

AMC Wants To Buy WWE?

That's the rumor, but I can't imagine it happening. First of all, the company is valued at well over two billion dollars. That's a lot of cash for a network that still airs films like Scorpion King 2. Second, there's the simple idea of Vince owning most of the stock and probably not wanting to sell. It's possible I guess, but I really don't see this happening.

I'm thinking WWE winds up either back on USA or Spike, with the latter causing a lot of interesting effects.

I Want To Talk A Little Bit About Triple H

If you've followed me over the years, you know I'm not incredibly fond of HHH. He's done a lot of things over the years that drive both myself and several other fans insane but that's not all there is to him at all. While also being an infuriating person at times, HHH is also one of the most talented and decorated names in wrestling history. Today we're going to take a look at his career and the good and bad over the years and look at why people need to calm down about him. Let's get to it.

HHH has been around the WWE for going on twenty years now and there has definitely been a lot of good and bad. First off let's take a look at the bad in HHH, which will be the shorter of these lists.

One of the biggest criticism of HHH is a fair one: he's not as good as he thinks he is. HHH has never been one to shy away from lumping himself in

there with Rock and Austin, despite there being no real justification for this. Jim Cornette once called HHH the guy that worked with the guy that drew money. There's no denying that HHH isn't great, but he's at the top of the second tier of wrestlers like Bret, Shawn, Orton and Savage. There's nothing wrong with being on that level, but there's a big gap between it and the next level.

Part of the reason why he isn't on that level is how badly he collapses in attempts to have the big match or big story. Now HHH has had his share of classics which we'll get to later, but far too often he tries to have THE match and it just doesn't work. Let's take a look at his match against Randy Orton from Wrestlemania 25.

The story coming into the match was Orton tormenting HHH and terrorizing his family to get the WWE Title. The match wound up having a stipulation saying that if HHH was disqualified, he lost the title. This went completely against the story they had been telling and took away what the match should have been. On top of that, the match ended with HHH just beating the tar out of Orton, hitting the Pedigree and retaining. He stood over Orton like a beast over its prey and the show ended. The general reaction seemed to be "that's it?" There was no big comeback, there was no big brutal spot, there was no real conclusion. It was just HHH standing over him in a symbolic ending which just didn't work.

Speaking of endings, another problem with HHH is his feuds go on WAY too long. We'll start with Orton again. These two feuded for over a year and the matches just didn't work. Orton may have been one of HHH's projects but the whole thing just didn't work. The matches weren't very good, the story just kept going and was eventually going in circles. Over the course of the feud, they managed to have three last man standing matches. As you would expect, people got tired of the story just continuing, especially with the same stuff happening over and over again.

Another good example of this and the big epic moment problems came in his feud with Brock Lesnar. The feud started the night after Brock lost in a great match to John Cena at Extreme Rules 2012 in April. The two didn't fight until Summerslam in August with Brock winning conclusively. How did the show end? With a shot of HHH looking to the crowd and apologizing for not being able to get it done.

The feud would continue at Wrestlemania, where HHH got the win before moving on to Extreme Rules 2013 where Brock won the final match inside of a cage. After three matches, the series felt like a bad movie series: the first match was good but not great, the second match wasn't necessary but was watchable, and the third match just didn't need to happen but did anyway. HHH getting the win at Wrestlemania was the only logical way to do the trilogy, but it also drew criticisms that HHH had to get the win on the biggest stage in the match the most people would remember.

This brings us to 2003 and Wrestlemania XIX. HHH came into the match as World Heavyweight Champion and defended against Booker T. The story was that "someone like Booker T" didn't deserve to be champion. While the storyline explanation was that HHH meant Booker's criminal past, there were heavy racial overtones to what HHH was saying. What happened at Wrestlemania? HHH won with a Pedigree to retain the title.

That scene is a great representation of the biggest thing holding HHH back: late 2002-2004. This was an AWFUL period for both HHH and the WWE in general with HHH's title reigns being major factors. Ignoring the creation of the World Heavyweight Championship and the splitting of the titles, HHH had some of the worst matches of his career in this stretch.

