

Darren Young Comes Out As Gay, First Openly Gay WWE Wrestler

That's rather cool. It takes a lot of guts to do this in a sport like wrestling.

By the way, do not post any homophobic/gay bashing comments on this. I'll delete them immediately.

Thought of the Day: The WWE Treadmill

I'm finishing Smackdown and this became even more obvious. One of WWE's biggest problems is that the year is so repetitive and it's the same pattern over and over again. Think about this.

The year starts the night after Wrestlemania where something big happens to set up Extreme Rules. After that PPV we go to the start of the big summer angle which usually culminates at Summerslam or the next month's show. During the big summer angle we hit MITB, meaning the next few months are spent teasing cash-ins, usually starting around Summerslam. Then we lighten up a lot until the end of the year through Survivor Series and TLC. The new year brings the Rumble and the start of the Road to Wrestlemania. The Rumble establishes one of

the major matches, the a few weeks later we get the return of the big name for the other Wrestlemania main event. Then it's the Chamber to establish the other title match and six weeks later it's Wrestlemania to close out the WWE year.

How many years in a row have you seen that exact sequence?

On This Day: August 8, 1999 – Sunday Night Heat: The Dying Days of RussoRiffic WWF

Sunday Night Heat

Date: August 8, 1999

Location: Joe Louis Arena, Detroit, Michigan

Attendance: 13,793

Commentators: Michael Cole, Kevin Kelly

Somehow I've never touched on Sunday Night Heat. Introduced in 1998, it was the original second show until Smackdown debuted (a few weeks after this episode), after which it dropped like a stone in importance. This is actually a live episode for no apparent reason We're two weeks from Summerslam 1999 and Austin is champion. The question is who will he be facing. Somehow we wound up with about four #1 contenders matches in a month so it's hard to say who he's facing at this point. Let's get to it.

The opening sequence sounds like metal being hammered. The main color being orange didn't do the show much good either.

Intercontinental Title: Val Venis vs. D'Lo Brown

Brown is defending and is European Champion as well. Venis makes sex

jokes about tax cuts. Here's Jeff Jarrett, the man Brown beat for the Intercontinental Title, comes out before the match, allowing Venis to get in a cheap shot. Brown takes over with ease and drops a leg for two as Jarrett blames Debra for costing him the title. Venis comes back with a spinebuster for two of his own as the fans aren't sure who to cheer for. A Russian legsweep puts D'Lo down but Jeff runs in for the DQ.

Venis and Brown clear the ring.

Here's Al Snow with his dog Pepper for a chat. Snow wants to know why Kevin Kelly doesn't believe Pepper talks to him like Timmy and Lassie, Dorothy and Toto, George Jetson and Astro or Shaggy and Scooby. However, tonight he's here to challenge Boss Man to a Hardcore Title match at Summerslam. Boss Man says ok and threatens to rape the dog with his nightstick and deep fry him into a real corndog. Or maybe he'll just step on Pepper's head. DANG this guy has some deep seeded issues.

Tori vs. Les Lexie Fyfe

Tori was good looking but one of the worst workers all time so we get to see her in a squash. You might know Fyfe from Shimmer or various other female promotions. The match is of course sloppy junk until Tori spears Lexie down and wins with a powerslam.

Ivory, Tori's opponent at Summerslam, runs in and attacks Tori, writing SL** on her stomach.

Tag Titles: Acolytes vs. Kane/Road Dogg

This is Ministry vs. others with the Acolytes defending. The Acolytes hit the ring before Kane is here and the beating is on. Dogg is taken apart but here's Kane for the opening bell. Kane cleans house to start but the numbers catch up to him. Bradshaw gets taken down by a side slam but Kane goes after Faarooq instead of following up. There's the top rope clothesline to take out Bradshaw and here's Hardcore Holly of all people.

He gets on the apron in Kane's corner and tags himself in which apparently counts....and turns on Kane (was he ever on Kane's team?)....before turning on the Acolytes and fighting everyone. The

Acolytes lay out Holly and we cut to Big Show being held back by Undertaker for some reason. Did I mention this was when Russo was feeling stressed out and about to leave?

Meat (Shawn Stasiak) says Terri is wearing him out.

Godfather vs. Prince Albert

Albert is Tensai. No match as a fat guy in white (Vic Grimes I believe) comes in to help Droz and Albert attack Godfather but Val Venis and Chaz (Mosh of the Headbangers in a boring gimmick) make the save. No match.

Al Snow gives Pepper training in being a hardcore dog but he can't get him to dive through a table. Snow goes to get something but leaves Pepper there. That's just dumb man.

