

On This Day: November 7, 2006 – ECW on Sci-Fi: As The Hardcore Turns

ECW on Sci-Fi

Date: November 7, 2006

Location: The Mark of the Quad Cities, Moline, Illinois

Commentators: Joey Styles, Tazz

Yep I'm still doing these. It's been nearly three months but I'm still doing these. In case you've forgotten, we're getting close to December to Dismember and the Extreme Elimination Chamber which is pretty much the worst PPV ever. Tonight we've got some qualifying matches which I don't think we've had up to this point. Then again there's a good chance I've just forgotten them. Let's get to it.

After a recap of last week's main event (Big Show/Test vs. Holly/RVD) we're ready to go.

Extreme Elimination Chamber Qualifying Match: CM Punk vs. Mike Knox

Before we get going, Kelly gets caught smiling at Punk so Knox sends her to the back. A fast rollup gets two for Punk as does a leg lariat as Knox is in trouble early. Punk hooks the Vice in the ropes ala the Tarantula and the springboard clothesline puts Knox on the floor. All Punk so far. Mike finally hits a knee to the ribs to take over and gets two off a bicycle (Brogue) kick. What is with big guys that use that move?

Punk gets a forearm up in the corner but a springboard rana is caught in a powerbomb for another close two. Knox, the big oaf that he is, misses a charge in the corner so Punk can fire off some kicks. The corner knee looks to set up the corner bulldog but of course it fails completely as Knox counters into a backbreaker. Knox loads up a superplex but Punk shoves him down and hits a high cross body for another close two. Since we're still in 2006, a bunch of kicks set up the Rock Bottom and the Anaconda Vice gets the tap out for Punk.

Rating: B-. You could tell Punk was good because he got Mike Knox to look solid in nearly every match they had. Punk going to the Chamber was obvious as he was the hottest thing they had on ECW at this point and he was destined to be a star. Good stuff here and one of Knox's better matches ever.

Sylvester Terkay and Elijah Burke are here and promise to bring Elijah Burke Productions to ECW. Great.

Here are Heyman and his security guards with something to say. Heyman has the gorilla head from last week and we get a clip of him costing RVD the main event last week. Tonight it's Big Show/Heyman vs. RVD/Holly where either someone will get their face kicked in or someone will be extremely embarrassed. Also there's an open contract for anyone from Raw or Smackdown that wants the last spot in the Chamber and they'll be able to sign it next week. Heyman says he has to leave to go do some cardio which sends Tazz into hysterics.

Daivari vs. Little Guido

Daivari tries to jump Guido early but gets punched in the face for his efforts. Guido hits some really basic stuff before walking into a hot shot to stop him cold. Daivari stomps on him a bit but walks into an elbow to the face for two. This clearly isn't going to last long. That would be correct as Daivari sends Guido hard into the corner and hits an arm trap DDT for a quick pin. Nothing to see here.

Khali hits the Plunge on Guido post match.

Video on The Marine.

Extreme Elimination Chamber Qualifying Match: Test vs. Tommy Dreamer

They start fast with Dreamer hitting a Cactus Clothesline to put both guys on the floor. Since we're in a Dreamer match though he's in trouble early with Test ramming him back first into the post. Back in and Test loads up the pumphandle slam, only to have Dreamer slip down his back and hit a neckbreaker for two. A sitout spinebuster gets two more for Dreamer and he chokes away on the ropes. That's not a nice guy there Tommy. Test

kicks him low as he deserves, setting up the big boot and the Test Drive to advance to the Chamber.

Rating: D+. Eh it's Test vs. Tommy Dreamer. Was there ever a doubt as to who was going to win here? At the end of the day there was nothing surprising either way here as Test gets a push he doesn't deserve and Dreamer is a jobber who can't pull off his ultimate goal. This was watchable but pinning Dreamer is hardly an accomplishment.

Rob Van Dam/Hardcore Holly vs. Paul Heyman/Big Show

I smell either a screwjob or a comedy match or even worse: both. Show and Van Dam start with the big man talking trash until Van Dam kicked him in the legs to shut him up. Rob immediately goes after Heyman but gets crushed by a splash and chopped in the corner. Show pounds him down and breaks up a few tag attempts to Holly. The fans are clamoring for a hot tag here which sounds like the screwjob to me.

We head to the floor and Holly backs down from the security. So much for being HARDCORE I guess. We head back in for a clothesline from Show who isn't interested in trying to get a pin. In a disturbing image, Heyman does jumping jacks on the apron, much to Taz's disgust. Show holds Rob's arms so Paul can slap him in the face.

Another Van Dam comeback is stopped by Show but he misses a charge and gets kicked in the face. The chokeslam is countered via a DDT and there's the hot tag, immediately followed by the turn from Holly. Yep I was right. Holly beats the tar out of him and hits an Alabama Slam on a chair as the match is thrown out.

Rating: C-. The crowd reaction on the heel turn was surprisingly solid but the match before it was generic stuff. Heyman never actually got into the match which doesn't really surprise me. At least it wasn't unfunny comedy and they went with the only interesting combo they had. Holly turning was probably a good idea as he's a natural jerk in the first place.

The heels celebrate to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. For an ECW on Sci-Fi, this was about as good as you're going to get. The Chamber is coming, but man alive is it going to SUCK. Holly turning is the big story here and it's the right move to turn him as I don't think people were really buying him as a face. On top of that we've got the incoming star next week to enter the Chamber match. Good show this year.

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Survivor Series Count-Up – 1997: The Most Infamous Night In The History Of Wrestling

Survivor Series 1997

Date: November 9, 1997

Location: Molson Centre, Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Attendance: 20,593

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

We had to get here eventually. This is the show that changes everything in wrestling, as we officially enter into the new era. It's also the last appearance by Bret Hart in the WWF for over 12 years, as this show has the most infamous ending to a match and a show in wrestling history. You young people often hear references to Montreal? Well this is the show they're talking about. Let's get to it.

The opening video is about the Iron Man Match, where Shawn won the title

in overtime. Bret has since gone insane and claimed conspiracy after conspiracy against him, mainly led by Vince and Shawn. The main event tonight is Bret vs. Shawn II. By that I mean about Bret vs. Shawn VIII (It's not even their first world title match at Survivor Series) but you get the point.

There's a Karate Fighters (game at the time) flying around. I'm sure people who paid good money for their seats are THRILLED that they get to look at a blimp instead of being able to see the ring.

Team New Age Outlaws vs. Team Headbangers

New Age Outlaws, Godwinns

Headbangers, New Blackjacks

The Outlaws I'm sure you know, the Godwinns are evil here and are Henry and Phineas, the Headbangers are Mosh and Thrasher, and the Blackjacks are Barry Windham and Bradshaw. Windham (looking FAT here) starts with Phineas, the latter of which is immediately knocked to the floor with a shoulder block. This is when the Outlaws are a new team of jobbers who would soon shock the world and win the titles from the LOD.

Off to Bradshaw who looks skinny here by comparison to what he would become. Phineas gets a boot up in the corner as the evil ones take over. The Outlaws don't want to come in so it's off to Henry instead. Bradshaw gets two off a legsweep and puts on an abdominal stretch before falling back and rolling up Henry for the pin. Back to Windham to face Phineas, with Barry hitting a gutwrench suplex and a lariat for two. Phineas comes back with a clothesline of his own for the elimination and to tie it up at three.

Mosh comes in to take over on Phineas with a devastating armbar. It's off to Billy who beats down Mosh and receives homophobic chants in his general nature. Or maybe it's something in French. We get down to some basic wrestling and the fans go SILENT. Mosh tries a bulldog but Billy shoves him off and gets the pin for a quick elimination. It's Thrasher/Bradshaw vs. Phineas/Outlaws.

Thrasher (trivia for you: Thrasher had a big hand in training Big Show) comes in and works on the arm but Phineas takes him down in return. The action in this match is really dull so far. Thrasher goes up and hits the Stage Dive (top rope seated senton) for the pin to make it 2-2. Off to Bradshaw vs. Road Dogg with the future JBL pounding away. A gutwrench powerbomb puts Dogg down but a Billy distraction lets Roadie get a school boy to pin Bradshaw.

Thrasher pounds on Dogg but walks into a pumphandle slam. He counters into a cover on the Dogg, but Billy comes off the top with a legdrop. Now when I say legdrop, I mean he literally is a foot away from Thrasher but gets the pin anyway. This looked so bad that even though I had seen it before, it still made my jaw drop. The Outlaws survive.

Rating: F-. The ending alone makes this a failure, but on top of that, the best worker in this match by far was Thrasher. Let that sink in for a minute. The Outlaws had only been the Outlaws for a month and a half or so at this point so no one cared about them, the Godwinns are as interesting as corporate accounting, the Blackjacks are the Blackjacks, and the Headbangers are barely interesting at all. This was a horrible match and an even worse choice for an opener.

Truth Commission vs. Disciples of Apocalypse

Jackyl, Interrogator, Sniper, Recon

Crush, 8-Ball, Skull, Chainz

The Truth Commission is based on a real South African thing, where there were a lot of crimes were committed during Apartheid and the government said "tell the truth that you committed/witnessed these crimes and say you're sorry." Amazingly enough it calmed a lot of people down and made the situation a lot better. That being said, I have NO idea why it's used as a wrestling gimmick. In short, they're a military themed group. That sums them up as simply as I can.

Jackyl is the leader and is more famous as Cyrus in ECW. Interrogator is Kurrgan and the real star of the team. Sniper is a French Canadian wrestler who means nothing at all and Recon is Bull Buchanan. Crush is

Crush, 8-Ball and Skull are big twins and Chainz is Brian Lee from ECW. This really doesn't scream interesting to me but this is during the Gang Warz period which didn't ever do anything for me.

Interrogator and Chainz start things off after a brawl with Chainz hammering away but having no visible effect. A sidewalk slam eliminates Chainz in about a minute. Off to Recon vs. 8-Ball with Recon hitting a World's Strongest Slam for no cover. Jackyl comes in for what might be the only match he ever wrestled in WWF. Apparently that's almost true as he only had some Shotgun Saturday Night matches other than this. He's much better as a manager anyway.

Jackyl drops a top rope knee which is immediately no sold. He chops away a bit but walks into a sidewalk slam for the pin to make it 3-3. Sniper jumps 8-Ball and hits some elbows for two as Jackyl is on commentary now. Off to Crush, the leader of the team, who stomps away on Sniper a bit. Recon comes back in to face Skull and they collide, sending Skull to the floor. 8-Ball comes in illegally and clotheslines Recon down for the pin.

Sniper comes in to beat on Skull but gets caught in a double spinebuster from the twins for two. Interrogator hits 8-Ball from the apron and Sniper hits a bulldog for the elimination, making it 2-2. If this match sounds like a total mess that is hard to follow, it's because that's being nice about what's going on.

Off to Crush for a figure four headscissors on Recon. Skull (I'm picking the names arbitrarily. It makes absolutely no difference at all and JR has no idea which is which anyway) DDTs Sniper but walks into a sidewalk slam from Interrogator for the pin. It's Crush vs. Sniper and Interrogator and Crush immediately powerslams Sniper down for the pin. Interrogator is in the ring before the pin hits and ANOTHER FREAKING SIDEWALK SLAM gives Interrogator the final pin and the victory.

Rating: F. In ten minutes, we had seven eliminations, FOUR of which were by the SAME FREAKING MOVE. This was another match where just like the first, there was no one out there that could carry things to make the match work in any way. It makes Interrogator looks good, but it barely accomplished that because of how bad the match was.

We're about thirty five minutes into the show and it may be the worst thirty five minutes to open a show that I've ever seen.

Some fans pick the main event. It's pretty much split.

Austin answers some questions from America Online.

We recap Team Canada vs. Team USA. Steve Blackman is in the match for the Americans now after running into the ring to save Vader on Monday so tonight is his debut.

Vader says his team doesn't look the same but that's because they're Americans.

Team Canada (captained by an Englishman) says they'll win.

Team USA vs. Team Canada

Vader, Steve Blackman, Marc Mero, Goldust

British Bulldog, Jim Neidhart, Doug Furnas, Phillip Lafon

If this is the best America can do, I need to learn to speak Canadian. Team America comes out to Angle's music. Naturally the Americans are booed out of the building. The Canadians come out to Bret's music to make sure the idea is hammered home. Furnas is from Oklahoma and Neidhart is from Nevada, but he had dual citizenship so it's not as insane. I think Furnas has the long hair but I can never remember which is which.

Mero, wearing a hat, starts with Bulldog. Mero takes off the hat and Bulldog wipes himself with it, making him a hero in America. Bulldog knocks Mero to the floor and makes fun of Blackman's martial arts in a funny bit. Vader comes in sans tag and works on Smith's arm but jumps into a slam. Bulldog EASILY suplexes Vader and it's off to Lafon. I was right about Furnas having the long hair. Good to know.

Back to Mero who hits a knee lift but gets his head kicked off by Lafon, followed by a clothesline for two. Off to Neidhart and then right back to Lafon. Blackman comes in and JR points out that Steve isn't a wrestler. Lafon DDTs him for two and gets a crucifix for the same. Blackman fights

off Team Canada on his own but gets caught on the floor in a fight with Furnas and Lafon, resulting in a countout elimination.

It's Mero vs. Neidhart now with Jim missing a middle rope splash. Vader comes in and is immediately knocked down twice by Neidhart. Vader comes back with the running body attack and a splash for the pin. Lafon comes in again with some kicks to send Vader to the floor. Back in and Lafon is sent rolling to the corner and a big belly to belly puts him down. A middle rope splash is enough to put Lafon out, leaving Bulldog and Furnas vs. Vader, Mero and Goldust.

Furnas comes in to pound away but misses a dropkick, allowing the tag in to Mero. Has Goldie been in there yet? Mero pounds Furnas down and goes up for a moonsault press and it looks AWFUL, with Furnas going down like he was trying to powerslam Mero out of the air but Mero hitting the move like usual. Either way it gets two and it's off to Bulldog because Furnas doesn't seem to be sure what planet he's on.

Mero escapes the Bulldog powerslam and blasts Smith with a right hand. Back to Furnas who fires off the rights and lefts. Furnas does the exact same thing, but Mero is a legitimate former amateur boxing champion so that's not really a fair contest. Mero tries a rollup but gets reversed into one by Furnas who grabs a handful of tights to get us down to 2-2.