His 3 Stages of Hell match with Shawn, the matches with Nash, the

Goldberg series, the Scott Steiner feud and some of the Orton matches are just dreadful but HHH just kept the title for months on end with the same matches with the same story ("I'm the best." "No I'm the best." Flair interfered, HHH keeps the title) and nothing ever changing despite the talent pool on Raw. HHH would finally break out of this period, but man alive was it hard to sit through.

We'll wrap it up with something else difficult to sit through: HHH's promos. There are times when they're very solid, but some of those things go on long enough to plant a farm and grow your own dinner. He takes about nine breaths between sentences and drones on about THIS BUSINESS, how he is THE GAME and how he'll prove he's the best in the world. Long heel promos can work, but you should want to see the villain get beaten up, not change the channel out of boredom.

Now that we've gotten all that bad stuff out of the way, let's take a look at the good side of HHH's career, because there's a lot to get to. Since there's more good than bad, we'll be going through it with more of a timeline format.

He arrived as the blue blood (basically the same gimmick he had in WCW when they said he had no future as a singles guy) named Hunter Hearst Helmsley and hooked up with Mr. Perfect before feuding with Marc Mero. The character can best be described as a pompous snob who looked down on everyone for not having as much money or power as he had. He was also obsessed with people's family history and how much better his was than yours. In other words, he was obsessed with his pedigree. His theme music was Ode to Joy by Beethoven and it was the perfect addition to his character.

The character was absolutely perfect for HHH at that time as he could

play a perfect snob. With the curtseying, the huge nose in the air, the classical music and the "I'm better than you" attitude, it was nearly impossible to not punch this guy in the face. He nailed the character and was slowly pushed up the card and won the Intercontinental Title, holding it for about four months.

Next up was DX which is the character that changed everything for HHH. All of a sudden he was being able to act like the sophomoric jerk that he was but on camera and with millions of people watching him. The group turned face after Wrestlemania XIV and was put into a feud with the Nation of Domination, triggering a personal rivalry with the Rock (who happened to be the man that took the Intercontinental Title from him).

HHH's time as the face leader of DX was some very entertaining stuff and one of the biggest reasons the Attitude Era worked. Instead of just having clean cut faces and heels, all of a sudden the faces were making adult jokes and being over the top funny. Aside from Steve Austin vs. Vince, DX was the biggest deal in the company and HHH was a huge part of that.

By late 1999, DX was all but done and HHH was moving into singles competition. He started talking about it being his time and how he would be the next WWF Champion. While that wasn't exactly right, he would be take the title from the next WWF Champion, winning the belt the night after Summerslam 1999.

This didn't quite work as HHH was still viewed as a glorified midcarder. He would be champion a few times around this point, starting his third reign in January 2000 (remember that, as it becomes important later). However, the most important thing for him was his on screen marriage to Stephanie McMahon, who he kidnapped, married and raped before she turned

on her father and joined HHH at Armageddon 1999.

The McMahon-Helmsley Faction was born through this union and would dominate the company for the next few months. This would be HHH's first time as a brutal dictator who ran the company with an iron fist. It would also be perfect for him as HHH became one of the best heel characters ever, with the fans absolutely dying to see him get what was coming to him. HHH became the Cerebral Assassin, a man who could fight but would rather out think his opponents to beat them.

One of the most important moments during this time was his match against Cactus Jack at the 2000 Royal Rumble. We'll go into that match more later, but the most important thing about the match was HHH's evolution beyond the Cerebral Assassin. For once in his career he had no way to keep his title other than to stand up and fight, which he did in one of the best matches ever.

This run went on for awhile until HHH was revealed as the man behind Steve Austin being run over by a car. The two feuded for months until they fought in a 3 Stages of Hell match at No Way Out, which happened to be another of the best matches ever. The two would form a questionable bond a few months later until HHH tore his quad in another great match with Austin against Chris Benoit/Chris Jericho.

HHH would be gone for the rest of 2001 (luckily missing the Invasion) and returning in January 2002 with one of the loudest pops ever heard in Madison Square Garden. He later turned heel and attacked Shawn Michaels, leading to a nearly two year on again/off again feud. Not all of the matches were great, but the first one at Summerslam 2002 is as good of a fight as you'll be able to find for a long time.

