

Monday Night Raw – January 28, 2013: Paul Heyman Lies A Lot, Raw Roulette Sucks and LESNAR!

Monday Night Raw

Date: January 28, 2013

Location: Thomas and Mack Center, Las Vegas, Nevada

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler, John Bradshaw Layfield

The Rumble is over now and the big stories are Rock winning the title and Cena winning the Rumble, likely setting up a title rematch that I don't think many people are interested in seeing. Tonight is also Raw Roulette which is a gimmick that this show flat out doesn't need. We should be getting ready for Wrestlemania but instead we get a night of gimmick matches and lame jokes instead. Let's get to it.

We open with Vickie who has three roulette wheels behind her. One has superstars, one has stipulations and one has a bunch of HILARIOUS gimmicks on it. First up is Cesaro vs. Orton which gets a special referee.

Here are Punk and Heyman to the ring and they are TICKED. Punk says this is day 435 and he goes on a RANT about how he's still champion and that he didn't lose. Ropes are kicked and tiny pieces of hair follicles are probably pulled out. Punk says Rock couldn't beat him without anyone's help and that makes the fans cheaters. Vince and Rock are swindlers and Punk is going to crash Rock's party tonight.

This brings out Vince who has this big goofy grin on his face. Punk calls him every insulting name he can think of but Vince says that he has proof that Heyman was behind the Shield attacks. Heyman: "Sir if I may..." Vince:

“YOU MAY NOT!” Vince says he’ll be evaluating Heyman later tonight which might result in his firing. This was a pretty fast ending.

Randy Orton vs. Antonio Cesaro

The guest referee is the Miz, which I said before his music hit. This was obvious because Cesaro pinned Miz clean last night, meaning the feud must continue. Anyway this is joined in progress after a break with Orton getting two off something we didn’t see. Cesaro pounds away in the corner but gets clotheslined down again. A suplex gets two for Orton and we head to the floor where Cesaro’s back is sent into the barricade.

Back in and Orton slingshots Antonio’s throat into the ropes for two. Miz has done nothing of note so far. They trade European uppercuts with Cesaro taking over. Orton comes right back with a BIG backdrop to send Cesaro to the floor as we take another break. Back with Cesaro guillotining Orton on the top rope and heading to the floor for a bit. Back in and there’s a cravate for a bit before Randy charges into a falcon’s arrow for two.

Off to a chinlock but Orton fights out of it with his usual stuff including the powerslam. Cesaro comes back with a jumping back elbow off the middle rope (looked great) for two. He argues with Miz, allowing Orton to hit the backbreaker. Cesaro pokes Orton in the eye and gets in an argument with Miz, allowing Orton to hit the RK0 for the pin at 12:45 shown.

Rating: C+. This was decent stuff but we were just waiting on Miz to do something. Like I said though there is no reason for Miz to be involved in this feud anymore. The guy lost clean in the title match last night so why should they still be interacting? The face turn continues to falter and Orton’s heel turn continues to not seem to be anytime soon.

Miz hits Cesaro with the Finale and looks at the Mania sign.

The next spin is by Ryback and he gets to make Vickie laugh. He starts by snorting at her and walking away.

Here's Ryback to the ring and after a break we see Andre Agassi and Stefi Graf in the audience. The Prime Time Players, Ryback and Matt Striker are in the ring. Apparently this is a joke off. The Players make a joke about Striker's luck with women that isn't funny and didn't make a lot of sense. Ryback asks what has four eyes, twenty fingers, and is about to be unconscious. The beating begins and Young runs away. Striker declares Ryback the winner and gets Shell Shocked too.

Backlund HOF video again.

Wade Barrett gets to pick his opponent tonight.

Wade Barrett vs. Bo Dallas

Dallas eliminated Barrett from the Rumble last and is the rookie from NXT. They fight in the corner a bit but Barrett hits his kick to the ribs to take over. Barrett loads up the Bull Hammer but charges into a belly to belly suplex for the shocking pin at 2:12. There's Barrett's first real feud as champion.

Cody Rhodes spins John Cena which is up next.

We hear about Cena being on Fruity Pebbles boxes, replacing Fred Flintstone. As stupid as it sounds, that's a pretty big deal.

Cody Rhoes vs. John Cena

Cena starts fast with a dropkick and a fisherman's suplex to send Rhodes to the floor. Cody says this is a waste of his talents and walks away, only for Cena to throw him right back in. The usual finishes for Cena at 1:56.

Cena talks about how some people don't seem thrilled that he won. There were 30 people in the match last night but he's the guy that won. Throwing Ryback out to win is the first step towards Wrestlemania, where he can face a champion of his choosing. Cena says this is a difficult step, but first let's pause to tell Cena he sucks. Apparently it's going to be either Rock or Punk for some reason. I didn't hear talk of a rematch. Cena says that he can face Punk again but he's come up short in six tries to win the title. But I thought Cena never lost anything.

On the other hand is the Rock. Cena talks about talking down about Rock even before Rock returned so that when Rock showed up again, there would be only one possible candidate. Then Cena spent a year feuding with Rock and there were times Cena showed him up completely. Everything was perfect until April 1 when he lost everything he had spent a year doing.

Cena says Rock won and there's the chant for the champion. He asks which one he should challenge: the guy he has even money to beat or one of the two guys he seemingly never could beat. Cena makes his decision right now: the WWE Champion, whoever that is at Mania. That smells like a three way to me.

Before Cena can leave, cue the Shield to surround the ring. The beating is on, which basically kills the Cena leads the Shield rumors. Sheamus tries to make the save but here's Ryback for the real save. Six man tag at Elimination Chamber maybe? Either way a big brawl breaks out with Sheamus being posted. Cena tries to fight them off again but gets beaten down. The TripleBomb leaves Cena laying.

Brodus and Tensai are going to have a lingerie pillow fight but Tensai says no way. They spin the other wheel and it's a dance off but Tensai didn't see it. COMEDY is coming people!

We see everything WWE did in Phoenix this week.

Time for the dance off but Tensai first takes off a robe to reveal

women's lingerie. Brodus has a heart attack. It's time for the dance off with Brodus going first. Tensai doesn't want to dance but Lawler says what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas. Tensai does some very awkward stuff including Gangam Style and some other outdated stuff. The guy that got to beat Punk and Cena last year everybody. Ron Simmons pops up for his one word. JBL: "I know that guy."

Del Rio gets a body slam challenge with Big Show.

It's time for the body slam challenge but Big Show knocks Del Rio out. He tapes the champion up to the rope and destroys Ricardo while Alberto has to watch. This goes on for awhile and is rather awesome with Del Rio being tortured mentally while Ricardo got the physical part. Also the revenge will be SWEET.

Kaitlyn vs. Tamina

This is a showgirl lumberjill match. The girls are in showgirl outfits which look good but the lumberjill stuff is played already. This is non-title too. Tamina takes over to start and takes Kaitlyn down with a chinlock. Kaitlyn is thrown to the floor and beats up I think Aksana in the process. Tamina gets hit by a headbutt and Kaitlyn goes after her with some decent aggression. That goes out the window as she puts the hat on Kaitlyn but the girls all come in for the no contest at 2:58. Nothing to see here.

Here's Rock to address the people. He says that the word to sum up the title win is FINALLY, because it's been a long journey. Rock has won seven WWE Championships before but this one means more than any. He thanks the people and says the days of CM Punk saying the people mean nothing are over. Rock gets in his usual jabs at Punk and Heyman but here's the ex-champion.

Punk says that he earned the title unlike rock who had it handed to him. If Rock has any respect at all, he would hand the championship back to

Punk right now. Rock says come get it and says Punk can either come get it or stand up there like a coward. Punk comes to the ring but says he's staying on the stage. He wants a rematch and lists off some places he'll be this weekend but finally says let's do it at Elimination Chamber. Also, this is ROCK's rematch, not Punk's. Rock says let's do it.