Vader pounds on Furnas as the King laments Sable having to leave with Mero. Furnas clotheslines Vader down and it's off to Bulldog again. Goldust, who apparently has a broken hand, STILL doesn't want to come in. Vader suplexes Furnas down but Furnas hits Vader low. When Vader gets another break from Bulldog, Goldie hides on the floor from a tag. Furnas suplexes Vader down but doesn't tag. A Frankensteiner takes Vader down for two but Vader no sells it.

Vader slugs Goldust in the face and pulls him into the ring. This is when Goldust walked out on Marlena when she was pregnant because he didn't want the responsibility or the lack of attention. Goldust walks out for a countout but Vader slams Furnas down and hits the Vader Bomb for the elimination. Vader turns around and is knocked silly with the ring bell from Bulldog for the final elimination.

Rating: C-. This was a better match by miles and miles than the first two, mainly due to people with actual talent being in there. On top of that, the people CARED about the match and it makes the match a lot better by result. The result was never in doubt given how worthless Team America was, but it was cool to see Vader getting to be like his old self, even for one night. The match still wasn't great but after the first two matches tonight, this was a masterpiece by comparison.

Buy Austin's shirt!

We recap Kane vs. Mankind, by talking about Undertaker. The idea here is that Undertaker kept saying Kane wasn't alive, but Bearer insisted he was. Kane showed up at Badd Blood and cost Taker the first Cell match. Kane destroyed various people, including Dude Love. Dude left but was replaced by a certain Mankind. Mankind offered to stand up to the monster and tonight it's Kane's debut match. Mankind's solution to Kane: hit him in the head with a pipe. I love it when things get basic like that.

Mankind promises to charge against a brick wall as many times as it takes until it goes down, and if he dies launching himself into that brick wall, so be it. If that's what it takes to get to Paul Bearer, so be it.

Kane vs. Mankind

The brawl starts immediately on the floor with Kane throwing Mankind into the steps. Kane has the red lights ala Sin Cara during his matches at this point. With Mankind half dead in the ring, Kane does the corner fire deal and the match starts. Mankind fights up and a Cactus Clothesline puts both of them on the floor. Kane knocks him right back down and throws the steps at Mankind's head to take him down one more time. Back in and Mankind charges into a big boot and Kane chokes away in the corner.

Kane sends it to the floor again and beats on Mankind some more, but Foley hot shots him onto the steps to slow the monster down. A chair to the head knocks Kane back into the ring and there's a piledriver, but Mankind goes after Bearer instead of Kane. Kane sits up and chokeshoves Mankind off the apron and through the announce table. The Spanish one of course.

Kane loads up a chokeslam on the floor but Mankind kicks him low (which only works on Kane on occasion) and DDTs him on the concrete. The elbow off the apron hits Kane again but Kane sits up and slams Mankind off the top to the floor. Back in and Mankind literally pulls himself up to his feet and is immediately tombstoned for the pin.

Rating: C+. When you have a new guy you want to put over, you call Mick Foley. This is a match you have to think about to get why it worked. First and foremost, Kane is supposed to be a monster who has very little experience in the ring. Think of him like Jason from Friday the 13th or something like that (Youtube Jerry Lawler vs. Jason. It's EXACTLY what it sounds like and it actually exists) as someone who just wants carnage instead of wanting to be technical. These two beat the tar out of each other and it made Kane look unstoppable. That would continue for about five and a half months until the Dead Man came back.

Vince says the main event will happen tonight.

Team Legion of Doom vs. Nation of Domination

Legion of Doom, Ken Shamrock, Ahmed Johnson

Farrooq, The Rock, Kama Mustafa, D'Lo Brown

The LOD and company talk about being ready for war. The LOD are tag champions. Hawk and Brown start with D'Lo bouncing off Hawk. Hawk no sells a piledriver as is his custom and a neckbreaker puts Brown down. Off to Rocky who gets knocked around but someone hits Hawk in the back and the yet to be named Rock Bottom eliminates Bird Man.

Off to Ahmed who "hits" a jumping back elbow to take Rock down. Kama, a freaking monster who would become a pimp named Godfather, is in next and takes Johnson down with one shot. Farrooq is in next to work on Ahmed's ribs and continue a feud that went on for like a year. Brown whips Ahmed with a belt which the referee somehow doesn't hear. Farrooq loads up the Dominator but Johnson escapes (while falling down) and hits a Pearl River Plunge (Tiger Driver) for the elimination.

Brown comes in again and hits a quick Low Down for no cover. Johnson

starts no selling and hits a sitout gordbuster. Farrooq is still at ringside. Rock comes in but walks into a spinebuster. Ahmed hits the ropes but Farrooq trips him up and holds the foot so Rocky can get the pin. It's Animal/Shamrock vs. Brown/Rocky/Kama at the moment. Animal comes in to face Rocky but it's quickly off to Shamrock. Ken is still somewhat new here so his style still looks fresh.

A big dropkick puts Rocky down and it's off to Kama. After getting beaten around for a bit, Kama puts on a front facelock to slow things down. A double clothesline puts both guys down but not for long. Some LOUD noise freaks everyone out and JR and King don't know what it was either. Anyway Animal gets two off a legdrop but gets kicked in the face for his efforts. Kama showboats a bit too much though and Animal dropkicks him in the back and gets a rollup for the pin.

Brown comes in and during the distraction, Rocky hits Shamrock low for two. D'Lo hooks a chinlock followed by a backbreaker, but his moonsault misses by about two feet. The Outlaws come out while wearing the stolen LOD shoulder pads, and we've got powder and a shoved referee. Animal gets counted out during this mess, leaving us with Brown/Rock vs. Shamrock.

JR talks about how many people Shamrock has made tap out. Jerry: "This is wrestling. You don't win by making people tap out." JR: ".....YEAH YOU DO!" Brown starts but it's both Nation members in there at once. Shamrock runs them both over, suplexes Brown and gets the submission via ankle lock. Rock cracks Ken in the back with a chair shot but it only gets two. Rock hits his spinning DDT for two as does the People's Elbow (not a thing yet). Ken comes back with a northern lights suplex and a standing hurricanrana. There's the ankle lock and Rocky is done.

Rating: C. This was a little messy but it pushed Shamrock hard while the heat for Rocky was INSANE. The crowd hated him and Vince certainly took notice. Both of these guys would get huge pushes in the next year with Rock winning the title at next year's Survivor Series. The LOD were in their very last run of note here and they didn't go out well after that. Fun match here although not great from a technical standpoint at all.

We recap Austin vs. Owen. Austin was challenging for the IC Title at

Summerslam when Owen piledrove him, legitimately hurting his neck (and in the long run saving the company because of what Austin had to evolve into) and paralyzing Austin for a few minutes. Austin amazingly enough finished the match and WON THE TITLE, which is remarkable when you think about it. He had to forfeit the title but tonight he's going for it again.

Intercontinental Title: Steve Austin vs. Owen Hart

Owen is defending, having won the title in a tournament since Austin was hurt. Owen has Lafon, Furnas and Bulldog with him. Hart stalls forever on the floor while rocking an Owen 3:16 (I Just Broke Your Neck) shirt. Neidhart tries to sneak in on Austin but walks into a Stunner. The champion gets in a shot to start and tries a piledriver, much to the crowd's delight. Owen wraps the knee around the post but gets kicked in the face.

The Hart Foundation leaves and Austin clotheslines Owen in the back on the floor. Hart puts Owen onto the broken Spanish Announce Table before choking away with a cord. Hart wants to be DQ'ed and rings the bell early. WOW that's almost eerie. Back in and Austin stomps Owen in the corner, hits the Stunner and wins the title. It's as quick as it sounds.

Rating: D+. This was barely four minutes long. I'd assume they were unsure about how long Austin could go out there and if that's the case it's more than understandable. Austin would again forfeit the title a month later because he wanted to go after the world title, which he would of course win at Wrestlemania.

Attitude. It's here.

We recap Bret vs. Shawn. This is Bret's chance to get his win back from Shawn at Wrestlemania 12. Bret was bitter at Shawn after a massive heel turn, so there's some great hatred going on here. I'll get to the big story of it and my thoughts at the end. Ironically enough Shawn cost Undertaker the title, giving it to Bret, at Summerslam.

WWF World Title: Bret Hart vs. Shawn Michaels

Shawn is European Champion coming into this for no particular reason other than he wanted Bulldog to not have the title anymore. Shawn wipes himself with the Canadian flag during his entrance to further make himself public enemy #1. We get the long tracking shot for Bret's entrance which is always cool for some reason. Shawn jumps Bret to start but Bret snaps on him and beats Shawn right back down to the delight of the crowd.

A HARD clothesline puts Shawn on the floor and Bret is going off. I don't think the bell rang yet. Bret takes it to the crowd and Shawn is reeling. Vince, Slaughter and a half dozen referees are at ringside now. JR talks about how this could be Bret's last match if he loses. Shawn gets an American flag bandana and chokes him into the crowd. Remember the match hasn't started yet. Bret backdrops Shawn over the barricade and back to ringside.

Shawn keeps trying to piledrive Bret on the concrete but Hart keeps escaping. They head back into the crowd with Bret in total control. They go to the entrance and Bret decks a referee. Back into the ring they go and the bell FINALLY rings as Bret chokes Shawn with a Fleur de Lis. Shawn comes back with the forearm and nipup as the fans chant that Shawn is gay.

Michaels chokes with the flag as Bret has a busted hand. Shawn stalls a lot because that's the kind of guy he is. Back to the floor with Shawn pounding on Bret and spitting on the crowd. Shawn drops Bret face first on the steps and breaks a Canadian flag over his knee. Back in and Shawn hits a top rope ax handle and it's off to a front facelock. Bret escapes in what has to be the loudest reaction to a broken front facelock of all time.

Shawn comes back and slams Bret down but Bret rolls through a cross body off the top for two. Bret puts on the Hartbreaker, the figure four around the post. Bret goes after the knee in almost perfect Ric Flair fashion, down to the cannonballs down to the knee and a Figure Four. Shawn finally turns it over and Bret gets a rope. A Russian legsweep gets two for Bret as does a snap suplex. Bret goes up but Shawn pulls the referee into the way so the shot hits Hebner instead. Shawn rakes Bret's eyes, puts Bret

in the Sharpshooter, and Hebner calls for the bell to give Shawn the title in the most infamous moment ever in wrestling.

Rating: B-. I'm only talking about the match here. The main thing to keep in mind about the famous ending is that there was about twenty minutes of brawling and of the actual match before the finish. I think that's something people forget because of the famous part. The match we got was quite good, which isn't really surprising given how familiar these two were with each other. It's no masterpiece, but it felt like an epic encounter, which is what it needed to do.

Now we'll get to the big white elephant in Montreal. I've not going to pretend like I have some big insight into what happened because I certainly don't. Books have been written about what happened here and there's no point in rehashing the whole thing all over again. In short, it was Bret's last match, he didn't want to lose the title in Canada, a screwy finish was agreed on, Vince changed the ending and screwed over Bret, Bret wasn't seen in WWE for almost thirteen years.

After all the years since then, I think both parties were wrong, but Bret needed to get over himself. So what if he had to lose the title in Canada? I get that he couldn't stand Shawn, but for someone who seems to pride himself on being oh so professional, it's pretty lame to say he doesn't want to lose the title in another country when he made it clear he was leaving.

Vince was in major trouble at this point and was under a lot of pressure. While I don't think he believed Bret would trash the title on Raw, he had to be worried about something happening, like the title having no value if Bret never lost it, which is understandable. Did he go about the issue the right way? No, but it wasn't a normal circumstance. Vince did what he thought was best and while it caused a ton of controversy, it was one of the few things he could do. There are a ton of different ways you can look at it, and there isn't a single right answer.

Overall Rating: D+. Main event aside, this was a pretty bad show overall. The first forty minutes are AWFUL, the next match is just ok, Kane vs. Mankind is decent, the next match is about building for the future, the

match after that was basically a squash, and the main event was good but not great. When the best you can do is good but not great, you've got a problem. They're pretty lucky that only the main event is remembered here, because the rest of the show sucked.

Ratings Comparison

Team New Age Outlaws vs. Team Headbangers

Original: D+

Redo: F-

Truth Commission vs. Disciples of Apocalypse

Original: F

Redo: F

Team Canada vs. Team USA

Original: B+

Redo: C-

Kane vs. Mankind

Original: C+

Redo: C+

Team Legion of Doom vs. Nation of Domination

Original: B

Redo: C

Steve Austin vs. Owen Hart

Original: C

Redo: D+

Shawn Michaels vs. Bret Hart

Original: B+

Redo: B-

Overall Rating

Original: B+

Redo: D+

Now there's a major change, likely the biggest so far.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/11/06/history-of-survivor-series-count-up-1997-what-a-screwy-show/>

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Thought of the Day: Major and Minor

This came up again last night while watching an old Raw. JR said Bret had won several major titles in the WWF, including the WWF, Tag Team and Intercontinental Title.

This brings up a question I've asked for years: what are some of the minor titles in wrestling? I've heard of major ones, but never any examples of minor ones.

Monday Night Raw – February 17, 1997: Three World Title Matches...Sort Of

Monday Night Raw

Date: February 17, 1997

Location: Bridgestone Arena, Nashville, Tennessee

Attendance: 5,876

Commentators: Jerry Lawler, Jim Ross

It's the night after In Your House: Final Four and we have a new world champion in the form of Bret Hart. However as a condition of him being champion, he has to defend the title tonight against Sycho Sid, who didn't get his title shot against Shawn due to losing his smile. We're coming up on Wrestlemania 13 in about five weeks so the buildup will begin tonight. Let's get to it.

I've already done the next two weeks worth of shows and links to the reviews can be found at the bottom.

WWF World Title: Bret Hart vs. Sycho Sid

That's quite the way to open up a show. Before the bell we're told that Undertaker will meet the winner of this match at Wrestlemania 13. They stare each other down but here's Steve Austin to attack Bret. Referees and backstage personnel break it up but Sid takes a shot to the knee

somewhere in there, putting him down on the mat for some swearing. Austin is taken away and Sid gets back inside, but Patterson and Brisco (some REAL Americans) and some referees won't let the match start like this. More on this later.

We look back at Shawn vacating the belt last Thursday, because of a "knee injury." I'm sure that wouldn't be a case of
Idon'twanttojobthetitlesoI'mfakingthiswholeting-itis.

