

Wrestlemania Count-Up – Wrestlemania VII: No That Isn't A Tear In My Eye

Wrestlemania VII

Date: March 24, 1991

Location: Los Angeles Memorial Sports Arena, Los Angeles, California

Attendance: 16,158

Commentators: Bobby Heenan, Gorilla Monsoon

Oh boy has a lot of stuff changed here. First of all, Jesse is gone from the company and is being replaced by a revolving door of replacements. Other than that we've got Sgt. Slaughter as an anti-American world champion who needs a REAL AMERICAN to save the title for the country. There's also a retirement match here between Randy Savage and Ultimate Warrior, which might actually be better than Warrior's title win last year. Oh and there's this big guy in black that is making his Wrestlemania debut tonight. Let's get to it.

The opening video is about Hogan saving AMERICA, which is what the entire show is about. I believe the subtitle of this show is Stars and Stripes Forever, so if you can't figure out what the ending is going to be, I can't help you. Keep in mind that this was inspired by the Gulf War....which was already over but who cares about technicalities like that?

Willie Nelson sings America the Beautiful.

Hacksaw Jim Duggan is dressed like a drunk Uncle Sam and comes out for commentary for the opening match since Heenan is managing. He gives his thoughts on the main matches too.

The Rockers say they'll beat the Heenan Family.

Haku/Barbarian vs. Rockers

Shawn and Haku get us going with Michaels trying to speed things up, only to be slammed into the corner. The second attempt at flying around works

a bit better as a dropkick puts Haku down. The Rockers do some of their double teaming stuff but Barbie takes them down with a big double clothesline. Shawn and Marty double superkick him down though and the Heenan Family has to regroup a bit.

We get down to Marty vs. Barbarian again and speed takes over one more time. A sunset flip doesn't work for Jannetty but Barbarian punches the mat. A rana takes Barbarian down and Marty pounds away for two. Off to Haku and a double headbutt puts Marty down again. Jannetty loads up another rana but the foreigners hit a double hot shot onto the top rope to really take over this time.

A gorilla press plants Jannetty and it's time for more heel double teaming. Marty comes back with something like a cross body for two but the speed continues to get beaten down. By speed I mean the drug of the day for Jannetty of course. Back to Barbarian for a bearhug followed by a powerslam so wicked that the fans pop for it. The falling headbutt misses though and it's hot tag time to Shawn. Things really do speed up now but Shawn gets kicked in the face to slow him down. That goes nowhere for the villains though and it's a Michaels cross body off the top for the pin on Haku.

Rating: B. Just a fast paced tag team match here with power vs. speed. This is one of those formulas that works no matter how many times you do it as long as you have talented guys in there. The future Faces of Fear were fine as monsters for the Rockers to conquer and it set a good pace for the show here. Solid opening match.

Gene is with Marla Maples (not really famous), Alex Trebek and Regis Philbin, our celebrities for tonight. Regis is scared of Earthquake, Trebek tries to make Jeopardy jokes, and Marla is still not famous. Apparently she was married to Donald Trump. Ok then.

Dino Bravo vs. Texas Tornado

Von Erich popped into the company around Summerslam, won the IC Title from Perfect, lost it and was immediately a jobber to the stars until he went back to Texas. It's a fast brawl to start but Bravo avoids the claw. Heenan is on commentary now. Von Erich runs into a boot in the corner and

Dino takes over for a bit. The side suplex puts Tornado down for two and that's about it for Bravo. A few seconds later it's Claw and Tornado Punch for the pin on Bravo.

Rating: D. Nothing at all to see here and it's a match that easily could have been cut. This was Bravo's last televised match before he left the company for good a year or so later. Afterwards he would soon be murdered in an illegal cigarette smuggling operation in Canada. Now there's a story that you can't make up.

Warlord and Slick are ready for Davey Boy.

Bulldog talks to Winston (his new dog) and says there's no bull in this bulldog.

Davey Boy Smith vs. Warlord

This is about whether or not Davey can break the full nelson. We start with our standard power stuff as they ram into each other a few times, only to have Bulldog knock Warlord out to the floor. A crucifix doesn't work for Bulldog so Warlord drops some elbows for no cover. We hit the bearhug but Bulldog punches out, only to get caught in a hot shot to keep him on the mat.

A BIG belly to belly (kind of) puts Bulldog down but again Warlord won't cover. We hit the chinlock until Bulldog fights up and hits a dropkick to send Warlord into the corner. Punches in said corner can't drop Warlord but a cross body is finally enough to get him off his feet. Warlord counters a piledriver but Bulldog counters the counter into a sunset flip for two. Bulldog misses a charge into the corner and Warlord hooks the full nelson. It looks like all hope is lost but the fingers aren't locked. Bulldog finally flips out of it and hooks the powerslam out of nowhere for the win.

Rating: C+. This would be filed under the category of "shocking the world" as it was actually a pretty solid match. Bulldog would get a lot better all of a sudden while Warlord would fall further down the card than he already was. This was way better than I was expecting and it turned into a pretty decent power match.

Jimmy Hart and hits Nasty Boys are ready to take the tag titles from the Harts.

The Harts say good luck cracking the Foundation.

Tag Titles: Hart Foundation vs. Nasty Boys

The Nastys got got hot in WCW in 1990, weren't signed to contracts, and debuted in the WWF in late 1990/early 1991. They won a tag team battle royal for this shot they're getting here. Jerry and Bret start things off and it's a quick Thesz Press to take Sags down. Brian gets knocked off the apron by the Hitman and Sags gets tripped down to the mat. No Sharpshooter yet though as Bret stomps the midsection instead.

Off to Anvil who starts powering Knobs around and pounds away in the corner. After being knocked to the floor, Brian comes right back in and is immediately caught in an armbar. The Nastys double team Neidhart in their corner to FINALLY take over, but a mat slam is enough to let Neidhart tag Bret back in. Hart tries to fight off both of the Boys, only to get decked from behind by Knobs.

Bret is sent out to the floor where he may have hurt his knee. Back inside Jerry whips him into the corner as we hit the heat section of the match. Sags hooks a reverse chinlock before Knobs comes in to do exactly the same. Back to Jerry for a neckbreaker for two and Brian breaks up a hot tag attempt. Hart breaks up a reverse chinlock by Knobs and now it's Jerry to break up another hot tag.

Brian misses a splash in the corner and Bret makes the tag but, say it with me, the referee doesn't see it. We get heel miscommunication and NOW we get a tag to Anvil. Jim cleans house and hits a quick powerslam for two on Knobs as everything breaks down. Jimmy Hart gets decked by Bret and there's a Hart Attack for Knobs. The referee tries to get Bret out and Sags decks Bret with Jimmy's helmet, giving the Nastys the titles.

Rating: B-. Another solid tag match here as the division was getting very hot all of a sudden. The Harts would quietly split up after this with Bret moving into the IC Title picture soon thereafter. The Nastys would hold the titles over the summer before dropping them to the monsters

known as the LOD at Summerslam.

Jimmy Hart's near panic attack over winning the belts is hilarious stuff.

We recap Jake Roberts vs. Rick Martel. Back in October, Roberts and Martel were on the Brother Love Show where Martel tried to spray his cologne on Damien's bag, only to hit Jake's eyes by mistake. Jake was basically blind for a few months, leading to the following blindfold match. These have never been good in the history of wrestling and I don't expect it to be here.

Jake says snakes always do it better in the dark.

Jake Roberts vs. Rick Martel

In short, they're both in hoods and neither guy can see. So the match starts and both guys point across the ring while trying to find where the other is. Martel gets down on the mat and crawls around, only to give us some stupid comedy spots with both guys tripping over the other. Rick tries a backdrop but Jake runs off to the side, showing that he can clearly see if you're thinking about this.

They miss each other in the corner a few times until Martel finally grabs him for a slam, only to miss an elbow drop. Martel gets the referee in the corner, only to realize he's grabbing a shirt. Jake uses the crowd for help by pointing and listening to the crowd cheer as he points at Martel. This continues on for awhile until Martel nearly grabs the snake bag.

The announcers continue a running joke where they can't hear each other which isn't funny. Jake gets knocked to the floor so Martel follows. He grabs a chair and pokes around with it but only hits the post. Back in and Martel takes Jake down and hooks the Boston Crab, only to have it broken quickly. Roberts grabs the DDT a second later for the pin.

Rating: F. This wasn't wrestling. It was a stupid idea with both guys wandering around and making no contact for about seven and a half minutes before both guys hit their finishers. Thankfully this feud was done after this as I don't think the fans could stand any more of it. Oh and on top

of that, Martel didn't cheat once by looking under the mask. Nice heel work there.

The Nasty Boys celebrate in the back and disgust Marla Maples.

Jimmy Snuka vs. The Undertaker

For those of you reading this now, we're currently at 20-0 and it all begins here. Taker slugs him around and rams Snuka head first into the corner a few times. The big jumping clothesline takes Snuka down and there's a quick smother by Taker. Jimmy charges into a knee in the corner and gets slammed down, only for an elbow drop to miss. Snuka chops away but misses a dive and falls to the floor. The Tombstone ends this a few seconds later.

Rating: D+. The match is just a squash but it's far more historic than anything else. Undertaker would go on to become the true Mr. Wrestlemania, never losing a single match in the entirety of his career there up to the point this is being written (2013). Snuka would fade from view soon after this.

We recap Savage vs. Warrior. Savage attacked then WWF Champion Ultimate Warrior on Saturday Night's Main Event because he wanted a title match. Queen Sherri then got on her knees in front of Warrior at the Rumble, only to be turned down again. Savage cost Warrior the title later in the night, setting up a career ending match here tonight.

Ultimate Warrior vs. Randy Savage

Before the match, Heenan spots Miss Elizabeth sitting in the crowd. Warrior only walks to the ring with a coat on instead of his usual sprint to the ring. His trunks have the WWF Title belt on the back with the words "Means much more than this". The fans HATE Savage here while Warrior gets some great pops. They lock up to start with Warrior easily shoving Randy down a few times. A shoulder does nothing for Savage so he heads to the outside.

Back in and a clothesline puts Savage down and there's an overhand choke. An atomic drop has Savage in trouble again and there's a big atomic drop

for good measure. Sherri tries to interfere and is immediately knocked to the outside again. Savage gets tied up in the ropes and Warrior pounds away as this is completely one sided so far. Savage finally comes back with a clothesline but he dives off the top into a slam position, but Warrior puts him down on his feet with no slam. Now THAT is a mind game.

Macho King goes to the floor and grabs a chair which is nothing more than a distraction so that he can jump Warrior. That goes as well as anything else has for him so far with Warrior pounding away at Savage's head. Warrior stomps away in the corner as Heenan says you couldn't sneak a midget into the building. Savage falls out of the corner to avoid a charge, sending Warrior out to the floor. Sherri adds a slap to the face and there's the top rope ax handle.

Warrior gets posted and Sherri gets in a few more shots for good measure. We're told that this is the largest PPV audience in the history of pay per view. Since there's no way to know that for months, I don't think this is the case. Warrior absorbs some slams and pops up to stare Savage down. A Sherri distraction doesn't work at all and Warrior runs the ropes, only to be slammed face first down into the mat for two.