Sheamus vs. Damien Sandow

This is a tables match because RANDOM! Sheamus seems to be favoring his left arm. Sandow runs to the floor to start and Sheamus is fine with beating him up out there. A table is set up in front of the ramp but Sandow runs away from it. We head to the other side of the ring where Damien finally dropkicks him down to take over. Another table is set up but instead Sheamus just throws it at him. Back in and Sandow takes out the injured (by the Shield) shoulder with a DDT. Apparently it's Sheamus' birthday today. Ok then.

Damien brings in another table and kind of Pillmanizes the arm with the table legs. Sheamus comes back with ease but misses a Brogue Kick that would have sent Sandow through a table. Damien charges but gets caught by the slingshot shoulder. Sandow hits him in the arm again and drops the Wind-Up Elbow. Sheamus is thrown ribs first into the side of a table in a painful looking move. Sandow goes up top, only to get shoved down to the apron for the ten forearms. A suplex back in doesn't work but White Noise through the table in the corner is enough for the win at 7:21.

Rating: C. Pretty decent match here but the tables were more clutter than anything else. That's the problem with Raw Roulette in general: these gimmicks don't add anything at all to the matches. If you want Sheamus to beat Sandow with White Noise, you can do that just fine without tables. The match was pretty entertaining but it doesn't accomplish much of anything.

It's time for WWE Karaoke with Ryder and Khali and company as the contestants. Khali gets to sing Shawn's theme song but after nearly

crushing Shawn's entire career, 3MB interrupts. Drew: "Whoa whoa whoooooooooooooo sweet child of mine." I love Drew McIntyre now. He gets chopped in the head for his efforts and it's a Rough Ryder for Mahal. The big chop and Tadpole Splash (Horny is part of "and company") take out Slater.

Here's Jericho's latest return to Raw. He welcomes us to Raw is Jericho and thanks all of the Jericholics for watching at home, which is something he'll neeeeeeeeeeeeeever forget a-gain. This brings out Team Ziggler with the namesake pointing out that Jericho is gone thanks to losing to Dolph six months ago. AJ says that was her idea but Jericho says put a leash on her already.

Langston says Jericho should leave before Big E. ruins the return. Jericho: "What does the E stand for? Your bra size?" Vickie pops up on screen and says she signed Jericho back to Raw and he gets to face Dolph tonight in a Strange Bedfellows match. In other words, they get to team up to fight HELL NO.

HELL NO vs. Dolph Ziggler/Chris Jericho

Ziglgler and Kane start things off with the unlikely partners bickering as we take a break about 25 seconds into the match. Back with Jericho being tagged in reluctantly, only to take both Kane and the legal Bryan down. The Walls to Bryan can't work and HELL NO collides. Jericho lets them fight and they start shoving each other. Ziggler tags himself in but Jericho slaps Kane in the back, leaving Ziggler alone in the ring. Chokeslam ends Ziggler at 5:40, over half of which was in commercial.

Here's Vince to give Heyman his job evaluation. Before Paul comes out, Vince says Punk has been escorted from the building. They shake hands so Vince uses some liquid soap. He asks Heyman if Paul is behind the Shield or Maddox but Paul denies it. Vince asks Heyman if he's ever lied. Heyman says something Vince's dad says before saying of course he's lied every day because promoters have to do that to survive. However, right now he

isn't lying of course.

Vince asks the fans if Heyman has an honest face or if he's an honest man. The fans chant no so let's go to the tape that Vince has. It's of Heyman and Maddox in the dark somewhere with Heyman saying turn the camera off. The audio keeps going though and the cameraman turns it back on. Heyman talks about paying Maddox off to screw Ryback in the Cell and paying the Shield in general. He says he and Punk have been doing it together and the Shield comes up to surround Maddox. Maddox begs and is beaten down anyway as the camera goes out.

Back in the arena and Heyman is panicking. Fans: "YOU GOT BUSTED!" Heyman says that wasn't him in the video and that Vince knows what it's like to be falsely accused. Paul says he has a thick New York Jewish accent and it's easy to impersonate. Heyman goes on a big rant about being falsely accused because of his success and saying that wasn't him again. Vince says he's going to have to future endeavor Heyman but LESNAR!

Brock is back (in bright yellow shoes) and circles the ring before getting inside to face Vince. He gets in Vince's face and they touch noses. Vince says Lesnar shouldn't do something he'll regret later. Lesnar keeps telling Heyman to go back to the corner. He nods at Heyman and it's an F5 for Vince as Heyman screams NO.

Overall Rating: D+. I forgot how annoying Raw Roulette can be. There's nothing to most of these shows and that was the case here. The gimmicks get in the way of the matches which defeats the purpose. This is very reminiscent of Open Fight Night where the matches are the same ones we could see on any given Raw. Nothing much to see here and the show was a letdown coming off last night's Raw. The ending helps a bit but not enough.

Results

Randy Orton b. Antonio Cesaro – RKO

Bo Dallas b. Wade Barrett – Belly to belly suplex

John Cena b. Cody Rhodes – Attitude Adjustment

Kaitlyn vs. Tamina went to a no contest

Sheamus b. Damien Sandow – White Noise through a table

HELL NO b. Chris Jericho/Dolph Ziggler

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Monday Night Raw – November 22, 1993 (Survivor Series Showdown): The Lost Episode

Monday Night Raw (Survivor Series Showdown)

Date: November 22, 1993

Location: Fernwood Resort, Bushkill, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Gorilla Monsoon, Jim Ross

I'm not sure why this is a significant show but apparently it's a "lost" episode of Raw because both this and some other episode of Raw was listed as production #41 and therefore this isn't part of the 1000 episodes of Raw. Given how hard it was to figure out which episode was #100 and #200 etc, this doesn't surprise me at all. This is the go home show for the Survivor Series and may be called Survivor Series Showdown. Let's get to it.

Yep it's the special. Based on what I can find, there was no official Raw for this date but it's WWF so are you expecting them to be able to pull

off this counting thing? This may or may not have been a clipped version of another show called Survivor Series Showdown that aired the previous day which I'll get to eventually.

Vince and Bobby are in the studio and talk about all of the eliminations of the upcoming main event Survivor Series match. Tatanka has been injured and replaced by Undertaker, just like Pierre being replaced by Crush. Jerry Lawler is also out for legal reasons (a 13 year old made up a story that he raped her but he would be back pretty quickly so Shawn is replacing him in the match against the Harts. Mr. Perfect also might have allowed for Randy Savage to replace him. So why was Heenan so shocked when Savage showed up?

WWF World Title: Bret Hart vs. Yokozuna

There's an opening match for you. Yoko is defending as I'm guessing this is the end of a TV taping or something. The champion shoves Bret around to start but gets dropkicked out to the floor for his efforts. JR points out the flaw of the USA chant but Gorilla brushes it off. Yoko stays on the floor for about two minutes without being counted out somehow. Back in (finally) and Bret pounds away before throwing on a sleeper.

That goes about as well as you would expect for a small guy trying a sleeper on a monster so the champion takes over again. A knee drop crushes Bret and Yoko rips at his face for a bit. The Canadian is sent to the floor where Fuji gets in a cheap shot with the flag and we take a break. Back with Bret pounding away out of the corner but getting taken down by a cheap shot to the throat.

Off to the nerve hold by the champion which lasts for a good long while. Bret fights up and charges into Yoko for no good reason and bounces out to the floor as you would expect. Yoko follows him out and gets sent into the steps to no effect, so there's a chair shot to Hart's back. More chair shots keep Bret down and we take a second break. Back with Yoko hitting the fat man legdrop for no cover.

Yoko misses a big charge in the corner and Bret has his rocking. The Hart Attack clothesline is enough for two but Bret has to deck Fuji before he can follow up. Hart goes up but dives into a bearhug but immediately bites his way out of it. A middle rope bulldog is enough for another two as the fans are WAY into it now.