We get some shots of Final Four last night which is still an awesome match.

Sid is freaking out in the back (moreso than usual) but says nothing is going to keep him from winning the title tonight.

Marc Mero vs. Savio Vega

Apparently Sable has been being much more aggressive lately to help Mero win some extra matches. Savio has the Nation with him, other than Farrooq who is in the balcony, looking down on the arena. Things start fast with Mero snapping off some armdrags and a dropkick sends Savio into the waiting arms of Crush. Mero dives over the top rope to take them both out but Vega takes over as they get back inside. A spinwheel kick in the corner has Mero in trouble and Vega chokes away on the ropes.

Marc gets a quick two off a crossbody and he pounds away with rights and lefts in the corner. Savio comes back with a snap suplex and sends Mero to the floor for a beating from the white rappers known as PG-13. Sable will have none of that and fires off some martial arts kicks to dispatch the white boys. Back inside and Mero hits a Samoan drop but the Nation chases Sable into the ring for the DQ.

Rating: C-. This was fun while it lasted but the ending hurt it a bit. Mero and Vega were both guys that could go when they were motivated and

Mero was at his best around this time. This didn't have time to go anywhere with less than five minutes, but at least they were trying.

Ahmed Johnson, in what appear to be orange pajamas, clears the ring with a 2x4.

Bret says he can't worry about Austin and has to defend the title against Sid tonight. After that, he'll be waiting on his next opponent. Lawler accuses Bret of overlooking Sid but Bret says he's just looking out for #1.

Intercontinental Title: Leif Cassady vs. Rocky Maivia

Cassady, more famous as Al Snow, lost to Mero last night but is getting this shot tonight. Such is life in the WWF. Rocky is still billed from the South Pacific here which makes me picture him singing show tunes. He won the title from HHH last Thursday and beat him again in a rematch last night. Before the match starts, here's Sunny in a barely there pink outfit to hit on Rocky.

They slug it out to start until Rocky clotheslines Cassady out to the floor. Back in and a cross body gets two for Rocky and we hit the armbar. We go split screen for an interview with HHH who says Maivia is just a lucky punk. These two really were joined at the hip for their entire careers. HHH blames Goldust for costing him the title last night and promises it's not over with him. Cassady finally fights out of the armbar and elbows Rocky in the face to take over.

A quick rollup gets two for the champion but Leif pokes him in the eye to take over again. Cassady uses a nice forward leg trip to take Rocky down and put on another armbar. The fans think this is boring and I can't say I blame them. Lawler compares Rocky to some other hotshot rookie that hasn't proven he can do anything yet: Tiger Woods. Back up and Leif DDTs the arm and hooks yet another armbar. A top rope shot to the head gets two for Leif but Rocky slams him down when Cassady tries another. The

high cross body sets up the shoulder breaker to retain Rocky's title.

Rating: D. Rocky was still brand new at this point and it was really showing badly. Cassady is a very talented guy but there was nothing for him in something like this. He was part of the New Rockers at this point but it was clear that such a gimmick wasn't going to take him anywhere. Who would think that these two would feud over being Mankind's best friend someday?

We go to the announcers where Lawler rants about how stupid ECW is. He issues a challenge for them to show up next week if they're tough enough. Lawler also throws in a jab at WCW, saying a friend of his took a Lawler sign to a WCW show in Memphis but they took it away from him.

We see a clip from the national anthem of all things.

Here are Goldust and Marlena to address HHH making a pass at Marlena. Goldust says he's from Hollywood but this is reality. HHH has crossed a line and now this is personal. All the money in the world can't buy Marlena and the only way that HHH is going to get closer to her is over his dead body.

Marlena clears up a few rumors about Goldust, saying that he is all man from the top of his head to the bottom of his feet, making him more of a man than HHH could ever be. Cue HHH with a cheap shot to Goldust, allowing him to pound Goldie down into the corner. There's a Pedigree so Marlena slaps HHH in the face, drawing in the yet to be named Chyna to shake Marlena like a toy, earning her another trip to the pokey.

Headbangers vs. Hardy Boys

Yes it's them and yes they're still really new around here. On the other hand you have the Hardy Boys who are REALLY young, with Matt being 22 and Jeff only 19 here. Jeff scores with a running clothesline on Most before

bringing in Matt to drop an ax handle on the arm. We go split screen to hear Farroq saying he'll finish Ahmed Johnson whenever he feels like it and lists off a bunch of expensive stuff that Johnson owns that he doesn't want the fans to know about. Their match at Wrestlemania should just be a Chicago street fight.

The Headbangers take over and pound away on Matt including Most hitting a springboard cross body to the floor. Back in and it's off to Thrasher who stomps Matt down into the corner before lifting him up into a suplex/side slam combo for no cover. Jeff gets the tag and almost immediately is clotheslined in half, setting up a powerbomb/guillotine legdrop combo for the pin.

Rating: D. This is much more of a historical anomaly than anything of note. The Hardys would become a regular low level tag team soon after this while the Headbangers would look like the bigger deal for a good while. The match was just a squash but it's always fun to see these future stars in their early days.

WWF World Title: Sycho Sid vs. Bret Hart

Sid has a bad knee due to the Austin run-in earlier tonight. We cut to the back and Austin is attacking Bret Hart in the back, ramming him into a steel door and even Vince McMahon is helping break it up. No match again.

Gorilla Monsoon says the title match will happen tonight, period.

Flash Funk vs. Owen Hart

Flash Funk is 2 Cold Scorpio and Brodus Clay minus about 100lbs. Both guys flip out of wristlocks to start before Owen catches a kick, only to have Flash flip him over with the foot Owen caught. That's a hard one to describe. They keep countering each other until Owen clotheslines him

down but Funk is right back up. Both guys try dropkicks at the same time and we have a standoff.

We get to the interesting part of the match: Paul Heyman of ECW calls in to talk to Jerry Lawler. They try a test of strength as Heyman accepts the challenge on behalf of ECW. Lawler makes fun of some of the big ECW names such as Sabu, Sandman and Blue Meanie. Owen tries the Sharpshooter but Flash gets a sloppy rollup for two. Clarence Mason, the annoying attorney that managed Owen around this time, comes out to get Owen's attention for some reason.

Owen goes to the floor so Flash can hit a big dive as Owen's partner British Bulldog comes out to yell at Mason. We take a break and come back with Owen bridging up into a backslide for two. Hart gets another near fall off a German suplex and there's a spinwheel kick to put Funk down again. We cut to a split screen with Steve Austin who says he went over the edge a long time ago.

Austin won the Rumble a long time ago and Shawn quit because he's afraid to face someone like Austin. Owen suplexes Funk down but Flash fights back with some shots to the face and a backdrop. The high cross body gets two on Owen and a great looking moonsault gets the same. They run the ropes a bit and Bulldog gets in a cheap shot with the Slammy, allowing Owen to hit a spinwheel kick for the pin.

Rating: C. I don't ever remember a match with so much stuff going on besides a match when Vince Russo wasn't in charge. Think about it: we had something going on with Mason, interference, a phone call and an interview, all in a ten minute TV match. The match was solid from what I could see, but there was too much going on to keep track of what was going on.

Bart Gunn vs. Hunter Hearst Helmsley

Honky Tonk Man is on commentary as he's still looking for a protege.

After the bell we get a promo from HHH, saying he doesn't know who Marlena is and he doesn't care. HHH grabs the arm to start but Bart counters into a wristlock of his own to take over. Gunn scores with a dropkick and takes HHH down into an armbar. Back up and Helmsley misses a charge into the corner and we're right back to the armbar. Helmsley gets up again and takes him down with a jumping knee to the face but here's Goldust to chase HHH into the crowd for a countout.

Rating: D. Another boring match here which was only there for the ending. Goldust vs. HHH continues to be an interesting story but the matches never quite lived to the story. Bart Gunn was such a forgettable guy after splitting from Billy until the Brawl For All of all things gave him some notoriety.

We go to Dr. James Andrews to talk about Shawn's knee. Apparently it's badly twisted but surgery isn't a requirement just yet.

WWF World Title: Bret Hart vs. Sycho Sid

Let's try this one more time. Bret is defending in case that was lost in this whole mess tonight. Sid takes him into the corner and pounds away to start before whipping Bret hard into the corner to work on Bret's bad back. Bret has a bad back? Apparently so for the sake of the match. Sid takes him down again with a hard clothesline before stomping down onto Bret's chest a few times. All challenger so far.

Bret comes back with some punches to the ribs and a backbreaker, causing JR to say Sid isn't 6'9 now. Unless a backbreaker involves cutting Sid's foot off, I'll have to disagree. Sid fires off more shots to the back and hits a backbreaker of his own (Lawler: "YAHOO!") for two. Bret comes back by taking out the leg and drops some elbows onto the knee for good measure. The leg is wrapped around the post and there's the Figure Four around the post (making its TV debut).

We take a break and come back with Bret bending the knee around the ropes

and kicking away at the thigh. Sid fights out with some forearms to the chest and a legdrop for two. Sid (with the knee looking perfectly fine) goes to the middle rope for another legdrop but Bret blocks a chokeslam. Bret misses a charge into the ropes but is still able to backdrop Sid over the top. Austin tries to come in through the crowd but Sid punches him down. There's the Sharpshooter but Austin sneaks in with a chair shot to break it up. The powerbomb (dude sell the leg!) is enough to give Sid the world title.

Rating: D+. I remember Benoit having the same problems with Sid two years later: there's only so much Bret can do when Sid won't sell the freaking knee injury. Sid had a knee injury coming into the match, had it worked on during the match, then got caught in the Sharpshooter but can hit the powerbomb fine? That doesn't work and it's not Hart's fault at all.

Undertaker comes out to stare down Sid to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. This is a very simple concept: the stuff involving Bret vs. Austin is awesome and the rest of the show is about as dull as you can get. That was WWF's biggest problem for a long time: they couldn't fill in a full show with interesting stuff and there was no reason to watch. Things would get better, but for now it was the main event scene or nothing.

Here's the February 24 show if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2012/03/14/monday-night-raw-february-24-1997-ecw-invades-raw/>

Here's the March 3 show if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2012/02/05/2557/>

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Impact Wrestling – November 7, 2013: Just Let Them Fold Already TNA

Impact Wrestling

Date: November 7, 2013

Location: Cincinnati Gardens, Cincinnati, Ohio

Commentators: Taz, Mike Tenay

It's a big show this week for TNA as this is the start of their world title tournament, perhaps the final Impact outside of Orlando for a good while and it's the 500th episode. However, what has TNA been focused on with their new Impact 365 deal? The fact that Pacman Jones is back in TNA for a show or two.

For those of you that aren't familiar with him, he's the guy that was suspended from the NFL for a year and thought he'd make a quick buck "wrestling" (read as standing on the apron and making a cover here or there) in the mean time. Now he's famous for being a decent football player that hasn't gotten arrested in a few years. He's been the focus for TNA in their internet videos late. Let's get to it.

We open with Dixie in the back with Pacman when Mr. Anderson comes up. He doesn't want any trouble but just a match with Bully. Dixie says she can make that happen.

We get a recap of AJ leaving and the announcement of the world title tournament via a voiceover similar to a movie trailer.

Pacman Jones and another Cincinnati Bengal are in the front row.

Here's the Main Event Mafia, which is actually still a thing. Sting says the Mafia has accomplished its goals of keeping Aces and 8's at bay and taking the world title away from Bully Ray. Today he can say mission accomplished, even though there has been a lot of trials and tribulation along the way. As of today, the Mafia is being put back up on the shelf. All of them have something they're doing at the moment, such as Sting coming up short in the gauntlet match and the other three all being in the world title tournament.

Sting is going to be dealing with this thing called entitlement. He's going to be dealing with those people that are trying to come in on top without ever having to pay any dues. Sting has respect for this business and hugs all three members of the team. He says he loves Joe and Angle but only hugs Magnus before walking away. Joe takes the mic and says he's been denied a world title for far too long. The road to the title starts with Magnus and it's going to go through Angle. They're all friends, but Joe is going to remind them why they make far better enemies.

Magnus says that Angle is on a road to redemption but it's also Magnus' road to destiny. He loves Angle like a brother, but after he goes through Joe, he'll mow Angle down if he has to. His goal is to become world champion but the fans don't seem to have the same vision that Magnus has.

Angle is left alone in the ring and says Sting is right. They all have their own goals and his is to become world champion once again. He also wants to prove he's Hall of Fame worthy, but last week he suffered a setback. Last week he was told he wasn't cleared to compete, but since then he's talked to his personal doctor....but here's Roode with an interruption.

Roode says he's embarrassed for Kurt because he keeps having to make excuses. Angle needs to be a man and admit that he's lost twice in a row to the It Factor. Roode's goal is the world title as well, and if he has to face Angle in the finals, he has no problem destroying him for a third

time. Angle is cool with that but doesn't want to wait for the finals so the fight is on now.

Angle is still in the ring after the break and says he'll wait in the ring until he gets Bobby Roode even if it's until next week. Roode comes right back out at him but security tries to break it up. The guys are finally split up after a few moments but Angle sprints up the ramp to get another piece. Joe, Magnus and Bad Influence come out to try to split them up and both guys are finally taken to the back.

The opening segment somehow keeps going with Bad Influence getting in the Bengals' faces, only to have them come into the ring and slam Kaz and Daniels down.

Garrett and Knux say the condition of the club is none of the people's business. Anderson comes up behind them and says that he just wants to talk. He says what they did to him was the best thing they've ever done to him. They need to get out of the club though because this isn't what they started.

Velvet Sky vs. ODB vs. Brooke

Winner gets a title shot at some point in the future. Brooke and Velvet shake it a bit to start so ODB chests them down. A double Bronco Buster has Brooke and Sky in trouble but Brooke rolls ODB up for two. ODB gets knocked to the floor so Velvet can get a neckbreaker for two on Brooke. Velvet gets powerslammed down but Brooke takes her down and drops a top rope elbow to ODB. Everyone is down so here are Gail and Lei'D Tapa to watch as we take a break.

Back with a three way slugout with ODB taking over. Both girls put a half crab on Brooke at the same time. The alliance doesn't last long as Velvet starts chopping away at ODB, only to be ran over again. ODB slams Brooke onto Velvet but goes to the floor to yell at Tapa and Kim. Brooke hits a dropkick through the ropes before clotheslining Velvet down. Everyone is back inside now and Brooke hits a cross body to take out both girls at once. Gail and Tapa get up on the apron and Gail comes in to break up In Yo Face to Brooke for a DQ at 9:45.