We hit the chinlock/sleeper for a bit before a double clothesline puts both guys down. Sherri tries to interfere again but the referee is taken down in the process. AGAIN the Queen interferes but accidentally takes Savage out by mistake. Warrior goes after her but gets caught in a rollup for two. Heenan is panicking over this stuff. Savage clotheslines him down and hits the flying elbow, followed by a flying elbow, followed by a flying elbow, followed by a flying elbow, followed by a flying elbow, which gets a two count in total. To say Savage is in shock is the understatement of the year.

Warrior starts shaking the ropes and hits the war path around the ring before clotheslining Savage half to death. The gorilla press and splash only get two and Warrior talks to his hands, asking if it's time for him to step aside. With Warrior on the apron, Savage decks him down to the floor as the crowd continues to be on the edges of their seats.

Savage loads up the ax handle to the barricade but Warrior hits him

coming down, sending Randy crashing into the barricade. Back in and Savage can barely stand so Warrior hits two tackles to send Savage out to the floor both times. A third hits and Savage is DONE. Warrior puts his foot on the chest to end Savage's career.

Rating: A. After watching both this and Wrestlemania 6 in about three days, there is zero question as to which is the better match. This was a pair of titans colliding and one man clearly was better. That's one of the formulas that never fails if worked even mostly right and they NAILED IT here. This is by far and away Warrior's best match ever, but the best part is yet to come.

Post match Sherri gets in the ring and beats the tar out of Savage who is defenseless and can't see who it is. Elizabeth shocks everyone by jumping the guardrail and throwing Sherri to the floor in the only time I can ever remember her getting physical. Savage gets up and is SHOCKED to see Liz, who hadn't been seen in about a year. Liz says it was Sherri attacking Savage who has no idea what to do.

Liz holds out her arms and after a few moments, Savage hugs her to one of the biggest ovations you will ever hear. Savage puts Liz on his shoulder before the go to leave. As is their custom, Liz holds the ropes for him but Savage says not this time, and holds the ropes open for her. Savage gets to take a bow in the middle of the ring and the fans are thrilled. This is the only, repeat ONLY, moment in wrestling that legitimately brings a tear to my eye every time I watch it. I think that's the case for a lot of fans.

Regis Philbin is measured for a coffin by Undertaker. Regis: "We're dying out here."

Demolition is with Alex Trebek who annoys them with stupid Jeopardy talk. It's Smash and Crush at this point, managed by Mr. Fuji again.

Regis talks to Tenryu and Kitao who are here for one night only. They don't speak English so we get some racially insensitive attempts at communication.

Jake Roberts and Damien torment Trebek a bit. This is why intermission

getting cut out was a good idea.

Demolition vs. Genichiro Tenryu/Koji Kitao

Now this is one of those out of nowhere matches. Demolition is on their very last toes of their very last legs here as they've even got Mr. Fuji again. Tenryu is a Japanese legend and Kitao is a big time sumo guy who became a pro and didn't do much. Kitao and Crush start things off but everything breaks down quickly. Fuji whacks Kitao in the back and Demolition takes over again. Gorilla asks what it takes to become a grand champion of sumo. Brain: "Being able to eat 1100 bowls of rice in an hour with a single chopstick."

Crush slams Kitao down and it's off to Smash. Kitao finally comes out of the corner with a clothesline and it's off to Tenryu. He speeds things up in a hurry but misses a top rope back elbow. Crush hits a backbreaker to put Tenryu down but Kitao breaks up the Decapitator. He breaks it up again and Tenryu hits a fast enziguri and powerbomb for the pin on Smash.

Rating: D+. Nothing to see here and I have no idea what the point of this match was. It's the final match for Demolition and on top of that, THIS is how you use Tenryu, a legitimate Japanese legend? The match was less than five minutes long and this is the only time I know of that Tenryu appeared for the company in a regular match for nearly two years. My guess would be this is part of the working agreement with Tenryu's SWS.

Boss Man says Heenan and his Family has nowhere else to hide tonight.

Mr. Perfect and Heenan say about what you would expect them to say about Big Boss Man.

Intercontinental Title: Big Boss Man vs. Mr. Perfect

Perfect is defending. This is an interesting yet simple idea for a story: Heenan had insulted Boss Man's mama so Boss Man swore revenge. He went after the Heenan Family and beat every single one of them until there was only Perfect left. Tonight is the final showdown. They spit at each other to start and Perfect slaps Boss Man like a schmuck. Boss Man hits him once to knock Perfect out to the floor and there's a spin around BY THE

HAIR. FREAKING OW MAN!

Boss Man speeds around the corner and hits a big clothesline to take Hennig down. Perfect gets tossed out to the floor and Boss Man is standing tall. Back in and Boss Man hits the running crotch attack to Perfect's back and whips him with a belt for good measure. Perfect finally avoids a shot and takes Boss Man down with some kicks to the ribs. Off to a chinlock with a knee in the back followed by an abdominal stretch. There's the Hennig neck snap for two and Mr. goes up, only to jump into a boot.

Perfect gets to do his reverse crotching into the post but as they go to the floor, Boss Man is whipped into the steps to take him down again. Since it was a Heenan distraction that caused the whip into the steps, here's Andre the Giant to counter the weasel. Andre picks up the belt and takes way too long to get to his position, from which he whacks Perfect in the head to knock him out cold. Boss Man covers but Haku and Barbarian run in for the DQ.

Rating: C. This wasn't great and I have no idea why they didn't change the title. The story set it up to be a title change, but I guess they were hoping for something else besides this. What that was I have no idea as Boss Man would never come close to the title again. The match was decent enough all things considered though.

Boss Man and Andre clean house post match.

Donald Trump, Chuck Norris, Lou Ferrigno and Henry Winkler are here. Yep, the Fonz showed up at Wrestlemania.

Earthquake vs. Greg Valentine

Valentine turned face a few months ago and this is his big match for the forces of good. We're 20 seconds in and Valentine is getting powerslammed down for two. A splash misses in the corner and Valentine gets him down to one knee. Quake breaks the Figure Four twice, hits a big elbow and drops the Earthquake for the pin.

Rating: F+. Earthquake was pretty much done as a singles guy at this

point but I'm assuming he got some shots at Hogan on house shows over the summer. Other than that though this was a filler match that didn't need to be on the card at all. Nothing to see here but at least Quake looked dominant.

The LOD says Power and Glory will be sour and gory after the match.

Power and Glory vs. Legion of Doom

Hercules is sent to the floor and it's a Domsday Device to end Roma in less than a minute. They were clearly coming for the belts very soon.

We recap Virgil vs. Ted DiBiase. Basically Virgil spent years serving DiBiase and FINALLY snapped on him at the Royal Rumble, setting up this match tonight. Roddy Piper is Virgil's mentor here too.

Virgil vs. Ted DiBiase

Virgil gets one of the three big pops of his entire career here, with the first being when he finally hit DiBiase with the belt. The other will be in less than ten minutes. Virgil pounds away to start and sends Ted out to the floor. Back in and Ted hits a clothesline but an elbow misses a second later. DiBiase, the wrestler, easily takes Virgil down and hits a suplex for two. Things are REALLY slow now compared to just a few moments before. We head to the floor for a bit with DiBiase shoving down Piper, who was on crutches at this point. DiBiase talks some trash so Piper pulls the top rope down but the distraction is enough for a countout.

Rating: D. This was all story but it really should have been Virgil pinning DiBiase, even on a rollup. These two would continue to feud with Virgil actually taking the Million Dollar Title at Summerslam 1991. The problem with Virgil was that after the DiBiase feud, there was nothing for him to do at all. The match was really dull and didn't have the payoff it needed at the end.

DiBiase puts Virgil in the Million Dollar Dream post match but Piper hits him with the crutch to break it up. Queen Sherri comes out to help with a beatdown of Piper, as she is now managing DiBiase. Referees come out to break it up until Virgil makes the save. Virgil tells Piper to get up, as

Piper had told him over the last few months.

We get a clip of Slaughter and General Adnan burning a Hogan t-shirt.

Slaughter threatens to get himself disqualified to keep the title. We get a clip of Slaughter beating up Hogan and Duggan as Slaughter laughs evilly.

The Mountie vs. Tito Santana

Tito chases him around to start and beats him up a bit, only to get caught in the ribs with Mountie's shock stick, ending this in less than 90 seconds.

Hogan gives his prematch interview, talking about how much he loves AMERICA and how he's got new weapons. We get a clip of Slaughter and Adnan beating Hogan down but he promises to do it for his country.

Here are the celebrities: Regis is on commentary, Marla Maples is the timekeeper and Alex Trebek is ring announcer.

WWF World Title: Sgt. Slaughter vs. Hulk Hogan

Hogan immediately chases Slaughter around the ring until Adnan is put on the floor. Feeling out process to start with both guys going into the corner. Hulk hooks a headlock to no avail but sends Slaughter backwards with a shoulder block. The champ hits one of the weakest chair shots you'll ever see to Hogan's back and pokes Hulk in the eye to finally take over. Hogan comes back with a clothesline and decks Adnan for fun too. A backdrop puts Slaughter down and Hulk sends him into the post.

Hogan hits a jumping knee to the back to send Slaughter into the corner and a slingshot sends Slaughter into the buckle again. Hogan gets in his ten punches in the corner for two but goes to the middle rope of all places, but Adnan breaks it up. Slaughter gets slammed down and Hulk drops a bunch of elbows. Now Hogan goes up top (!) but gets slammed to the mat and clotheslined to the floor. A better but still lame chair shot puts Hogan down again and it's time to work on the back.

A backbreaker gets two for the champion and he stomps away on Hulk's

back. There's a Boston Crab but Hulk is right next to the rope, making this pretty worthless. Another backbreaker gets two and it's a third chair shot, this time to the head, gets two more. Hulk is cut over the eye. There's Slaughter's Camel Clutch but Hulk fights up, only to be rammed into the corner to send him right back down. Slaughter puts an Iraqi flag on Hogan and you know what's coming now. A Hulk Up, big boot and leg drop later and AMERICA REIGNS AGAIN!

Rating: C. At the end of the day, if you didn't know what was going to happen here then you're either very young or have no idea how wrestling works. On top of the story, it's Hogan in a match against a big man. What else could you possibly expect? Hogan winning is the 100% right decision and the match certainly isn't bad. Slaughter was clearly a short term champion and there's nothing wrong with that either. Decent stuff here and a feel good moment to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. Oddly enough, this wasn't too bad. There's some lame stuff but for the most part it's very short with only Jake vs. Martel being both bad and longer than five minutes. Other than that you get a very fun opener, a masterpiece in the retirement match, a feel good main event and some other solid stuff. If you shave off about half an hour of this, which could easily be done by dropping about three matches, this show goes WAY up in value. Still though, it's worth checking out if you haven't seen it in a long time.

