malone vs. Rodman/Hogan. Malone did ok all things considered and was certainly trying. Rodman literally fell asleep in the corner. There were like four moves in ten minutes and it was just a mess.

The next month was Road Wild. WCW AGAIN used a celebrity in the main event in the form of Jay Leno. Yeah picture Jay Leno in a wrestling ring for a minute. I think you can figure out the level of quality out there. It was Page/Leno vs. Bischoff/Hogan and it was horrible. Again Leno was trying, but he had no business out there. The point is: these tag matches didn't mean anything and were there for a quick payoff. They didn't have intriguing stories going so they just threw money at people that the audience would know and hoped they were interested in the matches. Again, it becomes a way to get people watching because your wrestling sucks. It became more about the celebrities than what they were doing because the celebrities didn't advance anything.

A more modern example of the perils of this gimmick are the guest hosts of Monday Night Raw. They've toned it WAY down in

the last year or so, but do you remember when they had people like Al Sharpton, Buzz Aldrin, ZZ Top, Dennis Miller, Johnny Damon, Jewel, Florence Henderson (I was at that show. My goodness that was stupid) and Jon Lovitz? That's what I mean by a gimmick being completely overdone. It became too much of a focus and it started to hurt the show. Speaking of things that aren't interesting but are supposed to be realistic, let's get to point two.

Now let's move on with "shoots", with the quotation marks being there due to the fact that about 99% of them aren't real shoot comments and are scripted almost completely. For a bad example, let's look at the king of worked shoots: Vince Russo.

Russo LOVED him some shoots. Look back to the year 2000 in WCW during Russo's tenure and almost every PPV would have something like one in there (and yes that's an exaggeration for the commenters that like to say I'm exaggerating. I'm not perfect. Get over it.). Take for example New Blood Rising. Goldberg "stopped following the script" and walked out on a match, leaving Nash and Steiner to, and I'm quoting Schiavone with this, "improvise a new finish."

Now that's not a terrible idea on paper (parts of it are but that's beside the point) but there's one problem. Flash back with me to a month before that at Bash at the Beach 2000. Jeff Jarrett laid down for Hogan to win the title, followed by Russo coming out and going on a big rant about politics behind the scenes and all that jazz. This was about three months after the company had been rebooted and had everything reset, which was four months after Russo booked a rehash of Montreal at Starrcade, which was two months after Halloween Havoc where Hogan laid down for Sting in another "shoot" moment.

Shooting had become a gimmick rather than something that people were going to become interested in. That became more of the focus than the wrestling itself. It was about what the latest shoot was and the fallout of it until we got to the

next shoot. People stopped buying into it and therefore stopped caring, making it mean nothing and killing the gimmick. During this time, the wrestling product suffers because the focus is on the gimmick rather than the in ring product.

Now let's flash forward to 2011 and a guy I like to call CM Punk. One night at the end of Raw, CM Punk came out on the stage, sat down, and talked for almost ten minutes about how much he hated things in the WWE, and how he was being held back, and how much he didn't like John Cena, and all sorts of other things. This led to a very long debate about how much of it was real and how much of it was fake and was he really leaving or was he really signed and were we getting worked and all that stuff.

In other words, people were TALKING. The angle got people interested in what was going to happen next. Why was that? It's because this wasn't something you saw four times a year. It's something you hardly ever see, which is what gets people interested. Think about it in everyday life. What is going to get your attention more: a dozen of the same thing or one thing different from the rest? You're going to notice the outlier right? You notice the 6'6 blonde guy in bright yellow trunks that beats people in five minutes in a sea of guys that are 6'2 and in blue trunks right?

The other key point to this is what the shoot promo led to: it led to a wrestling match. Punk went on a rant about a lot of real life stuff, but everything he said led us to Chicago and Money in the Bank and a match with him vs. Cena. What got lost in the talk about the angle was that it just happened to occur before a pay per view and a main event that on paper would have been an ok draw. The shoot wasn't the focus of the show and the company. It was a tool to get us to MITB, where the wrestling would take over. It led to a match, not an angle.

To bring this back around to the opening idea, gimmicks in

wrestling can be good things if done right. However there's one major thing to them: they need to be used to enhance the wrestling on a show. Actually make that two things: they also need to be used sparingly. If you use the same ones over and over again they'll get stale and lose their effectiveness. Usually when you reach the point that you need gimmicks to get people to watch your show week after week, you've got more problems than you can fix.