Rating: C-. Not the worst match in the world but the ending sucked. Since when are there DQ's in a triple threat match? Velvet and ODB were their usual selves but Brooke looked a bit better than her typical performance here. The downside here is how obvious it was that the division is dying for some fresh blood though.

Post match Gail and Tapa destroy everyone (save for some forearms from ODB that staggered Tapa). Gail says it's clear she has no competition so she's issuing an open challenge to anyone from outside the company and if anyone beats her, they can have a title shot.

We get a video from AJ Styles of a title defense in AAA in Mexico.

Bully goes up to Knux and Garrett in the back and says he's tired of being ignored. Knux goes on a rant about how this isn't their club anymore but all about Bully. Ray says it's because he's president but Knux demands a vote tonight from all three of them and Taz. Knux storms off but Ray grabs Garrett and glares at him.

Dixie is on the phone, yelling at someone to fix the person who is humiliating her (presumably AJ). She hangs up when Ethan Carter III comes in. Dixie says he's done a great job but they need to change their plan a bit. Tonight he gets to pick his opponent which he thinks will mean the end of the streak. Dixie says keep the intensity up.

It's time for the Aces and 8's vote. Ray comes out last and says his catchphrase but Garrett cuts him off by saying yes, they do know who he is. Before the vote can be taken, Anderson comes out to watch. Garrett votes that he's finished and takes off his cut. Ray appeals to Knux but Knux says he doesn't need Ray or the club. He takes off the cut as well, leaving just Tazz and Ray in the club.

Ray assumes that Tazz is going to vote with him, which Ray says we're going to a tie, which goes to a president. Ray sucks up to Taz a bit before saying Tazz knows how to do what his president tells him to do. Tazz takes the mic and tells Ray to hit the brakes a little bit. They've been friends for a long time but have always done the right thing. The club has been about Bully's agenda alone for way too long, so Tazz is done too. Ray says put those colors back on but Tazz says make him.

Ray yells at Anderson for ruining everything so Anderson throws out a challenge for a No DQ fight at Turning Point. Bully talks about Anderson looking up to Steve Austin, but Anderson has forgotten the first rule. Garrett and Knux jump Anderson so Ray can whip him with the chain while shouting DON'T TRUST ANYBODY. Ray says the Aces catchphrase and the team is still together. Yes, SERIOUSLY.

Back from a break with Bobby Roode coming up to the announce desk and promising to take Angle out tonight.

Ethan Carter III vs. Dewey Barnes

This is another rematch for Carter. Ethan runs him over to start and slams him face first into the mat out of a belly to back suplex. There's a kick to the ribs but Dewey comes back with a dropkick in the corner and a neckbreaker but his missile dropkick misses. The Bulldog Driver (the 1 Percenter) ends Barnes at 2:25.

Joseph Park is eating candy corn in the back when Bad Influence shows up. Park says they're bullying him while they suggest he's Abyss. Richie Incognito and Jonathan Martin (NFL players currently involved in a bullying scandal) references are made until Eric Young comes in to make science jokes and set up a tag team match.

Bad Influence vs. Eric Young/Joseph Park

Eric gets double teamed to start but sends Bad Influence into each other. Park comes in for some work on the arm but it's back to Young for an Ultimo Dragon headstand in the corner. Kaz is sent to the floor for a suicide dive from Eric and a cross body back inside gets two. Young is sent to the corner for a Flair Flip plus some strutting on the apron, only to have Kaz knock him out to the floor. Back inside and Bad Influence lays him out with Daniels getting two off a clothesline to the back of the head.

A Kaz distraction prevents the referee from seeing the hot tag to Park but Young ducks a clothesline, sending Bad Influence into each other again. Now the hot tag brings in Park and there's a Boston Crab on Kaz. Daniels makes the save but everything breaks down. Daniels whips Young

knees first into the steps before picking up the bell ringer's hammer. That goes nowhere so he picks up the Appletini to blind Park, allowing Kaz to crucifix him for the pin at 4:38.

Rating: D. Just a match here for the most part with nothing significant happening at all. We've seen these teams fight several times now and nothing has really been accomplished as a result. The only interesting thing here is the difference in comedy. Young and Park have hammered their jokes so far into the ground that they haven't been funny for months. Bad Influence on the other hand at least keeps their comedy moving, which keeps them feeling much fresher. It's a nice breather.

Post break here's Angle again, saying he'll be out here if Roode wants a piece. Instead he gets Austin Aries who says he respects everything Angle has done, but if Angle doesn't bring his best, he has no chance. Dixie pops up on screen and spins the Wheel of Dixie to make it a submission match next week. Aries says good luck and walks away but Roode comes in from behind to jump Angle and beat him down against the steps. Aries makes the save so Angle will be at 100% next week. That's nice of him. Angle throws Aries to the side to get at Roode but so Aries goes after Kurt until security breaks it up.

TNA World Title Tournament First Round: Jeff Hardy vs. Chris Sabin

This is Full Metal Mayhem, which is TNA's version of TLC but you win by pin or submission. Sabin is sent into a chair in the corner to knock him to the floor, allowing Hardy to hit a clothesline off the apron to take Chris down again. Sabin comes back with a ladder to the ribs as we head back inside for a rolling cutter onto the ladder for two on Hardy. Jeff comes back with a backdrop to send Sabin onto the ladder in the corner and blasts Sabin with a garbage can.

Jeff sets up a table in the corner but Sabin hurricanranas out of whatever Hardy was setting up. Hardy gets crotched on the top and is caught in the Tree of Woe so Sabin can rip at his EARS. That's just painful looking. A baseball slide dropkick sends a chair into Hardy's face and Sabin stands on his groin in the corner. Hardy is able to blast Sabin in the back with a chair despite hanging upside down in a nice

counter.

Poetry in Motion connects in the corner and a clothesline sends Sabin out to the floor. Hardy lays him on a table and goes up top but misses a dive, crashing through the table as a result. Back in and Sabin puts Hardy on a table but his splash hits knees. It still drives Jeff through the table though so I'm not sure how much good it did him. Jeff scores with a quick Twist of Fate and sets up the ladder for a Swanton off the top to send him to the next round at 10:45.

Rating: B-. This was exactly what it was supposed to be. It wasn't anything that set the bar any higher, but it was what they advertised it as: complete mayhem with both guys destroying each other and a huge spot to end it. I fear for Jeff's ability to move when he's 54 years old, but the entertainment is good while it lasts.

Overall Rating: C+. This was a much better show than what TNA has been throwing at us lately but it was far from perfect. I really liked the Angle vs. Roode stuff which made me feel like they wanted to kill each other. It would be better if they were meeting in the tournament, but there's always the chance that they could cost one another their matches to set up a showdown somewhere in the future.

On the other hand, we have Aces and 8's. That's my problem with them: they're still around. This group has been around nearly 18 months at this point and shouldn't have made it half that long. I have no idea why this team is still around and I have no idea what TNA sees in them anymore. It's Ray and two goons who have never accomplished anything on their own but we're still supposed to care about them?

Overall the show was decent tonight but there was too much stuff that went nowhere, such as pretty much everything other than the main event and Angle vs. Roode. I liked tonight's episode, but I have zero faith in TNA to make this last at all. Maybe it'll be good for a few weeks, but long term planning is TNA's Kryptonite. Actually scratch that as it would imply TNA is Superman. We'll say it's their.....whatever the weakness is of Carrotman.

Results

Gail Kim vs. ODB vs. Brooke went to a no contest when Gail Kim interfered

Ethan Carter III b. Dewey Barnes – 1 Percenter

Bad Influence b. Joseph Park/Eric Young – Crucifix to Park

Jeff Hardy b. Chris Sabin – Swanton Bomb off the top of the ladder

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Survivor Series Count-Up – 1996: The Rise Of Steve Austin And The Debut Of The Future

Survivor Series 1996

Date: November 17, 1996

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

Attendance: 18,647

Commentators: Jim Ross, Vince McMahon, Jerry Lawler

To MSG we go as we're in a very different era here. Shawn is world champion but is also burned out and needing some time away from the ring. He's defending against Sid tonight, but that's not the important thing tonight. There's a major debut, but aside from that, we've got Bret Hart

returning for the first time since losing the title to Shawn to face a bald headed Texan who is tired of hearing how great guys like Hart are and wants to prove how great he is. His name is Stone Cold Steve Austin and tonight is his coming out party. Let's get to it.

After a quick look at what's been going on in MSG to hype the show we're ready to go.

Team Furnas and Lafon vs. Team Owen Hart/British Bulldog

Doug Furnas, Phillip Lafon, Godwinns

Owen Hart, British Bulldog, New Rockers

The New Rockers are Leif Cassidy (Al Snow) and Marty Jannetty. Furnas and Lafon are feuding with Hart and Bulldog for Smith and Hart's tag titles. Furnas and Lafon were a team who mainly worked in AJPW in Japan who were better than they're given credit for. Apparently Furnas is the one with the long hair. Got it. I can never remember which is which. Lafon vs. Marty starts things off and they trade arm holds, but Lafon avoids a monkey flip. The Rockers are heels here if that's not clear.

Off to Cassidy who is a better technical guy. Lafon goes after the leg but Cassidy comes back with a leg drag. Off to Phineas who spits into the air, catches it, and rubs it in his hair. Cassidy messes with Phineas and hides in the ropes as a result. A clothesline puts Godwin down and it's off to Owen for some stomping. Off to Bulldog for more beating but I keep getting distracted by the agents and other people coming in and out of the door to the backstage area at the top of the aisle.

Eventually we get down to Marty vs. Phineas with Jannetty taking over with a jumping back elbow. Marty loads up his Superbomb but gets crotched. Phineas loads up a superplex (JR: "How stupid was that of him?") but gets shoved down. Marty misses an elbow and there's the hot tag minus the heat to bring in Henry vs. Marty. Phineas dives into the corner to stop Henry from hitting the buckle and it's the Slop Drop (reverse DDT) to eliminate Jannetty. Owen immediately spinwheel kicks Henry to tie it up.

Phineas goes into one of his fits and beats up everyone, but Bulldog gets a blind tag and powerslams Phineas to make it 3-2. All three of those eliminations were in less than a minute so I didn't skip anything. It's Furnas/Lafon vs. Cassidy/Hart/Bulldog. Furnas and Bulldog start things off and Furnas is in trouble. Off to Cassidy for a spinning Rock Bottom for two. Furnas speeds things up but Owen gets a blind tag in and hits a sweet missile dropkick for two.

A fisherman's suplex gets two for Owen and some heel triple teaming has Furnas in trouble. JR goes on another rant about how the two referees are making no difference here. This is during the time when JR had gone heel for the first time but it wouldn't last much longer. Back to Cassidy who hits a gutbuster but doesn't cover for some reason. Cassidy misses a charge and there's the tag to Lafon, who hits a quick reverse superplex to eliminate Leif and get us down to the main two tag teams.

It's Lafon vs. Bulldog with Davey being dropped on his face. Owen comes in with a cross body for two. A neckbreaker and a legdrop get two on Lafon as does an enziguri. Back to Bulldog who kicks Lafon low to keep control. Things break down a bit and Lafon hits a quick sunset flip on Smith for the elimination. It's Owen vs. Furnas and Lafon with Lafon in the ring to start the last part.

Owen goes after the leg including an Indian Deathlock and the Sharpshooter but Furnas makes the save. Lafon hits a spin kick to take Hart down and there's the hot tag to Furnas (pun intended). Doug destroys Owen with suplexes and a release German gets the final pin. Furnas beat him in about thirty seconds.

Rating: C+. This didn't suck but it didn't hit a level they were reaching for. Furnas and Lafon didn't look right here and the crowd didn't really know who they were yet, so the place was hardly rocking. It's not a bad match but it didn't quite work like it was supposed to. Things will pick up soon on this show though.

Kevin Kelly is in the boiler room with Mankind, who he abandoned Undertaker for at Summerslam. Tonight the huge rivalry continues with Bearer locked in a small cage above the ring. This is when Mankind was

still relatively new (he debuted about six and a half months before this) and no one knew what to make of him yet. All anyone knew was he could beat up Undertaker which was unheard of at the time.

Mankind vs. Undertaker

Bearer has to be locked in the small cage. This is a Cornette Special. Taker lowers down from the rafters in what can only be called a Batman costume minus the mask. Taker also has on a new attire for this, which is basically a biker vest and leather pants. That would become his standard look for the next three years or so. Mankind rams him into the small cage to start and they head to the floor very quickly.

Back in and Taker gets all fired up before busting out a drop toehold. He goes after Mankind's right arm to take away the Mandible Claw, which is the only hold that can stop Undertaker. Taker puts on a cross armbreaker of all things, which is something he would occasionally bust out when he was MMA Cowboy Of Death mode but I didn't think he did it back here. Apparently if Taker wins he gets five minutes with Mankind. We head back to the floor with Taker ramming the arm into the barricade again. Back in and Taker misses an elbow but he sits up immediately.

We head to the floor for the third time via a Cactus Clothesline and they head into the crowd. Mankind charges at Taker but gets backdropped over the barricade and onto the concrete. A low blow puts Taker down on the apron and down onto the floor, where Mankind hits the elbow off the apron. Taker gets sent into the buckle but comes back with an elbow to the face.

Taker headbutts him halfway out of the ring as this continues to be a total brawl so far. Undertaker bites on the Claw hand but he lowers his head and gets piledriven down for two. Mankind loads up the Claw but Taker blocks the hands. The Tombstone is countered and there's the Claw. Taker sends him out to the floor which is one of the first times that hold has been broken.

Old School hits but Mankind pops up and hits a double arm DDT to put Taker down. Mankind goes up but jumps into a chokeslam. The Claw goes on but Taker chokeslams him anyway. Cool spot. Taker tries a cross body but

he crashes over the top and out to the floor. Mankind tries a flip dive off the apron but crashes just as badly as Taker did. Back in and Mankind tries a quick sleeper, only to be suplexed down by Taker.

Even JR is talking about how much more wrestling Undertaker is doing here which is indeed a strange sight. Mankind pulls out a foreign object to stab at Taker with. Unlike Lawler's style, there's an actual object here for Mankind to hit him with. Mankind climbs on his back in the corner but Taker pulls Mankind down and KILLS HIM with the Tombstone for the pin.