Ratings Comparison

Rockers vs. Haku/Barbarian

Original: B

Redo: B

Texas Tornado vs. Dino Bravo

Original: F

Redo: D

British Bulldog vs. Warlord

Original: B-

Redo: C+

Nasty Boys vs. Hart Foundation

Original: C-

Redo: B-

Jake Roberts vs. Rick Martel

Original: F

Redo: F

Undertaker vs. Jimmy Snuka

Original: D+

Redo: D+

Ultimate Warrior vs. Randy Savage

Original: A+

Redo: A

Genichiro Tenryu/Koji Kitao vs. Demolition

Original: W (For What were they thinking)

Redo: D+

Big Boss Man vs. Mr. Perfect

Original: C-

Redo: C

Earthquake vs. Greg Valentine

Original: N/A

Redo: F+

Legion of Doom vs. Power and Glory

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

Virgil vs. Ted DiBiase

Original: C-

Redo: D

The Mountie vs. Tito Santana

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

Hulk Hogan vs. Sgt. Slaughter

Original: C+

Redo: C

Overall Rating

Original: C

Redo: B-

These things need to be different already.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/03/14/history-of-wrestlemania-with-kb-wrestlemania-7-wrestlemania-goes-patriotic/>

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On This Day: March 16, 2012 – Smackdown: Back When AJ Was Interesting

Smackdown

Date: March 16, 2012

Location: Nationwide Arena, Columbus, Ohio

Commentators: Michael Cole, Booker T, Josh Matthews

It's that time of the week again. It's time for absolutely nothing being done about Bryan vs. Sheamus because that match means nothing in the grand scheme of Wrestlemania. Odds are we'll hear more about the battling GM's and that's about it. I haven't heard anything announced for tonight yet so it'll be a surprise to me as well. Let's get to it.

Do You Know Your Enemy? Mine at the moment is Iowa St. They need to be defeated Saturday.

Here's Christian to open the show with the Peep Show. He looks healthy now at least. Christian gets a nice reaction but Booker informs us that Christian is looking down at all of us. He talks about the 12 man tag match at Mania and says that it'll change a lot in WWE. Christian brings out Ace and Otunga as well as Teddy who comes out with Aksana. R-Truth is officially part of Team Long.

Christian says let the bidding begin on his services and Teddy gets to go first. Teddy looks at him so Christian goes on a small rant and says make it worth his while. He says to give Christian what he deserves: one more match. Teddy tells Christian he's awesome but won't beg him to be part of the team. Once Teddy takes over both shows, you have to earn title

shots and they won't get one if they get on his nerves. So in other words, earn it, but make sure you suck up at the same time?

Ace says that Christian should be on his team and guarantees Christian a title match if Team Ace wins. Christian says he won't fail, unlike Teddy. He officially joins Team Ace. Christian's music plays but Teddy says hang on a minute. He says Christian will be in action tonight but Ace says no because he isn't medically cleared tonight. Instead, Otunga gets to face the newest member of Team Teddy.

David Otunga vs. Kofi Kingston

This is joined in progress as we come back from a break. Ace is on commentary and Christian and Santino are at ringside. Teddy is on commentary too. Kofi kicks away to start but Otunga avoids him to take over. Cole and Teddy argue as Otunga pounds away. Christian can't compete because of an ingrown toenail. Powerslam gets two for David. Teddy and Ace argue about ingrown toenails as Otunga poses.

Off to a chinlock as Cole talks about baseball. Thankfully Josh actually talks about the match even a little bit to get us back to some sanity. Otunga hits a clothesline in the corner and then a second one. Booker says Otunga would have been better off in the WBF. That's allowed to be mentioned? Kofi comes back with a cross body for two and a dropkick to put David down. He loads up the Boom Drop but Christian trips Kofi. Teddy points it out so Christian is ejected. The GM's argue and Cole says something about the IC Title. Otunta tries to hit Kofi with his belt but Santino stops him. Trouble in Paradise ends this at 5:40.

Rating: C-. In a roughly five and a half minute match, we had attempted weapon use, two interferences, a fight between the GM's, and a WBF reference. Who in the world thought this match needed that much to it? The match was just ok and it's good to

see Otunga getting some time to be on offense.

Bryan is outside the Divas locker room and AJ comes out in a little black dress. AJ says this dress Bryan bought her doesn't seem to fit. Bryan: "It looked much better on the mannequin." Bryan talks about how they need to be the new power couple so he's gotten her a match tonight where a win could get her a Divas title match.

AJ vs. Nikki Bella

Bryan comes out to be in AJ's corner. Nikki gets on her knees because AJ is short so AJ dropkicks her in the face. Bryan is coaching AJ from the floor. Nikki stands on AJ's hair and pulls her up. Booker thinks AJ doesn't want to be in the ring. Off to a chinlock as Booker goes on a long and stupid rant about how AJ shouldn't be in there and doesn't want this. Josh and Cole agree that it's stupid because she's a wrestler and that's her job. AJ comes back with a cross body and Twin Magic fails. AJ grabs a rollup for the pin at 2:27.

Bryan celebrates post match. Booker says Bryan is ruining AJ's career and that wasn't a win. WHAT IS HE TALKING ABOUT???

Sheamus vs. Jericho later.

Raw ReBound shortens the Rap vs. Rock deal to about three minutes.

Cody talks about how dominant Big Show is 364 days out of the year, but at Wrestlemania he's a choke artist. This match also has more story than Sheamus vs. Bryan.

Great Khali vs. Cody Rhodes

Khali easily overpowers him to start and chops Rhodes a lot. Cody grabs a single arm DDT which Khali can't sell right so Cody works over the arm. Booker says go for the legs, even though Cody has Khali down already. Now it's to the knees for a bit but Cody goes up and jumps into a chop. Khali loads up a

chop but Cody heads to the apron and hits an enziguri. A dropkick to the knee sets up the Beautiful Disaster for the pin at 3:13.

Rating: C-. Cody beating a giant is a good idea heading into Wrestlemania. It worked for Luger when he was getting ready to face Giant back in 1996. It might work a little better if there was more than one face giant to face before Big Show but you get the idea. Cole called this a huge upset for no apparent reason.

Video on the Central American tour.

Here's Orton with something to say. He says he usually doesn't come out here to talk when he has a problem with someone but instead he hunts them down. However he feels like he's being hunted by Kane. Orton wants to know why Kane has chosen him. Kane wants people to embrace hate and Orton is embracing it as well. He calls out Kane for an explanation. Well forced exposition is better than no exposition I guess. Orton wants to know why he's putting Kane down when it eventually happens.

Here's the Big Fried Freak who talks about how Orton doesn't like being in the unknown. Usually he'd like to see Orton all unsure but since Orton asked, Kane will tell him. At least he's polite. We get a clip from last year where Orton beat Kane in a street fight and post match Kane offered a handshake which Orton accepted. I don't remember that but maybe it was a post show thing.

Kane says he watches that footage every day because it reminds him of what he had become: something with humanity. Kane says he's a monster again but he needs closure, which he'll get by destroying Orton. Orton says come get me but Kane says we'll do it at Wrestlemania. That gets us to eight matches which is acceptable.

Go to the David Otunga law offices!

Here's Drew for a match. Teddy pops up on screen and says Drew has a one year contract that can't be broken. Here's Drew's first opponent.

Drew McIntyre vs. Big Show

Show powers him around to start with pure power. McIntyre comes back with some kicks but Futureshock is broken up and Show spears him down. Show chokeslams him but decides to punch him instead of covering him. Show goes over to him and the referee stops it at 1:52. That's an odd ending.

Mark Henry vs. Yoshi Tatsu

Yoshi immediately dropkicks him but Henry glares at him. Henry takes over with power and powerslams Yoshi into dust. World's Strongest Slam ends this in about 2:00.

Here's Jericho to talk a bit before the main event. He talks about how he's been requested to apologize for what he said on Monday about Punk's family. There's no need to apologize for the truth. Punk has all the signs of an alcoholic such as the tattoos and trying to hide. Jericho talks about how the Pipe Bombs are things Punk wants to say to his parents. He's the best in the world and he's going to prove it by winning the world title at Mania. Afterwards, he's going to make a stiff cocktail and toast Punk and Punk's father. He starts a CM Drunk chant and says Pipe Bomb.

Sheamus vs. Chris Jericho

Sheamus knocks him into the corner to start and Jericho bails to the floor. That goes nowhere as Sheamus takes him back inside and gets two. Jericho gets sent over the corner and out to the floor in a crash. There are the ten forearms to the chest which Booker calls musical chairs. A delayed vertical suplex gets two for Sheamus. This has been one sided thus far.

Just as I say that, Jericho low bridges him to send Sheamus to

the floor. A baseball slide sends Sheamus into the barricade. Bryan and AJ (now in matching colors) come out to watch as we take a break. Back with Jericho still in control. The big red welt on Sheamus' back is still there after crashing into the table on Monday. Jericho hits a belly to back suplex as we hear about Jericho's Vengeance 2001 accomplishments.

Jericho loads up the running bulldog but Sheamus sends him into the corner to counter. Sheamus comes back with his double ax handles and the Irish Curse for two. The rolling fireman's carry slam looks to set up White Noise but Jericho counters into a Codebreaker attempt. Sheamus puts him on the top rope but the Brogue Kick misses. Jericho hits the bulldog and Lionsault for two. Sheamus pulls himself to the top but gets crotched. Jericho gets knocked to the mat and Sheamus hits the top rope shoulder for two.

Celtic Cross is loaded up but Jericho rolls down the back and counters into the Walls. Since Sheamus is a top face though he manages to get the ropes to break it up. Another Celtic Cross is loaded up but Jericho escapes again. They go to the floor and Sheamus throws Jericho over towards Bryan and AJ but they move. Sheamus stares at Bryan but Jericho rams him into the table. Bryan kicks Sheamus in the head as Jericho is getting back in and Chris wins by countout at 10:52 shown of 14:22.

Rating: B. I was digging this one and I can live with the ending because it serves a better purpose. It was obvious neither guy was going to go over clean here which is ok, but they still need to give us something else to care about with Sheamus vs. Bryan. The AJ stuff is kind of there on the side and I don't know if they're going to be able to have it mean anything for the PPV.

Sheamus kicks Jericho's head off to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. I like this one more than I've liked most of their shows lately. This did a good job of pushing a lot of

the matches for Mania which is really all you can do with two weeks left. Orton vs. Kane has a story (not a great one but a story nonetheless) now and we FINALLY get a little friction between Bryan vs. Sheamus. It doesn't mean anything but it's better than leaving them apart. Good show here though and a good Mania build show.

Results

Kofi Kingston b. David Otunga – Trouble in Paradise

AJ b. Nikki Bella – Rollup

Cody Rhodes b. Great Khali – Beautiful Disaster

Big Show b. Drew McIntyre by referee stoppage

Mark Henry b. Yoshi Tatsu – World's Strongest Slam

Chris Jericho b. Sheamus via countout

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Smackdown – March 15, 2013: Why Bother Calling It A World Title?

Smackdown

Date: March 15, 2013

Location: Allen County War Memorial Coliseum, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Commentators: Michael Cole, Josh Matthews, Brad Maddox

Back to Smackdown as we continue getting ready for Wrestlemania. Counting this episode we have four episodes to go before the big show and a lot of the card is already set. The main thing we still need to do is officially announce the likely six man tag between Shield and Orton/Sheamus/Big Show. We have a main event tonight of Ryback vs. Mark Henry, which I have

a feeling won't happen. Let's get to it.

