

# LESNAR! AND HE'S NOT FIGHTING HHH!

He's back and he laid out Punk with an F5. i can see Summerslam and I'm not sure what to think of it yet.

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## Ziggler Is YOUR New Super Face

He came out to attack Del Rio to a MONSTER face reaction. Things are changing and they're changing in a hurry.

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## Mark Henry Retires

He officially announced it on Raw. Given all the injuries, I can't say I blame him. The fans gave him a very nice reaction and chanted his name.

Edit: scratch that as Henry beat up Cena to set up a future match.

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# **Zeb Colter Gets A New Client**

Even Cole immediately buried this on commentary. It's Cesaro, who completely misses the point of Colter's speeches. In other words, now he's a jobber to the stars with a manager. That's an improvement for him at least.

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# **Captain Charisma Comes Calling**

Christian came back tonight on Raw and beat Barrett in a glorified squash. I still don't get the mass appeal of him but he's certainly a good hand to have.

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# **CM Punk and Paul Heyman Split**

Punk said that he doesn't want Heyman out there for his matches anymore. You can see Punk vs. Lesnar at Summerslam for here. Why I'm not sure but you can see it.

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# Alberto Del Rio Is A Heel Again

He called the US a bunch of pigs and cowards.

For the love of all things good and holy, let it be better than the last heel run.

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## Monday Night Raw – June 10, 2013: Meet The New Problems, Same As The Old Problems

### Monday Night Raw

Date: June 10, 2013

Location: Richmond Coliseum, Richmond, Virginia

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler, John Bradshaw Layfield

It's the go home show for Payback and the main story tonight is HHH vs. Axel II, assuming the match actually happens. Last week Vince and Stephanie talked him out of it, which made for a less interesting show than it could have been otherwise. I'd look for the match to be pushed back again until Payback, where HHH likely puts Axel over...in theory. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of HHH and the McMahon's issues from last week. As in we recap the WHOLE THING.

Curtis Axel vs. HHH

Axel is a bit hesitant to get in the ring. The bell sounds odd for some reason tonight. HHH pounds away in the corner to start and hits a quick suplex for two. Here's Vince of all people to say that the match is over with Axel winning via DQ at about 90 seconds. This can't end well.

Actually scratch that as HHH says restart it. The match continues for a few seconds and here's Vince again to say HHH loses via forfeit. HHH starts it again and this time it's a 60 minute iron man match. This time Vince takes the bell away and the match just ends. This was less than five minutes from opening to closing bell.

Ryback and Cena will be face to face tonight.

Post break Stephanie begs HHH to think of Vince because he's old and doesn't have much time left. HHH says he'll talk to Vince if Stephanie goes to calm him down first.

#### Kane vs. Dean Ambrose

Dean pounds on him in the corner but gets caught by a big boot to the face for two. Kane takes his turn at pounding away in the corner and hits a backbreaker for no cover. It looks like Kane has a huge bald spot on the right hand side of his head. Ambrose is whipped into the ropes and hit with another backbreaker as the referee brings out the bell. Dean misses a charge and is sent to the floor where he jumps into an uppercut as we take a break.

Back with Dean kicking Kane in the ribs as we see Orton watching in the back on the WWE App. Kane comes back with a boot to the face before tossing Ambrose into the corner. Dean is slammed face first into the mat before being taken into the corner. Kane loads up the chokeslam but Ambrose bails to the floor as Reigns comes in for the DQ at 11:23.

**Rating:** D+. Nothing to see here as it was mainly just killing time until the DQ ending. That's getting really annoying in the singles matches with the Shield involved but it's the best they can do because they don't want to job the Shield. Why they didn't just job Kane is beyond me, especially in a non-title match.

Sheamus vs. Sandow is on the pre-show Sunday.

You can pick Rollins or Reigns to face Bryan tonight.

Rollins wins 66-33. Orton will face Reigns.

We get a clip of Bryan accidentally dropkicking Orton on Smackdown.

Orton and Bryan are arguing in the back when Kane comes in and says to chill. Apparently they have matches against Reigns and Rollins tonight. I know this because Kane helpfully explained the graphics we saw a full 40 seconds ago. Vickie comes in and makes Orton/Bryan vs. Reigns/Rollins and Kane vs. Ambrose for the titles on Sunday. Kane is so happy that he hugs Vickie with a goofy grin on his face.