Smackdown is coming.

COUNTDOWN TO THE MILLENNIUM! 26 hours to go.

Meat is too tired for his match but goes out anyway.

Snow has Pepper back and introduces him to Blue Meanie, who wants to put the dog on his taco. Al hands the dog off to a woman and destroys Meanie.

Meat vs. Big Boss Man

Boss Man is Hardcore Champion but this is non-title. Terri accidentally distracts Meat to start and Boss Man takes over. Boss Man hits the running crotch attack to Meat's back and follows up with the sliding uppercut. We hit a quick reverse chinlock before Meat avoids a charge in the corner. Not that it matters as his hurricanrana is countered into a powerbomb to give Boss Man the pin.

Rating: D. Do I really need to explain this? Meat is the kind of one note character that is there to make Russo and Vince chuckle and little more. The match was junk other than the good powerbomb to end it, but it's a squash match with the jobber being the subject of the match. Nothing to see here.

Rock comes out for commentary on the main event.

Billy Gunn vs. Undertaker

Billy jumps Taker to start but gets launched into the corner and stomped down. Rock is feasting on Cole and Kelly as Taker gets two off a big boot. Gunn comes back with a dropkick and a neckbreaker before choking away. Rock guarantees to beat Billy at Summerslam and demands Cole say something and “stop kayfabling like an idiot.” Taker comes back with a running DDT but Rock gets up and pounds on Billy. Taker’s partner Big Show goes after Rock but it’s a tombstone to end Billy.

Rating: D+. The match was just an excuse to have Rock out there doing his schtick. Billy was in the middle of a good push at this point but at the end of the day he was just Billy Gunn and that wasn’t enough. Rock would get back to the big times soon after this and never looked back.

Rock is chokeslammed to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. It’s easy to see when Russo is around and when he isn’t. This show was a mess with all kinds of odd characters and non wrestling, but a few months later everything was great and the WWF destroyed everything in sight. It’s amazing what happens when you let the great wrestlers put on great wrestling shows. This however, isn’t one of those shows.

Here’s Summerslam if you’re interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2013/08/04/summerslam-count-up-1999-an-out-of-body-experience/>

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of Complete 2001 Monday Night Raw Reviews at Amazon for just \$5 at:

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On This Day: August 6, 1988 – Superstars of Wrestling 1988: How Could They Do This To Tito?

Superstars of Wrestling

Date: August 6, 1988

Location: LaCrosse Center, LaCrosse, Wisconsin

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Jesse Ventura

This is an interesting time for the company as we're coming up on the first Summerslam. Interestingly enough Hogan isn't champion at this time as Savage won the title at Wrestlemania IV. There's almost no way of telling what you're going to get on these syndicated shows but odds are there will be a lot of squashes. Let's get to it.

Vince and Jesse talk about Summerslam where Jesse will be the guest referee in the main event.

Intro sequence.

Don Muraco vs. Dave Wagner

The arena appears to be tiny. Wagner looks like Taz with Daniel Bryan's beard. Muraco takes him into the corner as Greg Valentine talks trash in the inset interview. They didn't have a match at Summerslam so I'm not sure why we'd hear from him. The announcers talk about Muraco having a match against Dino Bravo at the PPV so I wonder why Valentine is already setting up another feud. Muraco sends him into the corner and rides Wager

down to the mat with a knee. A tombstone so sloppy it would get Taker fined today is good for the pin.

UPDATE!

This is the control center segment, which is something I'd like to see come back. It's Gene in a studio previewing various Summerslam matches. We get a clip from a few weeks ago of DiBiase jumping Savage from behind so Andre could destroy him. Savage needed a partner for the main event of Summerslam and the choice was obvious. Jesse was named as guest referee, which made it look like DiBaise had the match in the bag. Jesse appeared to be afraid of Andre and to be on DiBiase's payroll. It's a really basic video but it hits every point it's supposed to and tells you exactly what you need to know.

Also Summerslam is on a Monday. Sign of the times.

Ted DiBiase vs. Mike Richards

Richards is from Milwaukee so he gets one of the biggest reactions ever for a jobber. He would have a long run in WCW as part of the jobbing tag team Disorderly Conduct as Mean Mike. DiBiase has Heenan, Andre and Virgil with him. Richards scores a quick armdrag but DiBiase easily takes him down and hits a series of falling fists. A powerslam plants Mike and the Million Dollar Dream ends this quick.

