

NXT – July 29, 2015: The Fruits Of NXT's Labor

NXT

Date: July 29, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Corey Graves, Byron Saxton

We have a clear path towards Takeover: Brooklyn now with a main event of Finn Balor defending against Kevin Owens in a rematch from their Beast in the East showdown. Other than that it seems that we're going to get Bayley challenging for the Women's Title, but first she wants to get through Charlotte. However, Charlotte first wants to go through Dana Brooke, who she faces tonight. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Enzo Amore/Colin Cassady vs. Scott Dawson/Dash Wilder

Cass keeps it simple here, just saying that you're S-A-W-F-T if you're not a certified G. Enzo and Scott get things going with Enzo taking it to the mat and walking over Dawson's back so he can do some dancing. Everything is about to break down when Dawson and Wilder realize that Cass is a foot taller than everyone else in the ring. Off to Cass, who seems to be a bit more over with the fans.

Back to Enzo for two on Wilder from a high cross body, only to charge shoulder first into the post. Wilder and Dawson start alternating as we get some NXT house show ads. The heels crank on the arm and Wilder stops Enzo from diving through the legs for a hot tag. A slingshot suplex (that's so appropriate for a team like these two) gets two on Enzo but the bad guys collide, allowing for the hot tag to Big Cass. Everything breaks down and Enzo chases Wilder around the ring, only to be caught in a 3D into a Codebreaker (Shatter Machine) to give Wilder the pin at 6:39.

Rating: C. Well ok then. Unless they're going to do a quick turn around and put Enzo and Cass in the title match in Brooklyn, I can't imagine

these two are going to be around NXT much longer. There's not much left for them to do in NXT if they're not going to win the titles, so let them go replace Santino on Raw.

Chad Gable and Jason Jordan say they're not your common team but they get things done when they need to. They're not as loud as the Hype Bros or Enzo/Cass, but they find a way to win. Jason doesn't want to say they're ready, willing and Gable.

We recap Charlotte vs. Dana Brooke, which is over Charlotte being in the Tap Out commercial, because Dana says Charlotte has been given all of her chances because of her last name. Dana wants a match to show her abilities and gets her chance tonight.

Baron Corbin vs. Jesse Sorensen

Yes that's TNA's Jesse Sorensen and he gets taken out by End of Days in 22 seconds.

Tyler Breeze comes in to Regal's office and yells about Regal not answering his Twitter, Facebook or Instagram messages. Regal: "I sent a carrier pigeon." Breeze will fight anyone from around the world but Regal says be careful what you wish for.

Jason Jordan/Chad Gable vs. Elias Samson/Levis Valenzuela Jr.

Jordan rides Levis down to start so it's off to Samson (who looks like Damien Sandow and Wade Barrett's lovechild) who wants Gable. Chad comes in and casually spins out of a wristlock before taking Samson down to the mat and cranking on the legs. Chad's smile as he does this is great stuff. Back up and Levis gets in a knee to Gable's back to take over before a slam gets two. Chad shrugs it off (because it's just a slam) and makes the hot tag to Jason, who quickly puts on the double belly to back suplex (now called the Grand Amplitude) for the pin on Levis at 4:23.

Rating: D+. They've got something special here with Gable. The guy has that grin that is so cocky that you want to cheer him and see him get his face kicked in at the same time but can also get on the mat with anyone NXT has to offer. The finisher is great too and the pair have great

chemistry together. Well done NXT as they develop more teams in a year than WWE has developed in the last ten years.

Dana Brooke is ready to conquer Charlotte, just like she's conquered everything else she's ever done. So she's the female Brock Lesnar?

We recap Bull Dempsey's struggles to stay in shape before seeing him trying to work out at the Performance Center. This goes badly, though some of it might have to do with his workout gear looking like it's made of trash bags. The tagline is "It's time to get Bull-Fit", which is kind of catchy. There's comedy potential here at least.

Charlotte vs. Dana Brooke

Charlotte shoves her down to start but has to go after Emma. The distraction doesn't work for once but Dana is able to pound Charlotte down in the corner for two. It's off to a bodyscissors on Charlotte until she lifts Dana up, only to have Brooke fall on top for two. Brooke cranks on an arm and a leg on the mat while shouting about Charlotte wanting to pose for Tap Out. A catapult sends Charlotte throat first into the bottom rope but she pops up with a neckbreaker and spear, followed by Natural Selection for the pin at 4:23.

Rating: C-. Not much of a match here as Charlotte shrugged off everything thrown at her and just beat Brooke up for the pin. Still though, that's kind of the point as Charlotte is on to something bigger and better while Brooke is just kind of there at this point. Emma could still do something entertaining though and that's all she needs to do, especially with so many of the NXT girls moving up to the main roster.

Samoa Joe is targeting Rhyno because they're both predators. Joe is going to choke Rhyno out.

Last week, Regal was upset that Kevin Owens ran him over, but Owens comes up and apologizes for going into fight or flight mode. Regal can't wait to see him take a beating.

Eva Marie says last week was just the beginning and she's coming for Sasha Banks and the title. They really can't be serious can right?

Kevin Owens vs. Martin Stone

Stone is a British wrestler who looks like a shorter Luke Gallows. Owens nails a clothesline to start and the backsplash. Stone runs into a release German suplex, followed by the Cannonball, a swanton bomb and the Pop Up Powerbomb for the pin at 1:48. Total squash.

Owens gives Stone an apron powerbomb post match.

Video on Rhyno's time in NXT.

Tag Team Titles: Blake/Murphy vs. Vaudevillains

Blake and Murphy are defending. Fans: "DOWN WITH DUBSTEP!" Blake and Gotch fight over a top wristlock to start until Simon grabs a monkey flip into a cross armbreaker, followed by a dropkick for two. English comes in and stays right on Blake with a top wristlock of his own. Murphy comes in but both champions take Japanese armdrags as this is all Vaudevillains so far.

Back from a break with the Vaudevillains working on Murphy's arm some more. English throws both champs to the floor but Blake is able to kick him in the side of the head to finally take over. Running forearms in the corner set up a chinlock on Aiden but he fights up and dives over for a tag to Simon. Fans: "OH MY GOTCH!" Gotch cleans house and the Whirling Dervish is loaded up, only to have Bliss grab English's leg, allowing Blake to roll him up and grab the tights to retain at 10:18.

Rating: C. This was a squash until the ending which seems to be there to set up a rematch in Brooklyn. The Vaudevillains are ready to take the titles as Blake and Murphy feel like a glorified transitional team and have since they won the belts. Bliss is the star of the team but they're far from bad.

The Vaudevillains clean house until they're alone with Bliss. Fans: "CHIVALRY! CHIVALRY!" They hold the ropes open for her but Bliss slaps both of them and leaves with the champs to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. This is one of the areas where NXT shines: they had a show here with almost no main event or top level story advancement, but

they showcased their tag division with five regular teams, all of whom could be considered contenders for the titles (in addition to mentioning a sixth in the Hype Bros). On a one hour show, NXT has managed to build up a full tag division and made the title match feel like a big deal. It's a great illustration of what you can do when you treat things like they matter. Well done here on a show that got to brag about the hard work they've put in to get here.

Results

Scott Dawson/Dash Wilder b. Enzo Amore/Colin Cassady – Shatter Machine to Amore

Baron Corbin b. Jesse Sorensen – End of Days

Jason Jordan/Chad Gable b. Levis Valenzuela Jr./Elias Samson – Grand Amplitude to Valenzuela

Charlotte b. Dana Brooke – Natural Selection

Kevin Owens b. Martin Stone – Pop Up Powerbomb

Blake/Murphy b. Vaudevillains – Rollup to English with a handful of tights

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Layla Retires From WWE

<http://www.wwe.com/inside/layla-retires-from-wwe-27726062>

Does it count as news when you haven't done anything in months if not years? She's from that model era of wrestling where the Divas were mostly worthless in the ring and Layla was really just the bubbly one who looked good in small outfits. There were FAR worse Divas out there and Layla reached a point where she wasn't too bad. I'll give her this too: I saw her at a house show in person and my goodness the cameras don't do her justice. She was stunning.

Monday Nitro – March 6, 2000: Oh Dear. Oh Dear Indeed.

Monday Nitro #230

Date: March 6, 2000

Location: Student Activities Center, Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Attendance: 4,682

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mark Madden

We're getting closer to the horror that is Uncensored 2000 and Jeff Jarrett vs. Sid Vicious. Both guys are talented and have their place on the card, but the main event isn't the right spot for either of them, especially coming off HHH vs. Foley and transitioning into HHH vs. Rock. Other than that, since we're in North Carolina, you can pencil in Flair

for a loss or some sort of humiliation. Let's get to it.

We open in the back with Fit Finlay choking Vampiro after promising to teach him some respect last week. Vampiro fights back but we cut to the arena for some pyro.

Psychosis vs. Kaz Hayashi

Juventud Guerrera is out with Psychosis for his Rock stuff and promises to live la vida loca. Kaz quickly knocks Psychosis to the floor and dives onto both guys for a nice spot. Back in and a dropkick puts Psychosis (Madden keeps calling him Psycho) down again and a spinwheel kick fires Kaz up even more. This is more emotion than I've seen from him in a long time.

Psychosis grabs a quick gordbuster as Juvy sits on the apron. Cue Finlay and Vampiro to fight at ringside and then into the ring to really wake the crowd up. Psychosis' top rope hurricanrana gets two but here are Paisley and the Artist etc to watch. Kaz gets dropkicked out of the air and takes the guillotine legdrop for no cover. Instead Prince gets on the apron and hits Psychosis with the belt, giving Kaz a rollup pin.

Rating: C. Yeah it was an overbooked mess, but it was a fun overbooked mess and that's a good way to open a show. Kaz looked like a guy who was trying to make something of his TV time and I can never fault someone for doing that. It's not a great match and Prince is still an anchor holding the division down, but this was the fast paced, fun match the division has been missing.

Psychosis and Juvy beat Prince down post match.

We look back at Jarrett pinning Vampiro last week.

Tonight's main event: Sid/Vampiro vs. Jarrett/Don Harris. I'm digging these young guys getting main event slots but good grief the heels are dragging these things down.

Security finally breaks up Vampiro and Finlay, ten minutes after we first saw them fighting.

The NWO, in a room with couches and black walls, laugh off the idea of facing Vampiro tonight.

Disco and the Mamalukes aren't worried about the Harris Twins. Johnny is swearing off cheese sandwiches until Uncensored and Vito is taking out Ron Harris tonight.

Vampiro is beating up various trashcans backstage.

Ricki Rachman and the Nitro Girls were at Duke University on Friday. This eats up far more time than it should. To their credit there was some money given to a children's hospital so at least some good came from it.

Ron Harris vs. Big Vito

Harris stomps him down to start but Vito kicks him in the face. Tony: "Would you call that a Mafia Kick?" Madden: "I'd call it an Italian American Heritage Kick." The Twins quickly switch places and Don hits Vito with a chain for the pin in less than a minute.

And never mind as instant replay shows the cheating and Vito wins. Disco and the champs take H Bombs until the Power Plant security guards and a cop come out and get beaten down as well.

David Flair, on his 21st birthday, is going to beat up the Wall for hurting Crowbar on Thunder. That was one heck of a chokeslam through the table.

The Harris Twins are arrested for shoving the cop. I'm not sure why they both are when only one touched the cop but it's wrestling logic.

The official tagline for Sid vs. Jarrett at Uncensored: the monster against the music. This is getting higher and higher on the list of horrible WCW ideas every single week.

The Wall vs. David Flair

Wall throws him to the floor to start and puts up a pair of tables. Daffney distracts Wall with screams, allowing David to hit him in the back with a crowbar. The metal rod to the back is no sold and David gets

chokeslammed through both tables for the DQ.

Daffney cries over how hurt David may be. Trainers come out, as do Curt Hennig, Terry Funk and Arn Anderson. Curt says David's old man should have been here. Ric was shown in the back earlier.