### Cody Rhodes vs. The Miz

Barrett is on commentary as we're told that Fandango won't be allowed to compete in the triple threat match, meaning Barrett defends against Miz alone. Miz pounds on Rhodes to start and hits the corner clothesline for no cover. The top rope ax handle misses though and Cody goes after Miz's knee. A front suplex gets two for Rhodes and it's off to a modified Indian deathlock on Miz. Not that it matters much as Miz counters into the Figure Four for the tap out at 2:36.

Heyman comes out before Miz and Fandango leave and announces that Axel is replacing Fandango in the triple threat. Axel says that him winning the IC Title on Sunday would be the perfect ending to the match on Sunday.

Mark Henry is coming back.

We recap the opening of the show.

Vince and Stephanie are in the back but Vince won't look at her. She knows he's upset and is just trying to protect Hunter, but HHH is a proud man and Vince stepped all over him out there. Vince doesn't like this idea of him not having much time left and is mad at HHH for making Stephanie cry. He cares about business first and Stephanie agrees, but business has to come first. If Vince tries to talk to him, Stephanie will be even more upset.

Here's Jericho for the hard sell before his match with Punk on Sunday. He talks about how the two of them came into the business with a huge chip on their shoulders and they both think they're the best in the world. They'll continue their awesome trilogy that was started last year and Punk will never (EVER!) forget him.

This brings out Ziggler who says that he's making his triumphant return here to steal the show from Jericho. Dolph talks about stealing the show every night and that on Sunday he'll prove that he's better than Del Rio in every way. Jericho cuts him off and asks Ziggler if he wants a tuneup match tonight. Ziggler says sure....but with Jericho facing Langston. The match is after the break.

#### Chris Jericho vs. Big E. Langston

This is joined in progress with both guys on the floor before Jericho heads inside for a quick baseball slide to take Langston down. Big E. whips Jericho into the steps to take over and heads in for some shoulders tot he ribs. Alberto Del Rio is ranting about something on the WWE App as Langston charges shoulder first into the post, giving Jericho a two count. Langston runs him over for the same result and pounds away for good measure.

Jericho fires back with an enzguri for two but his cross body is caught in a trio of backbreakers for two. Chris comes right back with a top rope cross body for two of his own but a Ziggler distraction lets Langston run him over with ease. A Del Rio distraction breaks up the Big Ending though and it's a Codebreaker for the pin at 6:30.

**Rating:** C. Jericho is fine for a spot like this, but the Del Rio vs. Ziggler feud has lost so much steam over the last few weeks due to Ziggler's injury. There's no shame for Langston to lose to someone like Jericho, but it's a bad spot for him to be in when he could be such a huge deal with the lightest tweaking. Good enough match here but it was nothing great.

Jericho celebrates as Ziggler tells Del Rio no way.

#### Sin Cara vs. Antonio Cesaro

Zeb Colter is at ringside, claiming that Cara snuck across our borders in the middle of the night but Cesaro is ok because he came into the country legally. So why was Colter not ok with Barrett months back? Sin Cara hooks a quick wristlock before getting slammed out of the corner for no cover. The gutwrench suplex sets up a powerslam for two before Cesaro pounds away on Cara's face.

A double stomp gets two and it's off to a chinlock. Back up and Cara hooks his spinning headscissors and a sunset bomb for two. Cole rants about Colter making money in the foreign country of Puerto Rico as Cesaro catches a cross body in a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker. A spinning chinlock (you read that right) sets up the Neutralizer for the pin on Sin Cara at 3:52.

**Rating:** C. I could live with Cesaro as Colter's new guy, although it doesn't fit with past continuity. If nothing else it would give Cesaro ANYTHING else to do instead of the vacuum he's stuck in now. Sin Cara is long past being a bust and it's kind of sad to see him lose time after time like this anymore.

Bray Wyatt and the Family are still coming.

Vickie and Brad Maddox plug the new Hardee's burger until Vince comes in to glare at them. Vince is ticked off about Ryback and Cena going face to face tonight because it could put the PPV main event in jeopardy. Vickie's answer is to cancel the match tonight (they have a match?) but Brad suggests to have the lumberjacks out there as security. Vince is pleased and tells Vickie to share her burger with Brad.