Hart Foundation vs. Tom Stone/Chris Curtis

The Harts are faces here and get a tag title shot at Summerslam. Jimmy Hart is still their official manager but he doesn't associate with them anymore. Stone was one of the longer tenured jobbers of the company. Why am I going into such detail on a squash? Anvil dropkicks Curtis down and it's off to Stone for a hard slam. Off to Bret who drops some elbows before it's back to Anvil for shouting. The squash just keeps going and

Anvil pulls Stone up after a powerslam. The Hart Attack finally ends it.

Rating: D. Nothing to see here but the fans were excited for the Hart Attack. The idea of the tag title match is that the Harts have no chance without Jimmy in their corner so they get to look good in a squash. It's a simple idea that doesn't involve a GM or a qualifying match or anything stupid like that.

Terry Taylor vs. Chris Todd

Taylor has been in the company for about a week here. His inset interview would suggest he's a heel but with a nickname of Scary Terry, I don't see good things in his future. It could be worse though: he could be a cross between a person and a bird. Jesse brags about how he's in good shape until Taylor finishes this with a Sharpshooter.

The Mega Powers are ready for the Mega Bucks. Liz gives Savage a kiss on the cheek and Hogan asks for one as well.

Tito Santana vs. Tim Dixon

Tito grabs the arm to start as the announcers talk about Summerslam matches other than the main event. That lasts for all of twenty seconds as Vince asks Jesse if he's afraid of Andre. Tito stays on the arm for a minute and a half until Dixon bails to the floor. The announcers bicker some more until Tito realizes how boring this is and wins with the forearm.

Rating: D-. My goodness dude you're Tito Santana. You're better than this. The match was terrible with the whole match being an armbars until the ending. I'm a big Santana fan but this was really dull stuff. That being said, it's a late 80s Superstars match so this is par for the course for the most part.

Here's Honky Tonk Man with something to say. Summerslam is Beefcake's final chance at Honky Tonk Man's title so Honky is thrilled to sign. Beefcake won't be cutting Honky's hair or taking the title.

Bolsheviks vs. J.T. Thomas/Warren Bianchi

We get the Russian national anthem before the beating begins. The Powers of Pain are ready for the Russians and talk about a wild kingdom. Boris slams Warren down and drops him throat first on the top rope. Off to Bianchi who gets kneed in the head and put on Nikolai's shoulder for a powerbomb. Boris comes off the top with a forearm to the chest for good measure and we're done.

Jake Roberts vs. Harley Manson

We're almost out of time so Jake hits a quick DDT for the pin. Seriously there's almost nothing more to it than that.

Demolition is ready for the Hart Foundation.

Dino Bravo of all people gets to say he'll beat Muraco to take us out.

Overall Rating: D-. This was boring even for Superstars standards. The whole thing was dull squash after dull squash and Vince accusing Jesse of not being a good choice as referee for the Summerslam main event. When you can bore me with a Tito Santana match, it's clearly not a good show.

Here's Summerslam if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2013/07/24/summerslam-count-up-1988/>

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of Complete 2001 Monday Night Raw Reviews at Amazon for

just \$5 at:

And check out my Amazon author page with wrestling books as low as \$4 at:

Sheamus Out 4-6 Months

Shoulder injury.

I was about to make a Thought of the Day called “What happened to Sheamus?”. This might be the best thing for him as he DESPERATELY needs to freshen up his character.

I Want To Talk A Little Bit About Advertising WWE Matches (The Mad Men Table Of Contents)

Over the last few years wrestling television has changed from a show of squashes to what you see today with the stories being advanced every week for two or three hours a night. However there are a few changes in how the shows could be presented from week to week that could help things a lot. Today we're going to look at how WWE screws up the advertising of

their show and how easily this could be fixed. Let's get to it.

This was originally going to be part of another I Want To Talk A Little Bit About but it evolved into its own. I could get used to this.

The other day I was reading and at the start of the book there was a table of contents. It's a basic idea and tells you what you're going to get in the book you're reading. Last night's Raw (August 5, 2013) was a pretty stacked show, with John Cena, Randy Orton, Daniel Bryan, CM Punk, Rob Van Dam and Shield in action. Of all those guys, two were announced early in the show. The other six were announced as being in action over an hour into the broadcast.

Now jump with me back to 1987. The main WWF show was Superstars of Wrestling and it always had the same intro: Vince and company telling us the wrestlers we would be seeing on the card. It might not include their opponents (as more often than not they would be in a squash match) but you would see who was wrestling that day and you knew inside the first 40 seconds of the show. In other words, it was like you had a table of contents that was telling you what you were going to see on the show that night.