The middle rope elbow hits but Bret might have hit his knee in the process. The Canadian goes up again but dives into a belly to belly as both guys are down again. The champ misses a splash so Bret hooks the Sharpshooter but Owen walks to ringside for absolutely no apparent reason. Fuji hits Bret with the bucket so Owen runs in and hits Yoko with the same bucket for the DQ.

Rating: B. When you can drag a good match out of the fat man Yoko, you can tell you've got something special on your hands. This was a LONG match too, hitting nearly half an hour which was unthinkable for a free TV match back in the day. Owen coming out was foreshadowing the heel turn on Wednesday. Yeah Survivor Series was on Wednesday in 1993.

We're going to get a feature on Stu and Helen Hart later. That could be good.

Survivor Series Report. This was a segment you would get around PPV time which was a rundown of the card and a few quick promos from people on the show. Part of this is a clip of Doink saying that he'll have Four Doinks of his own on Wednesday (he wouldn't be one of them) in one of the worst matches I've ever seen. We also get a clip of Team IRS fighting amongst themselves.

Marty Jannetty vs. IRS

Before this match we get a gem from Vince: "Tonight it's Marty Jannetty vs. IRS but this Wednesday night on the PPV they'll be opposing each other." Slow match to start with IRS hitting a slam and then backing off. Marty does the same and dropkicks IRS to the floor as we take a break.

Back with IRS holding a chinlock followed by an abdominal stretch as the fans chant Irwin. Marty fights back with right hands and a knee lift for two. A sunset flip gets two for Marty and a suplex gets two for IRS but his big running clothesline gets the pin on Marty out of nowhere. Yeah that was his finisher.

Rating: D. This was really dull for the most part until it picked up ever so slightly at the end of the match. IRS was the captain of the team due to having no one else that was head and shoulders above his partners. That's not true as Diesel was on the team but you get what I mean. Jannetty would actually get the winning pin on Sunday I believe.

Vince tops himself by saying "an excellent matchup there but it has nothing to do with the Survivor Series." So why did you put it on the card dude?

We go to the "Hart Family house" with Reo Rogers, a parody of Dusty Rhodes as performed by Bruce Prichard. Shawn is here too and even though it's the dead of night, they go up to the door and a REALLY old woman answers the door. We go inside (where there is a camera waiting) and a Bret poster on the wall. There's a tiny Owen one next to it as the turn is pushed even further. They go to see an old "Stu" but Vince cuts it off and ends the show. Dang that could have been funny stuff.

Overall Rating: B-. The show is an hour long and one match is nearly half of that. Since that match is good, how can you not say the whole show was solid? The PPV wound up being pretty terrible and the world title match here was better than anything on there, but that's the nature of 1993. Decent show here but it's nothing worth going out of your way to see.

Here's Survivor Series if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2012/10/30/survivor-series-count-up-2012-edition-1993-good-old-fashioned-american-xenophobia/>

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On This Day: January 23, 1995 – Monday Night Raw: A 1995 Raw That Doesn't Suck

Monday Night Raw

Date: January 23, 1995

Location: Manatee Civic Center, Palmetto, Florida

Attendance: 2,500

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Shawn Michaels

It's the night after the Rumble and the main story is that Bam Bam Bigelow shoves Lawrence Taylor and nearly got in a fight with him. That would be the main event of Wrestlemania, showing how big a mess things were. Shawn Michaels won the Rumble last night as well, setting up his world title shot against Diesel. This is still just an hour and would be for over two more years. Let's get to it.

We open with Vince apologizing for Bigelow shoving Taylor down yesterday. Apparently Bam Bam has been suspended without pay.

Dig that old school Raw opening! I haven't seen that in a long time.

Shawn is brought out to do commentary, which is kind of strange for the Rumble winner. He does his expected bragging.

Tag Titles: Smoking Gunns vs. 1-2-3 Kid/Bob Holly

The Kid and Holly are defending here, having won the belts last night in a tournament final. Vince: "This should be a tremendous matchup!" Shawn: "I'll let you know if it's tremendous. No one knows more about tremendous matches than me." Only Shawn could say that line and get away with it. Billy and Bob start things off and it's a feeling out process between both faces. Billy with a mullet just doesn't work at all. Then again most stuff Billy did didn't work.

Off to Bart but Bob bails away, interestingly enough from his future partner. The Kid comes in and fires away some kicks but can't hit Bart with any of them. Bart misses a dropkick and it's off to Bob again. We get some token arm work from the champ before both guys miss elbow drops, leading to a standoff. Billy comes in with a bulldog from behind for two as the champions take over. A double gorilla press on Holly looks to set up another double team move but Bob crotches Billy to escape.

The champions hit a double superplex for two as things pick up out of nowhere. We take a break and come back with Billy running into a knee to the ribs to put him back down. A kick to the face puts Billy down again and it's back to the Kid. A spinwheel kick gets two on Billy as does a double dropkick from the champions. Back to Holly who loses a slugout before it's back to the Kid.

In a teachable moment, the Kid hits what we would call the Fameasser on Billy. Apparently the teaching works as Billy hits a Fameasser of his own about thirty seconds later to take the Kid down. Hot tag brings in Bart who gets two off a backdrop of all things. The Gunns hit the Sidewinder (side slam from Bart/legdrop from Billy) for two as Holly makes the save. The Kid gets to play Ricky Morton which is the best possible role for him.

We take another break and come back with Kid in a chinlock. Back to Billy for a legdrop (he REALLY likes that move) for no cover. The Gunns hit a dropkick/suplex combo for two as Shawn is in full criticism mode. Holly finally does something and kicks Bart in the back to let the Kid make the

tag. Bob hits that dropkick of his for two but goes up and jumps into a boot like an idiot. The Gunns hit an over the shoulder powerbomb/top rope elbow combination on Holly to take the titles from the Cinderella team.

Rating: B-. This was a LONG match for its day. They probably had about twenty minutes out there and got a pretty good match out of it. I fail to see the point in taking the Gunns out of the tournament if they were just going to get the belts here. Still though, this was a nice treat given how much time it got. Neither team was heel here but they both had evil flashes in there.

The former champions ask for a rematch which I believe happened next week.

Shawn promises to find a new bodyguard. That would wind up being Sid.

IRS vs. Buck Quartermain

IRS and the Million Dollar Corporation stole Undertaker's urn last night, setting of an eight month or so long feud. You might remember Buck from the old school TNA days. Roddy Piper is on the phone for this for no apparent reason and praises the New Generation. The match is nothing of note and IRS wins with a flying clothesline in about two and a half minutes. The whole match was about Roddy.

Here's the King's Court (Lawler's interview show) with Jeff Jarrett and the Roadie. Jarrett brags about winning the IC Title last night and wants a shot at Diesel. Vince FREAKS about Jarrett wanting a shot at the world title. Well to be fair, why would a midcard champion ever get near the world title? Right Vince?

British Bulldog vs. Black Phantom

The Phantom is portrayed by David Heath, more famous as Gangrel. Davey

talks trash to Shawn before the match and gets jumped by the Phantom. A jumping DDT gets two on Smith but he comes back with the delayed vertical suplex for no cover. Vince goes into a bizarre rant about how Shawn didn't deserve to win the Rumble because only one foot hit. What Shawn did was perfectly legal, so why doesn't he deserve the win? Smith hooks a chinlock for a bit before Phantom makes a comeback and misses a middle rope splash. The powerslam gets the easy pin for Smith.

Rating: D. Nothing to see here but the commentary exchange was pretty fun stuff. Smith was a solid upper midcard guy around this time but would get stuck in a tag team with Luger soon after this that would bring him right back down. Nothing of note to the match here but that's par for the course in squashes.