### Randy Orton vs. Roman Reigns

Before the match here's Daniel Bryan to be in Orton's corner. Orton pounds away on Reigns to start and gets two off a dropkick. We get an abbreviated Orton Stomp and a knee drop to the chest for two but Randy goes after Rollins on the floor. Seth's distraction does nothing for Roman as Orton drops him back first onto the barricade for two back inside. Orton misses another kneedrop and Roman takes over to stomp away in the corner.

Orton comes right back with the Thesz Press and some right hands in the corner to take over. Randy goes to the middle rope on the inside but a Superman punch knocks him to the floor and us to a break. Back with Roman holding a chinlock as Bryan plays cheerleader on the floor. Randy fights up but gets taken down by a running clothesline for two more. Kane is watching in the back on the WWE App! LIVE! Off to another chinlock by Reigns but Orton suplexes out of it to put both guys down.

Randy is starting to feel it and hits a bunch of clotheslines followed by the backbreaker to counter a Samoan Drop. Reigns rolls to the apron like an idiot, earning himself that Elevated DDT. The RKO is loaded up but Orton has to put Rollins in position for the Elevated DDT. Reigns makes the save but Bryan hits the suicide dive on both Shield members for the DQ at 12:30. Make that a no contest because WWE is afraid to call a DQ for some reason.

**Rating:** C+. Again, as we not allowed to have Shield get a finish in a one on one match? I understand the idea of not wanting to have either guy lose going into the PPV on Sunday, but maybe they shouldn't be having the match six days before the PPV. The match was pretty good for the most part, other than one too many rest holds by Reigns.

The next match begins immediately.

#### Daniel Bryan vs. Seth Rollins

Bryan avoids a charge in the corner and fires off the kicks followed by a knee to the ribs. Daniel alternates between knees, elbows and kicks with the YES chants getting louder and louder every time. Rapid fire elbows to the chest get two and hooks the double knee stop out of the surfboard. Rollins runs to the floor, only to be taken out by a slingshot dropkick through the ropes. Bryan hits the running knee off the apron for two back inside as Rollins is in big trouble early on.

Seth avoids a right hand and hooks the Downward Spiral into the middle turnbuckle for two. In a nice move, Rollins uses Bryan's own surfboard against him but Daniel quickly escapes and fires off kicks to Seth's leg. There's a surfboard on Rollins but Bryan pulls his head down into a Dragon Sleeper for extra pressure. Seth elbows out and we take a break to



come back with Seth holding a chinlock. A forearm to the face gets two for Seth as Cole lists off a bunch of channels the show is airing on that no one but WWE cares about.

Back to the chinlock by Rollins as JBL talks about how awesome this show is. Bryan fights up and ducks an enziguri into a half crab but Seth is quickly into the ropes. Bryan fires off some kicks in the corner followed by a pair of running dropkicks for two. Back up again and Rollins hits the enziguri for two before firing off Bryan's own kicks against him. Daniel's hurricanrana is countered into a buckle bomb for two as the fans are all behind Bryan.

Seth kicks away in the corner but is backdropped out to the floor. The FLYING GOAT is blocked by a forearm but Bryan hooks Douglas Williams' Rolling Chaos Theory suplex for two. Bryan gets crotched on the top rope but escapes a superplex into a belly to back superplex which is countered into a midair cross body for no cover. Orton takes out Reigns before he can interfere, allowing Bryan to roll up Rollins for the pin at 15:30.

**Rating:** B+. That's more like it! I get that you can't have great matches all the time, but at the same time you need to have some high quality matches like this every now and then. Bryan is just MAD over right now and if they tweak his character in anything more than a minor way they're insane. He's ready for a main event push RIGHT NOW but I'm afraid they'll be worried about the sagging ratings and ignore how over he is because he's not "a draw".

Post match Orton hits an RKO on Rollins and the fans go INSANE with YES chants and the Bryan pointing.

In case you missed it the first two times, here's another recap of the HHH/Stephanie/Vince stuff. Oh and Curtis Axel is in there too.

WWE does stuff with the Special Olympics.

It's time for Kaitlyn's secret admirer to be revealed and it's....Big E. Langston. He hands Kaitlyn some flowers and says that this is odd because he's such a big guy who constantly beats people up. However since he first saw Kaitlyn, she's all he can think about. Kaitlyn looks very

nervous as Langston leans in to kiss her, only to drop her on the mat instead.