As for the evolution of wrestling that Hogan talked about, it doesn't need to happen. Trying to change things as often as people have has rarely worked and it likely wouldn't work for TNA. Their product has a ton of problems already and simply adding something new to it isn't going to get people to start watching. It's another quick fix for problems that have been built up for a very long time. Think of wrestlers that are repackaged but are still the same guy but just in a different outfit. It might improve things for a few minutes, but then it's still the same guy out there and nothing has really changed. At the end of the day, the solution to a lot of problems is to have good wrestling matches, not some big elaborate gimmick change.

Favorite So Ridiculous That It's Great Moment

On Raw tonight Santino got dropkicked but backflipped to his feet to hit the Cobra for a pin. It was so stupid but at the same time I loved it. What are some moments of yours that are so stupid and/or ridiculous that they're great? For me, it's the Reviving Elbow. This was one of the best thinking outside the box moments I can remember in a LONG time. It's from WCW

in I think early 1995. Hogan and Savage are in a tag match against two guys that aren't important enough to remember. They beat Hulk down but get distracted by something or other. Savage can't get Hogan up, so he goes up top and hits the big elbow on him which brings Hogan back to life. That's so crazy and creative that it's GREAT. Youtube it.

Your picks?

Thought of the Day: Meltzer And PPV Attendances

As some of you may know, Dave Meltzer has a habit of complaining about WWE lying about its PPV attendances. What I want to know is why is this such a big deal? Wrestling is based on lies, so why is lying about PPV attendances any different?

Favorite Wrestling Show Theme Song

Simple question which I feel like I might have asked before. I'll go with the Attitude Era Raw theme. It's great for firing people up for the show as it's hard rock which fits in well for the theme of the show.

Thoughts/picks?

Check Out The 6th Annual WrestleZone Tournament

I'm sure all of you at some point have thought about who the best wrestler ever is. Well on WrestleZone, every year we try to figure out who he is. We take 128 of the greatest wrestlers of all time from around the world and rank them like the NCAA Basketball Tournament. Over the next 6 weeks, we'll narrow down the field is down to one. This is the biggest event of the forums and I'm personally running the tournament for the third straight year. We hope you'll join us for a very fun event and some excellent discussion.

Here's a link to the main tournament section of the forums:

<http://forums.wrestlezone.com/forumdisplay.php?f=404>

And the brackets:

http://challonge.com/tournament/bracket_generator?ref=CHLEXYHAJI

Please keep in mind that in order to vote in a poll, we require you to have ten non-spam posts. This is done to prevent people from flooding the polls in someone's favor unfairly.

If you have any questions feel free to ask me here.

KB

Favorite Return

With Brock's return last Monday, I figured this would be a good topic. Read the title. What's yours'? I have to go with Undertaker at Judgment Day 2000. It came out of nowhere and he had been gone just long enough that you had forgotten he was gone but he wasn't completely forgotten yet. The fact that it was the ending to a great match helps too.

Thoughts?

Thought Of The Day – WWE Is Still The King

In the last four days, WWE has had two great shows and has shocked us with a few great moments. There are a ton of questions that we have now and it's very unclear where things are going. It's WWE proving yet again that they can turn it on at the drop of a hat and be the most intriguing company in the world.

Cue various people saying it's boring and uninteresting because they have to try to sound smart.

I Want To Talk A Little Bit About Burying

I mentioned this in a comment the other night but didn't realize I hadn't published it. This is the term that I hear used the most incorrectly around here and it's time you guys got a brief lesson on what it means.

Let's start by defining a burial. To bury someone in wrestling means that they are shoved down the card and no longer have the spot that they had. On top of that (adding more dirt onto it if you will) it means you're not coming back out of it for a long time. In essence it means you're done. There is next to no hope for your recovery and return to the spot you once had unless something major changes for you and probably others ahead of you.

And now, for one of the most important things I've ever say on here or anywhere else regarding wrestling. If you never pay attention to anything else I say, learn this for the collective intelligence of the planet: [b]You cannot be buried in one match.[/b] This is the biggest problem people seem to have with the term. For some reason there's a mentality that says if you lose EVER, your career is over and you're being buried. This is completely incorrect and I have no idea where this notion came from.

People lose matches. It has to happen. Losses mean nothing in wrestling. It's all about the way you lose. Let's take a look at an example. Christian hasn't won a match that meant anything in months correct? I don't think anyone would argue he's anything less than the third biggest heel on Smackdown and arguably the second biggest. He loses all the time and yet he's still every bit as over as he was when he started losing. For an older example, look at Chris Jericho, who lost clean to Evan Bourne on PPV. Did that bury him? Of course not. It put

Bourne over, which is the point of a win like that.