Rating: B. Foley said in his book that this is his least favorite of the series with Taker, which is saying a lot because this is a very solid brawl. It's physical for the full fifteen minutes it runs with two large guys beating the tar out of each other. On top of that, it's cool to see Taker work a new style while in an entirely new attire as well. Good stuff here.

Bearer's cage is lowered to Taker but the Executioner (Terry Gordy in a hood) makes the save. Taker beats him up but Bearer escapes.

Sunny (still smoking hot and not smoking crack here) comes out for commentary.

Team HHH, with the IC Champion as captain, is ready for Marc Mero. Mark Henry was supposed to be on HHH's team but he's injured. I'm shocked too.

Team Hunter Hearst Helmsley vs. Team Marc Mero

Hunter Hearst Helmsley, Jerry Lawler, Goldust, Crush

Marc Mero, Jake Roberts, The Stalker, Rocky Maivia

I think you know everyone here. Stalker is Barry Windham as a kind of military guerrilla warfare character. This is Rocky's debut, so who do you think the focus is going to be on? Lawler and Roberts are feuding as well. Mero has Sable with him here. Sunny immediately freaks out on JR for suggesting Sable is hotter. She yells about being natural while Sable is about to melt near the fireworks. Rocky's outfit looks ridiculous with kind of a cape but made of streamers that goes over his chest as well. Apparently Roberts was a surprise partner and the replacement for Henry.

Jake comes out with the big yellow snake sans bag and chases the team off with it. Goldust and Mero get things going with Marc cranking on the arm. They both block hiptosses so Mero rolls him up for two. Off to Stalker who is now just a guy in camo pants and a WWF t-shirt. Back to Mero to fire off a bunch of hiptosses to Goldie who is a bit calmer than he was last year. Rollup gets two for Mero and it's back to the arm. Stalker pounds away at Goldie's ribs before it's off to HHH. Off to Mero to face Crush as HHH wanted nothing to do with Wildman (Mero).

Mero grabs the arm and for you trivia guys out there, Rocky's first official time in a WWF ring is against Crush. It lasts all of six seconds before it's off to Lawler who is immediately punched, kicked in the face, and knocked to the floor. You know Lawler is going to go insane with the selling too. Lawler wants nothing to do with Rocky so it's off to HHH. Vince explains that Rocky's name is Dwayne Johnson and that he took the name of his father and grandfather to come up with Rocky Maivia.

In the first of many matches, HHH stomps away in the corner and JR is in football mode. Goldust comes in and drops an elbow followed by some rights to the head. Crush comes in and works on the back for a bit before it's off to Lawler. Back to HHH as Sunny makes fun of Vince for allegedly having a toupee. Rocky pounds away and backdrops HHH before it's off to Roberts.

Jake beats up everyone but tries to get to Lawler instead of going after the legal HHH. The shortarm clothesline takes HHH down but the DDT doesn't work. Off to Lawler who makes fun of Roberts for being an alcoholic. Lawler keeps doing it and there's the DDT for the first elimination. Goldust comes in next as JR makes fun of the lack of tan on Roberts. We hit the chinlock for a bit until jawbreaker gets Jake out of it. Off to Stalker as JR and Sunny talk about Barry wearing lucky boots. Crush hits Stalker in the back and the Curtain Call (reverse suplex drop) gets the pin for Goldust to tie things up.

Mero comes in immediately to hit a knee lift to take over. Goldie gets in a shot and HHH finally comes in to beat on the other captain. A backbreaker puts Mero down and it's back to Crush. This is during Crush's gang member phase and he couldn't look more out of place with his

partners at this point. A legdrop gets two for Crush and it's off to Goldie. Back to Crush for another backbreaker for two. Things are slowing down a bit here.

HHH comes in again and puts on an abdominal stretch. He gets caught holding the ropes and hiptossed out as is his custom with referees. A sunset flip can't get HHH down before he makes the tag to Goldust. HHH is back in about five seconds later and let's look at Sunny! Ok I can't complain about that one as much. Jake is pulled in sans tag, allowing Mero to hit a moonsault press on HHH for the elimination. That was a very messy sequence with all the tags with nothing happening between them and the non-tag to Jake. Either that or I missed a tag and Mero was totally illegal when he pinned HHH.

It's Mero/Rocky/Roberts vs. Crush/HHH. Crush comes in next and is almost immediately dropkicked out to the floor. Mero loads up a dive but Goldust makes a save and shoves Crush out of the way. Back inside, Crush's Heart Punch (exactly what it sounds like) pins Mero. We were looking at a replay when it happened though so that's hearsay. Roberts comes in, misses the short clothesline and is Heart Punched out as well.

We're left with Rocky (who actually gets a face chant in MSG at this point) vs. Goldust and Crush. He starts with the one not painted like an Academy Award and accepts a Test of Strength for some reason. A small package out of nowhere gets two for Maivia and here's Goldust again. Rocky cross bodies Crush for no count as both bad guys are in the ring at once. Goldust hits Rocky low which isn't illegal apparently but Crush Heart Punches Goldie. Cross body pins Crush and about thirty seconds later, a shoulder breaker (Rocky's original finisher) gets the final pin.

Rating: C+. This dragged a bit in the middle, but it accomplished three goals: Roberts got to knock Lawler out cold, Mero got to pin HHH to continue their feud, and Rocky got to debut strongly. The problem is the rest of the match wasn't much to see. Maivia winning over guys like Crush and Goldust is a good thing because it's unrealistic to have him beat the IC Champion and beating Lawler doesn't mean anything because Lawler is a career jobber in the WWF. Crush is a big imposing guy who is also a jobber, but at least he looks intimidating. Goldust has credentials too

and a loss isn't going to hurt him. Smart booking.

We recap Bret vs. Austin in arguably the real main event of the night. Austin has spent weeks or months talking about how what Hart did means nothing. Bret hasn't been seen since Wrestlemania when he lost to Shawn. Tonight we have to see if Austin can back up what he's saying against a rusty Hitman. The hype on this was excellent and still works to this day.

Bret says MSG is holy ground for him.

Steve Austin vs. Bret Hart

They stare each other down in the middle of the ring and Austin flips Hart off. This feels like a huge fight which is exactly what it's supposed to do. Austin takes Bret into the corner and gives a clean break. Bret goes for Austin's leg and they go into the corner as well for another clean break. I love matches where the guys mirror each other. JR says neither of these guys have ever submitted in the WWF. That's not actually true but we'll go with it for the sake of simplicity.

Austin actually wins a technical battle and cranks on the arm. Bret does the same and adds a hammerlock. They fight for wristlocks and Bret takes it to the mat, working on the arm. Austin fights up and takes his head off with an elbow. Bret stays technical, Austin turns it into a brawl. This is going to have some good psychology in it I'd assume. Bret takes it right back to the mat and cranks on the arm again.

Back up and Austin drops Bret with a Stun Gun and immediately chokes. Hit the neck, work on the neck. It's not complicated. Austin stomps on the neck and throat before slingshotting Bret's throat into the bottom rope. An elbow to the neck/chest sends Bret to the floor and Austin is starting to roll. Back in and Austin hooks a chinlock before dropping knees to the chest/throat for two.

They slug it out with Austin knocking Bret into the corner. Bret comes back with an atomic drop (which Vince calls a reverse piledriver because he's Vince McMahon and isn't a very good announcer) and a clothesline followed by a Russian legsweep for two. A bulldog attempt by Hart is countered by sending him chest first into the buckle. Austin loads up a

superplex but Bret slams him down and hits a top rope elbow for a delayed two.

Austin escapes a backbreaker with a rake of the eyes as momentum shifts again. Bret gets sent to the floor and Austin just pounds on him with forearms and punches. Austin rams him back first into the post as the attacks shifts to the back. Bret comes back by sending him into the barricade, breaking the thing apart. They head into the front row and knock the barricade over. Austin is in trouble again and Bret chases him to the other side of the ring.

Steve is like screw this defense thing and sling shots Bret onto the Spanish announce table. They fight underneath the table with Austin pounding away. Austin was a smart heel in that instead of standing around, he wanted to beat on Bret even more when he had Bret down. Back in and Austin drops a middle rope elbow for two. A running crotch attack to Bret's back gets another two and Austin is getting frustrated.

Off to an abdominal stretch and of course Austin grabs the rope. Back up and Bret wins a slugout before Stun Gunning Austin right back to take over again. A piledriver puts Steve down for two and Bret is exhausted. Bret hits a backbreaker and goes up, only to get crotched and superplexed down. Austin has that look in his eye where you know he's feeling it. Bret hooks Austin's feet after the superplex but only gets two.

Bret goes after Austin and walks into a Stunner but it only gets two. It gets another two and make that four. Austin is all ticked off now and pounds away at Bret before getting two more. He puts Bret in a solid Texas Cloverleaf but Bret still won't quit. He makes the rope and the fans breathe a sigh of relief. Austin sends him into the corner but Bret's knee gives out and Bret's back hits the post.

That gets two and Austin goes back to the Cloverleaf. Scratch that as he makes it a bow and arrow instead. It's amazing how much different that broken neck made Austin. He's a completely different guy here and it works really well too. Austin grabs the ropes to block a Sharpshooter and there's a sleeper but Austin hits a jawbreaker to escape. Austin slaps on the Million Dollar Dream but Bret climbs up the buckles and backflips

onto Austin for the surprise pin. Steve is stunned, no pun intended. Apparently this was a #1 contenders match. Ok then.

Rating: A+. It's Austin vs. Hart for 25 minutes. Were you expecting anything but a masterpiece? This match isn't remembered for one reason: they had a rematch which is one of the greatest matches of all time. This however is liked better by a lot of people and I can easily get that. This is a pure, hard hitting wrestling match which ends with a wrestling counter. The psychology here is incredible with Austin wanting to prove he can go move for move with Bret before finally getting outsmarted when Austin was frustrated and trying one of his old moves. This is one of the best pairings of all time.

Sid is ready for Shawn tonight.

Team Farrooq vs. Team Yokozuna

Farrooq, Vader, Razor Ramon, Diesel

Yokozuna, Flash Funk, Savio Vega, Jimmy Snuka

Snuka is a mystery partner, Yoko literally must weigh 700lbs, and these are the fake Ramon and Diesel. Diesel here is more famous as Kane. Cornette is on commentary here and freaks out because of Snuka, who was inducted into the Hall of Fame last night. This is when the HOF was even more of a joke than it is today. Funk and Vader get things going as this match couldn't be more filler if it tried.

Vader pummels him in the corner but Funk comes back with a kick that misses by so much that even Vince has to say it didn't hit. Vader goes down anyway. Vader is sent to the floor and Funk hits a moonsault to take him out and send Cornette into heart attack mode. Back in and Vader powerbombs him down but it's off to Yoko. That goes nowhere so it's off to Farrooq vs. Savio. This is Farrooq's debut with the Nation of Domination which is just him at this point.

Razor comes in and JR, the guy that brought them in, wants nothing to do with them. JR says he'd be a better manager than Cornette would. Cornette: "You couldn't manage a Wendy's!" JR: "I could if you were in

town." Razor can't do the fallaway slam so it's off to Diesel. Remember that this is New York City so guess how well this is received. Diesel pounds on Funk, Funk fires back, Diesel knocks him down, CAN WE GET THIS OVER WITH ALREADY???

Funk tries a sunset flip but gets chokebombed for his efforts. Off to Farroq who gets flipped around by Funk but Flash walks into a snap spinebuster. Here's Vader for some mauling before Savio gets the tag. Off to Snuka who charges into a Diesel knee. Vader vs. Snuka now and Superfly actually slams him.

Off to Savio who gets beaten up by Farroq on the floor. Back in and Diesel Jackknifes Snuka for the first elimination. Off to Snuka vs. Ramon now with Snuka slamming him down and hitting the Superfly Splash for the elimination. Then everyone brawls in the ring and EVERYONE IS FREAKING DQ'ED TO END THE MATCH.

Rating: F. There was no reason for this match to happen, Ramon and Diesel were STUPID, Yoko was disgustingly fat, Farroq was a waste of a debut, Snuka isn't a good surprise at all. There's nothing to see here and it was one of the worst matches I can remember in a long time. Also it's less than ten minutes long, making it the shortest Survivor Series match ever.

We recap Sid vs. Shawn. They used to be partners and now they're fighting over the title. Sid is nuts and that's about it.

WWF World Title: Shawn Michaels vs. Sycho Sid

Sid's name in pyro was always cool. The fans aren't all that thrilled with Shawn but it's not booing. Shawn charges at Sid and is immediately knocked down with right hands. The champ (Shawn) stands in one place and punches even faster which apparently is ok. Off to a headlock on the mat but Sid NIPS UP and pounds away. There's a gorilla press attempt but Shawn lands on his feet. Sid tries the powerbomb (POP) but Shawn bails to the floor.

Back in and Shawn takes out the knee before hitting a Robinsdale Crunch (it's a leg lock with Shawn jumping to crush the knee). The fans chant

for Sid. Off to a Figure Four for awhile before Sid rolls it over. Shawn goes for the hold again but Sid kicks him shoulder first into the post. Sid slows things down and starts firing off some kicks to the head and ribs.

Shawn avoids a charge into the corner and goes after the knee some more. Sid kicks him into the ropes and Shawn skins the cat, but Sid clotheslines him right to the floor. Shawn gets dropped on the barricade which gets two back inside. Sid hits a few running kicks to the head in the corner as things slow down again. Michaels avoids a charge in the corner and goes up, with the fans openly booing him now.

The champ dives into a backbreaker for two and Shawn can barely get up. Shawn fights up and turns it into a slugout with Sid going down. We get the always stupid looking jump into the boot spot and Sid puts on a cobra clutch. Shawn fights up and walks into a chokeslam. The place is exploding for Sid here. The powerbomb is countered into a small package for two but Sid gets the same off a powerslam.

Shawn nips up and is immediately clotheslined down to a BIG pop. Sid grabs a camera and blasts Jose Lithario (Shawn's manager) in the chest with it for no apparent reason. Shawn superkicks Sid down but stops to look at Jose instead of covering. The referee goes down somewhere in there and Shawn gets hit with the camera as well. Back inside Sid powerbombs Shawn down for the pin and the title. Girl in the front row: "N0000000000000000!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!"