Cue AJ because it was a SWERVE! She yells at Kaitlyn about feeling worthless because Kaitlyn was never there when AJ was having her heart broken. Instead of being there, Kaitlyn was off chasing the Divas Title. AJ can beat her mentally because Kaitlyn is trash and no one cares about her. The only thing Kaitlyn has of value is the title and that's gone on Sunday. AJ says that Kaitlyn can go back to her trailer park after the match on Sunday but the brawl is on now with Kaitlyn being left glaring at the crazy chick.

Bray Wyatt quotes the Bible (what happens to a man who gains the world but loses his soul?) and says they're coming.

#### Damien Sandow vs. R-Truth

This match has two purposes: hyping up Sandow as having a chance on Sunday and letting Jerry Lawler drool over a burger and shake from Sonic. Sandow quickly takes it to the floor and rams Truth back first into the apron before pounding away on the ribs. Back in and Damien stomps Truth down before hooking a chinlock. The Wind-Up Elbow gets two and the Silencer is good for the pin at 3:21.

**Rating:** D. Sandow has no chance on Sunday. There's nothing else to talk about here at all.

Post match here's Sheamus to congratulate Sandow on his win and say that he'll kick Sandow's head off at the Payback kickoff.

Stephanie is in the back and sends a messenger to find Vince for a meeting in their office. She sends another to find HHH for a meeting in their office.

Video on Ryback's path of destruction towards Cena for the Three Stages of Hell match on Sunday.

Vickie and Maddox bring out the lumberjacks (the entire roster) to protect Cena and Ryback from fighting. We take a break at 10:55 with this and the McMahons to go.

Back from break with Vince and HHH arguing in the back with Stephanie in between them. She SCREECHES at them to stop and work it out because she's tired of it. Vince won't apologize because he wants HHH to be more than a legend or a big deal or a champion. He wants HHH to be THE MAN. HHH wants a match with Curtis Axel and Vince likes the idea but they get in an argument over who wants to see the match. Then Stephanie comes back in and asks for a group hug. Vince says he'll hug Stephanie and HHH can hug them both. The guys slap each others' backs hard and that's it. Seriously, we spent all night setting up THAT.

It's 11:03 and here's the world champion for the first time tonight. Ryback stands in the aisle but Cena is ticked off that this isn't really face to face. They argue about the same things they've fought about for weeks: Ryback should have been champion but it's Cena's fault, Cena says that Ryback should take account of his own failures because THE CHAMP IS HERE. Ryback says he can see Cena and the legend ends when Ryback wins the title on Sunday in three stages. Cena wants to fight now but the lumberjacks hold him back. They get in the ring and the brawl is on, but both guys are held back to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C. Here's the problem with Raw in a nutshell: it's a solid two hour show but the extra sixty minutes of filler drags it down. If that sounds familiar, it's because it's been the problem for nearly a year since the show went to three hours. There are some solid stories and interesting action on here, but the constant recaps of stuff we saw 45 minutes ago and the incessant commercials for WWE App make this a chore to sit through at three hours. I'm sure the solution is more Vince, Stephanie and HHH though, because there's no way they're taking it back to two hours.

### Results

HHH vs. Curtis Axel went to a no contest

Kane b. Dean Ambrose via DQ when Shield interfered

Miz b. Cody Rhodes – Figure Four

Chris Jericho b. Big E. Langston – Codebreaker

Antonio Cesaro b. Sin Cara – Neutralizer

Randy Orton vs. Roman Reigns went to a no contest when Seth Rollins and Daniel Bryan interfered

Daniel Bryan b. Seth Rollins – Small Package

Damien Sandow b. R-Truth – Silencer

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# Monday Night Raw – January 27, 1997: Hunting For A Nation

## Monday Night Raw

Date: January 27, 1997

Location: Montagne Center, Beaumont, Texas

Attendance: 4,834

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Jerry Lawler

We're only a few weeks away from Final Four and the main event was set last week. Oddly enough Shawn wasn't on the show after he won the world title at the Rumble. My guess is tonight is his big moment after last week's Bret centered show. I get the idea of pushing the main event of the PPV, but at the same time shouldn't the focus be on the champion instead of his challenger? Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Bret whining and the announcement of the fourway match at Final Four for the title shot at Wrestlemania.