Sheamus/Randy Orton vs. Rhodes Scholars

Before the match we get a clip of Shield attacking Orton and Sheamus on Sunday. We also hear from Sandow who complains about how bad things went on Monday, but tonight the Scholars are going to ruin Orton and Sheamus' night. Rhodes and Sheamus start things off and after Cody can't get anything going he makes the tag off to Sandow. Damien stomps Sheamus down in the corner but Sheamus comes back with the knee lift and some running forearms.

Sheamus hits the ten forearms to the chest of Sandow before they head to the floor, allowing Rhodes to hit the Disaster Kick off the apron to take Sheamus out. After a break we come back with Cody dropkicking Sheamus down for two. Back to Sandow who pounds away on the pale one, only to have Sheamus headbutt him from the mat to escape. A front facelock keeps Sheamus in control but he punches his way out.

Sheamus is sent into the corner but the referee stops Sandow for a lecture. Damien charges into an elbow in the corner followed by the top rope shoulder from Sheamus to put both guys down. The hot tag brings in Orton to powerslam Rhodes. A t-bone suplex puts Cody down again as does the Elevated DDT. It's a Brogue Kick for Sandow and the RK0 to Cody for the pin at 5:57 shown of 9:27. Cole: "HASHTAG CELTIC VIPERS!" It's time to push Twitter again apparently.

Rating: C. Basic tag match here to establish the super team as a threat. Granted I'm not sure how much of a threat you can prove yourselves to be when you beat a team that loses every time they team up. Again, what was the point in splitting them up if you're just going to put them back together to job them out all the time?

Post match here's the Shield...on the screen. They say Sheamus and Orton should be afraid, but not tonight. Ambrose lists off all the people

they've taken apart and left laying in the ring like roadkill. Rollins wants to know why Shield doesn't have a match at Wrestlemania because that's the biggest injustice of all. Ambrose tells Sheamus and Orton to find a partner for a six man tag. Orton and Sheamus say they're in.

Fandango debuts tonight. Again.

We recap Lesnar's beatdown of the Outlaws from Raw as well as Heyman accepting Lesnar's challenge for Wrestlemania.

Sheamus and Orton talk about making the right choice when Big Show comes up. He offers his services even though he doesn't trust either guy. Instead though, Sheamus and Orton have apparently picked Ryback.

Kaitlyn/Layla vs. Tamina Snuka/Aksana

Tamina shoves Layla down to start but Layla comes back with some kicks. Tamina slams Layla as he blocks a kick before bringing in Aksana. The crowd is dead for this. The Funkadactyls are watching in the back. Aksana puts on a lame bow and arrow hold before it's back to Tamina for another suplex. Layla whips Tamina into the corner, allowing for a hot tag to Kaitlyn. She fires off kicks and right hands to Aksana and spears her down, but Layla tags herself in and hits Lots of Layla (that bouncing cross body out of the corner of hers) for the pin at 3:52.

Rating: D. This was a rather boring match with things continuing to lead up towards Layla vs. Kaitlyn, but again there's no reason to care about these girls. Tamina and Aksana are very boring as villains to be beaten up and Layla does nothing of note either as a challenger. The match was boring on top of having a played out premise to it.

The Bellas come in to see the Funkadactyls and the dancers say the Bellas were big influences on them. The Bellas call the Funkadactyls hoochie mamas who dance for a dinosaur and a man who thinks he's Japanese. A

brawl erupts and the Bellas leave the Funkadactyls laying.

We go back to Raw to recap the events with Punk, Kane, Undertaker and the urn during the tribute to Paul Bearer.

Kane vs. Dolph Ziggler

Kane takes him into the corner to start and fires off some knee lifts before punching away in another corner. An uppercut puts Ziggler down on the floor for a bit but he fires off some right hands back inside to get himself a breather. A big boot puts Ziggler down again though as does a slam. Dolph fires off more right hands but gets backdropped out to the apron. He comes back in with a missile dropkick for two before kicking Kane in the face.

A front facelock by Ziggler is easily thrown off by Kane but Ziggler counters with the jumping DDT for two. Kane comes right back with a delayed vertical suplex for two. A powerslam attempt is countered into the sleeper by Ziggler but Kane flips him down onto his back for two. Kane's top rope clothesline puts Dolph down but an AJ distraction breaks up the chokeslam. Langston throws Bryan into the timekeeper's area so Kane kick Big E. down. Back inside Ziggler hits a Fameasser and the Zig Zag for the pin at 7:17.

Rating: C. Not bad here but the distractions got to be a bit much. It was nice to see Ziggler getting a win here and it appears we'll be getting Ziggler and Langston vs. HELL NO at Mania for the tag titles. The formula worked for Shawn and Diesel twenty years ago so why not do it again here?

Post match Langston lays out Kane.

We get another parody video from Del Rio and Ricardo, this one about evil Canadian immigrants. Apparently they're crossing the border and bringing in maple syrup. Is this supposed to be amusing?

Jericho and R-Truth are laughing at the video in the back when Jack Swagger and Zeb Colter come in. Swagger talks about putting the weight of the country on his back and fighting for America's soul. They accuse Jericho of sneaking across the border and stealing American jobs, but Jericho points out that he was born in New York. Jericho tells Swagger to focus on his match with Del Rio at Wrestlemania but not until after their match tonight.

Fandango still debuts tonight. Allegedly.

Great Khali vs. Fandango

I'm sure you know the drill by now. Khali can't pronounce Fandango's name so no match. The idea is starting to get old in a hurry. We waste another five minutes on this.

We get the Rock vs. Cena video from Raw.

Sheamus and Orton talk about being excited for the six man when Shield jumps them. Ryback comes up but Booker tells him to go fight Mark Henry instead of worrying about Shield.

Mark Henry vs. Ryback

They lock up and fight into the corner but here's Shield about thirty five seconds in. No match for all intents and purposes.

Henry bails and Ryback clears out Shield. Henry gets back in but Shield comes back in to beat Ryback down. The TripleBomb lays Ryback out and the Shield leaves, allowing Henry to hit a pair World's Strongest Slams for good measure.

Jack Swagger vs. Chris Jericho

Feeling out process to start as they fight for control via a hammerlock. Swagger takes over with a big right hand in the corner but Jericho clotheslines him to get a breather. The springboard dropkick sends Swagger to the floor and we take a break. Back with Swagger hitting a running knee in the corner before hooking a double chickenwing. Jericho finally rolls his way out of it but gets kicked right back down for two.

Off to a front facelock by Jack but Jericho rolls over into a near fall. Jack takes out the knee with a chop block to set up the Patriot Lock. Chris kicks off and gets two more off a small package, only to be suplexed down for two for Swagger. We take another break and come back with Swagger hitting a running splash in the corner but Jericho comes back with a DDT for two. Chris fires off some kicks but Swagger grabs the gutwrench, only to have the powerbomb countered into the Walls of Jericho.

Swagger blocks those though and puts on the Patriot Lock but Jericho rolls through THAT and puts on the Walls. They're not on tight though and Swagger makes a rope. Out to the floor we go with Jericho sending Jack into the steps. Back in and a top rope cross body gets two for the Canadian but Jack blocks the Codebreaker. The gutwrench powerbomb is enough to end Jericho at 10:03 shown of 16:33.

Rating: C+. This started slow but the stuff after the second break was much better. This is where Jericho is so valuable: he could (and often does) lose like 80% of his matches but he's such an established star that it doesn't hurt him at all. The win doesn't do much good for Swagger but it's better than losing I guess.

Overall Rating: C-. The show was ok but there was nothing on here that got me excited for the most part. It was mainly Wrestlemania build but the focus was on everything but the Smackdown world title match. Del Rio wasn't even on the show and the only mention of the match was the unfunny Canadians video. Then again, it's not like this match means anything so it doesn't make much of a difference.

Results

Sheamus/Randy Orton b. Rhodes Scholars – RK0 to Rhodes

Kaitlyn/Layla b. Tamina Snuka/Aksana – LOL to Aksana

Dolph Ziggler b. Kane – Zig Zag

Ryback vs. Mark Henry went to a no contest when Shield interfered

Jack Swagger b. Chris Jericho – Gutwrench Powerbomb

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On This Day: March 15, 1987 – WWF Toronto House Show: Back When Tag Wrestling Was Sweet

Toronto House Show

Date: March 15, 1987

Location: Maple Leaf Gardens, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Commentators: Gorilla Monsoon, Jimmy Hart, Johnny V

Now as anyone that has read my reviews knows, I am obsessed with house shows from the old days, especially the late 80s. This is 2 weeks before Mania III, but it's not your traditional show. For some reason, what we have here is a one night tag team tournament. Without knowing otherwise, there's nothing on the line here and it's just a tournament for the sake of having a tournament. This is the absolute golden era of tag team wrestling though, so this should be great. Let's get to it.

On further review, this is for the #1 contendership. A word to those of you that might not get how this is possible. Back in the day, there were FAR fewer house shows, but they had bigger cards. For TV, rather than having a show like Raw or Smackdown, a lot of the time you would have guys in a studio who would show matches from house shows with dubbed in commentary.

They would edit some stuff out and air it on TV. Since most fans hadn't seen the show or didn't get what was going on, they thought these were matches taped for the TV show rather than recycled house show matches, which is what they were. This is a complete (I think) house show from a WWF stronghold: Toronto. These are the things I'm talking about when I mention the Boston shows on the Superstars reviews.

Here are your brackets.

Demolition

British Bulldogs

Can-Am Connection

Allen/Spivey

Paul Orndorff/King Kong Bundy

Muraco/Orton

Kamala/Sika

Killer Bees

Could be worse. No Harts so maybe this is for a title shot? No Rougeaus either, but that was a tag title feud at this time so that might explain it.

Quite a commentary team there.

First Round: Kamala/Sika vs. Killer Bees

Sika is more famous for being in the Wild Samoans. Has Kamala ever actually won anything? I don't remember a freaking thing

that he actually accomplished. The camera angle is odd at this show as it's from an angle and the ring is kind of up on a platform if that makes sense. The crowd is kind of small too. The ring looks small too. Valiant isn't a good talker but he's very energetic. Sika and Brunzell start. For some reason Kamala starts climbing the ropes. Ok then.

No clue why the heels are teaming together. Oh apparently they're a semi-regular tag team. As always the idea of them registering for a tag team is very funny. Their manager, the Grand Wizard, would be replaced by Mr. Fuji, who Shawn Michaels LOVES. They get a double slam on Kamala which was kind of cool. We get to the formula stuff here as Blair, the less talented of the faces, gets beaten down a lot.

That ends though due to the first instance of something I'm sure you'll hear a lot of tonight: heel miscommunication. A hot tag to Brunzell and a quick dropkick gets the win for them. On replay, you can see how awesome that one was. He kicked Sika right in the freaking face.

Rating: C+. Not bad for an opener at all. They used your standard formula here but at an accelerated pace. To be fair though, the heels are pretty much crap here though and that's hurting things. Bees were their usual solid selves, but they were being held down here by bad opponents.