This brings us to today's shows where you often hear only one or two matches at the start of the show. You can probably guess that certain people will be on the show, but it's really a guessing game. In other words, you have to judge the book by its cover instead of actually knowing what you're going to be getting that night. Now, this is a bad idea and let's take a look at a few reasons why.

First and foremost, if you know what you're getting later, there's a good

chance the fans of those people are going to stick around. Suppose you're a Randy Orton fan. If you're watching Raw and hear that he's going to be in a match against anyone that night, odds are you're going to stick around. Many fans would stick around no matter who it's against, but on occasion it's going to be against someone that people aren't going to be interested in.

This brings us to the second point of advertising the matches: pick what you mention. For instance, last night we had Rob Van Dam facing the World Heavyweight Champion Alberto Del Rio. That's a very popular former world champion in a rematch with a world champion that people would like to see. In other words, it's a match worth mentioning at the top of the show. On the other hand, a few weeks back we had CM Punk vs. Darren Young. The way to advertise that: "CM Punk will be in action later tonight."

Going back to Raw from last night, the main event was a six man tag between Shield and Daniel Bryan/Randy Orton/John Cena. The match was announced at roughly 9:15 and the opening bell was about an hour and forty five minutes later. That's a big match but it's only getting 105 minutes of time to build. This move causes another set of problems which can be rectified in just a few easy steps.

We'll start with the most obvious problem: it's not enough time to get the word out. If you weren't watching in a span of less than two hours, you had no idea the match was happening by the end of the show and you'll miss the match. These are three world champion caliber guys fighting the top three man team in years with potential world title implications. Daniel Bryan also happens to be the hottest act in the world right now and Cena is his opponent at the second biggest show of the year where Orton might cash in his shot at the title. And this gets less than two hours of build.

Here's the simple solution: announce the match for next week's show. It's a simple solution: you give it seven days to build up to the match instead of half a show and people have a chance to hear about it and anticipate it. Think about Wrestlemania 28. The main event had over a year to build up and it made a fortune. It's a simple principle: give it more time and people will be more interested.

Now what can you do in this week? You can use that social media that WWE is head over heels for to talk about the match. Have Bryan, Cena and Orton cut promos and put them on the App and have Shield respond to give the match another reason (sidebar: why did Shield come down in the first place? It was never explained, likely due to not having enough time) to happen. Have Orton Tweet about possibly cashing in the briefcase on Cena if he's vulnerable. Which is more interesting? Hearing Orton tease a cash-in or hearing a 15 year old from Ogallala, Nebraska talk about how much he's looking forward to something.

Think of the whole thing in practical terms. If you go to a restaurant to buy some food for the night, it's not all in plain brown bags. It's on a menu which tells you exactly what you're getting. You don't buy some mystery bag and hope you get something good in it. You look at what's presented and pick something if you think it looks good. The same idea is true of wrestling: if you like what's offered to you that night, you'll stick around for the show and stay until you get what you agreed to stick around for.

It also solves another problem: what was going to fill in the rest of the card? This is one of those things that gets on my nerves with general manager characters. Suppose Orton, Bryan or Shield hadn't come out during that segment? What was Maddox supposed to be filling in the rest of his show with? You book that main event in advance and the show is much more

logical, as you have a match for the show coming in and aren't booking things on the fly.

Booking things in advance also keeps the card from changing around all the time. Instead of mentioning something and then never following up on the idea later on because there's no bridge to the next week, you already have a match set up in advance and can build the show around that. If nothing else it could help prevent continuity errors like something being brought up one week and never mentioned or followed up on the next.

Finally, there's another out for the WWE by advertising the matches in advance. If a majority of the matches are announced in advance and someone sticks around because they want to see something but doesn't like it, they only have themselves to blame. You knew what you were offered, you agreed to stick around, potentially for hours on end, and you wanted to see a match. If it turns out the match sucks, you can't blame WWE for it as it was your idea. It's better than having someone wait up and then say "I waited two hours for THAT? Screw this company."

Overall, WWE has a lot of good stuff to offer its fans but it goes about telling them those matches exist very badly. Whether it's giving them just over an hour and a half's notice that a match is coming or not letting the match build itself up at all or offering WWE the Mystery Meat of the Day card and hoping you like what you get, there are distinct problems with the way the shows are advertised. Fix these things up and the shows would easily attract a bigger audience.

CM Punk Teaches You Grammar

It's exactly what it sounds like and it is GLORIOUS.

This is great stuff.

Total Divas Viewers Rise 14%

The show is a hit. Let the Did You Knows begin!