### Ahmed Johnson vs. Crush

During Ahmed's entrance we get a video of Savio turning on Ahmed in a tag match but not joining the Nation. Ahmed goes after the Nation lackeys (Faarooq and Savio are nowhere to be seen) to start but gets jumped by Crush as the bell rings. Johnson comes back with a quick slam and an ax kick for no cover. Crush gets kicked in the back and has his head smashed into the mat by Ahmed's boot. A corner splash and a kick to the chest put Crush down and Ahmed stands around again.

Crush rolls away from an elbow drop before putting Ahmed down with a belly to belly. He stays on Ahmed's back due to Johnson's lacerated kidney as Faarooq comes out to watch from the entrance. We take a break and come back with Ahmed dropping Crush down onto the mat to break what looked like a chinlock. Crush gets two off a backbreaker but jumps off the middle rope into a dropkick to give Johnson a breather. They head to the floor for a second and Faarooq runs out for a cheap shot by whipping Johnson into the steps. Back in and Crush's heart punch (exactly what it sounds like) gets the pin.

**Rating:** D+. This was pretty slow but it continues the story of Faarooq vs. the Nation which had gone on for months by this point. The idea was that Johnson couldn't handle the Nation on his own but having him lose all the time didn't do him much good. Crush was fine for a power lackey though and it fit him much better given his real life prison sentence around this time.

Ad for Thursday Raw Thursday. We'll get to that one soon.

Here's Shawn for his first interview after regaining the title. Vince talks about Shawn vs. Sid III on Thursday Raw Thursday and about the Boyhood Dream. Shawn says it isn't a dream but a reality and he'll do

whatever it takes to keep the title against Sid. Vince asks him about the fourway and which person he'd like to face, but Shawn of course doesn't answer.

Shawn talks about how all of the potential challengers have a bad side and right now it's bringing out the worst in everyone. Vince says it brings out competition so here's Bret Hart with something to say. Bret says that he wants Shawn to do whatever he has to do to come out of Thursday Raw Thursday (who named it that anyway? It sounds so strange) as champion because Bret wants to beat him at Wrestlemania. He wants it so bad that he'll watch Shawn's back against Sid.

Vince now brings out Undertaker who says that Bret has earned his respect after their wars, but Taker is tired of hearing about Bret getting screwed. If anyone has been screwed over the years, it's Taker himself and it's time for the title to come to the dark side. That means Taker vs. Shawn at Wrestlemania, so Shawn better give his soul to the Lord because his body belongs to Taker.

Now it's Austin's turn to say he'll fight Shawn at Wrestlemania. Instead of going to the ring though, Austin has JR come down the aisle with him carrying a microphone. Austin says he's tough but he knows an ambush when he sees it coming. He's thrown them over the top rope before and he'd have done the same thing to Shawn if he had the chance. Austin starts walking to the ring but turns around, only to run into Vader. Trash is talked but nothing physical happens.

### British Bulldog vs. Doug Furnas

Bulldog grabs a quick headlock but gets dropkicked out to the floor for his troubles. Back in and Furnas hits a charge in the corner and a suplex for two each. Bulldog throws Furnas out to the floor and then into the steps before dropping said steps on Furnas' back. Why this isn't a DQ is anyone's guess but we take a break before we can get an answer. Back with Ahmed trying to break into the Nation's locker room. Bulldog has Furnas

in a chinlock before pounding on the back.

Bulldog easily shrugs off a comeback big as this match just keeps going. Furnas blocks a piledriver attempt with a backdrop but is almost immediately caught in a suplex for two more. Back to the chinlockery as Owen yells about how bad of a Canadian Furnas is. Furnas dropkicks Bulldog down and gets two of his own off a powerslam.

Bulldog counters what appears to be a rana attempt into a powerbomb for no cover as Owen and his Slammy get up on the apron. We get some heel miscommunication with Bulldog going into the trophy but Furnas only gets two. Not that it matters as Bulldog counters a sunset flip into a rollup for the pin a few seconds later.