So many times people mistake a rub for a burial. Tonight on Smackdown Orton lost to Barrett almost clean. Barrett looks like a bigger star and a more credible threat. Orton is going to be the top guy on Smackdown for a very long time even though he lost here. He's down in the card more than he was over the summer, but he's not being buried. Another reason you might lose a match is to turn. Razor Ramon got beat by a jobber named the 1-2-3 Kid clean on Raw but it wasn't to bury him. It was to start his face turn that put him at his greatest glory ever in WWF.

For our final example, let's look at an actual burial: Drew McIntyre. Drew was once the hottest thing in the company, on an undefeated streak and depending on various reports you might read, in line to win the world title by the end of the year. Then his wife got him in trouble and his push stopped. Drew stopped winning matches, stopped being featured, stopped being talked about, and now is lucky to get squashed once a month. It took time for him to go down the card to the point where it's rare to see him on TV. He's been buried and it took months to do so.

Get the idea now? There will be a quiz later.

I Want To Talk A Little Bit About Passing The Torch And Rubs

This seems like an appropriate topic with Wrestlemania being about two weeks away. This is something that is very important

and can really make or break a company if not done right. Yet for some reason over the years, it's very rarely been done right. On Rise and Fall of ECW, Heyman talked about Terry Funk wanting to get the next generation ready so that there was a business to pass on to them. That's what we're getting at today so let's get to it.

Now first and foremost, there's a BIG difference between giving someone a rub and passing the torch to someone else. Back in the 80s, Hogan tagged with a bunch of guys that were known names but didn't become anything important until they were his best friend for a few months of house show tag matches. Then they'd be Hogan's partner for awhile and they'd be bigger stars than ever before. That's giving someone a rub.

Passing the torch means that you make someone the new big name in the company. We'll get to examples of that later on, but the main idea is that someone is either leaving, is dropping down the card after being on top for a long while, or that the other person is going to be taking their place. To use the example from earlier, Hogan wasn't going anywhere and wasn't moving down the card. He was still top dog but the others were up higher than they were before. That's an important difference.

On second thought, this was going to just be about passing the torch but I might as well cover rubs in here too. We'll get to passing the torch first.

Let's go back to the past as I'm known to do. The better example is probably King Jackie Fargo passing the torch to King Jerry Lawler but we'll go with something actually in the last thirty years with Harley Race and Ric Flair. Now let's take a good look at what put this together and why it was a true passing of the torch. There were a lot of factors that came together to make it work.

First of all, Flair was already a big name. He was a two time

NWA World Champion and was well established as a top guy. This is important to passing the torch because if you want someone like Race to go out, this is how you do it: to a guy that has proven he can do something already. Otherwise you might need to go to someone else which makes the moment weaker.

Second, this was built up. It had a long and personal angle to it which resulted in real emotion. Race had put a \$25,000 bounty on Flair's head and it was cashed in, resulting in Flair being put out of action for months. He took care of the attackers and then came after Race to take the championship and get his revenge. It was an angle that people wanted to see get paid off which makes the match that much more interesting.

Third, the match was great. It's a classic old school cage match with Race working him over and Flair making the comeback for the pin and the big moment. It was also in the main event of the first Starrcade, which at the time was the biggest card ever put together. Look at Cena vs. Rock this year: they're having this match in the main event of Wrestlemania after a year of these two arguing and bickering. In short: take your time and make the match feel important.

Most importantly though, RACE LEFT. After this happened, Race was gone from the NWA spotlight. There was a three day title change in New Zealand but other than that, Race went back to the smaller territories and eventually on to the WWF. Now, that's not to say that Race couldn't have come back in a smaller role. If Race had come back in say a year or even six months it would have been fine, as long as he didn't challenge for the title or feud with Flair. That's one of the main things: Race didn't try to come back against Flair. He had been defeated and was done.

There really aren't that many of these moments to talk about in history, and since most of them have been done well there isn't really a point to going through them one by one because they would all mostly say the same thing. The other few of

note are the Fargo/Lawler one that I mentioned earlier, Austin vs. Michaels in 1998, HHH vs. Batista in 2005, and really those are all of the major ones.

Now let's get to the problems that can come up when these rules are broken. This can also be called The Hogan Section.

Hogan has had a few chances to pass the torch onto someone else and both times he's broken one of the aforementioned rules and caused the next person to not be able to do as well on top. We'll start in 1990 at Wrestlemania 6. You could argue the first time was at #4 with Savage but the end result of that was ALWAYS Hogan vs. Savage for the title the next year so I can't fault Hogan for that as it was part of a major angle instead of Hogan not going away. Anyone on to #6.