WWE Posts Second Quarter Financials

There's a lot of data here. First up is the always important PPV data:

WrestleMania 29 – 1,039,000 buys

Extreme Rules – 231,000 buys

Payback – 186,000 buys

These numbers are all slightly down a bit from last year, but Wrestlemania was more expensive this year and there were more HD buys which make up the difference. Overall the quarter is

down from last year, but there was a fourth PPV in the second quarter last year as well which explains the loss.

Television revenue, another huge money market for the company, was up \$5.6 million (17%) from last year due to the extra hour of Raw and Main Event.

Live event/merchandise revenue were up as well.

Digital media (WWE.com) was up 27%.

Even WWE Studios made a profit.

All in all, this is an excellent report for WWE as the company continues to rake in money hand over fist.

On This Day: July 31, 1988 – Wrestlefest 1988: Hogan vs. Andre IV

Wrestlefest 1988

Date: July 31, 1988

Location: County Stadium, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Attendance: 25,866

Commentators: Alfred Hayes, Billy Graham, Sean Mooney

This is another show a lot of you likely have never heard of. It's in essence a HUGE house show in a baseball stadium that was filmed and released on home video. That being said, the card had fifteen matches and I think the home video has 10 of them. I'll try to fill you in on what you missed, but there's hardly anything of note. This is more or less the follow-up to Mania 4 and not quite a preview for the first Summerslam. The main event is Hogan vs. Andre in a cage which is a decent match. Let's get to it.

Alfred Hayes, Sean Mooney and Billy Graham welcome us to the show. This is going to be painful isn't it?

The official attendance is listed at under 26,000 but there's no way I'm buying this. It's probably closer to double that.

Rougeau Brothers vs. Killer Bees

This was the third match on the card after Big Boss Man beat Scott Casey and Brutus Beefcake pinned Hercules. At least they know how to edit a tape down. Bees are in long tights and they look horrible. Hayes points out that they look fat. Graham talks about zombies and I know this is going to be a very long show. Hayes is kind of a tweener announcer but not really.

The Bees are horrible here and completely out of shape. Then again they were promised the tag titles like 4 times and never got them so it's no wonder that they stopped caring. The crowd is kind of buzzing but it's rapidly dying here. In a moment that we would consider funny, Jacques hooks Brunzell's foot in a hold and tags in his brother and they double team. When the referee gets on him, Jacques informs the referee that they have a five count. I knew Danielson was a tape watcher but come on.

This match is painfully generic but it's not horrible. Ray gets his leg hurt so Jacques tries to fix it. That was odd.

Blair taps but that means nothing yet. Oh yeah there's at least 40,000 people there. That 26k is a joke. To further get the crowd into it we get a Boston Crab on Blair. This thing is just moving very slowly. We get a full nelson to really crank it up and down goes Blair again.

The Rougeaus were decent comedy heels when they wanted to be. It helped that they could wrestle fairly well too. The Bees used to be something like a bad version of the Hardys but now they're just old and fat. Is there anything funnier than a heel selling an atomic drop? Brunzell gets the hot tag and cleans a bit of house. His finishing move is now a Figure Four when it used to be a dropkick. The dropkick does hit to a nice reaction but it only gets two. Brunzell goes for a slam on Raymond and Jacques punches him, allowing Raymond to fall on him for the pin. Off a punch? Really?

Rating: D. This was pretty bad. The crowd died a few times in there which is never a good sign for an opener or any match for that matter. The Bees were the tag team jobbers at this point and this went nowhere at all. To be fair though this wasn't the opening match so that makes up for a bit of it. Could have been worse I suppose, but not by much.

Bad News Brownvs. Bret Hart

This is fallout from the Mania battle royal and Bret is officially a face now. Brown would get a short feud with Randy Savage soon after this which was very interesting although it never went anywhere really. The referee gets on Brown for being too evil and Brown tells him not to worry about it. That's a nice line actually.

Brown goes up and Bret is, say it with me, PLAYING POSSUM. Why would anyone buy Bret selling anything ever? It's what he does and he does it better than anyone. Bret can't get anything of note going here. Brown yells out for the Ghetto Blaster, his running enziguri finisher. Here comes the Hitman who might not

have that name yet. He hits a sweet dive over the top and Brown is in trouble now.

They crank it up and the match starts getting good. Bret doesn't have the Sharpshooter yet so he's going for whatever he can get to get a pin. He hits some of the five moves of doom but after a rollup Brown reverses into one of his own and uses the tights for a win. Neidhart comes out and they both beat down Brown to an extent. I'd love to see them in a real fight as Brown would massacre them.