Back from a break with David being taken away on a stretcher. Bam Bam Bigelow yells at Wall for taking it too far so Wall hits him once, knocking him onto a table. Bigelow implied that he trained/mentored Wall before getting knocked six feet off a single punch.

The Dog vs. Evan Karagias

I've wondered this forever, but why in the world is Brian Knobbs' theme music a rock version of My Sharona? Dog beats up all three members of 3 Count but gets triple teamed, drawing in Knobbs and Finlay. It's eventually just Dog in the ring, leaving everyone else to mindlessly fight outside. Dog hits a running splash on Evan and then bites his ear. Finlay throws Evan into the barricade and we see Dog's red eyes. All six get in again until Knobbs helps Dog with a middle rope powerslam to pin Evan.

Rating: N/A. It was long enough to rate but this was such a mess and the two people actually in the match were only together in the ring for about half the time. Much like the Tag Team Title feud, this isn't interesting but at least it's a feud that can be simply explained. That doesn't make it good, but it makes sense which is more than you can say about a lot of stuff around here.

Ric Flair says his son is a big boy and can take care of himself. He's ready for Hennig again tonight.

Jarrett yells at his three NWO girls about the situation tonight.

Nitro Girls for the first time in a long while.

Sid begs Vampiro to help him fight tonight. Vampiro says he'll be there.

Here are Jarrett and the girls with something to say. Jeff ejects the girls (who now have names: Kim, Tyrene and Midajah) and says tonight

there was a travesty of justice. The Twins are gone, but Jeff has a replacement: The Wall. Again, well done on putting young guys in big spots, and for once that's not sarcasm.

2XS (Lane and Idol) are on the phone but Idol says he lives here now so he's over with the rats. They see Demon's coffin and have an idea.

Curt Hennig vs. Ric Flair

Please give them time. Flair rips on the UNC Tar Heels basketball team and thinks they should be wrestling at Duke (UNC's major rival) tonight instead. Curt chops away in the corner to start and gives Ric a backdrop as only Flair can take one. They head outside with Flair striking away until Hennig chops him against the barricade. Back in and Flair goes...well he goes Flair actually as he suckers Hennig into the corner for a low blow.

More chops on the floor have Curt in more trouble as the idea is Flair being more aggressive than usual because of Hogan. So yeah, we're back to the RIC IS CRAZY because of Hogan idea from 1994. After some stomps to the leg, the Figure Four goes on but Hennig turns it over as you would expect him to do. They're not exactly blowing the roof off the place here. Hennig makes his comeback but has to deal with Luger, followed by a quick PerfectPlex for the pin on Flair.

Rating: C. Totally acceptable match here but that's par for the course from these two. Hennig vs. Flair is always good for a decent match and it's nice to see an older guy like Flair still trying around here. Luger and Flair are a good enough heel team, but Luger is so worthless these days and it's killing whatever good Flair brings to it.

Hennig's arm gets broken but Arn Anderson comes out to stand over him. Luger pulls the bat back to hit him but Flair shakes his head no and Lex drops it.

Lane and Idol weld the Demon's casket shut, because WCW catering now has blowtorches if you get the meal deal special. Demon comes up but gets beaten down because WCW isn't scared of a lawsuit.

More Nitro Party stuff.

Hennig is taken into an ambulance.

Flair and Luger brag and Liz looks especially gorgeous here.

Lane vs. Norman Smiley

Idol is on commentary as Norman starts with some dancing. A victory roll doesn't work so well and Smiley is sent outside, where Lane takes him down with a big flip dive. Back in and Lane gets slammed down but breaks up the Big Wiggle with a low blow. As usual, the referee sees this and doesn't seem to care. Lane misses a moonsault (landing on his head) to set up Norman's giant swing. Cue Miss Hancock to get on the table but she doesn't dance. The distraction is enough for the Norman's Conquest to make Lane tap out in a hurry.

Demon comes out to beat up Lane and Idol but gets in a staredown with Norman. Sure why not.

Sid promises to win at Uncensored.

An angry Tank Abbott is in the ring and doesn't care for the GOLDBERG chants. He isn't worried about Sid either because he only tapped because WCW was taking him off TV. Tank isn't leaving until he gets a match.

Tank Abbott vs. La Parka

One punch knockout. I'm so glad La Parka was given a winning streak over the last few weeks.

Doug Dillinger won't get Tank out of the ring so here's Meng, but JJ Dillon threatens to dock him 60 days pay if he gets in. Nothing comes of this because having a fun segment isn't something WCW will tolerate on their television shows.

Nitro Girls again.

Hogan, in a pre-taped interview, has signed release notes for the Yappapi Strap Match against Flair. He goes over the mindset behind the match and promises to strap Flair over and over. This was an old school promo but

this isn't an old school show.

Kidman vs. Harlem Heat 2000

Kidman says he has a partner but gets beaten down before he can bring anyone down. After about thirty seconds of beating, here's Booker to even things up. Booker cleans house but the double teaming gets to him as this actually breaks down into a tag match. Everything breaks down and there's a Book End on Big T. with Kidman dropping a top rope elbow but Cash (or is it Cass?) pulls the referee to the floor. Stevie hits something on Kidman off camera for the pin, because pulling the referee to the floor isn't a DQ in WCW. I think the better question is what IS a DQ in this company these days.

Here's Dustin Rhodes with some barbed wire (clearly not real) and something to say. He knocks Terry Funk unconscious two weeks ago but Funk got up and kept coming because he's a stupid old man. Dustin rips on the internet fans and says he's ready to make Terry bleed tonight.

After we don't hear the end of "you people s...." because SUCK of all things is censored, Terry Funk comes out to call Dustin a chicken. He imitates Foghorn Leghorn of all things and says he has Dustin's illegitimate brother in a garbage bag. Inside the bag is a plucked chicken wearing a diaper because why not. Terry thinks Dustin wants a barbed wire match so Dustin throws powder in his face and piledrives him. The threat of a powerbomb makes Funk come back with a low blow and a slam onto the wire.

Jeff Jarrett/The Wall vs. Sid Vicious/Vampiro

Before the match, Jeff ejects the girls again. Tony makes the big announcement for Sting vs. Luger: it's a lumberjack cast match with everyone whose arm Luger has broken will surround the ring. It's a brawl to start with the big guys fighting out to the floor. We settle down to Vampiro working on Wall's arm until Jeff gets in a cheap shot from the apron to change control.

Jeff comes in and works over Vampiro with that riveting Memphis style of his until Vampiro plants him with a Rock Bottom. The hot tag brings in

Sid to clean house and chokeslam Jeff, but Wall breaks it up. Sid clotheslines Jarrett to the floor and the big guys grab each other by the throat, only to have Jarrett sneak in with the guitar to Sid. Wall chokeslams Sid and Jeff gets the pin to end the show.

Rating: D. I really didn't care for this one but it's nice to see someone like Wall getting a spot here. Vampiro was really just kind of there but it's always cool to see the youth movement finally going somewhere. Unfortunately it ends with Jeff pinning Sid again to set up the lame World Title match down the line, but that's WCW for you.

Overall Rating: D+. As boring as the main event stuff has been lately, this really wasn't a bad show. They're building up some coherent stories and the young guys are getting some higher spots on the card, which makes for a show that actually entertains at points. Now don't get me wrong: it's still really boring and the idea of Uncensored makes me cringe, but this has been a major upgrade over the last few months.

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Summerslam Count-Up – 1990:

Oh Warrior. We Barely Knew Ye.

Summerslam 1990

Date: August 27, 1990

Location: Philadelphia Spectrum, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Attendance: 19,304

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Roddy Piper

This is a personal favorite of mine as I've probably seen this show upwards of 40 times. It was the first tape I ever owned and I went through at least two copies. We have a double main event tonight with Hogan returning to face Earthquake and Ultimate Warrior defending the world title against Rick Rude in a cage for the final blowoff in their rivalry. Let's get to it.

We open with a look at the fans coming into the arena and buying merchandise.

Now we get a traditional intro with Vince shouting about the double main event.

Rockers vs. Power and Glory

Power and Glory (Hercules and Paul Roma) get a jobber entrance. The camera immediately goes wide during the opening brawl so you don't see Shawn's knee get grazed by Hercules' chain. His knee was REALLY badly hurt at this time so he's just here for an appearance, making this a handicap match for all intents and purposes. Marty hits a quick dropkick to both guys and gets a small package on Roma but Slick has the referee.

Vince is freaking out over the referee missing stuff as Marty clotheslines Herc to the outside. We officially start with Roma vs. Jannetty and Roma tagging his way out of a sunset flip. Shawn is still on the floor as Hercules pounds away and slams Marty down. Roma plants Jannetty with a backbreaker for two but Marty comes back with a powerslam. The top rope fist connects with Paul's head but Hercules

breaks up the pin. Roma sends Jannetty into a clothesline from Herc as Shawn is screaming in pain. The superplex/top rope splash combo is enough to finish the massacre of Jannetty.

Rating: C-. The match wasn't too bad all things considered. The crowd is white hot here and they carried the match to a higher level than it could have reached on their own. It's kind of a shame that Marty had to be Shawn's partner as his own skills were overlooked by his far more talented partner.

Post match Shawn finally gets into the ring but Marty covers his injured leg and takes a beating himself. Shawn is taken out on a stretcher.

Mr. Perfect isn't worried about the Texas Tornado because he's perfect. Tornado had been around for only a few weeks if even that coming into this. Heenan says Texas Tornadoes never do any damage because you can see it coming from a mile away.

Texas Tornado says that Perfect doesn't know anything about Texas Tornadoes. They're powerful and devastating, and tonight he's going to go back into the clouds with the Intercontinental Title. I've always liked this promo: it's short, it's to the point, and it ties into the character name. Short and sweet. Note that Tornado is wearing yellow trunks here, just like Perfect. He'd change to white for the match

Intercontinental Title: Mr. Perfect vs. Texas Tornado

Tornado launches him into the corner to start and Perfect has a breather on the floor. The idea is that Perfect hasn't had time to plan for Tornado and doesn't know how to deal with him. Back in and Perfect hooks a quick hiptoss but Tornado slams him down and clotheslines Perfect out to the floor.

Back in and Perfect hits a clothesline of his own and the necksnap has Tornado in trouble. Off to a sleeper on Tornado but he quickly makes the rope. Perfect tries slapping him in the face, but Tornado pulls him into a slingshot, sending Perfect head first into the post. The Claw hold and Tornado Punch are enough for the pin and the title.

Rating: D+. This is a weird one as it's about three and a half minutes of stalling before the fast ending. This was supposed to be Brutus Beefcake's shot but he injured his face in a parasailing accident and Tornado was here as a surprise, which is likely why they went with the title change. Perfect would get the title back a few weeks later.

Mean Gene is talking about Sapphire being nowhere in sight (remember that as it becomes important later) when Hennig and Brain come in and say Tornado cheated by sending Perfect into the post. Heenan swears, yes SWEARS I SAY, that the shoulder was up at two.

Sapphire vs. Sensational Sherri

Sherri has on something like a big Mardi Gras mask which terrified me as a kid. Not that it matters as there's no Sapphire. The music plays again but there's still no Sapphire. Sherri says count to ten and then ring the bell. There's still no Sapphire so Sherri wins by forfeit.

Dusty Rhodes isn't sure where Sapphire, his chick, is. The idea is that Sapphire has been getting a bunch of gifts and no one knows who is sending them. The benefactor is scheduled to be revealed tonight. In what can only be described as a bizarre and random cameo, Jim Duggan pops up, says he hasn't seen Sapphire either, and walks away. Dusty lists off the gifts (ring, bracelet, fur coat, Cadillac etc) and that's about it.

Warlord vs. Tito Santana

Piper makes Mexican jokes as Tito grabs a headlock. Warlord easily shoves him down and Piper suggests going for a taco. Three straight dropkicks send Warlord out to the floor for a consultation with Slick. Back in and Tito pounds away but is launched to the outside on a kickout. Warlord rams Tito's back into the post as Piper does a horrible Slick impression. Back in and Warlord pounds on the back but Tito fires off a quick clothesline and right hands. The flying forearm hits out of nowhere but Warlord gets his foot on the ropes. Back up a few seconds later and a powerslam abruptly ends Tito.