Rating: B. Shawn's heart wasn't in this at all and that was clear throughout the match. His eyes didn't have it in there anymore and it's really no surprise that after February he would take time off to find his smile. This was good stuff for the most part but the ending seemed overdone. Little trivia for you: this is Sid's first title in the WWF or WCW. You would have thought he would have gotten something before then, given the PPVs he main evented.

Shawn scrambles to the back to check on Jose.

Overall Rating: B+. There's some awesome stuff on here with a lot of historical stuff in there too. There's one really bad match but it only

lasts ten minutes or so. Other than that, this show is pretty much golden. Solid show overall but the company was entering a dark age with the NWO destroying them. That being said, the Austin vs. Bret feud would continue for most of a year and would keep the promotion alive once they hit the double turn in the spring. Good show here and much better than I remember.

Ratings Comparison

Team Furnas and Lafon vs. Team Owen Hart and British Bulldog

Original: B-

Redo: C+

Undertaker vs. Mankind

Original: C+

Redo: B

Team Hunter Hearst Helmsley vs. Team Marc Mero

Original: D

Redo: C+

Bret Hart vs. Steve Austin

Original: A+

Redo: A+

Team Farrooq vs. Team Yokozuna

Original: D-

Redo: F

Sycho Sid vs. Shawn Michaels

Original: C-

Redo: B

Overall Rating

Original: B-

Redo: B+

Like I said, I liked it better than I rememebred.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/11/15/history-of-survivor-series-count-up-1996-bret-vs-austin-the-prequel-and-rock-debuts/>

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NXT – November 6, 2013: Night of the Living Squashes

NXT

Date: November 6, 2013

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Alex Riley, Renee Young

This is another one of those shows where you can't really guess what's coming. We get one of these episodes every taping cycle but they can be very entertaining most of the time. Last week wasn't the best show for

these guys but unlike everywhere else, I have full confidence that NXT can be fine again tonight. Let's get to it.

Earlier today Sylvester LeFort asks the mysterious blonde what is wrong with Alexander Rusev. The girl speaks Russian and LeFort has no idea what she's saying.

Welcome Home.

Sylvester LeFort vs. Alexander Rusev

The Russian blonde is now managing Rusev, who now comes out to what sounds like a national anthem. LeFort offers Rusev money to prevent an acute case of death, only to have Rusev clothesline him down and put on the Accolade for the submission at 13 seconds.

They actually clip the match on the replay.

Bayley is with Charlotte in the back and couldn't be happier to have her headband fixed. Sasha and Summer come in with a brand new headband for her but Charlotte is skeptical. No match is made but I think you can connect the dots for yourself.

El Local vs. Leo Kruger

Local pounds away to start but walks into a quick spinebuster for two. Kruger pulls Local off the middle rope and the Slice sets up three straight snap suplexes. A double arm guillotine choke is enough to make Local tap at 2:10.

We recap the issues between Paige and Emma over the last few weeks. They argued backstage last week with Emma thinking there's something wrong with Paige.

Troy McClain/Travis Tyler vs. Ascension

"LET'S GO THESE GUYS!" Non-title of course. Rick Victor starts with I believe Tyler and drives him into the Ascension corner for the tag off to O'Brien. Conor grabs a headlock and takes Tyler over six straight times before bringing Victor back in for a hard clothesline. There's the double

flapjack and the Fall of Man is good for the pin at 1:45.

Mojo Rawley vs. Ty Dillinger

Feeling out process to start as the male announcers grill Renee on which guy she'd want to hang out with. As usual though, it feels completely natural and is genuinely amusing. Ty drives Mojo into the corner and scores with a quick Russian legsweep. Rawley no sells a chop but is easily taken down into a chinlock. Ty rips at Mojo's face for a bit but gets slammed down and rammed into the corner. A very high jumping Earthquake splash is enough to pin Dillinger at 3:20.

Rating: D. Again, Rawley isn't anything special in the ring but his entrance and energy are more than enough to carry him for a good while. I'm not sure why they have him get beaten down from the start of the match and hit just a few moves, but it was enough to get Randy Savage a few WCW Titles so maybe Rawley will be fine.

Raw ReBund wastes five minutes of our time on the horrible final segment.

Bayley/Charlotte vs. Sasha/Summer and Graves vs. Neville in a 2/3 falls match next week.

Luke Harper vs. Kassius Ohno

The fans are way into Harper here. Ohno is now in basic black trunks instead of the bright colors he wore before he fell into a hole and got lost a few months back. Kassius pounds him into the corner to start but Harper comes back with even harder forearms to the face. They slug it out again with Harper putting Kassius down with a European uppercut of all things. Ohno is driven into the corner as this is one sided so far.

Kassius comes back with some kicks to the ribs but gets caught in a cravate. Another hard chop puts Ohno on the apron but Kassius comes back with a discus forearm to send Harper to the floor. A dive over the top takes Luke down and we take a break. Back with Harper hitting a BIG boot to send Ohno out to the floor. Ohno dives back in at nine so Luke drops a bunch of elbows for two. A quick rollup gets the same for Kassius but

Luke nails him with another forearm.

There's the Gator Roll from Harper who eventually stays in one place with the front facelock before kicking Ohno into the ropes again. Back up and Ohno scores with a running knee to the head to finally get the fans behind him. Ohno slugs away and scores with a running clothesline and a dropkick to the head.

A Buff Blockbuster (someone needs to bring that back as a finisher) gets two on Harper but he catches Kassius in a sitout Boss Man Slam for two. There's a bit boot for two on Ohno but he comes back with the Roaring Elbow for a VERY close two. Harper ends him with the discus lariat a few seconds later for the pin at 13:00 shown of 16:30.

Rating: C+. They were trying and the striking was good but Ohno has fallen a long way in just a few months. Kassius looked better out there and got the fans into him, but Harper is a main roster star at this point and feuding with two former world champions. That discus lariat is a good example of a simple move getting over because it gets pins. It's really that simple sometimes.

Overall Rating: C. Not a great show overall but it was a very quick 45 minutes. Rusev and Harper looked great and Ohno was his usual decent self. This was about the squashes which set up future matches so no real complaints there. The show needs the stars back but it's certainly not falling apart in their absence.

Results

Alexander Rusev b. Sylvester LeFort – Accolade

Leo Kruger b. El Local – Double arm guillotine choke

Ascension b. Travis Tyler/Troy McClain – Fall of Man to Tyler

Mojo Rawley b. Ty Dillinger – Running seated senton

Luke Harper b. Kassius Ohno – Discus lariat

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Thought of the Day: TNA At The Moment

Covering two current TNA stories. 1. Apparently AJ Styles will be gone for a few more months, defending the TNA World Title around the world.

Translation: Remember that guy we spent most of 2013 building up? Well you just don't get to see him anymore but come back later because he might be back then. Until then, watch a bunch of guys that AJ beat in a competition fight for the other title in his absence!

2. Dixie Carter announced a former world champion returning to Impact tomorrow night in Cincinnati.

It would be Pacman Jones, the former tag team champion from several years back. In other words, instead of bringing in new Knockouts, tag teams, X-Division guys or some fresh faces, TNA feels the better move is to bring back a guy who didn't wrestle, most people complained about being in TNA the first time, and makes the news for not getting arrested rather than the more traditional opposite.

That's TNA in a nutshell at the moment. More on their screwups later.

Survivor Series Count-Up – 1995: Bret vs. Diesel III

Survivor Series 1995

Date: November 19, 1995

Location: USAir Arena, Landover, Maryland

Attendance: 14,500

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Mr. Perfect, Jim Ross

This is an interesting show as things were transitioning from what we had for the last two years to the New Generation era, and by that I mean it's Shawn Michaels time. The main event tonight is Bret challenging Diesel, who has been champion for just shy of a year, for the title. Other than that we've got some Survivor Series matches here and that's about it. Let's get to it.

Oh and Nitro started about two months ago, meaning Luger is gone.

We start with Razor Ramon, talking about being in the first Wild Card match. The idea here was to take faces and heels and mix them up. It was an interesting concept but like most Survivor Series matches, it didn't mean anything and wasn't done again.

Mr. Perfect is introduced as a surprise commentator.

We actually get an opening video which is about Bret going A-Diesel hunting. The idea is old vs. new. It's No countout and No DQ tonight, basically meaning a street fight.

BodyDonnas vs. Underdogs

Skip, Rad Radford, Tom Prichard, 1-2-3 Kid

Barry Horowitz, Hakushi, Marty Jannetty, Bob Holly

The idea here is people that care about their looks vs. jobbers. Horowitz scored one of the biggest upsets ever over Skip. Jannetty needs no introduction as a jobber. The Kid is a mystery partner who is freshly heel here. By freshly I mean this is his first match as a heel. Razor comes out to go after the Kid who screwed him over on Raw on Monday. Yeah Raw is finally a big deal at this point too. Razor is IC Champion of course.

Prichard and Jannetty start things off and Marty has to fight out of the heel corner. The Kid holds him there but Prichard hits Kid with a knee by mistake. The BodyDonnas huddle on the floor until it's off to Radford (Louie Spicolli) vs. Marty. Radford is called BodyDonna in training because he's pretty fat. Here's Holly to face Rad and he takes Radford over with a rana. Radford tries the same thing but gets powerbombed down.

Off to Hakushi who is pretty freshly face I believe. He gets behind Radford but walks into a spinebuster. Off to the Kid who hits a top rope splash on Hakushi for two and it's off to Captain Skip. Hakushi escapes a belly to back superplex and it's back to Holly who speeds things up. Prichard comes in as the fans want Barry. A powerbomb counters a rana from Holly but Tom misses a moonsault. Holly hits a top rope cross body for the elimination. Skip immediately comes in and rolls up Holly to tie it back up.

Hakushi comes in again and trips up Skip before elbowing him in the face. A Vader Bomb hits knees though and Skip gets control back. A shot to the chest takes Skip down so here's the Kid again. The fans want Barry but it's Hakushi taking over with a Muta Elbow in the corner. A top rope shoulder takes Kid down for two but Hakushi misses a springboard splash. Razor is watching in the back. Kid kicks Hakushi in the back of the head and Radford gets the easy pin.

Barry comes in and gets pounded down and the fans almost explode. Naturally this match would be the end of his push because that's how it works in the WWF. Radford and the Kid double team Horowitz but he comes

back with a jawbreaker to Radford. Skip tells Rad not to pin Barry yet because Skip wants to get the pin himself.

Radford hits a Hennig neck snap as Hennig is stunned at the reaction to Horowitz. Rad stops to exercise and gets cradled by Barry for the pin. It's Skip/The Kid vs. Barry/Marty. Horowitz gets distracted by a double team and the Kid dropkicks him in the back, setting up a legdrop for the elimination. So it's Marty down two on one but he avoids a charging Skip in the corner.

A sunset flip out of nowhere gets two for Marty and the Rocker Dropper (a fancy Fameasser) puts Skip down and Marty goes up. Sunny crotches him (it's 1995 so I can still call Marty lucky for that) but Skip gets countered into a Superbomb (powerbomb off the top, which would be Skip's finisher in ECW) for the elimination. It's one on one now and a missile dropkick gets two for the Kid. A moonsault misses Marty though and they're both down. Jannetty dropkicks him down for two and here comes Sid. A Rocker Dropper takes the Kid down for two but Sid guillotines Marty on the ropes and Kid steals the pin.

Rating: B. This was a good match to open things up with, especially since I don't think anyone would have been able to buy Barry Horowitz captaining anything but an opening match team. Other than that though, the action here was good and it set the Kid up as a somewhat big time heel which is what he needed so soon after a turn. Good opener.

Razor threw a fit in the back after the loss, throwing a monitor against the wall in the process.

Three members of I guess you would say the heel Wild Card team (Dean Douglas, Owen and Yokozuna) say that Razor needs to channel his energy into their match later, since he's their partner.

Team Bertha Faye vs. Team Alundra Blayze

Bertha Faye, Aja Kong, Tomoko Watanabe, Lioness Asuka

Alundra Blayze, Kyoko Inoue, Sakie Hasegawa, Chaparita Asari

Let me make this clear for those of you that feel the need to educate me

every time there is a Japanese wrestler in a match: I do not care about Japanese wrestling. If I did, I would watch it. I also do not care about women's wrestling. If I did, I would watch more of it. Therefore, do me a favor and save your history lessons about these girls because I have almost no idea which is which, nor do I particularly care. I'm not saying they're not talented and that they haven't had some great matches. I'm saying I do not care about them, nor do I want to learn about them.

Bertha is a fat and not incredibly attractive woman and is Blayze's main rival for Blayze's Women's Title. She tells the fans to shut up in an attempt to get people interested in this match. Asari and Asuka start things off with Asuka kicking her head off with a spinwheel kick. At least I think that's what happened because we're getting a wide shot of the arena for the opening bell. Asari, a member of the face team, stands about 4'9 and is a tiny thing whereas Asuka looks like a monster.

Off to Blayze who is more Asuka's size for a slam on the Lioness. Back to Asari who debuts the Sky Twister Press (a corkscrew moonsault) in America. Asuka doesn't sell it but you can't ask everything of her. Vince has no idea what to call it but JR is there to clean up for him. Blayze comes back in and hits a German suplex to eliminate Asuka. Good now I don't have to keep track of two girls with similar names.

Watanabe comes in but misses a dive. Blayze sends her to the floor and does hit her dive to take over. Hasegawa comes in and hits five rolling double underhook suplexes on Watanabe as Perfect makes sexist remarks. Watanabe hits a seated senton off the top for two as this selling thing is still an issue. Aja Kong, a total monster, comes in with no tag and is immediately kicked in the face and suplexed by Hasegawa. Another Rock Bottom suplex puts her down but Hasegawa jumps into a kick to the chest. Something like a belly to back suplex eliminates Hasegawa to make it 3-3.

Asari comes in and is quickly dispatched by a middle rope splash. If you can't see the ending of this match coming, you fail your exam. Blayze comes in but tags out almost immediately to Inoue. Inoue looks like a cross between a Rocker and the Ultimate Warrior. By the time I finish typing that, a seated senton eliminates her. Kong put out three girls in about 90 seconds.