Rating: B-. Solid little match here as neither guy meant anything yet. Hart was supposed to be showcasing himself here and he did that quite well. He looked like this fast guy that could brawl and have solid matches to go with it. Then they put him back with Neidhart a few weeks/months later and this was completely forgotten about of course.

Honky Tonk Man goes to the interview area to talk to Gene. He says absolutely nothing of note and says he'll keep the title.

Intercontinental Title: Honky Tonk Man vs. Jim Duggan

Something tells me to expect a screwy finish. Graham enjoys the H0 chant far too much. Duggan was a fairly big deal at the moment, sort of about the level of Morrison. Honky was a guy that kept holding the title through nefarious means and the fans were drooling for him to lose the belt to anybody. He's one of the few occasions in wrestling where people would pay to see him get beaten up.

Duggan pounds away as you would expect him to. It amazes me to think that these two would manage to get into WCW a few years later with Duggan squashing Steve Austin in like 40 seconds for the US Title. It's starting to get dark around this time and it's ALL Hacksaw. Honky comes back with some heel offense but it lasts like a minute.

Duggan wants the Three Point Clothesline but Hart grabs his

leg for the DQ. This was the standard Honky match and it worked just fine. We had Duggan moments from winning the belt for sure but Honky cheats to keep it. That would only last about a month longer. Duggan gets Jimmy afterwards but the heels mess up and nothing goes well for them. Crowd loves it of course. Duggan destroys the guitar after Honky leaves.

Rating: C. I went with a C because this is the epitome of an average match for this time period. Honky gets the tar beaten out of him and then here comes the interference or other nefarious means to keep the title. It's as basic of a heel psychology as you could ask for but it drew crazy money since people wanted to see him lose finally. That's why the pop was so insane at Summerslam when he finally lost.

Power of Pain vs. Bolsheviks

Seriously we don't skip this? The Powers of Pain came in as faces but were well on the way to being heels as they and Demolition would do the double switch at Survivor Series. The Powers of Pain have the worst music I can remember in a long time for a team like them. The faces, which feels weird to use to describe the POP, clear the ring very quickly.

Volkoff and Barbarian start us off. Was there ever a time from the early 80s to the late 90s where Barbarian wasn't employed by one of the big two? He gets a sweet powerslam on Zhukov where he jumps in the air and gets extra momentum. To say this match is slow and plodding is a huge understatement. It's all power stuff which isn't something you want to see for a long time.

Warlord gets blasted in the back off the top by Zhukov and STILL manages to win a test of strength. Now THAT is how you no sell something. Barbarian gets beaten down as something more interesting happens to the right of the ring as you see everyone get up to look at it. No clue what it was but I'd rather watch it instead. The stadium is starting to get dark

now and after a 30 second comeback which is a stretch also, a powerslam and top rope headbutt on Boris ends it.

Rating: D. I know I've been saying that a lot but dang this was boring. They just kind of beat on each other for a bit and then did the finish. These four just didn't flow well together at all. For the life of me I have no idea why the company thought the POP were a good choice as faces but they eventually got it and switched them and Demolition. Getting there was a long wait though.

Jim Neidhart vs. Lanny Poffo

This was when Poffo was still a leaper and threw out Frisbees with his poetry on them. He was the king of jobbers at this point though so if nothing else he's not bad. I think his brother would be up next. He uses a moonsault which misses but was a big spot back then as he was the first WWF guy to use it I believe. I think Jim is a heel here but it's not entirely clear. The crowd is totally dead here. After just beating the tar out of Poffo a powerslam ends it.

Rating: N/A. Total squash here. I think they were toying with splitting up the Harts but that wouldn't happen for nearly three more years, resulting in Bret breaking out on his own and then Neidhart kind of fading away, although doing so in a positive way.

So next up on the card we were supposed to get an epic Savage vs. DiBiase match for the title. We don't get that on the tape though. HOWEVER, thanks to the joys of the internet, we get it anyway! This is more or less a bonus match so enjoy.

WWF World Title: Randy Savage vs. Ted DiBiase

Yeah they cut this off for no apparent reason. This is one of about the million rematches these guys had, each one totally awesome. This is from a Savage tape released by WWF back in I think 89 so they didn't have a ton to work with. This doesn't

have Graham on it so maybe the commentary was recorded later on instead of like the rest of the show. It's all Savage to start and the fans are WAY into this.