Rating: D+. Tito was a jobber to the stars at this point and made Warlord look as good as he could have, but the match was nothing special at all.

Warlord just wasn't all that good other than having muscles on top of muscles. Tito also jobbed to Barbarian at Wrestlemania so they had an idea of what they were using him for at this time.

Ad for Survivor Series. That show SUCKED.

Demolition says it's going to be a surprise combination of them facing the Hart Foundation for the titles. Sean Mooney asks them about a match with Legion of Doom, giving us this joke from Crush: "They're just a couple of second rate imposters." It's funny if you know your history.

Demolition has their entrance and it's Smash/Crush. The Hart Foundation says they don't care which combination they were going to face.

Tag Titles: Hart Foundation vs. Demolition

This is 2/3 falls and Demolition is defending. Basically the Harts have about as much chance coming into this as I have at being Miss America 1974. Bret starts with Smash but the Harts knock Crush to the floor before anything gets going. Things settle down and Bret gets a quick rollup for two. Anvil comes in to crank on Smash's arm before Bret comes back in with a fist to the back. Smash tries to get into a technical match with Bret and gets caught in an armbar for his stupidity.

Smash finally slams Bret down and brings in Crush, only to have Bret avoid an elbow and pound away. Crush charges into a boot in the corner and gets rolled up for two before it's off to Neidhart vs. Smash, only to have Crush kick Jim in the back to give the champions the advantage. Crush comes in again and misses a charge into the corner, allowing for another double tag to Bret and Smash. Neidhart falls to the floor as everything breaks down. Smash is whipped into Crush and Bret gets two off the middle rope elbow but here's Crush again. The Decapitator to Bret is enough for the first fall.

The second fall begins with Crush hitting a hard clothesline on Bret and Smash pounding on the chest. After a quick neck crank by Crush, Bret fires off the Hart Attack clothesline on Smash, allowing for the hot tag to Neidhart. A powerslam gets two on Smash and Bret launches Anvil into Smash in the corner. The Hart Attack takes Smash down but Crush breaks up

the pin for the DQ to make it 1-1. Why they didn't let the Harts get the pin there is beyond me.

During the break between falls, Demolition knocks Bret to the floor, allowing Ax to run down and sneak under the ring. The third fall starts with Bret getting two off a sunset flip before taking Smash down by the leg. Neidhart picks Bret up for the reverse powerslam for two on Smash. Now things get tricky as Smash rolls to the floor and rolls under the ring, switching places with Ax.

The idea is that Ax and Smash look so much alike that the referee can't tell them apart. This is fine except for one problem: THEY DON'T LOOK ALIKE! Ax is taller, heavier set and has a rounder head, not to mention a deeper voice. This reasoning never made sense to me as a kid and it still doesn't to this day.

Anyway the fresh Ax destroys Bret and gets two off Bret's chest bump in the corner. Anvil comes in sans tag as Smash takes Ax's place again. They try to switch again and the Legion of Doom come out to break it up. Smash goes after Hawk and Animal as Anvil shoulder blocks Crush into a rollup by Bret for the pin and the titles. The place comes unglued as the Harts have shocked the world.

Rating: B. That's probably a bit high but I love this match. The wrestling is just ok but the storytelling is as good as you'll get in a tag match with the LOD coming out to even things up, allowing the Harts to finally do the impossible and win the titles. This is a popular match among old school fans and if you watch it you'll see why.

Wrestlemania VII ad, with Vince promising over 100,000 fans. "Terror threats" prevented this from happening, which is WWF speak for "the Los Angeles Coliseum would have been half empty so we'll move it to an arena."

The LOD goes on a big rant about how they're the real thing and Demolition is living in their world. The Harts come in and say they'll fight anyone anytime.

Demolition wants to get their hands on the LOD.

Sherri has heard rumors about Sapphire and thinks she might be a UFO and not that stupid. It's a rather strange interview and we'll leave it at that. Basically Sapphire has done something that Sherri thinks is smart.

Nikolai Volkoff and Jim Duggan are proud to be international tag team partners. We're in intermission if that wasn't clear.

Earthquake and Dino Bravo brag about putting Hogan on the shelf. Big Bossman, Hogan's friend of the month, will be no problem for Dino. Jimmy Hart says Bossman and Hogan will leave on side by side stretchers.

Jake Roberts says he isn't afraid of Bad News Brown's sewer rats. The snake keeps wrapping around Jake's throat in a creepy visual.

Jake Roberts vs. Bad News Brown

Big Bossman is guest referee for no apparent reason. Brown jumps Jake before Bossman is in the ring but has to bail out of a DDT attempt. Back in and Bad News tosses Jake down and gets two off a legdrop. Jake tries the DDT a second time but Brown bails to the floor again. Roberts follows him out and gets hit in the ribs with a chair which isn't a DQ for some reason. Back in and Bad News pounds away as Piper asks if Vince has ever smelled Brown. Jake avoids a middle rope elbow and hits the short clothesline but Brown backdrops out of the DDT. Another chair shot to Jake is good for the lame DQ.

Rating: D+. This didn't have time to go anywhere and I'm still not sure why Boss Man was in here at all. Jake and Brown didn't do anything else after this and Brown didn't go after Boss Man after the feud, so I guess he was there as an enforcer for reasons not important enough to explain. The match was just ok.

Brown tries to drop a leg on the snake but Bossman makes the save. Bad News beats him down as well but Jake pulls the snake out of the bag to chase Brown off. This was Brown's last major appearance in mainstream wrestling.

Demolition yells a lot.

Time for the Brother Love Show with a REAL American as his special guest:

Sgt. Slaughter. This would be the start of his heel turn as he didn't like the idea of Nikolai Volkoff becoming an American and wants America to be how he liked it. Slaughter gives Love the Great American Award and declares WAR on Volkoff, while also saying that Sadaam Hussein would destroy America in a real war. Somehow this took nearly ten minutes.

Mr. Fuji says his Orient Express will leave big red marks on Volkoff's head.

Gene sees Sapphire go into a dressing room and lock the door behind her.

Orient Express vs. Nikolai Volkoff/Jim Duggan

Duggan and Volkoff sing God Bless America and get jumped in a twist on the old foreigners' gimmick. We start with the small Tanaka trying to match strength with Volkoff. Vince: "That wasn't too bright." Piper: "Yep, real dumb." You can't make it any simpler than that. Sato kicks away at Volkoff a bit but it's hot tag to Duggan who cleans house and finishes Tanaka with the three point clothesline. This was nearly a squash.

Sapphire won't open the door for Dusty but Rhodes swears he'll figure this out tonight one way or another.

Macho King Randy Savage doesn't care about Rhodes being out there alone and says he understands Sapphire's decision to leave a common man. I'm a big Savage fan and the energy he puts into his promos always impresses me. He's got NOTHING to talk about here and he was going nuts anyway.

Dusty Rhodes vs. Randy Savage

Before the match we hear a familiar laugh and cut to Ted DiBiase on the interview platform. He's been spending the last several weeks telling Dusty that he has a price just like everyone else but Dusty has kept turning him down. Tonight, someone else had a price: Sapphire, Ted's latest purchase. Ted's latest gift to her is a bag of money which is hard to pass up. DiBiase brings up the most obvious point to the story: who else could afford to pay for all the gifts Sapphire has been getting?

Rhodes charges at DiBiase but Savage jumps him from behind to start the

match. Back in and Savage hits a top rope ax handle for two. Dusty comes back with some elbows but his heart isn't in this. He has to stop to chase Sherri though, allowing Savage to knock Rhodes out cold with Sherri's loaded purse for the pin. This was nothing.

DiBiase leaves his suite but bails with Virgil and Sapphire as Dusty arrives. This would start a long feud which would include the debuts of Undertaker and Dustin Rhodes and Virgil's face turn.

Hogan says that he can't tell a lie because he's like George Washington. He loved his Hulkamaniacs for supporting him and remembers Tugboat for leading the charge until Earthquake and Bravo beat him down. Bossman says that Quake and Bravo have the Constitutional right to a beating tonight.

Hulk Hogan vs. Earthquake

This is Hogan's big return after being gone all summer due to an attack by Earthquake which broke his ribs. They lock up but Hogan can't shove the big man around. Now Quake shoves him down a few times as Jimmy is losing his mind. Quake shoulders him out to the floor and Hogan takes a breather with Bossman. Back in and Hogan tries pounding away but Quake sends him into the corner to take him back down. Hogan gets a boot up in the corner and nails some clotheslines but Quake won't go down.

After knocking Bravo and Hart off the apron, Hogan finally drops Earthquake with the big windup punch. All four guys get inside and the heels both take big boots to the face. The referee puts Bossman out though, allowing Bravo and Quake to hit a double slam on Hogan. A big elbow drop keeps Hogan down and a top rope forearm (from the 468lb Earthquake) to the back has Hogan down again. Off to a Boston Crab but Hogan tries to push his way out. That doesn't work so Hogan looks to his left and realizes he's about four inches from the rope for the break.

Bravo gets in some cheap shots on the floor but Earthquake misses an elbow drop back inside. Hogan finally gets to his feet (sidenote: Roddy Piper should not be allowed to cheer for Hogan. Ever.) but falls back down on a slam attempt. Off to a bearhug by Earthquake as the match slows down. Hulk punches out of it and tries a cross body like a schnook, earning the powerslam he gets as a result. Earthquake drops a pair of

Earthquake splashes (seated sentons) but Hogan gets up at two to shock the crowd.

It's Hulk Up time and there's the slam but Dino distracts the referee after the legdrop. Jimmy comes in but gets tossed at Earthquake, sending everyone to the floor. Hart accidentally hits Quake with the Megaphone and Hogan slams the big man onto a table (it's in Philadelphia after all)....for a countout? For the life of me I have no idea why Hogan didn't get a pin here. I guess they wanted to save that for house shows, but it's not like people wouldn't want to see Hogan do it again live.

Rating: B-. The match itself was nothing of note but this is exactly what the fans wanted to see other than Hogan getting a pin. These two feuded on the house show circuit for the next four months or so, which really is amazing when you consider how basic the angle was that set it up. This falls into the fun category which is fine for a show like this.

Post match Quake chokes Hogan until Bossman blasts him in the back with a STEPLADDER. Quake finally drops him and looks at Bossman so the cop pulls out the nightstick to chase them off. Lots of posing ensues as you can see the house show rematches with any combination of these four guys being made up.

We go to the back where Rude and Heenan talk about Rocky Balboa facing Apollo Creed. Rude has beaten him before and he'll do it again because a cage is his kind of match. Heenan says there will be no sequels either.

Dusty goes on a rant about being in a storm with only America being able to offer him shelter. He doesn't have a price for Ted DiBiase and he's coming for the Million Dollar Man. The feud would have been better if Sapphire hadn't disappeared after this show.

Lord Alfred Hayes talks about the cage being constructed and how it's put together. It's more interesting than it sounds.

Hogan brags about winning and says there's a fourth demandment: believe in yourself. He wants the world title back and will beat Earthquake as many times as it takes to be #1 contender again.

Vince and Roddy talk about Hogan vs. Earthquake happening again.

Earthquake, Hart and Bravo say the war isn't over for Hogan and Bossman.

The Warrior rants about Rick Rude being cracked like the Liberty Bell. He says he'll win and quotes some historic documents to continue the Philadelphia theme.

WWF World Title: Ultimate Warrior vs. Rick Rude

In a cage where you can win by pin or escape. Rude tries to block Warrior from getting into the cage so Warrior knocks him off the top and down into the ring. The champion finally comes in with a top rope ax handle smash and throws Rude into the cage. Rick goes into the cage a few more times but ducks a charge to send Warrior face first into the bars. Rude kicks Warrior away but jumps off the top to put him down again instead of climbing out.