First Round: Jerry Allen/Dan Spivey vs. Can-Am Connection

This is a very odd choice for a team here. Mike Rotunda had left and Spivey had no partner. Allen on the other hand...was a jobber. He's kind of like the Carlito of his day, minus the credibility. Yeah think of him like that. Allen and Spivey get no reaction. Can-Ams are the young pretty boys who get big girl pops. Jimmy talks about his clients' three matches at Mania, including saying that Alice Cooper couldn't carry a tune if it had handles on it.

That line would be in Honky Tonk Man's future song, so I

wonder who wrote that one. Valiant is REALLY annoying. Allen and Zenk start us off. Wow I'd be so riveted to this match. They botch a leap frog. That's hard to do. Jimmy lists off some songs his band had. For those of you that don't know, Hart was in a mainstream band called the Gents and they actually weren't that bad. They toured with the Beach Boys in the 60s.

We hit the formula stuff so that's fine. They mention Allen isn't Spivey's full time partner. At this time, Valiant is Demolition's manager. This isn't very interesting at all. To be fair that could be due to a lack of heel talent. There's a lot of that going around tonight apparently. This match has been 80% rest holds. Everyone comes in at once and in a pretty weak looking spot, Martel hits Allen with a cross body for the pin.

Rating: D. Just boring as possible here. It was mainly due to the terrible heel team though so I can't complain much there. The Connection was pretty solid though so I have to give them the benefit of the doubt here. Just a bad match overall though.

First Round: Demolition vs. British Bulldogs

Valiant is at ringside for this. I think Demolition has been around about a month at this point and Smash isn't the one that he would eventually be. The Bulldogs had just lost the tag belts to the Harts in a screwjob so they have a reason to go after Hart and to win the tournament here. At this point it's next to impossible to tell Demolition apart as Smash really does look like Axe at this point.

It's been all Demolition so far but to be fair it's only been a few minutes. Dynamite is the one getting beaten down. I'm stunned too. Davey gets a hot tag and the fans are INTO it. Valiant trips Smith up so like idiots, Dynamite throws a chair in and Davey hits Axe with it RIGHT IN FRONT OF THE REFEREE.

Seriously, that was idiotic. Gorilla says he can't blame them. Uh, I can.

Rating: D+. This was short but it was intense for what it was. Demolition was fast on the rise at this point so the result doesn't surprise me at all. This really could have been good if it had gone a few minutes longer.

First Round: Don Muraco/Bob Orton vs. King Kong Bundy/Paul Orndorff

Heel vs. heel here which is really rare to say the least. I don't think Paul and King teamed together many more times after this. Valiant suggests that these are four of the best wrestlers in the world today. That's very funny. The announcers call over Mr. Fuji to say a few words. Nothing of note even though I just noted it. And let's talk about Hogan vs. Andre. Sure why not. Wow the dynamic here is just weird.

I think Orndorff is heel here. He would have been face in the fall but heel late last year. Fuji throws in the cane and it hits Orton in the head. I mean Muraco had it but I figured I'd cut out the middle aspect to save some time. Orndorff gets the pin.

Rating: D. I know I've used that a few times but this just hasn't been that good of a show at all. The screwy finishes aren't helping things out either so that likely has a lot to do with it. The matchup here wasn't going to work no matter what though so I'd chalk it up to that.

The Semifinals are now set.

Demolition

Can-Am Connection

Orndorff/Bundy

Killer Bees

I think I know the finals already. We have an hour left and

that's all that's on the card? Really?

Semi-Finals: Can-Am Connection vs. Demolition

Demolition is kind of popular here, foreshadowing their face turn...a year and a half from now. Ok so it's not foreshadowing at all. This is apparently a main event in any arena in the entire world. When anyone says that, the first thing that comes to my mind: WHY IS IT NOT MAIN EVENTING THIS SHOW THEN??? Demolition is dominating for the most part here as you would expect them to. What follows is more or less as basic of a match as you could possibly ask for.

This simply isn't much to talk about but it's not bad. Demolition dominates for a good while until Martel gets the hot tag. Everyone comes in, the legal guys go to the floor, Zenk hits the post, and there's your countout to put Demolition in the finals.

Rating: C-. Not as bad, but still not very good whatsoever. The screwy endings continue here which is rapidly getting on my nerves. It's another formula match here which is fine but it's getting very repetitive.

Semi-Finals: Killer Bees vs. Paul Orndorff/King Kong Bundy

Bundy says that they should just get the titles now. Thanks for that Mr. Bundy. The Bees have their trademark masks which is a nice face acting heelish move. There's no way to tell them apart at this point so I'm not going to try. Again, why is Bundy getting cheered? Apparently Brunzell is in the ring at the moment. This is another quick match as the heels beat down one of the Bees but as they brag to the crowd the Bees do the switch. A rollup ends it.

Rating: D+. Again, just nothing to talk about here. This was maybe 3 minutes long and I have no idea how this is going to end up. This wasn't great or anything at all but the ending sets up the showdown with Demolition I guess.

We have 38 minutes left and Demolition vs. The Killer Bees?
That's it?

Sivi Afi vs. Red Demon

Uh, ok then. Can you spell filler? If you can't, pay more attention as I just wrote it out for you. WOW the crowd is dead for this. I can't blame them either. This would be the equivalent of a jobber lower than Santino vs. Santino but without the interesting aspect of it. See what I mean? Demon has some tape or a rope or something to choke him out with. Yeah I don't care at all. This is just a waste of four minutes as Afi hits a cross body off the top for the win.

Rating: F+. Uh yeah. Let's get to the next match please.

Finals: Killer Bees vs. Demolition

So it's a 32 minute final. Yeah I'm thinking NO on that one. Smash and Brunzell start us off as we're talking about Elvis for no apparent reason. This is very reminiscent of all the other matches, with nothing of note happening and this just being your standard match that could have been on a regular TV show. And this is the final match right? Got it.

Demolition is dominating of course and here come the masks. Gorilla said those exact words but I typed them first. I BEAT MONSOON!!! And a sunset flip off the top by Brunzell ends it? Ok then.

Rating: C+. A bit better but still nothing at all to write home about, let alone write a review of 23 years after it happened. Oh never mind. Anyway, nothing great here at all but it could have been much worse I guess.

And we have 24 minutes left in the tape.

Hillbilly Jim vs. Dino Bravo

Both guys aren't anything special but Jim was Hogan's buddy so

he's of course over as all get out. I wouldn't go messing with a country boy. He had been around about a year and a half at this point and his biggest feuds were behind him. That sums things up rather well for him. Oh and Bravo has brown hair and is wearing the same tights that Spivey was wearing earlier. Hart mentions his accomplishments in music including the tour with the Beach Boys. He really was a huge asset to Vince.

We're almost four minutes in and I don't think anything past a headlock has happened. Ah here we go as Bravo is actually doing some stuff. It's boring as heck but he's doing something at least. And there goes the referee. That's good enough for the DQ. Scratch that. It's bad enough for the DQ. Nothing good about this match.

Rating: F. Again, this is pure filler and it was bad filler at that. I want this show to end like NOW.

Tag Titles: Killer Bees vs. Hart Foundation

Well ok then. Apparently this is the reward for the win. Better than nothing I guess. The Harts try to walk off since the Bees are wearing their masks but they're declared legal. This should be a good match if nothing else. The masks are removed and we stall some more. Apparently the match has been signed already. That's impressive since the other match ended like 8 minutes ago. Those are some fast lawyers.

Danny Davis is with them and isn't wrestling tonight yet he's wearing the shorts anyway. Ok then. Anvil and Brunzell start us off. Anvil takes his straps off at the very beginning for no adequately explored reason. These four always had solid chemistry together and this doesn't seem to be any exception. A fan jumps the railing for reasons of genuine idiocy. Brunzell runs into Anvil and everyone is down.

We get a lot of standard tag stuff, such as the hot tag with the referee not looking and the slam getting dropkicked for a cover for a long two. The masks go back on and we get a double

sleeper. Brunzell gets a small package on Hart but Davis turns it over, allowing Hart to get the pin and keep the titles. Post match the Bees beat up Davis to an ERUPTION.

Rating: B-. By far the best match of the night. I think Brunzell once said these two teams wrestled between 300 and 600 times and it shows. This is one of their weaker matches but it's still pretty decent stuff, given that they had like 8 minutes to do it in. Not great, but good enough.

Overall Rating: D. If you enjoy either 80s tag wrestling or the Killer Bees, GET THIS IMMEDIATELY. Other than that, this is pretty weak to put it mildly. Now to be fair with the apparent total lack of star power and the tournament to hold things together, this wasn't terrible, but dang it wasn't anything good either.

I know Mania was coming up, but seriously, the biggest stars on the card were I guess the Harts? This was pretty sad but to be fair it was a house show, so I can't complain that much about it. Actually I could but I can give it sympathy here.

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Wrestlemania Count-Up – Wrestlemania VI: The Ultimate Challenge

Wrestlemania VI

Date: April 1, 1990

Location: SkyDome, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Attendance: 67,678

Commentators: Jesse Ventura, Gorilla Monsoon

Time for another historic main event and in this case it's probably Hogan's best match ever. After Hogan basically beat every heel in the company, the only thing left to do was to have someone new come into the main event. At the Royal Rumble, only Hogan and the Ultimate Warrior were left in the ring at one point. The fans erupted and we had Wrestlemania 6. That's the only match of note on the card so let's get to it.

The opening video is set in space with a bunch of constellations. Vince does a voiceover and talks about how the two strongest beings in the universe are Hogan and Warrior. That's different if nothing else.

Robert Goulet sings O Canada.

Rick Martel vs. Koko B. Ware

Martel is now a model and THE RING CARTS ARE BACK!!! Rick jumps Koko to start things off and the beating is on fast. Koko comes out of the corner with a cross body for two and a dropkick to stagger Martel even more. Martel heads to the floor, only to be dragged right back in. He sends Koko to the floor though and things slow down a bit. Rick pounds away on the back and hits a middle rope shot to the back. A backbreaker looks to set up the Boston Crab but Koko makes the rope. Some rams into the corner don't work because Koko is black you see. A middle rope cross body misses and this time the Crab ends Ware.

Rating: D+. Not much of an opener here but it was decent enough I guess. This would have been a dark match today I would guess. The interesting thing here is what you got on the clipped version. On that edition, the first Boston Crab was clipped to the ending of the second one. See how dangerous that stuff can be?

Gene is with the tag team champions Haku and Andre (the Colossal Connection), calling the Colostomy Connection. Heenan: "Well if you want to talk evacuation..." They say they'll beat Demolition. Gene: "The Colossal Connection: they're anything but regular guys."

Demolition says they're going to take out the Connection and take the titles. Ax wants to chop them down like trees while Smash wants to put them in a tractor trailer and push them over a cliff. Our heroes ladies

and gentlemen!

Tag Titles: Colossal Connection vs. Demolition

Only the challengers get an entrance. Andre is old and banged up here but they gave him a token title at the end of his career. The champions, the Connection, takes over to start as it's Haku vs. Smash to get us going. Off to Ax to pound away but Andre comes in to break it up. Smash will have none of that and the beating continues on Haku with the challengers taking turns on him.

Haku and Smash fight over a backslide for awhile until Andre breaks it up. Demolition keeps control though and Haku gets beaten on even more. Andre finally cheats enough to let the give the champions the advantage. The giant headbutts Ax from the apron for a very delayed two before Haku rams Ax's head into Andre's head for two more. This was during the time when Andre would be officially in for about 15 seconds which was all he was capable of anymore.