Bam Bam Bigelow is supposed to apologize but there's no audio. Post break and Bigelow still can't hear us. Oh wait yes we can. It's almost like this company has no idea what it's doing. Wait we DON'T have Bigelow. Egads man this is pathetic.

A quick preview of next week's show ends the show.

Overall Rating: C+. For a 1995 Raw, this was pretty entertaining stuff. A twenty minute match that wasn't half bad is an incredibly rare thing today so back then it would have been a once a year thing. Other than that we didn't have much, but for a one hour show that's pretty good stuff. 1995 just wasn't interesting for the most part though, and that's what this falls under the category of: decent but not interesting.

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Monday Night Raw – September 8, 2003: When The Highlight Of The Show Is Molly's Hair, You're In Trouble

Monday Night Raw

Date: September 8, 2003

Location: Von Braun Center, Huntsville, Alabama

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

This is another request whose reasoning I'm not sure of. Maybe people just like to make me cry. Anyway we're coming up on Unforgiven in a few weeks which has a main event of Goldberg vs. HHH. In keeping with WWE tradition, the main event tonight is Goldberg/Orton vs. HHH/Flair, because Orton is in Evolution and therefore will make problems for Goldberg. Dig that high quality matchmaking! Let's get to it.

Kane vs. Rob Van Dam

Kane was recently unmasked and therefore turned heel (granted it's Kane so who knows why he turned) on his tag partner RVD, setting up this cage match. Instead of THIS taking place on PPV though, we got Shane McMahon vs. Kane because Kane electrocuted Shane's testicles with jumper cables last week. Kane jumps Rob as soon as he gets in and immediately starts pounding away.

Van Dam gets sent into the cage but comes back with a kick and a flip attack out of the corner. Kane rams him right back into the cage again and crushes Van Dam's head against the cage with a boot. A side slam puts Rob down for no cover so Kane rams him into the cage again. Van Dam tries a comeback but his stepover kick is countered into a powerslam for no cover again.

Kane loads up a powerbomb but Van Dam punches out of it. Not that it matters much though as Kane clotheslines him down and goes back up top. That goes badly for him as well though as Rob crotches him and crushes him against the cage with a cross body. Somewhere along the way Rob got cut over his eye. The jumping kick from the top rope puts Kane down again and Rolling Thunder hits for no cover. Rob tries to leave but has to kick Kane off the ropes.

Since Van Dam isn't that bright at times, he tries the Five Star but only hits the mat. Kane loads him up in a powerbomb position but drops Van Dam face first into the cage. Van Dam gets thrown into the cage a few times and after pointing at himself, Kane loads him up for a third ram. Rob gets tossed...and the cage breaks, allowing him to fall to the floor for the win. Well that was unexpected.

Actually it's so unexpected that before I can rate it, Bischoff comes out and says you have to go over the cage and not out of it to win, so we need to keep going. After a break Kane continues to pound away while talking trash. Apparently during the break Kane slammed the cage on Van Dam's head to put him in this much trouble. Rob tries to climb and Kane just lets him so RVD kicks him in the face. Van Dam tries to climb up but Kane climbs onto the top rope with him and a kind of chokeslam off said top rope is enough for the pin.

Rating: C-. The match was ok but at the end of the day, unless you're a wrestling encyclopedia, you're not likely going to have an idea why this match is happening. JR and King mentioned Kane's rage, but I don't think they mentioned the two of them even being partners until a few weeks ago. Also the match itself was pretty one sided for the most part and I'm not sure why it was in a cage in the first place.

Bischoff makes Shane vs. Kane and King/JR vs. Snow/Coach for the commentary position (just go with it) for Unforgiven. For tonight, HHH and Goldberg face each other in a tag match with mystery partners. Hooray!

Lance Storm is worried about being called boring so Goldust tells him to go beat up Rico in front of the Stormtroopers. Storm tries to do the Goldust breath and it's rather disturbing.

Lance Storm vs. Rico

If nothing else we get to look at Jackie Gayda in a barely there outfit. The idea here is that Storm is boring and trying to find a personality. Rico starts the boring chant before the match so Lance punches him down. Goldust in turn starts a Rico Sucks chant and we're ready to go. A quick suplex gets two for Lance but Rico comes back with a kick to the face and a clothesline before ripping at Storm's face. Off to a chinlock for a bit until Storm fights up and starts firing off clotheslines. Jackie tries to get involved and gets kissed by Storm who quickly finishes Rico with a springboard missile dropkick. Short and not terrible here.

Storm and Goldie dance post match.

HHH wants to know who the mystery partners are but Eric won't say.

Trish Stratus/Jacqueline vs. Molly Holly/Gail Kim

Trish's team are the faces here and Molly is champion here. She's in blue tonight and has that short brown hair going on which looks GREAT. Also Gail is looking especially good here in white. Molly and Jackie start things off with the champion getting armdragged a lot. Off to Jackie who gets whipped around as well before an elbow drop gets two. JR gets Jackie and Molly confused because that's easy to do right?

Molly and Gail hit a double DDT on Jackie for two before Kim takes Jackie's hand and slaps it against Trish for a tag. Stratus comes in and beats on everyone in sight before hitting a headlock/headscissors combo to Gail and Molly respectively. The heels backdrop Trish to the floor before throwing the carcass back in for the pin.

Rating: D+. The match here was nothing special but I'm really impressed by how good the heels looked. In case you're missing the point, I'm talking about their looks and not their in ring abilities. It's WAY better than what we have going on with the modern Divas, but man alive they made few secrets about it being all about sex appeal at this point.

Here's Austin for the State of Raw Address. How about we state that at this address, Raw will have more wrestling tonight? There's a podium for him to speak from but Austin throws it to the floor and destroys it because it's not his style. It takes forever to get to his first announcement, which is that if HHH gets counted out or disqualified, he loses the title. As for Kane, Austin thinks he should be able to beat him up for what Kane did to Shane. However since Austin is Co-GM, he's not allowed to do that. Austin and his cabinet (his liquor cabinet of course) met and determined this sucks.

This brings out Christian who makes fun of the fact that Austin can't beat anyone up. He's tired of being Intercontinental Champion and not getting any respect and after debating the topic for a bit, we get down to the point: Christian wants his own talk show to replace the Highlight Reel. This brings out Jericho to lay out Christian to much praise from Austin. Jericho goes off on Austin for patronizing him and says he wakes up every day and prays that Austin has been fired. Austin says he likes the Highlight Reel and that Jericho can either keep whining or have a beer.

Jericho says that Austin wants to give him a Stunner but he can't do it. Jericho: "If you want Steve Austin to give me a Stunner, give me a doo-wa-diddy-diddy-dum-diddy-do." Austin: "That was the stupidest catchphrase I've ever heard in the history of Monday Night Raw." Steve throws Jericho a beer but the Canadian drops it. Austin gives him a very easy throw on the second try in a funny bit but Jericho slaps Austin on the back. That counts as physical provocation so there's the Stunner. Somehow this took over eighteen minutes. What exactly was said in that amount of time?

La Resistance/Rob Conway/Rodney Mack/Mark Henry vs. Dudley
Boys/Hurricane/Rosey

Oh I'm SURE this isn't going to get all messy. The good guys clean house and Spike is launched onto La Resistance (the tag champions at this point). Hurricane throws in a dive of his own and it's table time less than a minute into this shindig. They're only set up on the floor though as we finally start with Rosey and Dupree. The fat man (Rosey) misses a charge but clotheslines Conway and Dupree down with ease because he's fat.

Off to Spike for his double stomp on Conway but since Spike is the anti-Rosey, Conway gets the tag off to Henry. Picture any match of Henry crushing someone smaller than him for about a minute and you have what you're getting here. Mark misses a charge and Spike picks...Hurricane for the hot tag? You're Spike Dudley and you pick the freaking HURRICANE to fight Mark Henry? Conway is brought in as Henry is down on the floor, likely out for months with an injury. Everything breaks down and Conway walks into the 3D for two via a save from Mack as Henry comes back in and powerslams Bubba for the pin.