Savage hits an atomic drop and we get to see DiBiase's picture perfect selling to send him to the floor. It's so weird to think that Virgil would be in the company over 22 years later and working with Ted DiBiase still. A handful of tights get DiBiase in control as we hit the floor for a bit. DiBiase is just fun to watch. Everything he does just comes off as so perfectly smooth and crisp.

They slug it out on their knees and Sean says it looked like a midget boxing match. Someone make a Half-Pint Brawlers joke. DiBiase busts out a Spinning Toe Hold of all things. Savage is limping a good bit as I'm having trouble coming up with jokes for this as it's a very good match.

Savage tries to get his knee to work again after the lethal toe hold. Hayes points out that he's favoring his knee. I love high level analysis like that. Virgil interferes and it lets Savage get a rollup for two. Hayes goes on to point out that Savage messes up and sells the wrong knee. Wow this guy is getting on my nerves. Is there a point to the way DiBiase does that falling punch?

Out of NOWHERE Savage hooks a small package to retain. Post match the heels beat on him some more as the fans boo loudly. DiBiase puts on the belt but Savage stops him with a chair. The crowd is oddly dead for the post match stuff.

Rating: B. Solid stuff here but were you expecting something else? They got about fifteen minutes and just beat each other up. I'm sure they did this match about a dozen times but that doesn't mean it's not good. Savage was in a zone at this point but DiBiase might be a step better. That's saying a lot and it resulted in matches like these. Very solid stuff and fitting for a main event match. Now why was this cut off the tape?

Speaking of being cut off, Curt Hennig and Terry Taylor had a match here which I believe was their debut for the company in both cases.

Jake Roberts vs. Rick Rude

This is more fallout over the Cheryl Roberts kiss that didn't happen thing which was a big time angle back in the day and was incredibly well received. Naturally the fans pop very well for this so they got that part right for sure. Jake comes running out and beats up Rude to start us off very fast. Why do we keep getting shots of Rude's tights going down? Is there a strange fetish thing going on there?

Something tells me this is going to be long. They had a 15 minute draw at Mania so they'll likely do something similar this time around. We hit the chinlock and something tells me we're going to be here for a good while. I'm glad I was wrong there. Rude kicks him in the balls and no one seems to care. We hit the chinlock again to kill more time. This is going to last awhile.

How can someone live for that long with an arm around their neck like that? I just ask because Jake has been in this for about three minutes so far and is still alive. The announcers try as hard as they can to make this interesting and just can't do it. The hold is broken and Jake gets knocked to the floor just to continue this torture. Rude gets crotched on the top rope and Jake makes his comeback.

The camera work in this match is making my head hurt. They're doing FAR too many closeups. Jake goes for the DDT but Rude shoves the referee down so that he lands on him, cushioning the blow. I keep forgetting how tall Jake is. The referee is back up and Rude is leaving. Jake follows and say it with me: DOUBLE COUNT OUT. I watched 17 minutes for that finish. I hate my life. The snake gets on Rude post match and wraps around his throat in a cool visual.

Rating: D. This was just BORING. They fought that long and nothing of note happened. It was just bland filler that never went anywhere at all. These two had a white hot feud and yet nothing ever came of it. Also Rude pulling the referee down isn't a DQ? This was just bad and really brings the show down.

Haku vs. Sam Houston would be here. I'm glad they left it out.

Ultimate Warrior vs. Bobby Heenan

This is kind of a famous match. The loser wears a weasel suit. You figure out who wins this one. I'll give you a hint: he's crazy. Neither gets an entrance which is weird. We get some of Warrior's music but that's it. Heenan runs for his life multiple times but Warrior drops to the floor so Heenan can't see him and surprises him. Yes, Warrior used his brain and it worked.

Heenan gets a foreign object and pops him with it after calling Warrior a son of a gun. Wouldn't an object like that be fine to a guy from Parts Unknown? Heenan hits him with it like five times and can't drop Warrior. He more or less just jabs it in Warrior's throat over and over but it doesn't work at all. Warrior bangs on his chest and I think you can figure the rest out from there.

Warrior puts him out with a sleeper which makes sense here and puts the suit on him. Where does one get a weasel suit? Was there a furry convention in town? You know for being in a sleeper for about 30 seconds, he's WAY out of it. Warrior bangs on his chest once he gets it done like someone standing over his fallen prey. Ooh that was a good one. Bobby wakes up and realizes he has claws and a tail. This is like Kafka's worst nightmare.

Rating: N/A. This was for comedy more than anything else. They tried to make the match into nothing at all and that's what the best answer was. Heenan was always a good sport though and could do just about any kind of comedy so this was perfect for

him.