Off to the Tongan nerve hold by Haku for a bit before Andre chokes in the corner. Andre hasn't actually been in the match yet. A shoulder breaker gets two for Haku but he misses a charge into the corner. Hot tag brings in Smash to clean house and a flying forearm gets two. Everything breaks down and Andre is taken down by a double clothesline. Haku accidentally superkicks Andre into the ropes and the Decapitator gives Demolition their third tag titles.

Rating: C-. This was decent stuff but it was basically a handicap match. Andre was just too old to do much else after this and I don't think he ever had another match in the WWF. Demolition would go on to have a summer long reign before turning heel and losing the titles to the now face Hart Foundation. Decent stuff here and the fans loved it.

Heenan, ever the brilliant man, yells at Andre and SLAPS HIM IN THE FACE! Andre grabs him by the face and smacks him around, blocks Haku's superkick like it's a baby's hand, knocks Haku into the ring cart, changes his mind and kicks Haku out of the cart and leaves to a huge ovation. This was a good way to go out for Andre as he showed he could still beat up a lot of people with ease. Good stuff.

Jimmy Hart thinks there's going to be an earthquake in Toronto.
Earthquake is ready for Hercules.

Hercules vs. Earthquake

Earthquake misses a charge into the corner to start and Hercules pounds away on him. The big man heads to the floor before coming back in for a test of strength. Hercules goes down almost immediately and Earthquake is in control. The non-disaster comes back with some clotheslines but for reasons of general stupidity, Hercules tries a torture rack which goes as well as you would expect on someone who weighs 468. Two Earthquakes end Hercules.

Rating: D. Quick and easy here as Earthquake was clearly being built up as a huge monster for either Hogan or Warrior. He could certainly move very quickly for a guy his size and he had the talking ability to back it up. Earthquake is often forgotten as a quality monster which is a shame because the guy was pretty awesome.

Some celebrity interviewer is with Liz who says she'll be around more often in the future from now on. Not really but whatever.

Brutus Beefcake thinks Mr. Perfect's record looks pretty good. Tonight, he's going to make it imperfect.

Brutus Beefcake vs. Mr. Perfect

This is one of the biggest matches on the card. Beefcake starts fast and punches Perfect to the floor with a single right hand. Back in and another punch sends Perfect flying over the top rope again. Brutus pounds away some more and Perfect gets to do his over the top bumping. A running clothesline puts Perfect down and Beefcake calls for the sleeper as Mary Tyler Moore of all people is here.

Perfect's manager the Genius (the original Damien Sandow. They both even did cartwheels) slides in his metal scroll to Perfect and a shot to the head gives Mr. control. Perfect pounds away with some slow shots to the chest but the fans are staying into this. Beefcake comes back with the required slingshot into the required head first into the post bump by

Perfect which is enough for the win out of nowhere.

Rating: C-. The crowd carried this one as Beefcake wasn't a great worker but he had more charisma than he knew what to do with. Perfect was a leading candidate to face Hogan here so he was certainly a top heel. The match wasn't great but it was more than enough to fire the crowd up again here. Granted the crowd is already white hot so no complaints here.

Post match Brutus goes to cut Perfect's hair but Genius steals the clippers. Beefcake chases down the worthless Genius for a sleeper and a haircut. Brutus' SWEET music is playing the whole time on top of that.

Now it's time for one of the weirdest matches you'll ever see. We recap Bad News Brown vs. Roddy Piper which started with a double elimination and a brawl at the Rumble. That's all well and good. We go to Piper in the back where Piper says some people call him Hot Rod but then he turns around to show that half of his body is painted black. That side is called Hot Scot and you can hear the racial issues building from here. Apparently it was something about Michael Jackson.

Roddy Piper vs. Bad News Brown

An interesting point here is that both guys are legit black belts in judo with Brown being an Olympic bronze medalist in the sport. They immediately take it to the mat in a fist fight until Piper gets two off a cross body of all things. The referee (former heel wrestler Danny Davis) keeps separating them so Brown takes over by sending Piper's head into the buckle. He yells at Piper for trying to be black and it's off to a nerve hold.

Brown slugs him down a few times and drops an elbow for two. Somewhere in there a buckle pad is ripped off and it's Brown going chest first into said buckle. Piper pulls out a single white glove (Brown wore a single black one) and a bunch of punches send Brown to the floor. Piper swings a chair but hits the post and it's a double countout.

Rating: D. Instead of a brawl or something entertaining, this was much more of a bizarre spectacle than anything else. Brown would be gone soon after this while Piper would shift into the broadcast booth to take over

for Jesse. The fight was a lot weaker because of how much stuff there was to distract from the action which is never a good thing.

Steve Allen, former host of the Tonight Show, is playing a piano in the bathroom as the Bolsheviks rehearse the Russian national anthem. Jokes are made and they're not that funny.

Hart Foundation vs. Bolsheviks

National anthem, Canadian assault, Hart Attack to Boris, pin in about 20 seconds.

Go to Mania 7 in Los Angeles where there will be over 100,000 fans! Or not because of "terrorism threats" so we're going to a smaller place! Pay no attention to the fact that it was reported that Vince couldn't sell the place out so they moved the event!

Tito is ready for Barbarian and Heenan.

The Barbarian vs. Tito Santana

This is Bobby Heenan's debut as Barbarian's manager. Barbarian takes him into the corner to start but Tito comes back with punches to send Barbie to the floor. Back in and a big hip toss puts Tito down but Santana comes back with right hands to the head for two. They run the ropes and Barbarian kicks Santana's head off to take over. When all else fails, kick the other guy in the face.

Barbarian misses a middle rope elbow but Tito can't take him down with a dropkick. The flying forearm takes Barbarian down but Heenan puts his foot on the rope. Barbarian slugs him down and goes up top for a BIG clothesline off the top (and a SWEET bump from Tito) for the pin.

Rating: C-. The shot at the end makes up for most of the match sucking. Tito looked like he was dead out there and the flip backwards made it look even better. This was just a way to set up Barbarian as a singles guy which went absolutely nowhere. The guy stayed employed over the years if nothing else though so he's got something up on a lot of people. Tito was officially a jobber to the stars at this point.

We recap Dusty/Sapphire vs. Macho/Sherri. This started at the Rumble where Brother Love insulted Sapphire and a brawl broke out with Savage and Rhodes. Sherri started attacking Rhodes on TV and a fourway brawl broke out there too.

Rhodes and Sapphire are ready for the mixed tag and say they have the crown jewel, whatever that is.

Dusty Rhodes/Sapphire vs. Queen Sherri/Randy Savage

Savage is the King at this point. This is the first mixed tag in company history according to Fink. I don't know if that's true but I don't know of another preceding it. Dusty and Sapphire are introduced at 465lbs. Jesse: "Are you telling me Dusty only weighs 200?" Dusty says cut the music because he's got the crown jewel: Elizabeth. Savage FREAKS (I think. It's kind of hard to tell with him) and Jesse is on one of his famous rants.

The genders have to match here so the guys start things off. Sherri tries to interfere but Sapphire makes the save. Dusty throws Sherri into Savage and we're off to the women. Sapphire shakes her hips into Sherri and hooks an airplane spin for bad measure. Sherri tries a slam which goes as well as you would expect it to. Off to the men again with Sapphire getting in a few slaps from the apron.

The guys go to the floor but Savage runs back in for a top rope ax handle to the floor. He hits it again for good measure but Sapphire gets in the way of the third jump. Back in and Randy hits a suplex for two and drops Rhodes with a shot to the head with the scepter. Sherri hits a top rope splash for two on Dusty because the rules don't matter I guess.

Everything breaks down with Sapphire taking over on Sherri. Liz sends Sherri back inside and it's a schoolgirl win for Sapphire on the Queen.

Rating: D. Another mess here that was there more for the spectacle than anything else. Most of this show isn't that good all around and this was another good example. Sapphire continues to be pretty much there as a sight gag but thankfully she would be gone later on in the summer. Not much to see here for the most part.

Liz, Sapphire and Dusty dance.

Another Mania 7 ad.

Bobby Heenan is nearly speechless over Andre beating him up.

Rona Barrett is your usual celebrity that is out of place on a wrestling show.

Savage and Sherri freak out a lot.

Demolition celebrates their title win. This must be intermission. They're ready for the Hart Foundation.

Now we get one of those famous interviews that is still talked about today. Hogan talks about getting energy from all of the Hulkamaniacs and says that THIS is where the power lies. He's going to get Warrior down on his knees and ask him if he wants to live forever. Apparently he and the Hulkamaniacs can bring all of the Little Warriors into the light. Hogan: "It doesn't matter whether you win or whether you lose." He's already setting the stage for the loss.

Warrior throws Sean Mooney away, saying Sean doesn't deserve to breathe his air. He goes on one of his usual rants about how no one can live forever but Hogan's beliefs can live through him. He talks about darkness and beliefs that come with any and all challenges. Tonight is about merging the Hulkamaniacs and the Warriors together. Warrior may be insane, but he's really not that much worse than Hogan when you think about it.

Orient Express vs. Rockers

Jannetty and Tanaka start things off and the Rockers take over with their usual speed stuff. Double teaming sends the Express out to the floor before things settle down a bit. Mr. Fuji hooks the top rope, sending Marty out to the floor. Back in again and Jannetty escapes a backdrop and makes the tag off to Shawn. A double superkick puts Tanaka down so it's off to Sato. Tanaka kicks Shawn in the back and the Rockers are in trouble again.

A gutbuster gets two for Tanaka and a big kick to the face puts Shawn down again. Sato hits a top rope knee drop and it's off to a nerve hold. Shawn comes back with a big old clothesline and a diving tag to Marty. Things speed up and we get some heel miscommunication. A big backdrop puts Tanaka down but Fuji breaks up the double fist. Marty goes after him and gets salt in the eyes for his efforts. He stumbles into the barricade and that's a countout.

Rating: C+. Decent tag match here which would be topped by about a mile at the Rumble. These guys needed more time than this and a better finish to be awesome so this one was just ok. The Rockers would start getting awesome in a hurry after this with nearly two years before their famous split. The Express would only have a handful of PPV matches ever and this is the most recent that I've seen.

Rhythm and Blues are in the back with Steve Allen cracking jokes at their expense. Greg Valentine as a guitar playing rocker is just wrong.

Dino Bravo vs. Jim Duggan

These two feuded for a long time. Earthquake is here with Dino, sending Gorilla into a rant about how you can't be a wrestler and a manager. Kazarian would disagree. Jesse brings up how stupid it is to bring an American flag to Canada (against a Canadian at that). This is power vs. power and AMERICAN power takes over early on, sending Bravo out to the floor.

Back in and Duggan misses a charge into the buckle and Dino slugs him down. Jesse: "I don't like Hacksaw." Gorilla: "Why not?" Jesse: "He's so ugly." Jim comes back with three clotheslines but has to fight off Earthquake. In the distraction he hits Bravo with the board for the pin.