Rating: D. Yep it was a mess. It amazes me that they're so strapped for time that they have an 18 minute talking segment and then they have to put ten guys in one match to get them all on TV for that week. There's nothing here to see other than another quick match tonight with way too many people in one match.

Post match La Resistance picks up Spike and throw him over the top rope and at the table. I say at the table because they don't throw him far enough and Spike's head smacks into the table, probably breaking his neck in the process.

Eric makes a 3-2 handicap tables match for the titles at Unforgiven. For those of you not remembering, Eric LOVED tables matches. It was like his version of tag matches for Teddy Long.

HHH talks about Goldberg and plugs a sponsor at the same time.

We run down the Unforgiven card.

Shane is at The World but before he can get anywhere, Bischoff pops up and makes his match with Kane a last man standing match. That means the PPV now has a handicap tables match, a last man standing match, a match for control of Raw's announcer booth, and a career threatening match. Why would we care about wrestling, right? Oh and another gimmick match would be added later.

Molly and Gail still look hot but now they have an evil idea, whatever that is.

Scott Steiner vs. Steven Richards

Somehow Steiner has a job at this point. He also has Stacy who is his girlfriend/head freak at this point, which would change very soon. This is angle advancement for Steiner vs. Test, the latter of which is at ringside here. Richards tries to jump Steiner to start and gets pounded down in the corner as a result. There's a clothesline for Richards and it's push-up time. Richards gets a boot up in the corner but walks into a Downward Spiral for the pin. Nothing match here.

Post match here's Bischoff AGAIN to make Test vs. Steiner for the PPV with Stacy on the line.

Back from a break and Coach and Snow are in the ring. THIS is what gets the next to last spot on Raw people. Let that sink in for a minute. Coach talks about jobs JR can have after he loses his job soon and we get WWE Humor with faces superimposed over FUNNY pictures. He goads JR to the ring and Coach gets laid out. Lawler shoves Snow to the floor and that's that. This is happening because Coach and Snow are the Heat commentators and want a promotion. Seriously, THIS is the second big feud on Raw right

now. Yet somehow people defend 2003 to me. I don't get it.

Goldberg/??? vs. HHH/???

Bischoff comes out and talks tough to HHH before bringing out Flair to be HHH's partner. Goldie's partner: Randy Orton. Goldberg starts fighting the opponents before Orton gets there before beating up his own partner. We're not going to get a match here are we? Orton gets in a shot on Goldberg's knee as HHH says lower the cage again. Bill keeps trying to fight and has all three guys down for a bit, only to walk into a chair shot to the head from HHH. The big beatdown ensues as Goldbeg is bleeding. HHH is legit injured at this point so the Pedigree is basically Goldberg falling and HHH kneeling. A second try closes the show.

Overall Rating: D-. Yet people still defend this nonsense. Let's look at what we had tonight: a cage match that wasn't important enough to give a story to, JR/King/Snow/Coach as the second big feud for the PPV, a beatdown to end the show, a 20 minute talking segment that went nowhere, and no good matches in two hours. When the best part of a show might be Molly Holly's hair, you've got major problems.

I've already done the September 15, 2003 Raw if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2012/11/03/monday-night-raw-september-15-2003-whoever-requested-this-start-running-now/>

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Monday Night Raw – January 21, 2013: Why I Love Rumble Season and They Got Rock!!!

Monday Night Raw

Date: January 21, 2013

Location: HP Pavilion, San Jose, California

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler

It's the go home show for the Rumble and most of the card is set. My guess is that the Rock will be in the building tonight to further the feud with Punk. Other than that you can expect to see the big deal at the end of the show where everyone is thrown to the floor with one person left standing. Other than that there isn't likely to be anything new tonight. Let's get to it.

The Martin Luther King Day video opens things up. Vince never misses this one.

Here are Heyman and Vickie to open the show. Vickie says that it's her job to make sure everyone has the best time they can at her show. That means she has to do things that are unpopular at times, which includes when it involves The Rock. Heyman says last week Rock insulted him as well as Vickie, who he sucks up to.

We get a clip from the Rock Concert last week with Rock making fun of both of them and Vickie says that if Rock tries to get in here tonight, he'll be arrested. We're told that Rock is being stopped from getting in by cops so we cut to the back where Rock cuts a promo on the three cops.

Rock says that instead of arresting him, one should arrest Punk for impersonating a champion, because unlike Manti Te'o who had an imaginary girlfriend, Punk has an imaginary nutsack. Heyman should be arrested for going out without a bra and Vickie should be asked what her insides look like, because her own head is buried inside of her. Rock tries to talk his way into the arena but Vickie says he's not getting in, if you smell

what the Vick is cooking.

Tonight there's a Beat the Clock Challenge and whoever wins gets to pick their number in the Rumble. The idea is that there will be three matches: whoever wins his fastest gets to pick their Rumble spot.

Beat The Clock Challenge: Randy Orton vs. Antonio Cesaro

Both guys try quick rollups with Cesaro grabbing a headlock to take it to the mat instead. Antonio has the American flag trunks on now as he continues to embrace America. Orton comes back with a Thesz Press but shifts to another cover instead of using the cover that the Press is by definition. Orton punches him down for two and we take a break. Back with Cesaro putting Randy on the top turnbuckle but Orton blocks a superplex and knocks Antonio to the outside.

Orton gets pulled down as well as the clock continues to tick. The gutwrench suplex gets a pair of two's and we hit a chinlock in a match that is designed to be won as quickly as possible. A slam gets two more for Cesaro as does a double stomp as we hit nine minutes. Back to the chinlock for a bit until Orton fights up and does all of his usual stuff. Cesaro counters the Elevated DDT into a jackknife cover for two and the European uppercut gets the same. Orton is sent shoulder first into the post and falls to the floor as we're past eleven minutes now. Cesaro comes back in and walks into the RKO for the pin at 11:36.

Rating: C-. The lack of psychology in this match made my head hurt. In a match based around speed, why in the world would you keep going to the floor or putting on chinlocks? The clock idea can get a bit annoying after while but it'll get even worse later on in the night. The match here wasn't bad but the psychology was plain stupid at times.

Foley Hall of Fame video.

Shield video/promo talking about how they've taken out a lot of people and they're just getting started.

Big Show vs. Zack Ryder

Brad Maddox jumps in on commentary to further annoy us. WMD ends this in

46 seconds.

Show talks about his second Last Man Standing match with Del Rio at the Rumble. He stands on Ryder's chest and counts to ten.

Post break Maddox goes to see Heyman again and Heyman actually agrees to help make him famous. Ok then.

Ryback vs. Heath Slater

Back to basics for Ryback here as he mauls Heath and beats up the cohorts before finishing with Shell Shock at 1:11.

Ryback says his job is fun and on Sunday he's in his first Royal Rumble. He's made for this kind of match and it's going to lead him to the main event of Wrestlemania.

Rock is still trying to talk his way around the cops. He says the cops are here to serve the people, not to protect Vickie Guerrero. Rock talks about what an experience it is to see Rock's entrance and the fans start chanting his name. One of the cop says he had tickets for tonight and his wife and kid are in the crowd. Rock sees an opening and Vickie comes in to say arrest him.

The cops say Rock isn't breaking any laws but apparently Vickie has the power to have them suspended from the police force. Punk is up next so Vickie offers Rock a chance to get in if he'll apologize and make it good. Rock says he's getting in but on his terms, not hers. The other problem is that Vickie still looks horrible tonight. Vickie shoves the cops away and leaves. Rock tells the cops he has an idea.