A hard slam into the cage has Warrior down but Rude still won't try to climb out. Rude tries the Rude Awakening after winning a quick slugout but Warrior easily breaks the hold with raw power. They clothesline each other down before Rude hits a quick Rude Awakening for no cover. Instead Rude goes up to the top of the cage for a right hand to Warrior's head. Heenan is losing his mind trying to get Rude to cover but Rude goes up the cage again.

This time Rude jumps into a right hand to the ribs but Heenan slams the door on Warrior's head as he goes to escape. After the two count both guys collide and they're down again as the match drags some more. Warrior stops him from crawling out while pulling Rude's trunks down in the process. Heenan is pulled in and whipped into the steel before being sent outside again. The champion Warriors Up and hits the gorilla press before climbing out to retain.

Rating: D. This match sucked and the ending was exactly what people expected. These two had a match on SNME a month earlier and maybe Rude should have taken the title there to give it back to Warrior here. There was nothing of interest here and Warrior never seemed to be in any real danger due to Rude not going for a cover or trying to escape.

Overall Rating: C+. This is a show where the individual parts don't reflect how the whole show comes out. This is a turn your brain off and have fun show. The main events were exactly what the fans wanted and the other stuff is fun as well. There was a show long angle with Dusty which set up another feud on top of all that. It's a good example of how not everything needs to be a huge show that changes everything and that's a good lesson for modern WWE to learn.

Ratings Comparison

Rockers vs. Power and Glory

Original: B-

Redo: C-

Texas Tornado vs. Mr. Perfect

Original: B

Redo: D+

Sapphire vs. Sensational Sherri

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

Warlord vs. Tito Santana

Original: C+

Redo: D+

Hart Foundation vs. Demolition

Original: A+

Redo: B

Jake Roberts vs. Bad News Brown

Original: C-

Redo: D+

Nikolai Volkoff/Jim Duggan vs. Orient Express

Original: D+

Redo: N/A

Randy Savage vs. Dusty Rhodes

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

Hulk Hogan vs. Earthquake

Original: B+

Redo: B-

Ultimate Warrior vs. Rick Rude

Original: C-

Redo: D

Overall Rating

Original: A+

Redo: C+

Nostalgia is a powerful drug.

Here's the original review if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2010/12/12/summerslam-1990/>

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NWA San Francisco TV – July 1, 1979: I Think There's Something Wrong With Him

San Francisco TV

Date: July 1, 1978

Location: KXTV Studios, Sacramento, California

Commentator: Hank Renner

I had a good time with the previous show and I'm assuming this is the followup. I'm guessing we won't be seeing Piper or Race here as it was rare to see the same lineup week after week. It was a nice way to keep things fresh and you never knew who you were going to see on a week to week basis. Let's get to it.

Just like last time, the show is incomplete and at least the first match is missing. That's something you have to expect on something like this though.

Jerry Monte vs. Buddy Rose

Rose is a big time heel. After some quick stalling it's Rose taking Monte down and slapping on a chinlock. That goes nowhere so Rose, in his overly huge trunks, misses an elbow and gets caught in an armbar. Well at least Monte has some psychology to him. They trade slams and it's right back to

that armbar.

Back up and we get some miscommunication as both guys try a drop down at the same time. I don't think I've ever seen that one before. Monte slaps on a third armbar until Buddy fights up with some basic strikes. A rake to the face freaks Buddy out and the fans are getting into this. Buddy whips him hard into the buckle though and drives some knees into the back, setting up a backbreaker (similar to the Irish Curse) for the pin.

Rating: C-. I liked this way more than I was expecting to as Monte was game for a fight here. Rose was obviously going to win, but at least they didn't go with something really simple and boring. Monte tried out there and did some decent stuff with the arm until we got to the only possible conclusion.

Buddy Rose brags about his robe and says he has the accomplishments at 25 years old that no one else has ever had. He's been compared to Ray Stevens, but Rose is just that much better. That match might be coming one day, but Stevens will be facing the man with a steel stomach (seriously), Pepper Gomez, on July 15. Rose knows Gomez has a hard stomach but he can pound on everything else.

The younger generation is taking over and it's no longer Lou Thesz's world. It's Buddy Rose's world because he's earned this reputation. Last week he was wrestling all over the country and he's insulted by having to fight in a preliminary match in the Cow Palace. It's only main events for Rose and only if the money is right. This was an interesting case as the message was good but Rose has an awkward way of speaking and it didn't work as well as it could have. He needed to cut down a bit and get to the point faster, though he got the points across.

Guy Lambert vs. Roddy Piper

We get some more bagpipes before the match. Piper takes his sweet time in taking off the kilt before we can get going. Lambert scores with a quick slam to send Piper outside and three armdrags into an armbar. Piper fights out of a wristlock (how did he ever manage to do that?) and hammers away in the corner, followed by a clothesline for two of his own. A high backdrop gets the same but Lambert puts on a freaky abdominal

stretch. That goes nowhere and Piper punches a lot more before finishing with a pair of swinging neckbreakers.

Rating: D. Boring match here with Piper destroying the guy but with far less energy or entertainment value than last week. The match wasn't that long and Lambert was fine for a jobber, but you expect more from someone like Piper, especially after the really fun match he had last week.

Post match Piper says the match with Mayne was non-title, which is either a mistake on Wikipedia or a lie to sell the rematch on the 15th. Roddy won the match, despite Mayne barking a lot. Every time Piper got up and hit him again, the barking got weaker and weaker. The match was stopped and Mayne attacked him post match, busting him open. The cuts on Piper's face look really awesome. Next up is a title match, as ordered by the NWA. Well at least according to Piper, as the interviewer says it was Mayne's idea.

The rest of the tape is cut off.

Overall Rating: D+. I didn't like this one as much as the previous one but that might be due to the lack of Harley Race being all gruff and awesome. Piper picked things way up in his promo where he went insane as only he could, but the rest of the show didn't do much for me. Then again it would have helped to be able to see the whole thing instead of just under half an hour.

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In case you've never heard of it, this is the site you all should be using for your news, results etc. I'm a staff member over there and handle all the live coverage and results, plus a weekly old school review and the column you see here. The staff is very smart and does things well and you can find some awesome podcasts and video features over there. Check these guys out and start using them more often. It's where I get a lot of my news and I know the staff there works very, very hard at what they do. The site has been around for a few years now and it's growing fast, so head over there and enjoy what they've got.

Summerslam Count-Up – 1989: Good Old 80s Awesome

Summerslam 1989

Date: August 28, 1989

Location: Meadowlands Arena, East Rutherford, New Jersey

Attendance: 20,000

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Jesse Ventura

We're back with another edition of the show with another tag team main event. This time it's the now heel Savage teaming with an actor named Zeus to face Hogan and Brutus Beefcake. This isn't even the blowoff match between the teams which makes the match even more of an odd choice. The other major match tonight is Rick Rude defending the Intercontinental Title against Ultimate Warrior, the man he stole the title from back at

Wrestlemania. Let's get to it.

Jesse blames Tony for having Heenan run off the air. I have no idea what he's talking about as Heenan is on the show later tonight.

We get an intro video similar to the opening of a regular TV show with various highlights and people enjoying the warm weather.

Hart Foundation vs. Brain Busters

The Brain Busters (Arn Anderson and Tully Blanchard) won the tag titles a few weeks before this show, but since the match was already signed this is non-title. Why it wasn't changed to a title match is beyond me but there's no way this won't be awesome. Heenan is with the Brain Busters here, making what Jesse said even more confusing. Bret and Tully get things going with Hart going straight for the arm. Arn comes in to take Bret to the mat with a headlock, only to have Bret crank on his arm as well.

A hammerlock slam puts Arn in a cute bit before it's off to Neidhart for some powerful cranking on the arm. The Harts change two more times and both guys get to crank on the arm before Bret puts on an armbar. Arn slips out and brings in Tully who has his own arm pulled on by Anvil. Blanchard pulls on the beard to escape but can't hiptoss the big man over. Back to Bret for more arm work before Anvil sneaks in without a tag. It's only cheating if you get caught remember.

Anvil completely no sells some chops to the chest and sends Tully into the buckle before bringing Bret back in. The fans are all over Heenan with a Weasel chant while Bret works on a hammerlock. Tully grabs a top wristlock but Bret bridges off the mat to escape and the Busters are sent to the outside. Back in and Bret wins a slugout with Tully but gets suckered into a chase with Blanchard making a blind tag to Arn who blasts Bret from behind.

Everything breaks down again with the Brain Busters being knocked out to the floor once again. Back in and Bret sends Tully's face into Anvil's boot before bringing Neidhart again. Things break down again but Bret accidentally whips Jim into the buckle to give the Busters control. Arn

drives a middle rope elbow into Neidhart's back before it's back to Tully for a reverse chinlock. Neidhart picks him up but Tully makes another blind tag off to Anderson to block a tag.

Arn punches him down but Anvil LAUNCHES Anderson off at two. Back up and both guys collide before Bret gets in a knee to Arn's back to give Neidhart a breather. The hot tag brings in Hart vs. Blanchard with Bret dropping the middle rope elbow for no cover. Everything breaks down for the third or fourth time tonight with Bret being whipped into Tully to put both guys down.

Arn and Jim go to the floor but Bret slingshots Jim over the top into a shoulder block to Tully. Anvil powerslams Bret onto Blanchard but Anderson hits an ax handle to Bret's head for the pin (while covering his head so the referee doesn't see it's Arn in the ring because Arn Anderson is more awesome than you).

Rating: B. I could watch Arn Anderson matches all day because of stuff like that at the end. I mean, who would think of such a little thing like that at the end of a match? This was a very solid opener but again I have no idea why the titles weren't on the line here, especially if the Busters were going to go over by pin. The Harts wouldn't even be a factor in the title scene for another year and even then they were big underdogs.

Dusty Rhodes talks about how the man in the blue suede shoes told him he can dance better than the Honky Tonk Man. This is a bit of a step down from Hard Times.

Honky Tonk Man vs. Dusty Rhodes

Dusty recently stole the Boss Man's hat and nightstick after debuting early in the summer. We start with a dance off before Dusty takes him into the corner for a clean break. Honky bails to the floor to avoid the Bionic Elbow but comes back in for Dusty to grab his arm. Instead of driving an elbow into the shoulder though, Dusty messes with Honky's hair to really get on his nerves. An atomic drop and the Bionic Elbow put Honky down with Dusty in full control.

Ten right hands in the corner drop Honky to the mat and it's off to Dusty's totally lame leg lock (meaning he stands there and turns Honky's foot) fills in some time. Honky fires off some right hands but drops down to avoid a running Dusty. Jimmy Hart trips Dusty up and Honky just lays on the mat instead of going after Rhodes as Jimmy is stalked. Honky gets Jimmy's megaphone for a shot to Dusty's ribs and finally takes over with a chinlock.

It's the long form version as we're still in the hold about two minutes later. Dusty fights up and misses an elbow so it's back to the chinlock. Rhodes fights up again and pounds away with right hands but Honky sends him into the referee to make this match go even further. Jimmy accidentally knocks Honky silly with the guitar and Dusty drops a big elbow for the pin.

Rating: D-. Who in the world thought this deserved ten minutes should be carried into the street and shot. Between the leg lock and the WAY too long chinlock, this could have been cut in half and nothing would have been lost. Honky was fine as a jobber to the stars at this point and he would maintain that position for months to come. This was way overbooked for what it was worth, but the fans loved Dusty which is the point of the match.

Honky asks someone to help him find the stage and wants to know where Priscilla is.

Demolition and King Hacksaw Jim Duggan are ready for their six man tag against the Twin Towers (Boss Man/Akeem) and Andre the Giant.

Mr. Perfect vs. Red Rooster

Perfect is still perfect at this point. They shove each other around to start until Hperfect shoves him down and hits a hiptoss. Things speed up a bit with both guys running the ropes and Perfect trying a slam. Rooster slips down the back and tries a slam of his own but can't get Perfect up in a weird spot. Perfect sends him to the floor for a second and pounds away back inside, only to be shoved to the floor by Rooster. Perfect wins a quick slugout on the floor before going inside for the PerfectPlex and a very fast pin.