I don't think anyone would argue that the main event of that show was designed to be a moment where Warrior became the top guy. However in short, Hogan didn't leave. He stuck around in 1990 and feuded with Earthquake, taking all of the spotlight (as well as the top and most obvious feud for Warrior) from the new champion. The right thing would have been for Hogan to take AT LEAST a few months off and made a movie or whatever.

Instead he stuck around and therefore made Warrior look like a second rate guy, which made the main event of Wrestlemania completely pointless. Warrior was a failure as the top guy but there was never a real chance for him to be the top guy. Everyone thought that Hogan was still top dog and him simply not having the title wasn't going to prove that wrong. Considering Warrior barely beat him, it didn't really prove that Warrior was the top guy. Instead of passing the torch, Hogan basically gave Warrior the title for about 7 months and then got it back later. Good for him, bad for Warrior.

Jumping to WCW, we have the moment that was a big bullet to WCW in the Monday Night Wars. Sting FINALLY stopped Hogan and won the (nearly) year and a half long title reign and it

should have been the end of an era in WCW. This is probably the biggest botch of one of these things ever. First of all, the match sucked for reasons that you can read elsewhere. Second, Sting didn't get to even hold the physical title for two months, so how much do you think the fans cared by that point? Third, Sting officially won the title in February and Hogan had it back by mid-April. Sting is defeated, Hogan is champion AGAIN, and the fans are screwed over.

The third example of Hogan doing this would be in 1998 with Goldberg. Now to be fair this was probably much more about WCW than Hogan, but depending on what you believe about Hogan having creative control in the back, that could be a matter of debate. Also to Hogan's credit, he lost the match clean (mostly) and never got his win back against Goldberg, which is a big help. However that being said, he got the title back in just a few months. There was WAY more to it than that, but at the end of the day, the problem was that Hogan had the title back about half a year later, Goldberg was defeated, and the fans were screwed over AGAIN. Sound familiar?

There are probably other example that I'm overlooking, but I think by now you more than get the idea. The WWF in 1990/1991 was in real business trouble and was even on the verge of going under for awhile. The WCW instances are times where the company took big hits because either they wouldn't let people have the title or they wouldn't let anyone get thrown out of the main event. The moral: bad things happen when you don't change things when you need to.

Now onto the other topic that I wasn't going to talk about here but it fits as well: rubs. As we've established, a rub is where someone is going to be sticking around but is going to bring someone else up the card by giving them some of their star power and making them look like a bigger deal. We'll begin in the 80s, as I am known to do.

The perfect example of this is usually Flair and Sting from

March 27, 1988 and there's a good reason for that. Sting wasn't a big time name like he is today. He was a guy that had been brought over from a regional company and was looking for his first big break in the national scene. The company knew he had talent but they needed a way to let the masses know that.

Enter Ric Flair, who in the words of Jim Cornette, made a career out of making other people look way better than they ever could have done on their own. So at the first Clash of the Champions, Sting fought Flair for the NWA Title and had him in the Scorpion when the bell rang and the time was up. Flair made Sting look AWESOME that night and Sting became a huge star because of it. Flair kept the title and would for a good while, but Sting was a major player all of a sudden. I think you get the idea.

There are dozens of other examples from history that I could go into, such as the tag teams that Hogan had which I mentioned earlier and Bret vs. Austin in 96/97, but you more than get the point by now. On the other hand, there are examples of times where bigger names lose matches, but the win doesn't do a thing for the smaller name guy. Let's take a look at a quick example.

I hate to do this again, but the best example is Hulk Hogan. In the year 2000, Hogan lost to Billy Kidman. What's forgotten about this is that Hogan DOMINATED Kidman and Kidman won after Bischoff hit Hogan with a chair. The win didn't do anything for Kidman because it didn't look like he had a chance to beat Hogan in a fair fight. The same thing is true of instances like jobbers pinning big names, such as Brooklyn Brawler pinning HHH in the year 2000. Rock had a bit of a hand in that loss, but HHH still gets made fun of for it on occasion. Again, I think you get the idea.

So anyway, in short there are good ways and bad ways of passing the torch, and hopefully Rock does it with Cena at Wrestlemania. Rock is a guy who a victory over would still

mean a lot and I just hope they don't screw it up somehow. Rubs and passing the torch are very important things in wrestling, and if you don't do them right they can turn out very badly indeed.