Here are Punk and Heyman for their weekly talk session. Punk says that he's been champion 428 days and he's going to be champion this time next week. He's looked into the eyes of the Rock and knows that Rock isn't a champion inside his heart. A long time ago Punk chose honest arrogance while Rock picked all of the people. Rock may be the Brahma Bull and the Great One but he can't call himself champion. Punk is the man and in six days, Rock is on a collision course with him.

Beat The Clock Challenge: The Miz vs. Dolph Ziggler

AJ is looking GREAT tonight. The clock is set at 11:36 so Miz tries for two fast pins but can only get two. They trade pinfall reversals until Ziggler hits a decent dropkick for two. A neckbreaker gets another two on Miz and it's chinlock time. Miz takes Ziggler down and pounds away as we're under nine minutes. A kick/knee to the face takes Ziggler down and there's a chop block to set up the Figure Four. That gets countered because Miz isn't Flair and Miz is sent to the floor. Langston sends him into the apron which gets two for Ziggler back inside.

We take a break and come back with four minutes left on the clock and Ziggler holding a chinlock. Miz fights up and hits a sunset flip and big boot for two each. Miz goes off on Ziggler in the corner and pounds away before hitting the running clothesline and the top rope ax handle for two. 2:30 left. The Finale is countered into a rollup by Ziggler which is countered into a rollup with trunks for two for Miz.

Ziggler hits the jumping DDT for two and we're under 2:00. Miz picks the leg and COMPLETELY screws up the Figure Four but an AJ distraction lets Langston pull them to the ropes. Under a minute left and Miz has to avoid a Langston distraction, allowing Ziggler to hit the Zig Zag for the pin at 10:56.

Rating: D+. PLEASE let this be the end of the Figure Four idea for Miz. It doesn't fit him whatsoever and this whole face push continues to be a disaster for him. Channeling Flair, as in a guy who is a jerk just like Miz, isn't going to do him any favors either. This didn't work that well at all and a lot of that is due to Miz. Let him be himself, not Flair.

It's time for HELL NO's anger management graduation. Dr. Shelby is running things and apparently his first name is Marion. Apparently they're his first graduates. This comes complete with caps and gowns, Pomp and Circumstance, and diplomas. Bryan has his hair slicked back and they put their hats on in the ring. They officially graduate and as a final exercise, they have to pick who is valedictorian. Kane says Bryan and Bryan says NO.

Kane says Bryan has never had a problem with shutting his mouth before and an argument breaks out. Shelby snaps and asks them if a hug would

make them feel better. The Dr. has an idea: what if EVERYONE hugged at the same time? Kane asks about Lawler and Cole and Shelby says yes them too. Lawler finally does it and now Bryan wants the physician and Justin Roberts to hug. Kane wants three fans to hug. They both tell random fans to hug and then everyone has to hug at once. A jumping group hug ends this.

Kaitlyn vs. Alicia Fox

Kaitlyn takes it to the floor quickly and pounds away as Tamina is looking on in the back. They head inside again and Alicia grabs a quick chinlock. That's the extent of her offense as Kaitlyn spears her down for the pin at 2:05.

Heyman has secured a sky box for Punk to watch the next segment from. He calls it a Paul Bomb for the Rock.

Here's Heyman to the ring to act as an interpreter for Punk since most of what he said likely went over the heads of most of the fans. The people seem to think that it's a foregone conclusion that Punk is losing the title on Sunday because Vince is desperate for someone to defeat Punk for the title. Rock is the flavor of the month this time because Rock should be focusing on Punk but instead he's singing songs about Heyman and Vickie. This means that Rock is stupid...and he's also apparently coming to the arena.

He holds up the ticket that presumably the cop had for himself and Heyman bails. Rock thanks the cop for the ticket so Heyman correctly points out that the ticket doesn't allow Rock to get in the ring. "Shut your mouth Twinkie T***." Rock looks up at Punk in the box and says that on Sunday he's winning the title. What it all boils down to is that Rock is going to rip Punk's face off and there's nothing Punk can do about it.

Rock invokes Martin Luther King and says that Rock is going to whip Punk all over the place. Next Monday, everyone from Bangkok to Brazil and all the way back around to San Jose is going to say free at last free at last, thank God almighty we are free at last from CM Punk as WWE Champion. Rock finishes it up and there go the lights. They come back up and SHIELD IS ON THE ROCK! They hit the Triple Bomb and leave Rock

laying. Punk says that Rock may have a dream, but at some point you have to wake up. Rock is bleeding from the mouth.

We get a video on Martin Luther King. Dang they're really proud of him tonight aren't they?

Beat The Clock Challenge: Wade Barrett vs. Sheamus

The time to beat is 10:56. They slug it out to start and Sheamus gets two off a Regal Roll. Ziggler is watching in the back. Barrett rolls to the apron where he guillotines Sheamus to slow him up. Back inside and Barrett clotheslines Sheamus to the floor as we take a break. Back with five minutes left and Barrett kicking Sheamus in the ribs. Off to an armbar on Sheamus before Sheamus comes back with running ax handles and a knee lift.

We're under 4:00 to go and Barrett is dumped to the apron for the ten forearms. A suplex back in gets two on Barrett and we've got 3:00 left. Wade escapes White Noise and sends Sheamus' shoulder into the buckle. A pumphandle slam is escaped but Sheamus misses the Brogue Kick. A kick to the ribs and one to the jaw get a VERY close two. Barrett hits a middle rope elbow for two and we've got two minutes to go.

Sheamus escapes Wasteland and hits White Noise for no cover. He loads up the Brogue Kick but here are AJ/Dolph/Langston for a distraction. Winds of Change gets another near fall on Sheamus but we've only got 18 seconds left. Barrett loads up the forearm but charges into the Brogue Kick. The clock runs out though at 10:56 just as Sheamus covers giving Ziggler the win.

Rating: C. We were pretty much waiting for Ziggler to come out at the end and the question was could Ziggler survive the clock. Ziggler getting to pick his spot is interesting but there's no reason for him to pick anything other than #30, unless he wants to show off. This was your usual match between these two in a pairing we've seen WAY too many times now.

Ziggler and company celebrate in front of Vickie and she says Dolph gets to pick a number, but not any number. It's either #1 or #2. Ziggler is stunned.

We recap the Shield stuff again and cut to Heyman and Punk smiling in the back. They run into Vince who accuses them of sending Shield out to jump Rock. Vince says that if Shield gets involved on Sunday, there will be consequences. Heyman and Punk protest and point out how many other people Shield has attacked. Vince doesn't care and says that if Shield interfered, Punk is stripped. Of the title you sick freaks.

Alberto Del Rio vs. Tensai

Tensai takes the champion (non-title here of course) down to start and hits a pair of Vader Bombs before Del Rio comes back with a rana out of the corner and a German suplex. The enziguri in the corner sets up a mostly missed middle rope moonsault for the pin at 1:31.

We get the second inductee into the WWE Hall of Fame: BOB BACKLUND! Awesome choice there and his speech should be interesting to say the least.

Here's Cena to close the show. He talks about Sunday coming up and usually being a day of rest. Cena talks about people enjoying Sundays and talks to a kid in the crowd who probably plays video games on Sundays. He asks the kid to stop blocking him from getting to the next level on Black Ops 2. Cena mentions a goofy sounding user name before moving on to some chick who apparently enjoys a calm Sunday but winds up with a guy's phone number in the pocket. The guy happens to be over in the front row and sex jokes are made.

The point to all this rambling is that everyone does different stuff on Sunday and this particular Sunday is about the Royal Rumble where the winner goes to Wrestlemania. The Rumble is going to be a war and Cena says he'll win the Rumble. His music hits but it's only 10:58 so here's Sheamus to offer a rebuttal. He says he'll repeat what he did last year, but here are the Prime Time Players to say THEY'LL win. Before they can get that far though, Orton makes an appearance and says he's feeling deja vu.