Rating: D. This was very odd with the match finishing out of nowhere after no build at all. The match had to be cut for time or maybe an injury because there's no way this was the match they were planning. Or maybe they didn't have time because we needed Dusty to have an even longer chinlock. These two are capable of having a far better match though and did many times.

Survivor Series is coming.

We go to Gene with Rude and Heenan in the back but the set falls down and the interview never stars. They try it again and the heels say they'll do whatever it takes to keep the title.

The Rockers/Tito Santana vs. Fabulous Rougeau Brothers/Rick Martel

This should be awesome. Martel teases getting in there against Tito to start but sends Jacques in instead. As is his custom, Jacques requests a handshake but sneaks in some choking on Tito instead. The Rockers come in without tags and the good guys hit stereo dropkicks to send the French Canadians to the floor. Things settle down to Marty vs. Jacques with the latter going to the middle rope and head faking Marty, but Jannetty is faking the head fake and punches Jacques on the way down.

The advantage is short lived though as Ray Rougeau gets in a knee to the back from the apron and a kind of superkick to put Marty down. Off to Martel for right hands and some dancing followed by a cartwheel out of the corner. Marty is tired of the dancing and dropkicks Martel down but Rick runs away from the charging Tito. Instead it's Santana putting a headlock on Ray before getting two off a clothesline.

Much like his brother did earlier, Jacques interferes for Ray and the Rougeaus take over on Santana with a double back elbow. Martel comes in to pound on the weakened Tito like a true weasel. Rick stomps away against the ropes as the fans are getting angrier and angrier at the Model. Jacques comes in again and hooks a front facelock to block the hot tag. Back to Martel but Tito fires off right hands to send the crowd into a frenzy. Jacques quickly pulls Tito's hair to break it up but Tito gets a sunset flip for two.

Rick puts Tito down with a backbreaker and Ray hooks a Boston crab to stay on the weakened back. Back to Jacques for an abdominal stretch with a helping hand from Martel on the apron. Rick comes in again to break up another hot tag attempt and Ray stops Tito's comeback just like Jacques did earlier. Tito hits a quick cross body for two and the Rockers finally come in to break up the interference. Ray comes in to keep Tito down but Jacques' flying knee hits his brother, FINALLY allowing Tito to make the hot tag to Shawn.

Martel tries to hide in the corner but gets caught in a huge backdrop to send him running even further. A dropkick and a suplex put Martel down and the top rope right hand gets two as everything breaks down. Tito hits the flying forearm to send Martel to the floor and Marty rolls up Jacques, only to have Martel slide back in and blast Jannetty with a right hand, giving Jacques the pin.

Rating: B. Take six guys and two feuds, give them fifteen minutes in front of a hot crowd and witness the awesome. That's exactly what happened here and the crowd got WAY into it, especially the Martel vs. Santana stuff. Those two just started feuding a few months before this and people were drooling to see Tito get his revenge. Really solid old school six man tag here which worked exceptionally well.

We recap Rude vs. Warrior. Rude attacked Warrior during a posedown at the Rumble before stealing the IC Title at Wrestlemania with help from Heenan. Tonight is the rematch with Rude defending against a ticked off Warrior after Warrior spent months fighting through the Heenan Family. This was also used to set up Warrior vs. Andre the Giant over the winter.

Warrior rants about Andre before saying he'll get his title back from Rude.

Intercontinental Title: Ultimate Warrior vs. Rick Rude

Rude isn't sure what to do with Warrior to start so he tries punching him in the face to no avail. A clothesline puts Rude on the apron and a sunset flip is easily blocked with a right hand to the champion's face. Warrior easily picks him up and gorilla presses him to the floor as this is one sided so far. Rude is sent into the barricade as Jesse is losing

his mind over the referee not disqualifying Warrior.

Warrior gets two off a top rope ax handle before throwing him into the corner and pounding away. A shoulder block gets two on Rude and there's an atomic drop to crush Rude's spine a bit more. Warrior swivels his hips but gets crotched on the top rope to Jesse's glee. Rude pounds on the back as he did in the Wrestlemania match and gets two off a suplex. Off to a reverse chinlock with Rude dropping down onto Warrior's back for good measure. Back up and Warrior breaks up the Rude Awakening but gets caught in a sleeper.

Warrior finally fights out with a jawbreaker but after they run the ropes a bit, Rude sends Warrior into the referee to put everyone down. It's Rude on his feet first but Warrior starts to Hulk Up to a HUGE reaction. A big backdrop and a clothesline put Rude down followed by a powerslam but there's no referee. Warrior hits a piledriver but the referee crawls over for two. A powerslam sets up the splash but Rude gets his knees up to slow Warrior down again.

Rude hits a kind of powerbomb (basically driving Warrior's head into the mat) for a close two as things slow down again. Rude hits a top rope right hand to the jaw as Roddy Piper strolls down. A piledriver puts Warrior down but Piper flashes Rude, allowing Warrior to suplex him out of the corner. Warrior hits a quick shoulder block followed by the gorilla press and splash for the title and an ERUPTION from the crowd.

Rating: B. If there has ever been better chemistry between a talented guy and a guy who could barely survive against anyone else, I'm not sure where it is. Warrior looked great out there and got the win back to conclude a very well done feud. Good stuff here as this show is cooking after a somewhat weak start. That pop for Warrior pretty much gave him the world title right then and there.

Mr. Perfect says he's perfect.

Roddy Piper laughs about costing Rude the title, setting up his first feud after returning to the ring.

Ronnie Garvin is in a tuxedo and gets to be a guest announcer tonight.

Heenan comes in to interrupt him and rants about Piper coming to the ring and costing Rude the title. Rude isn't pleased either and yells as you would expect him to.

We go to an intermission, which is just a graphic with a countdown clock until the show continues.

We recap the main event tag match. Hogan was in a movie with Tiny Lister portraying the villain. The idea of the story is that Lister's character Zeus felt that he could beat Hogan in Hogan's real life job so he beat up Hogan before a cage match. This would be like Harrison Ford picking a fight with Mark Hamill because of what Hamill did on the Millennium Falcon. I don't know if we were supposed to take it seriously or not, but the main problem here is obvious: Zeus is an actor instead of a wrestler, meaning there isn't much he can do in the ring.

Savage and Beefcake got involved to make it a tag match so Zeus didn't fight alone. Hogan couldn't hurt Zeus with a chair to the back but raking the eyes had an effect, giving Hogan an opening tonight. Savage was still a big deal at this point so this really was a big heel team to face Hogan and Beefcake. We get full clips of these moments as the intermission continues.

Twin Towers/Andre the Giant vs. Demolition/Jim Duggan

Duggan is King of the WWF and has his face painted like Demolition but is rocking an American flag pattern of course. Akeem starts with the King with Duggan absorbing the trash talk and pounding away on the big man before it's off to Ax for some pounding on the arm. Smash comes in and Demolition pounds Akeem down before bringing Duggan back in to crank on the arm as well.

Akeem finally gets in a shot to Ax's ribs and it's off to Boss Man who is immediately pounded down by the fresh Smash. Boss Man rakes the eyes to slow Smash down but Smash rakes the eyes right back in a good bit. Ax comes in again and cranks on the arm but gets sent into the wrong corner so Andre can come in and pound away with big right hands.

Akeem comes back in but misses a slow motion splash, allowing for the hot

tag back to Smash who slams Akeem down in an impressive power display. Everything breaks down and Akeem hits a bottom rope splash on Smash, but Duggan hits Akeem in the back with the 2x4 to give Smash the pin.

Rating: C. It wasn't much of a match but for above seven and a half minutes with these six guys, this was as good as you were going to get. Duggan was about as big as he was going to get in the WWF at this point as the fans were WAY into his Hogan-Lite character. Demolition was fresh off losing the tag titles but but they were still the most popular tag team in the company. Good, fun little match here which was much better than I was expecting.

Ted DiBiase says he'll beat Jimmy Snuka because he's cultured and Snuka is a savage.

Greg Valentine vs. Hercules

Ronnie Garvin is guest ring announcer after being fired from being a referee. He takes a ton of shots at Valentine ("Weighing in at 249lbs....but he looks about 30lbs heavier and wears a robe with cheap rhinestones.") since Valentine got him suspended in the first place. Hercules jumps Valentine to start and powerslams him down for two. A quick rollup gets two for Greg before they head to the floor for nothing of note. Back in and Valentine pounds him down with some elbows but the Figure Four is broken up. Hercules suplexes him down but gets rolled up with Valentine's feet on the ropes for the fast pin.

Rating: D. This was all about furthering Garvin vs. Valentine with the stuff before the match and a bit we'll get to in a second. I'm no Garvin fan at all but this was an amusing angle given where you could turn your brain off and laugh at some stupid jokes for a few minutes every show. There's nothing wrong with comic relief and having a talented guy like Valentine out there made it a bit easier to sit through.

Post match Garvin announces Hercules as the winner, which apparently is good enough to get Valentine disqualified. Like I said, this is the time to turn your brain off.

Randy Savage, Zeus and Sister Sherri gather round a cauldron and predict

bad futures for Hogan, Beefcake and Liz. The late 80s were weird in case you were wondering.

Ted DiBiase vs. Jimmy Snuka

No story here as they're just out there to fill in a few minutes before the main event. Snuka headbutts DiBiase to the floor before the bell and avoids a charging Ted to send him into Virgil for a big crash. An atomic drop sends DiBiase to the floor and the match slows down a bit. Back in and Snuka can't get high enough for his reverse leapfrog so he sends DiBiase into the corner to keep control. Ted goes to the eyes to get a moment's breather but gets caught by a shoulder to put him back down.

A quick stun gun sends Snuka into the top rope and Ted can stomp away like a good 80s heel. DiBiase works on the back with knees to the spine and a backbreaker for no cover but a middle rope elbow misses. Jimmy slams Ted down and hits a middle rope headbutt but Virgil breaks up the Superfly Splash. Snuka chases him around on the floor but gets sent into the post by DiBiase for the countout.

Rating: D. Another lame match here and I'm not sure why DiBiase couldn't get a pin. Either way, the match was there to give the fans a breather from that EPIC Hercules vs. Valentine heat before the main event. Snuka was still a fan favorite so having him out there wasn't the worst idea in the world.

Post match Snuka hits the Superfly on Virgil.

Hogan and Beefcake talk about riding motorcycles across a river (just go with it) with Liz riding on the back of Hogan's bike. Savage and Zeus weren't mentioned at all.

Genius recites a poem about Summerslam, saying he thinks Zeus and Savage (his real brother) will win.

Zeus/Randy Savage vs. Brutus Beefcake/Hulk Hogan

Before we get going, Liz gets her own full entrance as the secret weapon. It's a brawl to start but Hogan can't hurt Zeus. He goes to the eyes but can't slam Zeus down so the monster chokes Hulk down. Beefcake tries to

dive on Zeus but gets caught in midair. Now it's a bearhug on Hogan but here's Savage off a tag. Why in the world would you change when you had Hogan in trouble like that? A top rope ax handle gets two for Randy and it's off to the sleeper.

Hogan elbows out of it and hits some shoulder blocks but Zeus knees him in the back to slow him down. Back to Zeus for another bearhug which takes Hogan down to the mat for some two counts. It's back to Savage to snap Hogan's throat over the top rope and a suplex gets two. Savage misses some elbow drops and there's the hot tag to Beefcake. A high knee gets two on Savage and Beefcake hooks his sleeper. Savage rams him into the middle buckle and it's off to Zeus, but Brutus puts him in a sleeper as well.

Randy breaks up the hold with Sherri's loaded purse but he suckers Hogan into the ring instead of covering. Hogan stops Savage from attacking Liz but Beefcake is still in big trouble. Back to Zeus for some choking on Beefcake until the referee makes the save. Savage comes back in but walks into a double clothesline to put both guys down. The hot tag brings in Hogan to clean house but Sherri trips Hulk up to give Savage control again.

The big elbow hits but Hogan is up before there's any cover. Savage runs away and it's time for the showdown with Zeus. Hogan pounds away and finally puts Zeus down to one knee. Liz takes out Sherri and Beefcake intercepts Savage, causing him to drop the loaded purse. Hogan blasts Zeus in the face with the purse, slams him down and drops the leg for the pin.