Rating: D. Another filler match, another match that sucked. Duggan was there to get crushed by Earthquake post match. Bravo was a decent lackey and midcard heel for people to beat up, but as usual he was going to lose no matter what he did out there. Except to Ronnie Garvin last year because Garvin sucks.

Duggan gets crushed by Earthquake post match.

We recap DiBiase vs. Roberts. Ted choked him out in MAY and then six months later Jake came after him. I've heard of slow builds but this is ridiculous. Roberts held up the belt and that's about it.

Roberts says he's going to make Ted beg for mercy.

Million Dollar Title: Ted DiBiase vs. Jake Roberts

DiBiase is quickly sent to the floor as Jesse criticizes Gorilla's hot dog consumption. The DDT is escaped twice and Ted takes a breather on the floor. Back in and Jake grabs a hammerlock before driving some knees into the arm. Off to another hammerlock as Gorilla starts talking anatomy. Jake has to chase off Virgil though and Ted gets in a shot as Roberts comes back in. Roberts misses a running knee lift and Ted takes over.

Off to a front facelock by DiBiase as the fans are doing The Wave. It goes on for a good while as Ted sends Roberts' arm into the post. A piledriver puts Jake down but DiBiase doesn't cover. Off to the Million Dollar Dream for a bit but Jake gets his foot on the ropes. Jake comes back with an atomic drop and a clothesline followed by a backdrop for no cover. The DDT is loaded up but Virgil makes a save, pulling Jake to the floor when the referee isn't looking. They head to the floor where the Million Dollar Dream is put on again. Jake sends DiBiase into the post but Ted gets back inside anyway to retain.

Rating: C-. This match took a long time to get going but the crowd was into this match for the most part. Apparently DiBiase wins the title even on a countout because this is a non-sanctioned belt. Gorilla thinks DiBiase doesn't deserve the title because he didn't earn it, but Jesse says Ted does because Ted paid for it. Point to Jesse.

Jake beats up Virgil and DiBiase because he can with Ted taking a DDT. Roberts shoves some money in Ted's mouth for fun.

Slick says life is all about money so he's happy that DiBiase has paid off Akeem to take out Big Boss Man. DiBiase had asked Boss Man to get the belt back from Roberts but since there was no crime, Boss Man turned face for being offered a bribe.

Boss Man doesn't have much to say.

Big Boss Man vs. Akeem

Boss Man's face as he rides to the ring is almost scary. DiBiase is waiting at ringside and jumps Boss Man before the bell. Wait apparently it did ring but the referee didn't care. Good to know. Anyway Akeem pounds away on Boss Man but gets caught in an atomic drop out of the corner. The Boss Man Slam ends this in less than two minutes.

The fans don't care about Rhythm and Blues.

Mary Tyler Moore likes Wrestlemania.

Here's Rhythm and Blues to perform Hunka Hunka Hunka Honky Love. The only thing of note here is future WCW World Champion Diamond Dallas Page as the man driving the pink Cadillac into the arena. The Bushwhackers pop up in vendor costumes to beat up the band and break guitars.

The attendance record is announced: 67,678.

Rick Rude vs. Jimmy Snuka

Rude now has straight hair and is all tough instead of being a comedy guy. Steve Allen comes in to do commentary for no apparent reason. Snuka takes over to start with some shots to the head, only to have Rude suplex him down with ease to take over. Jimmy comes back by ramming Rude's face into the mat, only to get poked in the eye for his efforts. Snuka misses something off the top and jumps into a punch to the ribs. The Rude Awakening ends this quick.

Rating: D. This was there to set up Rude as a threat to the new champion after the main event tonight. That would lead to Summerslam and a main event title match, but that would be about it for Rude in the WWF. Snuka wouldn't do much here at all and was a total jobber to the stars after this one.

We recap Hogan vs. Warrior. They wound up being the only two guys in the ring at one point in the Rumble and the reaction to their fight was great. They then had some run-ins on SNME and the Main Event and that's

about it. This is much more about a battle of respect and they certainly don't hate each other.

WWF World Title/Intercontinental Title: Hulk Hogan vs. Ultimate Warrior

This is title for title. It's one of those matches where both guys are built up to the point that neither can lose and the fans are completely split on who they want to win. That's REALLY hard to pull off and I don't remember a better execution of something like this ever before. The shot of Warrior on the ropes doing his pose as Hogan comes to the ring still sends chills up my back.

They stare each other down and both guys shove the other into the corner. We get the famous test of strength with Warrior taking over to start. Jesse is STUNNED but Hogan fights back up and takes Warrior down to his knees, giving us one of the most popular .gif's in the history of the internet (implied oral sex if you're not familiar). Hogan trips Warrior down and drops an elbow for one but Warrior pops up and no sells a slam. Warrior slams Hogan down and clotheslines him to the floor where Hogan might have hurt his knee.

Back in and the brawl is on with Hogan's knee being fine and not ever mentioned again. Hulk takes over and pounds away at Warrior's head before getting two off a pair of elbow drops. Off to a front facelock and a small package for two. Hogan hooks a chinlock and pounds away on Ultimate's head. After a brief break we're right back to the chinlock followed by a belly to back suplex for two for Hulk.

There's chinlock #3 and you're not likely to ever hear the fans freak out as much from someone fighting out of a chinlock as you get here for Warrior. A double clothesline puts both guys down and Hebner counts VERY slowly, which is the right idea here. Warrior grabs the ropes and starts Warrioring Up before hitting some clotheslines. A suplex gets two for Warrior and it's off to a bearhug on Hulk.

Hogan fights out of the hold with some solid rights to the head but on the breakup, the referee is taken down. Warrior hits a pair of ax handles off the top and starts to get fired up. The shoulder block misses though and Hulk drives him head first into the mat, but there's no referee.

Warrior suplexes Hogan down but there's still no count. A rollup gets a VERY close two for Hogan and it's time for the punches.

An elbow sends Warrior out to the floor and Hogan gets posted. Back in and Warrior snaps off some clotheslines followed by the gorilla press into the splash. That gets two and it's time to Hulk Up. Hogan pounds away and hits the big boot, but the legdrop misses. Warrior hits a fast splash for the surprise pin to win the title and shock the world.

Rating: A. That's likely high but the crowd here REALLY helps this one. This is a match that just works and there's almost no other way to put it. I don't think there's much of an argument over this not being Hogan's best match ever and it's easily Warrior's first or second best ever depending on your taste about next year's entry. Either way, this is a great match and one of those matches you have to see at some point as part of being a fan.

Hogan hands Warrior the belt and leaves in the cart, partially stealing the spotlight but it's not as bad as I remember.

Overall Rating: C+. This is one of those shows that is completely dependent on the main event. Other than that there's almost nothing here at all, although there's nothing that horrible. It's mainly a big group of random(ish) matches with stories to most of them, but almost none of them are anything of note. Still though, it's pretty fun stuff overall and the main event is must see. It's not a great show or anything but it's worth checking out.

Ratings Comparison

Rick Martel vs. Koko B. Ware

Original: D

Redo: D+

Demolition vs. Colossal Connection

Original: C-

Redo: C-

Earthquake vs. Hercules

Original: D-

Redo: D

Brutus Beefcake vs. Mr. Perfect

Original: C

Redo: C-

Roddy Piper vs. Bad News Brown

Original: A

Redo: D

Hart Foundation vs. Bolsheviks

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

Barbarian vs. Tito Santana

Original: D

Redo: C-

Dusty Rhodes/Sapphire vs. Randy Savage/Sensational Sherri

Original: D-

Redo: D

Orient Express vs. Rockers

Original: C

Redo: C+

Jim Duggan vs. Dino Bravo

Original: D+

Redo: D

Ted Dibiase vs. Jake Roberts

Original: C

Redo: C-

Big Boss Man vs. Akeem

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

Rick Rude vs. Jimmy Snuka

Original: C-

Redo: D

Ultimate Warrior vs. Hulk Hogan

Original: A+

Redo: A

Overall Rating

Original: C+

Redo: C+

I'm surprised by that Bad News/Piper match more than anything else.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/03/13/history-of-wrestlemania-with-kb-wrestlemania-6-epitome-of-a-one-match-show/>

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews

Thought of the Day: Let's Do The Time Warp Again

So now they're taking ideas from WWF and WCW. In addition to stealing the Vince/HHH/Stephanie story, now we have the following from WCW in 1997:

Bully Ray as Hogan

Sting as Lex Luger

AJ Styles as Sting

Bound For Glory as Starrcade

It's been sixteen years so why not?

Impact Wrestling – March 14, 2013: It's Like New Year's Day

[Impact Wrestling](#)

Date: March 14, 2013

Location: Sears Center, Chicago, Illinois

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Tazz, Todd Keneley

We're past the Orlando era now as Impact will be on the road permanently going forward. The main story of course is that Bully Ray is the new TNA World Champion, having beaten Jeff Hardy on Sunday at Lockdown while also revealing that he is in fact the President of Aces and 8's, FINALLY giving the team both a leader as well as a major accomplishment. We'll hear about that as well as see AJ Styles live on Impact for the first time in months tonight. Let's get to it.

We open with a clip from Lockdown with Hogan telling Bully Ray to be remembered as he won the title. This transitions into a package of still photos from the world title match with Ray accepting the help of Aces and 8's and winning the title.

Tag Titles: Hernandez/Chavo Guerrero vs. Bobby Roode/Austin Aries

Never mind as Aces and 8's beat down Chavo and Hernandez before the champions ever come to the ring.

D-Von says this is the team that is going to take over TNA and introduces the new world champion Bully Ray. Bully and D-Von do their old Dudleys pose before Bully is presented with his biker vest. Ray asks if we know who he is before saying he's the President of Aces and 8's, the world champion, the man who fooled Sting, Hulk and Brooke but also made fools out of all the fans. For nine months the fans bought into Ray and all the lies he told.

On Sunday he was so proud of the team and he never felt better than when he hit Jeff with the hammer to win the title. The plan was delayed a bit as Bully was supposed to leave when Wes and Garrett came into the cage, but they waited until the Hogans came down. See, an hour before the main event, Hulk gave Bully a lecture about doing something memorable. Ray says that's something the NWO never could accomplish. Ray begs Hogan to come out and fire him but knows Hulk won't do it. He says when you ride with Aces and 8's, you never ride alone.

Sting is in the back freaking out about how Aces and 8's are burning TNA at the stake. He need to talk to Hulk so he can get his hands on Aces and 8's tonight.

Gail Kim/Tara vs. Mickie James/Velvet Sky

A pre-match interview with Gail talks about how Teryn Terrell is on probation for costing Gail the title on Sunday. Gail and Velvet start things off with Sky taking Gail down with a series of armdrags. Off to Mickie for a double rolling leg drag on Kim. Mickie chokes Gail in the corner and gets two off an enziguri as we take a break. Back with Mickie getting caught in the Tarantula from Tara in the ropes.

A double slingshot suplex gets two for Gail on Mickie and it's off to the corner for some choking. Mickie comes out of said corner with a hurricanrana and there's the hot tag to Velvet. Gail and Teryn get in an argument with Gail shoving her down. Terrell smacks her in the face, allowing Mickie to hit the Thesz Press off the top on Gail. Tara hits Mickie with the Widow's Peak but Velvet takes out Tara with In Yo Face for the pin at 9:40.