Before he gets into that, Miz comes out to say his catchphrase but HELL NO comes out to say something as well. You know the real money in this company is making microphones. With them arguing, here's Cesaro to say HE

is winning the Rumble. He dedicates his win to the USA but here are 3MB to say their usual stuff. The rest of the locker room comes out for the required huge brawl before the Rumble. Sheamus throws out about five people and the show ends in chaos.

Overall Rating: B-. I liked tonight's show. They hyped up the Rumble as well as talking about other things going on in the show. That's a good go home show and I'm intrigued to see the Rumble on Sunday. Rock vs. Punk will be awesome and while I think I know who is going to win on Sunday (no hints yet as I'm in a predictions contest and I don't want to give away my brilliance), it's always a fun show. Good stuff tonight.

Results

Randy Orton b. Antonio Cesar – RKO

Big Show b. Zack Ryder – WMD

Ryback b. Heath Slater – Shell Shock

Dolph Ziggler b. The Miz – Zig Zag

Kaitlyn b. Alicia Fox – Spear

Wade Barrett vs. Sheamus went to a no contest

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Dolph Ziggler's Rumble Entry Number Announced

Kind of at least. Ziggler won a Beat the Clock challenge tonight but since he made out with AJ in front of Vickie, he has to pick either #1 or #2. Odds are he'll be in there either about two minutes or close to forty five.

Shield Attacks Rock

People have been wanting this and now they got it. I didn't expect they would actually go there but it's definitely something interesting to see. I still think Rock wins the title on Sunday but they've definitely made it more interesting now.

Raw Roulette Is Back Next Week

As per this video on WWE.'s Youtube channel.

Any predictions/matches/stipulations you want to see?

The Bryan/Kane/Shelby Hug Segment

.....I have no idea what I just witnessed but I couldn't stop looking at it.

On This Day: January 19, 1998 – Monday Night Raw: I Can't Emphasize Enough How Big This Was For Raw

Monday Night Raw

Date: January 19, 1998

Location: Selland Arena, Fresno, California

Attendance: 7,329

Commentators: Jim Ross, Michael Cole, Kevin Kelly, Jerry Lawler

We're officially on the Road to Wrestlemania now as this is the night after the Rumble. Austin won of course and will face HBK, the winner of the casket match. Unfortunately the winner of the casket match shattered his back and can barely move let alone wrestle. Things would have to be booked properly to make sure this worked right, which was impressive in its own right.

That's not the most important thing tonight though, as we have one of the most famous moments in wrestling history tonight as Mike Tyson is here. This would, for all intents and purposes, launch Austin vs. McMahon. Just saying that name brings a little smile to my face. They had had some run-ins before this but nothing that would compare to this one. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Kane vs. Taker. Going into the Rumble there was a belief that Kane might help his brother in the casket match. Kane did appear during the match but turned on his brother (yeah I'm stunned too) and threw him in the casket, locked it, and LIT IT ON FIRE. Footage would later

reveal the casket was empty after it was clear Kane had thrown him in there. I'm not sure if that had aired yet though.

Theme song is still awesome. Austin signs all over the place.

Paul Bearer opens the show properly as he comes out to Taker's old music. Mad heat on Bearer. He says he got us didn't he. Bearer talks about how awesome he is for a good while and about how it was all a plan with him and Kane and how Kane never really left him. This is some pretty solid gloating indeed. How exactly does Bearer get his face to curve like that?

He says that Taker is gone and never to return. Naturally this brings about a gong and a big pop from the crowd. Druids bring out a casket and of course Kane is in it. JR calls him dastardly so you can tell he's serious. Paul Bearer says he's Paul Bearer and you're not. Thanks for clearing that up fat boy.

Ad for the encore of the Rumble, complete with every single highlight of it.

We talk to DX in the back where HHH says that Owen might want to head south too because he can't cut it here. Shawn talks about being guilt ridden over the whole incident with Taker last night. He's going to bring Taker back tonight though.

Disciples of Apocalypse vs. Nation of Domination

The Nation is Farooq, Kama and D'Lo here against the regular three Disciples. One of the twins that we'll call Skull starts with D'Lo. Never mind as that's 8-Ball. Brown got a nice run in the Rumble and they were trying to push him as a decent midcard guy around this time which never really got off the ground even with the European Title.

Skull wasn't in the Rumble as some people jumped him, thinking he was Austin. That was actually kind of creative. Chainz

(Brian Lee to you SMW and ECW fans) takes over for a bit before Kama takes him down. Off to Farroq now who would soon be thrown out of the Nation. By soon I mean a few weeks/months but close enough. The fans are all over D'Lo here so maybe that's what they saw in him.

He takes down one of the twins with an elbow to give the Nation control again. Why did the Harris Brothers keep getting jobs? They weren't interesting at all but they managed to keep getting signed. We sing Farroq's praises for a bit until Brown misses a moonsault so that Skull (I guess) can make the tag to Chainz. Everything breaks down and it's a DQ. Rock and Henry run down and it's a big beatdown. Shamrock comes out to get a piece of Rock and Ahmed Johnson comes out because he existed to fight the nation.

Rating: C-. Pretty boring match here but it was to set up the post match shenanigans. I'm assuming this would set up a big ten man tag somewhere but I don't remember it off the top of my head. This wasn't too bad and I've long since been a fan of tag matches to start shows so this was fine.

Vic Venom gives us an ad for Raw Magazine. He would eventually go to WCW and become an onscreen character by his real name: Vince Russo. And so it begins.

Tom Brandi vs. Marc Mero

PLEASE let this be their last fight as no one cared about this feud at all. I didn't realize Chimmel did announcing this early. Ridiculous pop for Sable. Mero puts a robe on Sable that says Property of Marvelous Marc Mero. Brandi is big and Italian. That's all there is to him really. He jumps Mero to start us off and gets a side slam for two. Big Sable chant starts up as Mero gets a DDT to take over.

He's starving for attention apparently. Someone brings a bouquet of flowers for Sable and Mero isn't pleased at all. He beats up the flowers instead of Brandi and sends Sable to the

back to great heat. Brandi's limited offense is in full swing here including a sitout Gordbuster for two.

Brandi speeds things up a bit and gets two off a reversal to a suplex. TKO is countered and Brandi is sent to the floor on the kickout. Sunset flip gets two and here's Sable to distract the referee and the TKO (Fireman's Carry into a Cutter) ends this. Mero beats him up with the flowers for fun post match.

Rating: C. This actually wasn't that bad. It would have been a lot better if anyone actually cared about Brandi but I guess that's splitting hairs. This wasn't much of anything but it wasn't boring which is rather surprising. Decent little match that hopefully ends this feud once and for all.

DX goes off to inspect the hearse which I might have mentioned earlier but I'm not sure that's here and open the back door. Inside are...women. The pull the guys inside and Chyna shuts the door. And they were in a hearse why?

Shane arrives with Mike Tyson. Maybe that should be switched.

Quebecers vs. Cactus Jack/Chainsaw Charlie

...the heck? What in the world are these doing here? Didn't I suffer enough back in 94? They start on the floor of course and it's all hardcore dudes in control so far. Jacques, looking about 90 pounds heavier than the last time I saw him, starts with Funk officially. Piledriver by Rougeau can't keep Terry down for even one.

Off to Pierre who used to be a pirate I think but I might have my guys backwards. Cactus comes in to save Charlie/Terry and throws a Mandible Claw on the referee because he's a little nuts. That's good for a DQ but the beating continues post match. Terry, the freaking crazy man that he is, launches a Vader Bomb off the apron to take out everyone. Cactus clears the ring with a bat despite not really being in trouble. No rating as this was mainly brawling without much of any actual

wrestling.

DX is still looking for the Deadman and asks some Mexican midgets. Shawn doesn't want to bend down that far so Chyna picks him up instead.

Tyson is having fun talking to....Sgt. Slaughter?