Tag Titles: Demolition vs. British Bulldogs

The Bulldogs are more or less done at this point as they would be gone very soon. Yeah their last appearance as a team was at Survivor Series, about four months after this. They had one televised match in between: a draw at Summerslam. Demolition is getting more and more popular at this point, having won the titles at Mania. They would hold them for over a year, setting the record that still stands for longest tag title reign.

If nothing else the music here is great. Davey vs. Smash starts us off which is probably the best combination given how broken down Billington was at this point. Dynamite comes in and gets the tar beaten out of him which makes something close to sense I guess. Graham suggests Hayes manages the Bulldogs. Thankfully that never happened. He says they should be more malicious.

Graham needs to shut up now. When Mooney is your most competent announcer you can tell this isn't going to go well. Dynamite comes back in maybe 30 seconds after getting beaten down for far too long. The snap suplex hits Axe and they do the launch headbutt. Dynamite busts out the Octopus Hold but Axe gets a cane shot for the pin.

Rating: C-. Nothing really great here but this was just to give us a tag title match against a competent team so that certainly worked. The Bulldogs were done at this point but they were still good for stuff like this. It's no classic or anything but it'll do just fine for what it's supposed to be here.

Ken Patera vs. Dino Bravo

Commentators were actually suggesting that Patera retire at this point due to a lack of skill. He only had two moves: a full nelson and a bearhug at this point. Hopefully this is

short. Bravo is a “world title contender” allegedly. That’s very funny. Patera was finally back after being put in jail for beating up a cop back in the day and no one cared.

He was this era’s Mark Henry: he used to be in the Olympics and then left for a long time before coming back to no one caring. Patera keeps going for rollups and such but gets caught in the side suplex to end it. At least it was short.

Rating: D-. Again this just wasn’t any good. There was nothing to Patera at this or most any other point in his career so it’s not like this meant anything. At least it was short, and when that’s the best thing you can say about a show, it’s not good.

Hulk Hogan vs. Andre the Giant

This is obviously the main reason to see this show as these two were still a pretty big draw at this point. Andre is almost as tall as the cage, which makes the whole 15 feet thing a bit of a stretch. Hogan of course gets a huge pop. Normally I would complain about Hogan getting the main event over the champion, but here it makes sense. Hogan is now the greatest sportsman of all time. Oh dear.

This is escape only. This doesn’t quite have the appeal of Mania 3 for some reason. Andre is aging very badly at this point, not even able to stand up straight anymore. Sean listed the rules at the beginning of the match and then Hayes spends a minute and a half asking how you win. It’s not comical like when Heenan did it. Hayes just doesn’t get it. They punch and choke each other a lot. Andre ties Hogan to the cage with his t-shirt and Hayes thinks Andre should go up top and jump to the floor.

For some reason Andre thinks a t-shirt is going to hold Hogan. Has he not watched ANY of Hogan’s entrances over the years? Andre is on his knees and uses a bearhug on Hogan. That’s just a weird visual. He switches up his offense and uses an elbow

drop. Andre takes a turnbuckle pad off which even Graham sees the problem with: YOU'RE IN A STEEL CAGE.

It busts Hogan open though and you can clearly see him blade. Andre bites the cut, clearly being influenced by Twilight and wanting to be a sparkly giant. Hogan makes his comeback and drops the leg. No slam or anything but just clotheslines. Heenan comes in and gets beaten up too. Andre tries to climb out but gets caught and tied up in the ropes. After another shot to Heenan, Hogan wins over the top. He doesn't even pose.

Rating: D+. Pretty bad match here and nothing of note at all. Hogan was clearly winning the whole time and with just 10 minutes of punching etc, there isn't much good going on here. Then again it's Hogan in his prime doing what the fans wanted to see so it's a bit difficult to trash it. This was a house show though, so Hogan winning to send them home happy is what matters most.

After the show ends we see the three hosts standing in front of the "stadium". The green screen effect might not be so obvious if the fans in the picture actually you know, moved?

Overall Rating: D. This show is BAD. Keep in mind that the Savage/DiBiase match wasn't on the tape so you really can't count that one. Other than that there just isn't anything of note here. Then again like I said this was just a filmed house show so it wasn't supposed to be anything classic. It's boring beyond belief, but it wasn't supposed to be a PPV quality card. There are far worse shows but the two big ones aren't bad for checking out for historical sake. Also, including the extra match, all this was done in two hours and fifteen minutes. That's not bad for like 12 matches. Anyway, check out the main two and that's about it, but only one is actually good.

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