So it's Blayze vs. Faye, Kong and Watanabe. All three get in the ring at once but it winds up being Watanabe who is legal. A snap suplex gets two for the champion and a slow motion piledriver gets the pin and the elimination for Blayze. Faye comes in and after some basic shots to Blayze, Faye gets caught in a German suplex to make it one on one. Kong hits a superplex for two and she crushes Blayze in the corner for a bit. Alundra hits a bad rana for two and a standing moonsault for the same. Blayze goes up but gets headbutted down and the spinning backfist gets the pin for Kong.

Rating: C+. The match was fun stuff considering it only had ten minutes to get through seven eliminations. Kong would have been a great challenger for Blayze, if the division had stayed around. Blayze would show up on Nitro in about a month and throw the WWF Women's Title (and her career too) in the trash. Fun match but too rushed to mean anything.

A Bill Clinton impersonator is here. He says he's been watching Bam Bam Bigelow since Bigelow was a kid and playing with Pebbles.

Bam Bam Bigelow vs. Goldust

Goldust is like a month old at this point. Bigelow is obsessed with fire at this point which makes sense given his looks and attire. This is when Goldust was just a movie guy at this point and not, you know, trying to screw everyone on the roster. After about a four minute entrance, we're ready to go. Then we get some stalling to go with the long entrance. There's not even a Marlina yet to look at.

Goldie tries to get in Bigelow's mind but gets knocked to the floor for his efforts. Back in and Bigelow slugs him down but charges into a boot in the corner. Goldust gets rammed into the post on the floor but he comes back with a clothesline to send Bigelow back to the floor. Back in and it's a front facelock as this match keeps dragging along. Bam Bam is thrown to the floor but comes back with a clothesline. A headbutt misses and Goldie rides Bigelow on the mat. Bam Bam comes back with an electric chair but gets taken down by a lariat. Bigelow makes a comeback, misses a charge, and gets bulldogged down for the pin.

Rating: F. This was an eight minute match. Look at the length of what I

wrote and tell me how this match ran eight minutes. Goldust was all mystique and no substance for a year or so until he figured out how to wrestle a match as Goldust instead of as Dustin Rhodes in a funny outfit. This was Bigelow's last match in the company ever.

Clinton wastes more of our time. Bob Backlund is with him now. Backlund is a critic apparently.

We recap Mabel vs. Undertaker. Mabel was fat and won the King of the Ring, then last month on Raw he dropped some big fat legs on Taker, crushing his face. Tonight it's about revenge.

Royals vs. Dark Side

King Mabel, Jerry Lawler, Hunter Hearst Helmsley, Isaac Yankem

Undertaker, Fatu, Henry Godwin, Savio Vega

Mabel is on a throne carried by about five guys, all of whom look like they're about to have hernias. The idea here is you have King Mabel, King Lawler, the blue blood and the Royal Dentist Isaac Yankem. About two years later, Isaac would put on a mask and remember that he's Undertaker's brother named Kane. What exactly is dark about Taker's partners isn't really clear. Fatu is MAKING A DIFFERENCE and is supposed to be some kind of hero for kids in the projects. He was very happy to become the Sultan a year later.

Taker's entrance of course is huge. He has this skull looking mask on now which would eventually be purple and look very stupid. Fatu and Hunter Hearst Helmsley start things off. The Dark Side has matching t-shirts that say Rest In Peace. Fatu throws Helmsley around to start but we almost get a Pedigree, which is only broken up by a glare from Undertaker. Off to Godwin who was feuding with Hunter at this point in the standard culture clash feud.

Off to Lawler who immediately tags in Yankem. A big hop toss puts Isaac down but he sends Henry into the corner to escape. Back to Helmsley, which I'm getting tired of typing. If only there was a shorter version of his name. Perfect: "You know Helmsley likes to be called Triple H." Thank

you Mr. Perfect. Anyway, Godwin gorilla presses HHH, holding him up for a LONG time.

Lawler comes in and gets Savio which is a clash of styles if I've ever heard of one. Vega pounds away on Jerry as does Fatu. Yankem gets in a knee to Fatu's back and the evil King takes over. Isaac comes in to slam Fatu and a legdrop follows. Mabel comes in but misses a splash in the corner. Vega pounds on Mabel in a rematch of the KOTR final. A side slam kills Vega but there's no cover.

Vega gets beaten on in the corner to fill in more time. Yankem is listed as 6'8 or 6'9 here, which means he would have grown about three or four inches by the time he became the Big Fried Freak. A HHH knee drop gets two on Vega as the crowd is silent because none of this means anything. This is all just filler until we get to the Taker tag when the place is going to erupt.

Lawler's piledriver on Vega gets two. Well it's not Memphis so it's understandable. Lawler knocks Vega into the corner....and here's Taker. Jerry gets thrown around by the throat and no one will tag him. Tombstone and pin on Lawler, tombstone and pin on Yankem, chokeslam and pin on Helmsley, and there's just Mabel left. He immediately belly to belly suplexes Taker down and drops the face crushing legdrop before dancing a bit. There's the situp and Mabel runs for the countout.

Rating: D+. This whole match ran just under fifteen minutes and about two of those meant anything. Everything was waiting for Taker to come in and dominate, which he did quite well, but getting there was pretty dull stuff. This match is more fun for looking at what these people would become rather than what they are now. Taker would lose the mask soon enough thank goodness.

Bret is ready for Diesel and isn't looking forward to the defense he'd have at the next In Your House against British Bulldog. He talks about Wayne Gretsky and wonders if he himself is still the best ever. Today he'll find out.

Diesel isn't worried about Bulldog and he's going to take care of Bret tonight.

DiBiase and Cornette have a small argument before the next match. Shawn comes in and says chill.

Team Shawn Michaels vs. Team Yokozuna

Shawn Michaels, Ahmed Johnson, British Bulldog, Sycho Sid

Yokozuna, Owen Hart, Razor Ramon, Dean Douglas

This is the Wild Card match with all of the mixed up partners. It's also Ahmed's PPV debut. Douglas is the original Damien Sandow, which is a ripoff of the Genius. We get going with Owen vs. Shawn which is of course very fast paced stuff. Shawn sends him to the floor and after ducking a tennis racket shot from Cornette, taps Cornette's pants with said racket. Back inside and it's Douglas pounding away on Shawn and suplexing him down.

Shawn comes back with a forearm followed by a double ax off the top rope for two. Douglas misses a Vader Bomb so Shawn comes back with a moonsault press for two. It's off to Ahmed who gets to destroy everything in sight but he can't slam Yoko. After a big group beatdown, Dean is able to get a chinlock on Ahmed to take over. Razor gets in some cheap shots which is rather heelish of him.

Back to Owen which lasts all of three seconds before it's back to Dean. Johnson powerslams Dean down but it's off to Shawn who is launched by Ahmed at Dean for two. In a more normal act for Razor, he pops Dean in the face to give Shawn a rollup win. Off to Bulldog vs. Owen which should be a good pairing. Owen hits a sweet spinwheel kick for two and Davey is so mad that he tags out to Shawn.

Hart tags out to Razor and it's time for a rematch from Summerslam 95. JR: "I don't think they can wrestle each other without a ladder." They're tentative to start things off but Shawn throws Razor to the floor, followed by Razor taking Shawn's head off with a clothesline. They collide in mid-air but Shawn nips up. Razor is like screw that chico and hits the Razor's Edge out of nowhere. Ahmed makes the save and the fans aren't sure if they like that.

They collide again....and then they do it for a third time. Shawn tags in Sid who had his back to the ring for some reason. This is a rematch from Raw and part of an ongoing feud. Razor can barely get up, allowing Sid to pound away at will. Yoko tries to get in a cheap shot on Sid but Sid kicks him away. Razor comes back with some right hands and they clothesline each other down. That's the fourth time something Razor has done something like that in five minutes.

For some reason, Sid goes up (well he is Sycho) and gets slammed back down for two. A one handed chokeslam (looked awesome) puts Razor down but Sid tags in Shawn instead of powerbombing Razor. Shawn accidentally superkicks Sid, but Bulldog breaks up the pin. Not that it matters as Razor covers again a second later and gets the pin. Sid powerbombs Michaels, his own partner, before leaving. Bulldog and Razor are legal at the moment with Davey pounding away....or not as Davey was just having fun.

Razor and Shawn are both down but Ramon can only get two. Owen gets the tag to beat on Michaels and drops him with a backdrop. Off to Yoko for the first time I believe and he destroys Shawn in the corner. Shawn gets whipped upside down in the corner and it's off to the nerve hold by Yoko. It's not like Yoko is flexing or anything but it does look like a nice shoulder to lean on I guess.

Shawn gets up and is promptly elbowed back down. Off to Owen for a double headbutt to put Shawn down again. Owen misses a swan dive and Shawn makes the tag to Ahmed, who cleans house. The yet to be named Pearl River Plunge (Tiger Bomb) pins Owen and it's off to Razor vs. Ahmed, which would have been a very interesting feud. Razor bulldogs Johnson down and things break down again with Razor beating up all of his opponents.

Ahmed goes to the corner to pose, and he just happens to put himself in Razor's Edge position. With Ahmed down, Bulldog comes in sans tag. Here come Sid and the 1-2-3 Kid with DiBiase as Razor hits the fallaway slam on Bulldog for two. Razor drills the Kid but walks into the powerslam for the elimination. It's Shawn/Bulldog/Johnson vs. Yokozuna now.

Shawn gets the fat man first but the right hands don't do much to Yoko, who slugs Shawn down with ease. Yoko hits the fat man legdrop but opts

for the Banzai instead of covering. Shawn, fearing death, avoids the drop and makes the tag to Ahmed. There's the slam (for the second time) but Bulldog breaks up the pin by his own teammate. Davey gets dropped and Shawn superkicks Yoko down. A splash from Ahmed (with a SQUEAL) gets the pin and the victory.

Rating: C+. For a match with almost no point behind it and some wacky teams, this was pretty good stuff. The Shawn vs. Razor stuff was interesting as you knew they had chemistry but it was fun to see them without a gimmick. Ahmed looked good but not great here, which would be the right description of him for his entire run in the WWF. Fun match that was never tried again, which I can understand.

More Clinton stuff with Sunny sitting on his lap. Lucky guy.

Bret talks about his previous matches with Diesel, both of which rocked.

Diesel says he's Jackknifed Bret twice but he's not sure if he can beat him. Diesel won the first one by DQ and the second was a draw. They were both good matches so this should be good too.

Perfect picks Bret, JR picks Diesel.

WWF World Title: Bret Hart vs. Diesel

Diesel is defending and this is No DQ and No countout. Diesel immediately takes a buckle pad off, so Bret takes another one off to match him. Bret immediately charges him into the corner and goes after the leg but Diesel pounds him over the back to take over. Diesel knocks him to the floor and Bret is limping. The champ follows him out and hits a HARD ax handle to put Bret down again. It's a slow start so far but they have a lot of time.

Hart gets sent into the barricade and goes back in but he bails to the floor immediately. Back in and Diesel wins a slugout, knocking Bret to the floor with a big right hand. Diesel whips him into the steps and keeps the pace slow. A theme of the promos had been wearing Bret tiring Diesel out so there's some good psychology going on here. Diesel puts Bret down with a hard chair shot to the back and Hart is reeling.

Back in and Diesel loads up the Jackknife but Bret keeps grabbing the leg to block it. Now he bites the champ's hands to escape. The fans are starting to get into this too. Bret goes for the knee and the champ is in trouble. They do the same opening sequence as Bret goes for the knee but Diesel hits him in the back. This time though, Bret gets him down and cranks on the knee. See, THAT is storytelling.

Perfect says the line that always gets on my nerves of "they're all the same size on the mat." JR properly says "the size and power advantage are negated on the mat." What JR says is true. Diesel is still however bigger than Bret on the mat or standing up. Anyway, Bret cannonballs down onto the knee and there's the Figure Four. Diesel makes the rope but Bret stays on the bad leg.

Hart tries the Sharpshooter but Diesel thumbs him in the eyes before kicking him into the exposed buckle. Bret picks the leg again and wraps it around the post before tying a cord of some kind around the post. He ties the other end of the cord to Diesel's leg, making the champion a sitting duck. Bret gets a chair but Diesel uses the free leg for a big boot. Diesel crawls for the chair but Bret gets to it first and wears out the knee with chair shots. The leg is still tied to the post.

With the leg still attached, Bret pulls off the backbreaker. Bret takes the chair to the top but Diesel punches him down to crotch Bret. Hart gets slammed to the mat, giving Diesel the chance to untie his ankle. Diesel chokes Bret with the cord and hits the side slam for two. Diesel sends Bret chest first into the exposed corner and puts him in 619 position for the running crotch attack, but he can't run because of the bad leg. Instead he jumps into the air and crashes down on Bret, which looks more painful than the running version.

Diesel can barely hit Snake Eyes onto a covered buckle and Bret is in trouble. He tries another one but Bret escapes and rams Diesel into the exposed buckle. A Hart Attack clothesline gets two on the champ and Bret starts his comeback. That would be his second comeback if you're keeping track. A middle rope clothesline gets two as does a Russian Legsweep. Bret clotheslines Diesel to the floor and tries a plancha but Diesel just steps to the side and lets Bret crash.

Bret starts getting back to the apron but Diesel knocks him off, and for the first time ever, through the Spanish Announce Table. They head back inside and Diesel calls for the Jackknife but Bret falls onto his face from exhaustion. Diesel picks him up to try again but BRET IS GOLDBRICKING and rolls Diesel up for the title out of nowhere, shocking the fans.

Rating: A. Outstanding match here with both guys looking awesome. It takes the right kind of opponent to get a great match out of Nash, but when you put a smaller guy like Bret or Shawn in there, you're going to get a good result almost every time. These two had some masterpieces against each other and this was one of the best ones. I had a blast with this and it worked really well with Bret getting more and more violent and sadistic before faking Diesel out and using a wrestling move to win the title. That's psychology people, and it's great.

Diesel snaps post match and lays out Bret and some officials. Bret takes two Jackknives and says I'M BACK to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. This was a pleasant surprise as with 1995 you often think of something disappointing but instead this was good almost throughout. The Goldust match was terrible but other than that and arguably the Undertaker match, the rest of this is all solid to quite good stuff. Throw in a new world champion and there's not much you can call bad here. Very good show.