NWA North American Title: Bradshaw vs. Jeff Jarrett

Bradshaw is a Blackjack here so he has more or less no chance here. Jarrett has Cornette and the Rock N Roll Express with him which is an odd combination indeed. Cornette gets on commentary because he's awesome. Cornette rants about the WWF being worse than the NWA and goes about 20 seconds without taking a breath in one long sentence. Nothing impressive for Cornette but awesome for normal humans.

Jarrett controls to start but runs into the future New York Millionaire who launches him with a fallaway slam. Bradshaw went 40 minutes in the Rumble last night. The Express interferes to give Jarrett the advantage but he misses a charge. Gibson takes him down again but there's what would become the Clothesline From JBL for no cover. BIG powerbomb takes Jarrett down again and has to fight the Express some more. Windham is at ringside and does nothing but accidentally hit Bradshaw to end it.

Rating: D+. This was a mess for the most part but had some entertaining value to it. Bradshaw was a guy that they wanted to push for a long time it seemed but it took six years for them to finally pull the trigger on him for some reason. The NWA angle is one of those that I'm still not sure what the point was but it would die off soon.

The NWA guys beat Bradshaw down post match and Windham turns on him, joining the NWA again. They had a decent little stable going there.

Ads for house shows.

Time for Hour #2 which is where the good stuff happened more often than not.

Shawn rants about not speaking Spanish and not being able to find Taker, and the lights go out. Great you've summoned Satan somehow.

Tyson is still walking around in the back.

There's the gong going off and there go the lights again. Do they pay their electric bills or not? Someone is lowered from the ceiling but you can't see anyone clearly at all. The lights come up...and it's Shawn in Taker attire. He's managing to dance here so I guess his back wasn't completely destroyed until the next day. Chyna and HHH head to the ring with a grill as it's time for a cookout.

Let the wiener jokes begin. Chyna has a salami which may or may not be a joke. HHH offers Owen (The Mr. Hanky of WWF, which was the tenth episode of South Park and the most recent at the time so that really was a new idea at the time) a title match next week despite having a bad knee. He also says why would you want to ride Space Mountain (throwing in a WOO here) because it's old and broken down. I wonder if Flair ever called him out on that later.

Shawn says he's still awesome and wanted to give Taker one more shot but he's gone. He wants to know who's next for the title shot and says the name Stone Cold, drawing the biggest pop of the night by far. He goes over Austin's resume and points out that he has done all those things as well, although he leaves out being one of the three people to win a pair of Rumbles. Shawn says that the Heartbreak Kid lays down for absolutely nobody, which seemed like it was taking a lot of effort to say for some reason.

Tyson is talking to the LOD which is so awesome it's beyond

words. Sunny shows up to hit on him which gives Hawk a rush. Ok then.

Los Boricuas vs. Owen Hart/Taka Michinoku/Headbangers

Honky Tonk Man of all people is on commentary here. Has anyone ever explained why Los Boricuas aren't Las Boricuas as they should be? Miguel (don't worry about who is who. Only Savio ever meant anything) starts with Taka and actually beats up the champion a bit. Off to Mosh and Jesus now and there are a lot of leapfrogs. JR says Jerry and Honky are talking like cousins, wink wink nudge nudge.

The Puerto Rican gang beats on Mosh for awhile and Savio W00s at the crowd which seems to be a theme for the night. Owen comes in to a BIG pop, which means nothing though and he should be fed to HHH of course, and the Sharpshooter ends one of the unimportant guys with relative ease.

Rating: C-. Just barely long enough to pass here but it wasn't too bad. These matches aren't very good but when you have three minutes and eight guys, how much can you get in there? The point was for Owen to look good and he ran through the four guys with ease at the end so it did its job and wasn't terribly boring so I'll let it pass.

Owen accepts HHH's challenge for next week.

Tyson is talking to the Nation now.

Austin is still to come. If you couldn't figure out the ending already you're an idiot.

Rocky Maivia vs. Ahmed Johnson

They're alternating between Rocky Maivia and The Rock at this point. Ahmed rushes the ring and Rocky takes him down almost immediately. Ahmed could have been awesome but he couldn't stay healthy. Rock hits an elbow drop which is just a flashy move here and nothing special at all, not even having a name

yet.

Crowd HATES Rocky here. Ahmed blocks a suplex and here he comes (To save the day! Save the day!). Big clothesline takes the Great One down and we hit the floor. Rocky into the steps but here's Mark Henry to run interference. He grabs a chair as Rocky takes a spinebuster. It's time for the Plunge but there's the chair to Ahmed's back and the Rock Bottom (no name either) ends it. Really short so no rating again.

Shamrock runs down to get a piece of the Rock but he bails.

We get a clip of last night with Shawn standing over the open casket and Taker grabbing his balls. Odd moment.

Tyson is chilling with DX.

Tag Titles: Godwinns vs. New Age Outlaws

The Outlaws are still fine tuning things here and wouldn't join DX for over two more months. Road Dogg does the big long intro as he's coming to the ring. They're in overalls here to make fun of the hog farmers I guess. And the fight is on almost immediately with the big men taking over early. The Outlaws had a tendency to get destroyed for the vast majority of their matches before somehow escaping with the belts.

Billy gets his overalls ripped off to be left in blue tights. Ross is pimping the heck out of that replay. As I predicted the Outlaws are getting destroyed here. Phineas goes Japan by launching some kicks at Billy's ribs. No Road Dogg in yet. We're talking about Tyson more or less non stop here which is fine for once. This has been completely one sided.

Road Dogg has to break up a pin while Lawler talks about how everyone in his family is a boxer, except for his aunt who is a Doberman. Funny line. Billy tries to fight back which gets him nowhere. Wheelbarrow slam gets two by Henry. It all breaks down and Road Dogg gets a shot to Henry with a bucket for

Billy to get the pin to retain. Road Dogg was never in the match. There was a brick in the bucket, as I guess the METAL BUCKET wasn't enough to knock Henry out.

Rating: D. This was just bad. The Outlaws were awful in the ring at this point and the Godwinns were never good in the first place. This didn't work in the slightest with there being one Outlaw in the match the entire time and the ending being pure Outlaws trash. Boring match overall and a weak main event. Granted that's not the most important part of the show in the slightest.

And here it is. Vince brings out Mike Tyson for a major announcement. This was one of the major blows against WCW as this got WWF mainstream media coverage and in turn got fans watching. Tyson and the Attitude Era fit perfectly together and WCW was in trouble and knew it. Tyson lists off some of his favorites: Don Leo Jonathan (never wrestled for WWF) and Nikolai Volkoff (WTF???).

Vince starts to make the announcement that at Mania, in this very ring...CUE GLASS SHATTER! Security (read as Slaughter and referees) come out to stop him and the ring is completely full now. Austin says that he's tired of Tyson shaking everyone's hands and he won't shake Tyson's hands. This is an awesome moment if you can't tell.

Austin says he wants a piece of Tyson. Get a room dude. It's the famous scene of Austin saying that he's the toughest son of a gun on the planet and that while he respects what Tyson has done in boxing, he's in Austin's world now. Austin says that if his words aren't working he has some sign language for Tyson and flips him off. Tyson shoves Austin and it's a big brawl.

The goons finally get Austin out of the ring and we get the famous shot of Vince shouting down to Austin that he ruined it, morphing into Mr. McMahon for the first time I believe.

Austin flips Vince off and apparently hit one of Tyson's guys. The crowd noise is ridiculously loud. After a quick break, Vince is seen begging Tyson to stay as we go off the air.

Overall Rating: B-. The wrestling is bad and the matches were pointless, but that's the key word: pointless. This wasn't about wrestling as it was clearly about making Austin look like a major deal. It was incredibly clear that Austin was getting the title at Mania. What wasn't clear was how he was going to do it. Adding Tyson in was a perfect blend of mainstream and wrestling and its importance can't be overshadowed. This was a fairly decent Raw for the most part but the ending was excellent. Good show overall.

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