Rating: D+. Amazingly enough, a non-wrestler like Zeus wasn't capable of having a good match on any size of a stage. Beefcake and Savage were just window dressing here, but in this case the window dressing carried the match for his team. Zeus was just horrible here and was basically the original promotional stunt for a wrestling movie, which never works.

Post match Liz cuts Sherri's hair. Much posing ends the show.

Overall Rating: C+. There's a lot of bad stuff here but the good matches are more than good enough to make up for the lame short ones. The crowd

is VERY hot all night to lift the show even higher up which helped a lot. The main event was horrible and while the cage match that blew it off a few months later was better, this is the match that should have been the big deal. Still though, the show is worth checking out but you should fast forward a few of the matches.

Ratings Comparison

Hart Foundation vs. Brain Busters

Original: B+

Redo: B

Honky Tonk Man vs. Dusty Rhodes

Original: F

Redo: D-

Mr. Perfect vs. Red Rooster

Original: C+

Redo: D

Rick Martel/Fabulous Rougeaus vs. Tito Santana/Rockers

Original: B+

Redo: B

Ultimate Warrior vs. Rick Rude

Original: A-

Redo: B

Jim Duggan/Demolition vs. Andre the Giant/Twin Towers

Original: C+

Redo: C

Hercules vs. Greg Valentine

Original: F-

Redo: D

Ted DiBiase vs. Jimmy Snuka

Original: D

Redo: D

Hulk Hogan/Brutus Beefcake vs. Randy Savage/Zeus

Original: B-

Redo: D+

Overall Rating

Original: B-

Redo: C+

About the same this time.

Here's the original review if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/07/23/history-of-summerslam-count-up-1989-gather-round-the-cauldron/>

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of NXT Reviews: The Full Sail Years Volume I at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B011T13PV4>

And check out my Amazon author page with cheap wrestling books at:

Monday Night Raw – July 27, 2015: On The Middle Of The Road To Summerslam

Monday Night Raw

Date: July 27, 2015

Location: Chesapeake Energy Arena, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Commentators: Michael Cole, Byron Saxton, John Bradshaw Layfield

Summerslam is still coming and tonight's big question is what is going to co-headline the show alongside the showdown between Brock Lesnar and Undertaker. Seth Rollins vs. John Cena in a champion vs. champion match has been teased, but it would be interesting to see if Cena holds onto the title until Summerslam. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of last week's big brawl between Undertaker and Lesnar with the entire roster trying to keep them apart.

Here's the Authority and Seth Rollins to open the show. HHH says this is a night of firsts and we're going to start with a major announcements. For the first time ever, Summerslam is going to be a special four hour event, of course with Undertaker vs. Brock Lesnar as the main event. Tonight is going to be something special tonight as well as Big Show goes one on one with Dean Ambrose. That's uh, quite the announcement there Trips.

On top of that we have Paige vs. Sasha Banks and Kevin Owens vs. Randy Orton. Stephanie brings up the Divas Revolution with Alicia Fox/Nikki Bella vs. Becky Lynch/Charlotte. Rollins takes the mic and brags about how amazing he is, calling himself one of the greatest WWE Champions of

all time, but here's John Cena to disagree. Cena doesn't like the idea of Rollins calling himself the greatest of all time because Rollins is a joke. On a night like tonight, we need to find out which one of them is right.

If tonight is a night of firsts, we need to find out if Seth Rollins really is a man, so how about Cena vs. Rollins for the World Title tonight? Seth says Cena needs to earn a shot but Stephanie wants to put it up to the people because she can't remember if she's a face or a heel. The fans love the idea and even start a YES chant so Stephanie says NO, complete with a little dance. HHH thinks the idea has merit though so instead it's going to be a US Title match with Rollins having the chance to be a dual champion.

The Austin Podcast returns next week with.....Paige? That's not quite Taker or Sting but at least they look better in leather shorts.

Dean Ambrose vs. Big Show

This is actually fallout from two weeks ago on Smackdown where Ambrose countered Big Show's chokeslam through a table with a DDT. Miz is on commentary, almost guaranteeing Ambrose loses because WWE doesn't think stuff through. Show takes him into the corner to start and rips Dean's shirt open before running him over with a shoulder. The fans aren't pleased and it's nice to see that last week's promo wasn't meant to be yet another face turn.

Dean low bridges him to the floor and a baseball slide sets up a suicide dive but dives into a chop as we take a WAY too early break. Back with Show working on the leg but has to stop to tie his boot. Miz rants about Ryback missing time, because he could beat up a staph infection.

Ambrose's sleeper has as much effect as anyone's sleeper has on Big Show (we need the tranquilizer dart that Angle used) and Show goes old school with the Alley Oop for two. Another chokeslam is countered with another DDT but the rebound lariat is countered with the chokeslam for two.

Show does the smart thing by just chokeslamming him again but Dean rolls to the floor to lay in the light of the video screen because THE RING SKIRT IS A VIDEO SCREEN. Yes I know it has been for a long time but it

looks stupid. Dean gets back in but a superkick puts him on the floor again, setting up a spear to flatten Dean one more time. Ambrose dives in at nine, only to be thrown outside for a third time in two minutes. This time Show throws him inside but Dean kicks him away for a suicide dive. Show is waiting for him with the KO Punch though and it's a countout at 10:30.

Rating: D+. WHAT??? Did we really just watch Dean Ambrose get beaten up by Big Show for ten minutes before they finally just let Big Show knock him out? Are we really back to the annual Big Show push that no one but WWE wants to see? I mean, at least it's not a pin but my goodness WWE: stop doing this. The guy is 43 years old and going over Dean Ambrose on Raw.

Dean still won't stay down so Show loads up a spear, which goes right through the barricade instead. Ah so he's a smart loser.

Neville vs. Fandango

Fandango tries a powerbomb but opts for a clothesline instead. JBL: "When in doubt, hit your opponent really hard." A Gory Stretch of all things has Neville in trouble but he comes back with his series of quick strikes. Having never watched a Neville match, Fandango heads outside in front of the ramp, setting up the big flip dive. Back inside and the Red Arrow is good for the pin on Fandango at 1:54.

Post match, Stardust comes on screen and rips up a comic book while talking about wining and dining with kings and queens. No one wants to talk about the strange but don't worry because he'll rescue the WWE Universe and there is nothing Neville can do to stop him.

Paige gives Charlotte and Becky Lynch a pep talk when Team Bad comes in to trade insults. Paige wins by saying she was the first NXT Women's Champion.

Sasha Banks vs. Paige

Non-title. Sasha's Sky's The Limit theme makes its Raw debut here. Their lockup goes to the mat and then out to the floor without a break. Back in

and Paige fires off her elbows in the corner, followed by a fall away slam for two. We hit the hammerlock (nice little change of pace) before Paige drives Banks down into a Fujiwara armbar. Sasha tries to fight up but eats a superkick to put her on the floor with Paige diving on all of Team Bad as we take a break.

Back with Sasha holding a chinlock as everyone else has been ejected from ringside. The double knees to the chest in the corner get two and it's back to the chinlock with Paige in trouble. That doesn't last long though as Paige fights up and fires off a series of knees in the corner and the trio of clotheslines. A superkick looks to set up the PTO but instead it's another knee to Sasha's chest for two. Sasha hits a charge in the corner for two of her own, followed by a sloppy Bank Statement for the clean tap at 13:57.

Rating: B-. It's not a classic or anything, but this was the first time in a LONG time that a women's match on Raw actually felt serious instead of WWE trying to make it feel serious. This felt like a wrestling match between two very talented women and that's not something you get from the Divas. This is a positive sign going forward and a huge win for Banks.

Rollins says he'll win tonight because he beats the best that WWE throws at him every single time. Tonight, the future passes Cena by.

The Terminator (yes that Terminator) is in WWE 2K16.

Here are Rusev and Lana for a chat. Rusev says he's smitten with her and wants to give Summer a present. First up: a puppy, who is so ugly that they have to name him Dog Ziggler. The second present is....a headless fish. It's a cold fish, so let's name it Lana. Cue the real Lana who rants about Rusev trying to humiliate her. She should be ranting about how her accent slips a bit as she talks faster.

Lana goes on about Summer being a Lana ripoff and how Rusev is just trying to replace the real thing. Lana kicks Summer in the leg and put on an armbar while ripping at Summer's hair. Summer goes face first into the fish and Lana leaves. This was, in a word, really stupid.

We see the same recap the opened the show. Saxton says Lesnar is back

next week in the city that hosted last year's Wrestlemania: San Jose, California.

Lucha Dragons vs. Los Matadores

The Prime Time Players are on commentary and this match is to move up the tag team rankings. Cara and Diego flip around to start before the Dragons double team Diego down for two. Kalisto slaps on an armbar as Titus makes fun of Darren's shyness on commentary. It's Diego coming back with a running clothesline to take over but Kalisto grabs the arm again to stop the comeback.

Cara's springboard cross body is caught in midair and they drop him face first onto the post. Even Torito gets in some cheap shots (Titus: "THAT'S BULL!") as Titus and JBL argue over Puerto Rican bullfighters. Fernando's chinlock has Cara in more trouble and the slow offense continues with a front facelock. Who thought it was a good idea for a lucha team to wrestle a slow paced mat style?

Cara gets in a belly to back for a breather and the hot tag brings in Kalisto for a springboard tornado DDT. Cara swantons onto Diego on the floor but we've got New Day, with a sign saying Kofi is the REAL Mega Dad of the Year. Kalisto grabs a huricanrana for the pin on Diego at 8:05.

Rating: D+. So not only was it slow, but they're basically saying that match last week where the champions lost means nothing because they just lost clean to another team. New Day vs. the Players isn't much of a feud but it's finally feeling like a story instead of just two teams having matches because the script says they should be.

Here are Wyatt and Harper with something to say. Well one of them with something to say at least. Bray thinks everyone here has a family and thinks most people here love their family. There's this idea that if a family stays together, they can survive anything. That's a lie though man. It's a shame that people won't tell their family the truth.

It's in your house, your government and your places of worship: those that trust you the most are the ones you should fear the most. The truth shall set you free, but freedom comes at a very hefty price. A long time

ago, Bray had a pet. It wasn't the most charming one but Bray loved him all the same. That pet wanted to know what was over the hills and across the train tracks, so one day Bray loosened his chains and the pet ran away.

One day he came back, but the pet was different, partially because of a scar alongside his eye. The pet never left his side, but it would never be the same. That brings him to Harper, who was a damaged man that Bray picked up from the dirt and fixed him like a broken toy. One day, Bray knew he would have to set Harper free, but now Harper has come home. Harper says he didn't know why he existed or why he was here, but his family found him.

Bray showed him the truth: this is all the people's fault. They made him what he is when they shunned him but Bray saved him. When you pray for the rain, you best be prepared for the mud. Harper is ready to give his life for Bray, and Bray says he knows Harper would go through anything for him. That brings Wyatt back to Roman Reigns, who was told that this was just the beginning. If Reigns really cared for Dean Ambrose, he would tell Dean that he was in danger. This is Reigns' hill to die on and Bray himself will seal Reigns' fate. We're here. Follow the buzzards.

Alicia Fox/Nikki Bella vs. Becky Lynch/Charlotte

Becky runs Nikki over to start before it's off to Charlotte for a twisting rollup (Charlotte's Web) for two. Off to Fox who has similar success as Charlotte drops a knee to the head. Nikki offers a distraction so Fox can get two off a northern lights suplex. Nikki comes back in for her pushups and some laughter before it's off to Fox for a double arm crank with her feet in Charlotte's back. She pulls on it so hard that Charlotte flips over onto her for two, allowing for the tag off to Becky. A t-bone suplex sends Fox flying as everything breaks down. Lynch's Disarm-Her armbar makes Fox tap at 6:10.

Rating: C. Totally fine match here with no one really standing out. Again, the problem here is the lack of any reason for these matches to be taking place as no one can challenge for the title until AJ's record comes down. The problem is we don't really have a reason for the title to

be a non-factor, but that's life in WWE for you.