**Rating:** D. So let me get this straight: we're supposed to buy Furnas and LaFon as contenders to the tag titles after they lose a non-title match and Furnas can't beat Bulldog even after Owen blasts Bulldog in the head with the Slammy? It's pretty clear why the tag division was in such a shambles at this point.

Post match Owen and Bulldog get in an argument over the mistake with Bulldog throwing down the Slammy and his tag title belt. Scratch that as they shake hands a few moments later.

We go back to MSG to see more of Savio turning on Ahmed.

We also get a clip from Shotgun Saturday Night with Savio saying he hasn't joined the Nation. He then had a match with Rocky Maivia and revealed that he had joined the Nation. Well that's certainly a swerve, a full seven minutes in the making.

For just \$1.49 a minute, you can find out Sid's secret weapon for the world title match.

Video of the press conference to announce Tiger Ali Singh has signed with the WWF. If you don't remember that name, keep it that way.

### Vader/Mankind vs. Godwinns

Mankind and Phineas start things off as we hear about Royal Rumble Raw next week, which will be the Rumble airing on Raw. It's quickly off to Henry who wins a slugout with Mankind. Mankind is knocked into the corner but would rather rock back and forth than tag Vader. After a quick skirmish on the floor it's time for Vader vs. Phineas. Vader easily knocks him into the corner and goes NUTS, pounding Phineas down into the corner.

Mankind comes back in for the Mandible Claw but Henry clotheslines them both out to the floor to break it up. Henry is pulled over the top and out to the floor to start a big brawl as we take a break. Back with Phineas missing a charge at Mankind before a double tag brings in Henry to pound on Vader. Henry actually slams Vader down but gets punched in the face a few seconds later. They head to the floor with Mankind swinging a chair and hitting Vader by mistake, earning the Godwinns a countout win.

**Rating:** C-. I've seen worse and Henry looked great in the brawls with Vader. The Godwinns were one of the few regular tag teams around at this point but their time was already over. It looks like we're heading towards Vader vs. Mankind which is odd given that Vader is already in the world title scene at this time.

Ahmed finds the Nation and swings at their car as they speed away to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D+. The main event stuff was pretty good here but all the other stuff dragged the show down. The tag stuff was nothing interesting and the Ahmed vs. Faarooq stuff isn't enough to carry a show. It was nice to have the champion on the show and thankfully his segment was really



strong. Unfortunately the rest wasn't and the show was pretty dull as a result.

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# Monday Night Raw – January 20, 1997: Bret Is Screwed

## Monday Night Raw

Date: January 20, 1997

Location: Montagne Center, Beaumont, Texas

Attendance: 4,834

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Jerry Lawler

We're past the Rumble and Shawn Michaels is the WWF Champion once again. The main story though is that Austin won the Royal Rumble despite being eliminated by Bret earlier on in the match. Bret is rightly angry and odds are he'll have something to say about that tonight. We're on the way to Wrestlemania now and things are about to get awesome. Let's get to it.

We open with the announcers narrating a video on last night's show, focusing on the two main events.

Here's a ticked off Bret to open the show. He starts yelling at Vince for lying about Bret getting a title shot if he beat Stone Cole. Bret got his shot but as luck would have it, Shawn Michaels was on commentary for the title shot and cost Bret the title. Then he had to beat 29 other guys in the Rumble, but even after winning that he still doesn't get a world

title shot. The way Bret sees it, he's been screwed by Shawn, Austin, the WWF and Vince himself. Since he isn't going to get a title shot, Bret quits and leaves through the crowd.

This immediately brings out Austin whose mic doesn't work. He threatens to equipment guy with violence for giving him a bad mic before telling Hart to quit whining and go back to Canada. As for Austin, he's been ripped off for six years and tonight he's being screwed over again by Gorilla Monsoon. Gorilla has made Austin vs. Undertaker tonight because Sid has a concussion, so Austin has some bananas to stick somewhere on Gorilla.

Vince walks out of commentary to find Bret.

#### British Bulldog/Owen Hart vs. Doug Furnas/Phillip LaFon

Owen and the Bulldog are tag champions but this is non-title. LaFon starts with Owen as they trade some wristlock counters. They run the ropes a bit before Phillip superkicks Owen down and tags in Furnas. Doug gets two off a quick belly to belly before Owen comes back with a spinwheel kick for no cover. Off to Bulldog who walks into a hurricanrana before it's back to Lafon. Bulldog pounds away but gets caught by some kicks to the ribs and a jawbreaker for two.