We're going to jump forward to the end of Evolution as Batista wins the 2005 Royal Rumble and chooses to fight HHH at Wrestlemania XXI. After ruining Randy Orton's face turn (more on that later as well), HHH put Batista over on three straight pay per views, including once inside the Cell. He then took some time off and returned to feud with Ric Flair, culminating in a great old school cage match at Taboo Tuesday 2005.

Next up was a DX reunion with Shawn Michaels and I'm really not sure if I should put it in with the good or the bad. The story dominated 2006 and saw HHH and Shawn torture Vince McMahon who fought back with his handpicked associated. The matches weren't all that good but it was more harmless than anything else. This was followed by a feud with Rated RK0 which was cut short as HHH tore his quad again.

After returning in 2007, HHH would win the WWE Title again that fall and enter a long feud with Randy Orton. Again we'll skip that and get to Summerslam 2008, where HHH worked what can almost be described as a miracle: he got a good match out of Great Khali. Many have tried but he's the only person to really pull it off. He followed it up with a very solid feud against Jeff Hardy, eventually being in the match where Hardy FINALLY won the title.

We'll jump ahead to February of 2011 where HHH challenged Undertaker to a match at Wrestlemania. The match was good but I never bought HHH as a real threat to the Streak. Their rematch a year later inside the Cell was FAR better though and was a contender for match of the year. Soon after HHH started a feud with Brock Lesnar, leading to a match at Summerslam 2011. Again it was good but not all that great.

Our last jump brings us to modern times with HHH and Stephanie as the Authority, the on-screen owners of the company. After months of going

back and forth as a face or a heel, HHH would finally establish himself as a heel and set up his match with Daniel Bryan at Wrestlemania XXX, which will take place about three weeks after this is being written. I can't imagine it not being great though.

Now let's take a look at the major good themes of HHH's career.

First of all, HHH can play one heck of a villain. As I said, that run he had in 2000 as the WWF Champion when he feuded with the Rock is right up there with Hollywood Hogan in 1996/1997 and Ted DiBiase in 1988 as the greatest heel runs ever. There's just something about HHH talking down to people that makes you want to see a hero get his teeth kicked in which is exactly what you want in a heel.

Think about this for a minute. HHH kidnapped a woman, forced her to marry him, then got her on his side and took over the company. If that isn't evil, I don't know what more you could be expecting. The key to it though was he got what was coming to him at the hands of both The Rock and Steve Austin who beat his teeth in over the second half of 2000. The same thing is likely to happen when he faces Bryan at Wrestlemania. I can't imagine the match ending with anything other than Bryan taking HHH's head off with a running knee or making him tap out.

Speaking of matches, I can barely count how many classics HHH has had. Let's look at this for a second. There are the two street fights and the Cell match with Cactus Jack, almost any big match he had with Rock with the ladder match in particular, his wars with Steve Austin, the triple threats with Shawn and Benoit, the unsanctioned match with Shawn at Summerslam 2002, the miracle against Great Khali, his three Wrestlemania matches with Undertaker and some very solid stuff with Cena and Flair. I'm sure I'm missing a bunch but the reality is clear: the guy has been

having great matches for over 15 years now. That just doesn't happen in wrestling.

He's also had a natural evolution to his character. HHH started off as a blue blood who thought he was better than everyone else before switching over to saying screw that, I want to have fun. However he eventually abandoned the goofiness and embraced the core of his character: a man obsessed with power who would do whatever it took to take over the company. Now he's in charge of the company and is trying to be civilized but occasionally loses control and agrees to do something that gets him in trouble.

Before we wrap this up, let's bust up a few myths about HHH.

Quite often you'll hear people say that he became the star that he is because he married the boss' daughter. Here's the thing: by the time they started dating, allegedly in early 2000, HHH was a two time WWF Champion (he won his third title on January 3, 2000 so it was three reigns unless they started dating on the first two days of the year), a two time Intercontinental Champion and the King of the Ring. Marry Stephanie was definitely a boost, but HHH was going to be a big star no matter what.

Another story you hear about HHH is that he invented his own world title. I've heard multiple versions of this, with the main story being that the Intercontinental Title was to be the top title on Raw with HHH dominating that belt. Think about that for a second and you'll see that it doesn't make sense. At the end of the day, Raw is THE show for WWE and having a glorified midcard title as its centerpiece just wasn't going to work. WWE making another title made sense and HHH just happened to be the guy that got it. To suggest that it was all his idea is illogical.