Look back at last week's Tough Enough elimination and a list of the remaining competitors.

Randy Orton vs. Kevin Owens

Sheamus is on commentary. Owens jaws a lot to start and they slug it out with Randy knocking him outside early on. Back in and Orton rakes his boot over Kevin's face but Owens rolls right back to the floor. It's Orton being sent face first into the post and a fall away slam to launch him into the barricade as we take a break. Back with Owens getting two off the backplash but walking into Orton's backbreaker to even things up.

It's Owens staying in control though and slugging away in the corner, setting up the Cannonball but Orton rolls away. The powerslam plants Owens and the t-bone suplex does the same (Orton must have been watching the Divas tag). They fight to the floor again and it's a Brogue Kick to Orton for the DQ at 11:06.

Rating: C. I wasn't really feeling this one but at least Owens looked like someone who could go toe to toe with a guy on Orton's level. I don't think he's going to be back to the level he reached when he debuted for a good while, but there's a big difference between being forgotten/buried and what we're seeing here.

Post match Sheamus goes after Orton but Cesaro runs in to get his hands on Owens. Sheamus offers a distraction though and Owens powerbombs Cesaro and spits on him.

Cena says he's been defending this title for months now but tonight he's up against the golden boy and the WWE World Heavyweight Champion. If Rollins is as good as he says he is, then he can shock the world.

US Title: John Cena vs. Seth Rollins

Cena is defending and for the sake of simplicity, I'll only refer to Cena as the champion. A quick shoulder puts Rollins on the floor and things slow right back down. Back in and an AA attempt is countered, allowing

Rollins to kick him down to take over. Rollins slaps on a chinlock and we take a break. Back with Cena fighting out of the chinlock (dang that must have been a dull commercial break) but missing a charge in the corner.

Cena comes back and tries his finishing sequence, only to have Rollins kick him in the head/shoulder for two. The Shuffle is broken up by another kick to the head but Cena avoids a corner dive of his own, setting up a tornado DDT for two on Seth. The top rope knee to the head gets two on the champ but Cena catches him in an electric chair for two. Another knee to the nose puts Cena in the corner but we stop to check for blood (which is flowing from his nose. It could be broken).

Thankfully Cena will have none of that but Rollins kicks him in the head, setting up the buckle bomb for two. The doctor comes in to look at the nose but Cena is right back up with the springboard Stunner. Rollins flips out of the AA though and the low superkick gets a very close two. Fans: "THIS IS AWESOME." Not really guys.

An AA gets two (that should be a drinking game) and Cena gets his nose looked at again. A closeup shows that the nose is definitely broken as it's off to one side. Cena gets superplexed off the top and Rollins floats over into a falcon's arrow for two. The fans are getting way into these kickouts. Rollins misses the Phoenix Splash and it's off to the STF for the tap at 17:05.

Rating: B. Well there's the Summerslam co-main event. I'm guessing they'll go with Rollins saying he had nothing to lose which is about as acceptable as you can get but I'm never a fan of these endings. Cena vs. Rollins for the World Title at Summerslam is fine as there isn't really anyone else to go for the belt, but I'm hoping Cena drops the US Title before the show. Good but not great main event here.

Overall Rating: C+. I'm kind of split on this one. The wrestling isn't bad and the show flew by, but there's really nothing worth talking about. This really was a show that didn't do anything bad (Big Show beating Ambrose aside) and started setting up stuff for Summerslam. We've already got Brock vs. Taker set so you really don't need to focus on it all that much. It's a pretty middle of the road show but it went by quickly and

got some things done so we'll say it's a good week.

Results

Big Show b. Dean Ambrose via countout

Neville b. Fandango – Red Arrow

Sasha Banks b. Paige – Bank Statement

Lucha Dragons b. Los Matadores – Hurricanrana to Diego

Becky Lynch/Charlotte b. Nikki Bella/Alicia Fox – Disarm-Her to Fox

Randy Orton b. Kevin Owens via DQ when Sheamus interfered

John Cena b. Seth Rollins – STF

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Summerslam To Run Four Hours

[Major Update: WWE SummerSlam Officially Moves to Four Hours](#)

Because the solution to having too much programming every single week is an extra hour at the second biggest show of the year.

Summerslam Count-Up – 1988: Elizabeth Actually Does Something!

We're finally at the final of the Big Four WWE shows with Summerslam. Back in 1987, it was clear that pay per view was a big deal for the company, so Survivor Series was added to the schedule. That show was a huge success as well, so why not add a third pay per view on top of it? The new show was Summerslam which made its debut in 1988. The show was coming off the very successful Wrestlemania IV with Randy Savage as the WWF Champion, meaning the company was firing on all cylinders. Over the next 27 days I'll be counting down the shows leading up to the 2015 edition. Let's get to it.

Summerslam 1988

Date: August 29, 1988

Location: Madison Square Garden, New York City, New York

Attendance: 20,000

Commentators: Gorilla Monsoon, Billy Graham

The main event here is Hogan/Savage vs. DiBiase/Andre in a match billed as Mega Powers vs. Mega Bucks. Allegedly the plan was to have Ric Flair jump from the NWA and challenge Savage for the title but Flair backed out, giving us the tag match instead. Other than that we have Honky Tonk Man defending his title against a mystery opponent and the Hart Foundation challenging Demolition for the tag titles. The card wasn't exactly stacked for this show. Let's get to it.

The opening video has what would become the Royal Rumble theme song set over shots of the four guys in the main event plus their managers, Virgil and Miss Elizabeth.

Fabulous Rougeaus vs. British Bulldogs

These two teams could not stand each other behind the scenes, eventually reaching the point where the Bulldogs left the company as a result. Davey jumps Jacques to start and rams him into turnbuckle after turnbuckle to put him down. Smith throws Jacques over to Raymond for a tag in a nice display of bravado. Off to Dynamite for a quick headbutt and a slam to keep Raymond in trouble.

Off to an armbar by Dynamite Kid before Davey comes back in for one of his own. Dynamite comes back in with a wicked clothesline to take Raymond's head off. Chris Benoit idolized Dynamite and you can see so many of Benoit's moves when you watch Dynamite's matches. Davey comes in and trades some snappy rollups before it's back to Dynamite to continue cranking on the arm.

Davey comes in again but Jacques trips him up to shift control to the Canadians. It's off to some leg work now as Jacques kicks away at Davey's hamstring. The Rougeaus start tagging in and out with Ray coming in to drop some knees on the hamstring before Jacques comes back in to pull on the leg. Ray comes back in sans tag to pull on the leg before Jacques puts on a spinning toehold. Davey finally gets back up and monkey flips Ray down, allowing for the tag to Dynamite.

The Kid speeds things way up and sends Ray out to the floor, triggering a brawl between Davey and Raymond. Back inside and Davey hits the powerslam but Jacques breaks it up before a one count. Dynamite comes back in for the headbutt but Jacques drills him with a belly to back suplex for two. Off to an abdominal stretch by Jacques followed by a camel clutch from both Rougeaus. Kid fights up and rams Ray into the buckle to escape but it's right back to the abdominal stretch by Jacques.

Dynamite finally fights up again and headbutts Jacques down to bring in Davey. Jacques immediately grabs the rope to avoid a dropkick but gets caught in a gorilla press onto the top rope. Everything breaks down and

Davey picks up Dynamite to launch him into a headbutt on Jacques, but the time limit expires before there can be a cover.

Rating: C+. This was a solid opener as the fans were staying hot throughout the extended rest holds. The parts with both teams brawling and getting to move around made for a much better match, but you can't do that for twenty minutes when you're going for the draw. Draws were much more commonplace back in the 80s so this was nothing that odd to see.

We see Ron Bass attacking Brutus Beefcake and busting him open with a spur. The big red X saying CENSORED which doesn't actually cover the cut on Brutus' head is hilarious. Brutus won't be able to challenge Honky Tonk Man for the Intercontinental Title tonight but there's an unnamed replacement.

Bad News Brown vs. Ken Patera

Patera is a former Olympic weightlifter who has seen far better days. Bad News is a former Olympian as well, having won a bronze medal in Judo. Brown goes right after Patera during Ken's entrance and drops a quick elbow for no cover. Patera comes back with a clothesline and takes his jacket off to really get things going. A back elbow puts Bad News down but an elbow drop misses. Brown stomps away on the apron as we're firmly in punch and kick mode here.

Patera blocks a backdrop with a kick to the chest and gets two off a bad backbreaker. Off to a bearhug by Patera but Brown pokes him in the eye to escape. Patera can't get his full nelson on in either attempt at the hold so he botches a charge into the corner instead, hitting the post shoulder first. The Ghetto Blaster (enziguri) is enough for the pin by Brown.

Rating: F. Patera was terrible by this point, not even being able to run into Brown's elbow in the corner properly. Even the announcers were suggesting that he retire at this point, which I believe he did soon after. This match was nothing more than punching and kicking which doesn't make for a very entertaining few minutes. It's a product of the times on house shows that, which for all intents and purposes is what this show is: a big house show with a big main event.

Ad for a boxing PPV which had some kind of promotional deal with WWF.

The Mega Powers (Hogan/Savage/Liz) are hyped up for the main event and say that Liz is their secret weapon.

Rick Rude vs. Junkyard Dog

Just like in the previous match, the good guy is jumped during his entrance. This time though Rude is backdropped down and headbutted to the floor for a hug from Heenan. Back in and Dog misses a headbutt, allowing Rude to hit Dog with a top rope axhandle. Rude pounds away on the head as Graham shouts that it won't work. Instead it's off to a chinlock by Rick as the match slows way down.

Back up and Dog pounds away in the corner but stops to go after Heenan. A Russian legsweep puts Dog down, and Rude goes up top. Instead of immediately diving off though, Rude takes his own tights down to reveal another pair with Cheryl Roberts (as in Jake's wife) on them. Jake charges in for the DQ as you would expect him to do.

Rating: D. The match sucked but it's miles ahead of the previous match. If nothing else Dog had some great charisma and kept the crowd in it, as opposed to Patera who put the crowd to sleep seconds after the bell rang. The Dog was just a jobber at this point and would be in WCW by the end of the year.

The Dog is mad post match but nothing comes of it.

Honky Tonk Man, like the dolt that he is, doesn't want to know the identity of his mystery opponent. He says he wants to be surprised.

Powers of Pain vs. Bolsheviks

The Powers (Barbarian and Warlord) are still faces here and have the Baron (Von Raschke) with them. Just like in the previous two matches the brawl is on as soon as the good guys hit the ring. The Powers double clothesline Boris Zhukov as Volkoff tries to sneak in for a cheap shot. Barbarian easily catches him coming in and sends him flying until we get down to Barbarian vs. Boris to start things off.

Boris puts his head down and....something happens (it looked like a choke but it's not really clear) before it's off to Warlord for a gutwrench suplex on Zhukov. Both Russians double team Warlord but they can't even get him down to his knees. Nikolai chokes away before Boris puts on a chinlock. The Russians have a double backdrop broken up and it's off to Barbarian again. Everything breaks down and it's a double shoulder followed by a swan dive to Boris for the pin.

Rating: D. Another lame match here but the Powers looked decent. The Baron would be gone in a few weeks as the company wasn't pleased that a dark character was getting cheered, so they turned Demolition and their evil S&M looking gear face instead. Also did the Russians ever actually win a major match?

Ad for Survivor Series.

Here's the Brother Love Show with a bell ringing to start it for some reason. After a minute or two of talking about love, he introduces his guest: Hacksaw Jim Duggan. Duggan says that he loves the country and that Love is a fake. Love thinks that Dino Bravo knows the meaning of love and loves his country (Canada), but Duggan says that the people of Canada don't respect Bravo. Duggan says this isn't Sunday school and he'll police this company if need be. Love says he doesn't see a badge on Duggan, but Jim says his 2x4 will do just fine. Duggan gives him a five count to leave and Love is gone at four. This was pointless.

Same boxing ad as earlier.