The non-champions work on Bulldog's leg but a blind tag brings in Owen for a missile dropkick for two on Furnas. Back from a break with Owen dropping an elbow on Furnas for two but the Sharpshooter is blocked. Hart breaks up a hot tag attempt but gets caught by a cross body for two.

Bulldog comes back in with the delayed vertical suplex for two of his own as the match continues its slow pace. Back to Owen for a chinlock before he misses a top rope splash. A double tag brings in Bulldog and LaFon with the powerlifter LaFon snapping off suplexes. LaFon is on a roll but Owen blasts him in the face with a Slammy, allowing Bulldog to hit the powerslam for the pin.

**Rating:** C-. This wasn't bad but it never really got going. Furnas and LaFon are very talented but they never reached their potential in WWF. Both guys were better showcased in Japan where they had the time and platform to show how good they really were. Owen and Bulldog were pretty good tag champions but the lack of competition hurt them a lot.

Video of Shawn's entrance last night.

Video of Ahmed Johnson chasing Faarooq out of the Rumble last night.

### Bart Gunn vs. Faarooq

This is when the Nation was still Faarooq, Crush and Savio with other unnamed guys (D'Lo Brown, PG-13 and others). Faarooq runs Bart over as JR makes fun of the Robin Hood episode of Nitro. Bart cranks on the arm with a hammerlock and drives knees into the arm. We take a break and come back with Faarooq stomping away and hitting a powerslam for two. Off to a chinlock on Gunn followed by some stomping for two. Gunn ducks a top rope shoulder block and gets a quick two off a bulldog. Bart has to go after the rest of the Nation and Faarooq gets in a cheap shot on the floor. Back in and the Dominator ends Gunn.

**Rating:** D. This was a long squash which didn't accomplish much. The Smoking Gunns being broken left Bart with nothing at all to do other than job until the Brawl For All. Nothing to see here though as Ahmed vs. Faarooq is delayed even longer than the months we've already had to endure it.

Here's Vince with Commissioner Gorilla Monsoon. Gorilla can't change the winner of the Royal Rumble, but Austin isn't going to be getting the title match at Wrestlemania that easily. Instead at In Your House there's going to be a four way No DQ match for the world title match at Wrestlemania. The participants: Undertaker, Vader (both were illegally eliminated by Austin), Austin and Bret Hart.

This brings out Austin who says you can't have a fourway match with Bret having walked out. There's no instant replay in the WWF so you can't keep Austin from his title shot at Wrestlemania. Austin gets in Monsoon's face before yelling at Vince instead. Bret comes back through the card and the fight is on with Austin. Hart takes over and rams him into the steps as we take a break.

### Undertaker vs. Steve Austin

Bret brawls with Undertaker during his entrance but Austin jumps Taker as Hart is taken away by the referees. They head inside with Austin stomping away before having his head slammed into the mat. Old School connects and Austin is in trouble in the corner. Austin comes back with a neckbreaker and kicks Undertaker down during the situp. Austin chokes away on the ropes and rams Taker face first into the buckle.

A clothesline gets two on Taker as Lawler screams at Austin to work on Taker's injured ribs. Instead it's off to a chinlock as Lawler is now at ringside shouting about the ribs. Taker hits Austin low but Austin hits the Stunner out of nowhere for no cover. We cut to the back where Vader and Bret are being pulled apart. We take a break and come back with Austin pounding away on a downed Taker. Austin goes up and gets crotched but finally listens to the King and goes after the ribs to maintain control. Taker comes back with a clothesline but here's Vader for the DQ.

**Rating:** D+. This was ok but the Lawler stuff was kind of distracting. Since when has he either cared about Austin or gotten involved in something like this? That and the ending was disappointing but understandable given the match that was just announced. Austin and Undertaker never had good chemistry either and it really shows at times.

Bret comes out as well and a long brawl ends the show.

**Overall Rating:** D+. They really need another hour at this point as they're still having a ten minute squash featuring Bart Gunn instead of

anything else. The main event stuff is interesting but they have to fly through it along with several other stories in order to make things fit. Also, where was Shawn the night after he won the world title in his hometown? Not a good show but once it hits two hours things should be stronger.

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