Next up is the theory that he pushed his buddies (Shawn, Sheamus, Batista etc) to the moon. Does anyone really want to argue that those three weren't going to get pushed anyway? Sheamus gets some of the loudest pops on the show, Shawn is as talented a guy as you'll ever hear, and Batista has been a big star every time WWE has used him. Yeah HHH pushed his buddies, and they'll all turned out fine.

Sticking with the buddy thing for a minute, why is this something that HHH gets bashed for so much? It's a common practice in wrestling to push your friends and HHH is really one of the weakest offenders. Ole Anderson nearly put WCW under by pushing his buddies in the early 90s. Hulk Hogan had BRUTUS BEEFCAKE in the main event of Starrcade. Back when Vince took over the WWF, how many of the people that got pushed were people who were loyal to him? There are multiple other instances but the point is clear: HHH isn't the first guy with power to push his friends and he won't be the last. It happens all the time and it's been FAR worse over the years.

Let's look at one last thing: HHH dominated the world title. If HHH gets blasted for this, he's fourth worst at best. Since the time the titles were split, HHH has won eight world titles. This puts him fourth in that span after Edge with eleven, Randy Orton with twelve and John Cena with fourteen. Edge won eleven world titles in the span of just over five years, or over two titles a year. HHH might have held the belt longer than Orton and Edge, but HHH didn't win and lose it as often for as many cheap title reigns. While they're boring, I'd take one of HHH's long reigns over five of Edge's month long reigns any day.

Overall, the good outweighs the bad with HHH. There are just so many outstanding matches and segments (I could have gone on for several more pages breaking down his matches and why they're as awesome as they are) that they overshadow the bad stuff. The problem is the bad stuff is REALLY bad with 2003 being one of the roughest years I can ever remember in wrestling. That run he had in 2000/2001 is as good a stretch as you'll

ever find in wrestling and his period where he was the veteran who was seeing how much he had left is quite a run as well. There's just so much to rave about there and it's unfair to criticize him as much as people (including myself) do.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of on the History of Summerslam at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

And check out my Amazon author page with wrestling books for under \$4 at:

New Member of the Hall of Fame Announced At Smackdown

This is a spoiler for the 8 of you that watch Smackdown live. It's Carlos Colon, the king of wrestling in Puerto Rico and father of Carlito. Nothing wrong with this one.

Newest Hall of Fame Inductee

It's about time. Paul Bearer is in. I've had that typed three times now so I'm glad he's finally announced. Nothing wrong with this pick as usual.

Official CM Punk Plan Made By Chicago Fans

This is a real thing.



GOAL: HIJACK RAW AND CHANGE THE ROAD TO WRESTLEMANIA XXX

OBJECTIVE => EMBARRASS THE BRASS
TACTICS:

- Turn your back to Batista/Cortez/HHH/Stephanie McMahon segments
- Should these folks wrestle a match, let them know it's the "Same Old Hell"

OBJECTIVE => DANIEL BRYAN IN THE TITLE MATCH

TACTICS:

- "Yes, Yes, Yes" we do NOT want to see a HHH vs. Bryan match
- We want to see Daniel Bryan in the "Title Match"
- And, as always, "Yes, Yes, Yes" we are big "Daniel Bryan" fans

OBJECTIVE => PROVE THAT PUNK IS A WRESTLEMANIA MAIN EVENT TALENT

TACTICS:

- How long can Chicago hold a "CM Punk" chant while standing to start the show? Honestly, let's have fun with this.
- How interested are you in this meaningless match with no stakes or story? You'd rather watch a "CM Punk" match? Yeah, us too.

OBJECTIVE => ELEVATE HIGHCARDERS

TACTICS:

- "We want Jiggly" and let's convince the world they do too
- "Let's go Miyuki" the stronger they are the better chance Ryo has to defeat Cera at Wrestlemania

Considerations:

- Undertaker is immortal and will always deliver a match
- There is no Wrestlemania without Jesse! "Thank You Jesse"
- "Shut up, Agents! Can't trust all our new guys!" (This is awesome)

"Our power is in our coordination. Our objective is to be seen. Our goal is to **WrestleMANIA**"

The imagine isn't great but if you can't read it, here's a slightly better picture.