Intercontinental Title: Honky Tonk Man vs. ???

Honky says to get him someone out here to wrestle and he doesn't care who it is. After a few seconds, the Ultimate Warrior charges to the ring, pounds Honky with right hands, hits a shoulder block and splashes him for the pin and the title in thirty seconds. The crowd ERUPTS, as this is what they've been waiting over a year to see.

So why was this so awesome? This was one of the most perfectly told stories the WWF ever produced and they nailed it every step of the way. Back in 1987, Ricky Steamboat was Intercontinental Champion but wanted to

take some time off. The solution was to put the title on the comedic newcomer the Honky Tonk Man, who cheated to win the belt. Honky viewed as a total joke as champion due to his lack of skill and his gimmick of a wrestling Elvis impersonator.

The fans looked at him as someone who would lose the title the first time he defended it against someone far more competent than he was so it wasn't that big of a deal. This is where Vince had the fans: what if Honky just didn't lose the title? If there is one thing pure fans hate, it's seeing a guy who doesn't deserve a title holding onto it against people they like. Honky did this for the next 18 months by coming up with every way imaginable to cheat, ranging from getting counted out, disqualified, having Jimmy Hart interfere, walking out of matches and all points in between.

Honky continued to hold the title against far better talent, such as Jim Duggan, Randy Savage, Jake Roberts, Ricky Steamboat and Brutus Beefcake, with the idea being "he has to lose eventually." All of a sudden, Honky was one of the biggest draws around because people would pay their money to see him get beaten up, thinking that the lucky streak couldn't go on much longer. Well the streak DID keep going, stretching into the longest title reign in the history of the belt which still stands to this day and will likely never be broken.

This is why having Warrior out there was so brilliant. Warrior was the last guy on earth that you would expect to pull off something clever, but he did what everyone else had overlooked: he didn't bother trying to outsmart Honky, but instead just ran over him and beat him in thirty seconds. This is EXACTLY what the fans had wanted to see for over a year and they got it to perfection. That's the kind of storytelling that you never get anymore which is a shame.

Regis Philbin is here.

Survivor Series is coming, so here's a four minute highlight reel from last year's show. This must be intermission.

Sugar Ray Leonard, one of the boxers in the advertised show, thanks Vince for promoting his fight.

Video on Leonard and his opponent in the fight Donny Lelonde.

Lelonde talks a bit as well.

Leonard says he'll win.

We see the intro video from the beginning of the show again.

Bobby Heenan comes up to the announcers' booth and says that DiBiase is counting his money while Andre reads the Wall Street Journal. The Mega Powers are currently cowering in their locker room.

Dino Bravo vs. Don Muraco

These two fought at Wrestlemania earlier in the year as well. This is power vs. power so they shove each other around to start. Some armdrags put Bravo on the floor before heading back in for a hiptoss. Off to an armbar by Muraco but Bravo comes back with an atomic drop to take over. A Russian legsweep puts Bravo down but Muraco has to go after Bravo's manager Frenchy Martin. The referee gets kicked but nothing comes of it, allowing Bravo to hit his side slam for the pin.

Rating: D-. Somehow that match ran five and a half minutes. Muraco would also be gone soon before the end of the year and it's not hard to see why. He was nowhere near as bad as Patera earlier but it was clear that his best days were behind him. Bravo would become Earthquake's lackey soon after this and have the most productive time of his career.

Another Survivor Series ad.

Jesse Ventura says that he's going to be impartial as the guest referee in the main event despite taking money from DiBiase.

Tag Titles: Hart Foundation vs. Demolition

Demolition is defending and the Harts don't even get an entrance. The champions have Mr. Fuji and the Harts' former manager Jimmy Hart with them. Bret and Ax start things off with Ax pounding Hitman down like he's nothing. Bret avoids an elbow drop and it's off to Anvil (Jim Neidhart) vs. Smash with Neidhart taking over. Ax hits a knee to Jim's back from

the apron and the champions take over again.

Neidhart gets in a punch to Ax's face and it's off to Hart vs. Smash again. Smash will have nothing to do with this selling stuff and whips Bret shoulder first into the post as the champions get their first extended advantage. Bret's bad arm is caught up in the ropes and both champs pound away on the injured limb. Smash bends Bret's arm around his own leg Off to Ax for more cranking on the arm. Bret is shockingly not selling it all that well.

Smash sends the arm into the post again and Bret is in big trouble on the outside. Back in and Ax pounds away while Graham is SCREAMING at Anvil to do something. Bret comes back with a clothesline with the injured arm but the referee misses the tag. Smash charges into a knee in the corner and now the referee sees the tag. Anvil comes in and cleans house, even slingshotting over the top onto Smash on the floor. Back in and Bret throws Anvil into Smash in the corner for two before everything breaks down. Neidhart goes after Fuji, allowing Ax to hit Bret in the back with the megaphone to retain.

Rating: B-. This took some time to get going but once Bret got in and started selling, it was all awesome. Demolition would hold the titles for nearly another year in the longest tag title reign in company history. These teams would go at it again in two years in one of the most entertaining tag matches ever. This was good stuff, but they were capable of much better.

Boxing ad.

Honky is going NUTS in the back, ranting about how this isn't fair.

Big Boss Man vs. Koko B. Ware

Boss Man is brand new here. This wasn't included on the home video version for reasons that I've never figured out. It was probably a time thing though. Koko fires away to start and staggers the very fat Boss Man with a dropkick. Boss Man is one of the best cases of weight loss you'll ever see as he lost probably 100lbs in a year and a half, making him MUCH smoother in the ring.

Koko charges into a front facelock and Boss Man pounds him down with a forearm to the back. A splash in the corner crushes Ware but Boss Man pulls him up at two. Off to a surfboard hold but Koko rolls forward and kicks Boss Man in the face. A stiff right hand puts Koko down again but Boss Man misses a top rope splash. Boss Man misses another splash in the corner and a missile dropkick gets two for Koko. Ware charges again but gets dropped face first onto the post, followed by the Boss Man Slam for the easy pin.

Rating: D. This went WAY too long for a squash early on in Boss Man's run with the company. The match wasn't terrible and Koko looked good with the high flying stuff, but therein lies the problem: there's no reason to have Koko look so good here. He should have gotten destroyed in about three minutes as opposed to being somewhat competitive in twice as long.

Boss Man hits Koko with the nightstick post match.

Survivor Series ad. Again.

Ultimate Warrior celebrates in the back and talks about it being like a comic book tonight. He'll be on the next spaceship to Parts Unknown.

Jake Roberts vs. Hercules

Jake goes for the snake but it's merely a ploy to get in some quick right hands. A knee lift puts Herc down but Jake can't hook the DDT. Instead it's a headlock and Hercules can't even break it with a belly to back suplex. Herc escapes and drops some elbows for no cover. Off to a chinlock on the Snake as Graham says you can use this to talk to your opponent. In non-announcer speak: it's a nice way to call spots. A lot of spots could be called here as Herc keeps the hold on for well over a minute.

Jake finally fights up and tries a hammerlock but gets elbowed in the face for his efforts. Roberts pulls Herc from the apron to the floor, only to have his neck snapped across the top rope as Hercules comes back in. We hit the chinlock again but Jake immediately jawbreaks his way out of it. The short clothesline looks to set up the DDT but Hercules backdrops out of it. Herc drops an elbow for two but Jake slips out of a

slam and knocks Hercules out lukewarm with the DDT for the pin.

Rating: C-. The match was nothing special but it certainly wasn't bad. The DDT looked great and the fans went nuts for it so you can't say they didn't get what they wanted. Hercules was fine for a role like this as he was strong enough to be a threat to anyone but rarely won anything. Decent little match here actually.

We recap the buildup to the main event. Andre seemed to be challenging Savage for a world title shot but DiBiase jumped Randy from behind, allowing Andre to choke Savage down. The Mega Bucks challenged Savage to a tag match which Savage accepted, saying that he would announce his partner later. If you didn't know who that was from a mile away, you fail as a wrestling fan. Jesse Ventura, long time Hogan hater, is guest referee for no apparent reason. Andre intimidated Jesse and DiBiase paid Jesse off so the fix is in.

Mega Powers vs. Mega Bucks

Jesse sends all three managers (Virgil, Heenan and Liz) to the floor but not to the back. He also makes the teams change corners for no apparent reason. Savage gets to fight Andre to start but it's quickly off to DiBiase. He wants Hogan and gets both Hulk and an atomic drop into a right hand from Savage. Hogan pounds DiBiase as well and it's off to Savage for some double elbows. A top rope ax handle gets two for Savage off a slow count from Ventura.

Andre comes in to beat Hogan down but Jesse is with Liz. Now the Giant comes in legally and sits on Hogan's chest a few times before putting on a nerve hold. With DiBiase coming in sans tag, Andre chokes away with his singlet. Ted comes in legally for a near fall off a clothesline before dropping those trademark fists of his. Off to a chinlock which Gorilla swears is a choke. Hogan finally elbows his way out of the hold but a double clothesline puts both guys down.

The hot tag brings in Savage to pound away on DiBiase with right hands and a backdrop. A top rope ax handle puts DiBiase down again but Ted rams him into the top turnbuckle to change momentum again. DiBiase clotheslines Savage down and it's off to Giant again. Andre sits on

Savage in the corner which is a lot more devastating than it sounds. Back to DiBiase who gets two off a suplex. Ted goes up for a middle rope elbow, but Savage uses all of his flying elbow experience and rolls away.

Hulk comes in again off the real hot tag and cleans house on both Mega Bucks but Savage jumps into Andre's boot. Hogan puts DiBiase in a sleeper but Andre makes the save with some headbutts. The Mega Powers are down, but Liz gets on the apron and in the most famous part of the match, takes off her skirt to reveal a bikini bottom and some nice legs. The distraction lets the Mega Powers do their big handshake and Hulk Up as one. A top rope ax handle to Andre, a flying elbow and legdrop to DiBiase later and things are pretty much done. Jesse only counts two, so Savage has to shove his hand down for the three.

Rating: B-. Much like the original Wrestlemania main event, there isn't much to see here but it's a fun match. It gave the fans exactly what they wanted and the Liz bit was a big surprise as she NEVER did anything sexual up to that point and rarely did after. Hogan and Savage were obviously going to win, but that doesn't mean it wasn't a fun moment and a decent main event.

Hogan lifts Liz (who remember is rather scantily clad here) onto Savage's shoulder for the post match celebration. Savage gives him a look that says "Dude, NOT COOL!" You could see the seeds being planted even back then.

Overall Rating: D+. This is more of the start of a historical series than a good show itself. The only things people remember are Liz's legs and a thirty second squash and it's really not surprising. The rest of the show is a bunch of boring matches with nothing of note to them at all. It's certainly not a terrible show as there are some good tag matches and some decent singles matches, but nothing on here is must see television and nothing is really significant. For a big house show though, not too bad.

Ratings Comparison

For each of the twenty five reviews, I'll be posting a comparison of the original reviews to the redos as I always do. Summerslam was one of the first set of reviews I ever did so the original ratings are going to be

very interesting.

British Bulldogs vs. Fabulous Rougeaus

Original: B

Redo: C+

Bad News Brown vs. Ken Patera

Original: D+

Redo: F

Rick Rude vs. Junkyard Dog

Original: D

Redo: D

Powers of Pain vs. Bolsheviks

Original: C+

Redo: D

Ultimate Warrior vs. Honky Tonk Man

Original: A+

Redo: N/A

Dino Bravo vs. Don Muraco

Original: B-

Redo: D-

Demolition vs. Hart Foundation

Original: B-

Redo: B-

Big Boss Man vs. Koko B. Ware

Original: D

Redo: D

Jake Roberts vs. Hercules

Original: C-

Redo: C-

Mega Powers vs. Mega Bucks

Original: B

Redo: B-

Overall Rating

Original: D+

Redo: D+

How could I have possibly liked Muraco vs. Bravo? There's NOTHING there!

Here's the original review if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/07/23/history-of-summerslam-count-up-1988-liz-has-some-nice-legs/>

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