Ratings Comparison

BodyDonnas vs. Underdogs

Original: A-

Redo: B

Team Bertha Faye vs. Team Alundra Blayze

Original: D

Redo: C+

Goldust vs. Bam Bam Bigelow

Original: C

Redo: F

Dark Side vs. Royals

Original: B-

Redo: D+

Team Shawn Michaels vs. Team Yokozuna

Original: C+

Redo: C+

Bret Hart vs. Diesel

Original: C+

Redo: A

Overall Rating

Original: B-

Redo: B

As close as the previous show was to being the same, this one is almost entirely different, yet it leads to a very similar overall rating. That's a very interesting thing and one of my favorite things to see in doing this.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/11/14/history-of-survivor-series-count-up-1995-bret-slays-the-giant/>

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Monday Nitro – June 15, 1998: The Roddy Piper Show

Monday Nitro #141

Date: June 15, 1998

Location: Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum, Uniondale, New York

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Tony Schiavone, Bobby Heenan, Larry Zbyszko

We're past the Great American Bash and the main development is Sting holds both tag team titles. Seriously, other than that not a ton has changed. Hogan, Hart, Piper and Savage had their match which changed absolutely nothing and Booker is the TV Champion again. There's not much else to say about the show, which is a good indication of how important that show was. We're now four weeks away from Bash at the Beach so let's get to it.

Public Enemy vs. Hugh Morrus/Barbarian

This opens the show as Public Enemy is on their way to the ring as Tony welcomes us to the show. It's a street fight meaning the weapons are flying as soon as the Public Enemy hits the ring. As usual it's pure

insanity with everyone hitting everyone else in the head and Grunge being sent head first into a garbage can. Even Jimmy Hart gets in a cheap shot with a sheet of metal.

Hugh backdrops Rocco into a powerbomb from Barbarian and a bunch of garbage can shots keep Rocco down. Grunge comes back in with some trashcan lid shots to Barbarian as Morrus loads up a table on the floor. A frying pan to the crotch slows Morrus down but he's good enough to bulldog Rocco. Jimmy tries some more shots to Rocco's head, earning him a suplex into the ring. Rocco is eventually suplexed over the top and through the table, but he lands on Barbarian for the pin.

Rating: D-. I can't stand these matches. I get the idea of appealing to the ECW fanbase but couldn't they come up with something more interesting than just hitting each other in the head with metal? These matches don't add anything at all and when it takes a few seconds to determine who won, there's probably a problem.

We get the opening pyro display and the announcers' usual recap of the recent events around these parts.

Earlier today Mike interviewed some fans to find out if they were ready for Nitro.

We recap the Wolfpack recruiting Page from last week.

Opening sequence.

Nitro Girls.

Here's how to get a Nitro Party!

Here's Savage for an interview. He has a message for Piper and that is....that he wants DDP in the Wolfpack. Savage talks about Wyatt Earp

wanting to help the Wolfpack and goes into a sales pitch to Page for a spot on the team. He wants Page in a cage match tonight and if Page can beat him, Page can join the team with Savage's full endorsement.

We get some stills of the tag match last night.

Chris Benoit vs. Fit Finlay

Tenay suggests that this is a #1 contenders match for the TV Title but I don't think that's official. Benoit takes him into the corner to start and this is going to be a physical one. The fans are all over Finlay from the bell and he seems a bit shaken by it. Finlay takes him down with a headlock and cranks on the arm a bit before just kicking Benoit in the face. We hit the chinlock on the Canadian before Benoit fights up and hits a backbreaker to send Finlay to the floor.

Finlay sends him back first into the apron before taking him inside for a reverse chinlock. Benoit stands up and drops Finlay down onto his back for two. We come back from a break with Finlay dropping a knee on Benoit's face for two. Chris fights up again with some hard boots to the ribs but gets dropped throat first across the top rope. Finlay misses a charge into the post and Benoit hits the Rolling Germans to put both guys down.

Benoit is up first but the Swan Dive only hits mat and Finlay drops another knee to the head. These shots are making me cringe more and more every time. The rolling senton puts Benoit down again but Benoit goes into beast mode, countering the tombstone into the Crossface for the win.

Rating: C+. This took some time to get going but everything after the break was awesome. These two beat the crap out of each other, but the shots to the head are hard to sit through. It's good to see Benoit get a win after losing the series though, so maybe there's hope for him yet. Solid match here for the most part though.

Post match Gene comes into the ring to interview Benoit about the series with Booker. Benoit invites Booker out here to see him face to face for some business. Here's Harlem Heat and Benoit stares Booker down, only to shake and raise his hand. Booker calls Benoit the best man he's ever been in the ring with and Benoit says to say the word if Booker ever needs a good man in his corner.

This isn't cool with Stevie who calls Benoit a pipsqueak. Benoit repeats what he said and Booker offers another handshake but Stevie blasts Benoit in the face. Cue Mongo (dang it) to pull Stevie off but Booker breaks it up. Harlem Heat leaves and Benoit says he's here for one thing, and he holds up the four fingers.

Post breaks here's DDP to answer Savage's challenge. Well in theory at least as Page would rather talk about Hogan and Rodman. They're both somewhere between a cockroach and that white stuff that accumulates at the corner of your mouth when you're really thirsty (direct quote from the movie Con Air). Apparently there's a tag match at Bash at the Beach with Page having a partner to be named. Oh and Savage is on for the cage match tonight.

We get a clip of Hogan and Rodman attacking Page with chairs last week. Apparently there are rumors that NBA superstar Karl Malone might don the tights and join WCW. I'm guessing that was the major announcement that wasn't made on Thunder.

Nitro Girls.

Gene is in the ring again and it's time for Piper's weekly rambling. Piper: "GOD BLESS FRANK SINATRA!" Sinatra died a month before this, so I'm assuming it was a tribute, but that's a bit late isn't it? Anyway, Piper talks about remembering the Statue of Liberty wearing a kilt (I rescind my thought on it being a tribute and vote for Piper is nuts) and says he's tough enough to make Rush Limbaugh lose weight and put Howard Stern on the Disney Channel. The smark crowd stops him with a loud RODDY

chant but Piper confirms the cage match for tonight, but with him as the referee for no apparent reason.

Hiroshi Tenzan/Masahiro Chono vs. High Voltage

The Japanese guys are IWGP Tag Team Champions and are in the Black and White. Robbie Rage gets jumped to start but Kaos comes in off the top with a clothesline to take down Chono. High Voltage clears the ring and we take a break. Yes, this match is getting a break. Back with Rage stomping on Tenzan and putting on a reverse chinlock. Tenzan fights up as the announcers talk about Goldberg being with his sick mom tonight.

Chono comes in off the tag and everything breaks down for a few moments. Things settle back down with Kaos blocking a Chono suplex until High Voltage comes in for a double team. Kaos' top rope clothesline hits Rage by mistake, allowing Tenzan to drop a top rope headbutt for two. Not that it matters as the Mafia Kick ends Kaos seconds later.

Rating: F. I can't stand these matches as we're just supposed to instantly care about people we haven't seen in months because they're wearing NWO shirts. Yeah Chono and Tenzan are awesome, but we need more than a few matches a year for the fans to realize that. On top of that the match was horrible with everyone looking sloppy and the match being a big mess. Given what I've seen from both teams, I blame this pretty much entirely on High Voltage.

Still shots of Giant vs. Sting last night.

Here's the Wolfpack to a BIG reaction. Nash talks about how life is full of ironies, such as the last man to join the Wolfpack is the first one to bring home some gold. He brings out Sting for his pick of the partners but Sting wants to suck up to the crowd first. Sting talks about how everyone in the group has credentials, ranging from Konnan coming from a bunch of tough barrios, Luger holding every title there is to hold and Nash being a living, breathing monster. Savage isn't listed as a

possibility for some reason. However, he's going to wait until the tag title defense tonight to make his announcement.

Kanyon vs. Sick Boy

Kanyon charges to the ring and the brawl is quickly on. Sick Boy is stomped into the corner and punched a lot before Kanyon pulls him down with a neckbreaker for two. Kanyon heads to the floor where a Lodi (in a safari hat because he's odd like that) distraction lets Sick Boy take over. Back in and Sick Boy goes up but hops down, allowing Kanyon to hit a great looking forward electric chair for two. A faceplant out of the corner puts Sick Boy down again before the Flatliner gets the pin.

Rating: C-. This didn't have time to go anywhere but Kanyon continues to look awesome. His offense was so different from anyone else and he had a solid look, but for some reason he never reached that higher level. The feud with the Flock is working though and I'm curious to see where it goes.

Here are Rude and Hennig with Curt now in the Black and White like he should have been all along. Rude talks about how everyone has been asking why they turned on the Wolfpack and it's the stereotypical answer: money. If it had been Hennig in there with Goldberg, the streak would be over. That's going to be the case one day because Hennig has won over 3,000 matches. Hennig brags about swerving Konnan and promises no swerves with the Black and White, even though he's now swerved DDP, Flair and Konnan. He'd never swerve Rude though.

JJ Dillon is here to address the Cruiserweight Title issues from last night. The referee was right to call the match last night so here's Jericho, already in celebration mode. He sings about being the champion and says there's dancing in the streets. JJ says Jericho is the champion, but he has to defend against Malenko within 30 days. Jericho rips into Dean's dad again, but thankfully Dean was about two feet from Jericho to jump him immediately. Malenko beats him into the back and throws Jericho

into anything he can find, ranging from what look to be portable bleachers to a cardboard box. Security finally breaks it up.

Chris Adams vs. The Giant

Giant is smoking again. This actually lasts longer than I expected, going a full 20 seconds before the chokeslam ends Adams.

We look at Hogan and Rodman attacking Page again last week.

Here are Hogan and Bischoff for their weekly (or hourly depending on the show) chat. Hogan says that God created Hollywood on the seventh day. Back in the day when he was selling out MSG, the slimy one (Nash?) was wishing he could be like Hogan one day. As for Page, if he wants a piece of himself and Rodman, come get some, even if it means bringing in Karl Malone. Hogan and Rodman have already signed for Bash at the Beach, so make sure to check the show out to see who Page and his partner take a beating. This was short and actually accomplished something. I'm as shocked as you are.

More Nitro Girls and the Nitro Party video.

Hour #3 begins.

Here's Sting for his decision. He wastes no time and picks Nash. Tony calls this a curveball, even though it was one of four possible options. Nash does a survey of which NWO the fans are here to see, which sums up this company in a nutshell. Lastly, he says Hennig is the Pack's newest prey.

Tag Titles: Sting/Kevin Nash vs. Harlem Heat

Tony gets the continuity wrong before the bell, saying Sting has been a tag champion for a long time, even though it was clearly stated the

titles were vacant coming into last night. Booker and Sting get us going in the best possible pairing for this match. Things start fast with Sting jumping over Booker before taking him down with a hiptoss. Booker bails to the floor for a meeting with Stevie before coming back in with the jumping forearm.

Stevie yells at Booker so T brings him in to try his own luck. Ray stomps Sting down but he comes back with some of those odd shots to the face of his own, allowing for the tag off to Nash. Kev comes in but walks into a slam, only to have Stevie miss an elbow drop. We take a break and come back with Booker missing a dropkick on Sting. Back to Nash for knees in the corner and the big boot to the jaw before the side slam gets two.

Off to Sting again who stomps a mudhole on Booker before actually hitting his jumping elbow drop. A Vader Bomb of all things gets two but a regular splash hits Booker's knees. Ash comes in before Booker can make the tag though, meaning the match slows down again. Nash powers Booker down but tags back out to Sting before he breaks a sweat. You have to protect that hair at all costs you see.

The Wolfpack keeps up the fast tags with Nash coming back in but Booker escapes Snake Eyes and gets two off a rollup. Booker avoids the Stinger Splash and finally makes the tag off to Stevie. Sting walks into a powerslam but Stevie talks trash, only to get caught in the Death Drop for the pin about 10 seconds after he was tagged in.

Rating: D+. Not a terrible match here and at least Stevie did the job instead of Booker. The match was pretty dull though with Nash seeming to be as bored as you could imagine him to be and Sting just going through the motions as well. Harlem Heat was done as a top tag team but they were still good enough for a spot like this.

The announcers talk about the cage match.

Remember that video of Scott Steiner on a movie set with Hogan where they

met Carl Weathers? Well here it is again.

The cage is already set up but first we get Bischoff talking to Scott Steiner in a sitdown interview. Scott says it's nice to be in New York but it's nothing compared to Los Angeles. He name drops a bunch of actors who congratulated him for the snow job he put on his brother. Just establishing the new character for Steiner, which I can't imagine lasts long.

Nitro Girls.

Randy Savage vs. Diamond Dallas Page

There's a top on the cage and Piper is the referee. Page climbs on top of the cage to pose before getting inside. We get the bell and Page goes after Savage's bad arm, only to have Randy hit him in the bad ribs. Page goes up top but gets crotched down, only to pop up and go after Savage's own injured ribs. A ram into the cage gets two so Savage sends him into the steel for the same. They ram each other into the buckle before Savage goes head first into the cage.

Back up and they hit heads to put both guys on the mat again. We take a break and come back with Page pounding away and scoring with a clothesline, only to be taken down by a low blow. Savage goes up for the big elbow but hurts his knee on the way down, allowing Page to kick out. Savage and Piper get in a fight over the speed of the count with Savage laying him out via a piledriver. Page comes back with the Diamond Cutter to put all three guys down.

The fans (or the PA system) wants Goldberg as all three guys get back up. Page punches Piper for trying to pull him off Savage, so Piper sends Page into the cage three times in a row. Now Piper beats up Savage, because Heaven forbid a match doesn't focus on Piper at least once. Piper rams both of them into the cage...and the cage raises up. Cue the Black and White to fill the cage which lowers after they get in. The massive

beatdown is on as the match is thrown out.

Rating: D+. This was more about Piper than either wrestler and that's a big problem in WCW at the moment. Piper is playing WAY too big of a role and I have no idea why WCW thinks he's the right man for this spot. The match itself was nothing special as both guys were banged up and basically going through the motions out there until Piper did his thing.

The NWO destroys Savage with Bischoff kicking a chair into his knee. The Wolfpack comes out to try for a save but they can't find a way in. Nash runs (work with me here) to the back and finds the button to raise the cage and we go off the air.

Overall Rating: C-. While not great, this was SO much better than last week as they kept things moving. Rather than focusing on one story, the show focused on different stories at different times which made things a lot easier to sit through. Hogan only having one promo and a run-in at the end is a great example of this as he had something like nine appearances last week. The wrestling was passable and the stories were advanced as well, which is all you can ask for a lot of the time.

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