<http://www.rspwfaq.net/2014/03/tonights-chicago-objectives.html>

Then, this might happen tonight:

1. Punk comes out and puts over Chicago as the greatest city ever.
2. A new world championship is made and Bray Wyatt vs. Dolph Ziggler square off for it at Wrestlemania.
3. Daniel Bryan is inserted into the title match at Wrestlemania and guaranteed to win.
4. Batista, HHH, Orton and Stephanie are crushed under rampaging camels, leaving only Bryan vs. Punk for the main event of Wrestlemania.
5. Every fan gets a big bag of money.

Fans after the show:

“Screw this company. Why are they wasting all this stuff on ONE SHOW? Do they not want to make money anymore???”

“You’re going next time right?”

“Sorry for making you wait so long. I was just buying 15 Punk items. Of course I’ll be there and do the VIP experience. It’s awesome going.”

John Cena’s Injury

As you’ve likely heard, Cena’s knee injury was revealed to be a work, but it turns out he has a legitimate groin strain. This gets me to thinking. It strikes me as interesting that Cena has a REAL injury less than a week after a major worked injury was revealed to be fake. It’s almost too much of a coincidence. Everyone’s reaction: “He’s not a good enough

actor to pull that off.” Any chance that’s exactly what WWE was hoping we would say?

Thought of the Day: The Boy Band Of Wrestling. No Not Three Count

Anybody remember them? Aside from Daniel Bryan, what did the original Nexus ever accomplish? Think about it. Of the main seven guys on the team, here are their career accomplishments:

4 Intercontinental Titles

5 Tag Titles

That’s it. Of the original seven (Barrett, Sheffield, Young, Otunga, Tarver, Slater, Gabriel) plus Harris and McGillicutty that’s all they’ve won in their entire WWE careers. Those guys debuted almost four years ago and have a resume that Chris Jericho probably accomplished in a two year stretch. They never won anything significant while they were a team and once Barrett lost his title shot they were done completely.

It’s really kind of astounding that they were THE story for four to six months and had practically no lasting impact at all. Even once Punk took over the group they didn’t do anything as Orton knocked them out one by one in about six weeks. Even the Dungeon of Doom had more accomplishments than this. At the end of the day, the fact that most of them sound

like they belong in a cubicle at an accounting firm and had character traits that felt like they were pulled out of a fishbowl and assigned to each member (among other things) crippled them. It's a great lesson in what happens when you put no effort into characters at all.

They're the boy band of wrestling: big deal for awhile, people kind of remember them, one guy means anything today.

Cena's Knee Injury A Work

Pretty much confirmed at this point. The refusal to accept further treatment was kind of a giveaway.

The Network Is LIVE

After some problems getting it to work, I've got it loaded up. Some of the shows can take a few seconds to load but the video looks great and there are a few extra shows that haven't been mentioned like WCCW and a few house shows from the 80s. I'm thrilled so far.

Anyone had good and/or bad experiences so far?

Thought of the Day: The Wrestlemania X-Factor

It's reminiscent of Judgment Day 2000. Back at Judgment Day 2000, the Rock was in an iron man match against HHH. With about two minutes to go, everything fell apart and Rock was outnumbered by about six to one. It looked like there was no hope but the Undertaker returned and saved the Rock. He also cost him the WWF Title but that's another story.

The place went NUTS as Undertaker had been gone for about six months. He was making a huge return after about six months away and he had been gone just long enough that people had forgotten he was missing. That brings us to the next six weeks before Wrestlemania. There's a factor that hasn't been mentioned in the the last few weeks and I think that's by design.

The man I'm talking about is Vince McMahon.

Vince hasn't been seen on WWE TV since I believe TLC, or about two months ago. Everything seems to be falling down around Daniel Bryan as HHH and Stephanie's authority continues to expand but if history has taught us anything, it's that Vince McMahon can defy any story or power structure and be the ultimate power in WWE at the drop of a hat.

Vince is going to be back before Wrestlemania and he's going to be shake up the Bryan vs. HHH feud. Bank on it.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of on the History of Summerslam at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

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