Rating: C. This was one of the better women's matches I've seen in a very long time. Mickie is so smooth in the ring and it's very nice to see those long legs back again. The rest of the match was ok but Gail vs. Teryn does nothing for me as there's no reason to care about Terrell other than she's a hot blonde.

We recap the Aces and 8's segment from earlier before going to the back to see Bully toasting Aces and 8's. He thanks them for being behind him these past nine months but realizes he hasn't talked to his wife in awhile. Bully calls Brooke and they leave her a voicemail to get on her nerves. Oh and say hi to dad for him.

Hulk won't answer anything about Aces and 8's.

Robbie E vs. Robbie Terry

This is a rematch from the PPV where E got destroyed. Terry power walks to the ring, sending E running to the floor. E tries to jump Terry but it has no effect at all. A big beal sends E flying as does a one man flapjack. Terry hits a modified Jackhammer as the fans chant feed me more ala Ryback. The fireman's carry into a spinebuster gets the pin for Terry at 1:19.

Terry dances post match.

Sting goes in to see Hulk and we cut to a break.

Aces and 8's continue to celebrate.

Hogan blames Sting for everything that happened with Bully. Sting wants Bully tonight but Hogan goes on a rant, saying he never should have trusted Bully. Apparently everything is over and nothing can get better again.

We recap AJ's saga and his loss to Daniels on PPV. We also look at the Claire Lynch stuff and AJ walking out on the company.

Sting runs into Aries and Roode, now with matching shirts that identify them as dirty heels. They make fun of him for causing all of these problems and say that it's unfortunate that they can't fight, because they were going to give Hogan and Sting a title shot. Sting says he wants to fight and Roode bails, leaving Aries alone with the Stinger. Apparently they're fighting later tonight.

Here's AJ back to Impact after several months away. Or actually not as instead it's Bad Influence in Road Warrior attire. Ok that's pretty awesome. They don't have the spikes but they can do the poses perfectly. Kaz says they're bringing back Throwback Thursday and paying homage to

the second best tag team in wrestling history. Daniels even does Hawk's WEEEEEEEEEEEEEL catchphrase. Apparently this is the Legion of Boom.

This brings out James Storm who says that the original LOD is a little bigger, a little tougher and a lot more over than these two are. Bad Influence gets to pick which of them gets beaten up by Storm right now.

James Storm vs. Christopher Daniels

Storm starts fast and throws Daniels around before ramming Daniels into Kaz, getting two as a result. Kaz trips up Storm to get Daniels control which includes a slingshot moonsault. Storm comes back in a slugout though but can't hit Eye of the Storm. Daniels puts him down with a release Rock Bottom, only to miss the BME. Storm hits Closing Time and a Backstabber for the pin at 3:43.

Rating: C. Not much you can say about a match that long. Storm in a big time program would be a good thing for him as after last year he's desperately in need of a reset. Daniels vs. AJ must be coming again though, because this is TNA and that's how things work around here. Not much to the match but it was fine.

Post match Bad Influence beats up Storm but here's the returning AJ to lay out the evil tag team. Daniels bails but AJ hits Storm as well.

We recap Wes Brisco vs. Kurt Angle from Sunday before seeing Aces and 8's destroying Angle in the back.

Here's Joseph Park who is gushing about having two wins now. He's been reflecting on his accomplishments, including graduating law school and making partner at Park Park and Park. Park grew up around here going to Cubs games (mixed reaction) and going to Blackhawks games (POP) and he can't wait for what's coming next.

This brings out Matt Morgan to make fun of Hulk because that story is still going on after not being mentioned for months I guess. Morgan doesn't like Park having a contract here and calls Park Hogan's biggest mistake. One by one, Morgan is going to eliminate each and every one of Hulk's mistakes, starting with Park. He tells Park to leave but Morgan insults Chicago and that means it's time to fight. Morgan uses the always lame "on my time" excuse and goes to leave, only to catch Park not paying attention and kicking him in the head. Morgan says his time is next week.

Aces and 8's want to know if Hulk is going to fire them because they've destroyed a lot of people. Ray thinks destroying the show sounds like a good idea so let's go do that.

We get some clips of Brooke freaking out after the end of Lockdown.

Austin Aries vs. Sting

Feeling out process to start as the fans are split on who to cheer for. Sting carries Aries over to the corner but Austin lays on the ropes to show off. Sting kicks him down but misses a Stinger Splash as Aries bails to the outside. Back in for a bit before Sting knocks him right back to the floor. There's the Stinger Splash to Roode against the barricade and Aries is sent through the barricade as we take a break.

Back with Sting still in control but he has to stop and yell at Roode, which gets Bobby ejected. The distraction lets Aries kick the rope into the Little Stingers and there's the suicide dive for good measure. Back in and Aries hits a middle rope dropkick to the back of a seated Sting for two. Aries pounds away in the corner but Sting gets in a few right hands. A dropkick to the knee puts Sting back down though and Aries keeps control via a quickly broken half crab.

Back up and Sting misses a dropkick but Aries tries for the Scorpion Deathlock. Unfortunately he doesn't know how to hook the hold and Sting is able to come back again. A big clothesline spins Aries inside out but

Austin bails away from the real Scorpion. After guillotining Sting down on the top rope, a missile dropkick puts Sting down for about one second.

Sting busts out a gorilla press slam before missing another Stinger Splash. Aries hits a running dropkick in the corner and a running splash of his own. The brainbuster is countered into a Scorpion Death Drop for two but the Stinger Splash sets up the Deathlock...but here are Aces and 8's for the DQ at 15:16.

Rating: C+. Good match here until the run in ended as this match continues to become more and more like the NW0. The match was rolling along until the end with a story of Sting not being able to hit the Splash until the end. It was cool to see the old gorilla press come back here though and the match was better than I was expecting.

Aces and 8's want to know if Hogan is going to fire them.

After a break Ray is still wanting Hogan to come out and here he is. Hulk is still on crutches so he stays on the stage. He says firing Aces and 8's would be too easy and they deserve the hard way. It might not be today or tomorrow, but it's coming. Right now, Hogan is telling everyone on the roster to go to war with the bikers.

About five guys (including Angle, Terry, Hardy, Chavo and Hernandez) runs out to beat down Aces and 8's but there are too many bikers resulting in a big beatdown of the TNA guys. Jeff Hardy is beaten down in just a few seconds and this is a pretty lame brawl. Ray says is this what you meant by memorable and starts destroying everyone with his chain. Ray goes halfway up the ramp and says the cavalry just got destroyed. He asks what his dad is going to do to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. This was a really solid show tonight as everything seemed to have a new energy to it. It was cool to see Aces and 8's with a swagger that they could back up, which is probably because none of them wrestled tonight. Everything had a point tonight and it was like the

beginning of a new year for the show in a lot of ways. I'm excited for next week's Impact which is a rarity anymore.

Results

Mickie James/Velvet Sky b. Tara/Gail Kim – In Yo Face to Tara

Rob Terry b. Robbie E – Spinebuster

James Storm b. Christopher Daniels – Backstabber

Sting b. Austin Aries via DQ when Aces and 8's interfered

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Wrestlemania Count-Up – Wrestlemania V: The First Wrestlemania Sequel

Wrestlemania V

Date: April 2, 1989

Location: Trump Plaza, Atlantic City, New Jersey

Attendance: 18,946

Commentators: Gorilla Monsoon, Jesse Ventura

Given how this year's (2013) Wrestlemania is more or less a sequel to last year's, this is an appropriate show to get to. This is more or less the followup to Wrestlemania IV as Savage has snapped on Hogan, claiming that Hulk is jealous of the title and all that jazz. That's really all you need to know about this show as it's the only match that means anything at all. Let's get to it.

Rockin Robin, the reigning Women's Champion, sings America the Beautiful.

Hercules vs. King Haku

The crown isn't on the line here. Haku jumps him from behind to start but Herc comes back with a hip toss and a slam followed by a release flapjack. A clothesline puts Haku on the floor but Hercules suplexes him right back in. Some elbow drops keep Haku down but Hercules goes after Heenan like an idiot. Haku jumps him from behind and we head back inside for a pair of backbreakers for a pair of counts.

Since this is a power match we hit the bearhug as even Jesse says this isn't going to get a submission. Gorilla criticizes Haku's technique, prompting Jesse to ask what a gorilla would know about bearhugging. Herc breaks the hold and the King yells at the referee, only to get caught by a cross body. Hercules pounds away and hits a running knee lift followed by some clotheslines. A powerslam gets two but Hercules jumps off the top into most of a superkick. Haku misses a top rope headbutt and Hercules wins with the belly to back suplex with a last second shoulder raise.

Rating: C-. Nothing special here but it was a basic enough match to get things going. Hercules was a generic power guy so there wasn't much to get interested in with him. Haku would join up with Andre to win the tag titles by the end of the year. I'm not sure if there was much of a feud here other than Hercules vs. Heenan which was only touched on.

The Rockers say they can handle the Twin Towers.

Rockers vs. Twin Towers

That would be Big Boss Man/Akeem. Shawn makes his Wrestlemania debut by starting against Big Boss Man and the little guy takes over quickly. He also decks Akeem in the corner and gets to face the bigger man (Akeem, the former One Man Gang). The Rockers start flying in and out of the ring as they work over Akeem's arm. The arm cranking continues but Akeem makes a blind tag. Marty gets tossed into Boss Man's arms and crushed by both big men. This is back when Boss Man weighed about 400lbs so it's a big more painful than it sounds.

The Towers take their turns with fat man offense as Marty is in big trouble in a hurry. Akeem avalanches him in the corner and it's back to Boss Man. We get heel miscommunication though and Boss Man is knocked to the floor by his own partner. Off to Shawn who pounds away in the corner before both Rockers hit a series of whips into the corner. A double middle rope shoulder finally takes Akeem down for two and it's back to Shawn on his own.

Akeem KILLS HIM with a clothesline (Jesse: "I think he irritated Akeem!") but Boss Man misses a top rope splash. The Rockers hit some double dropkicks (one of which sees Shawn completely missing Bossman) but a top rope rana is countered into a wicked powerbomb by Boss Man. Akeem crushes Shawn with a splash for the pin.

Rating: C. Considering how hungover the Rockers were in this match (as confirmed by Shawn), this came off pretty well. The Rockers sold the power offense like few others could, which made for some awesome visuals. They would get a lot better over the coming years but this wasn't their best performance.

Ted DiBiase talks about hanging out with Donald Trump and having them here to see him beat up Beefcake.

Ted DiBiase vs. Brutus Beefcake

This isn't for the Million Dollar Title which ticks Gorilla off. Brutus has his AWESOME music at this point. Beefcake jumps DiBiase to start to tick off Jesse as well. Ted bails to the floor and comes back in for some chops, only to be knocked right back to the floor by a right hand. Back in again and Brutus wins a slugout but Vigril trips him up to give DiBiase his first control.

DiBiase pounds away (there's a lot of punching in this match) and hits the falling punch for two. I love that move. A middle rope ax handle puts Brutus down again but Beefcake reverses a suplex to put DiBiase down right next to him. A double clothesline does the exact same thing but Ted is up first. He tries another suplex which actually works this time, followed by the Million Dollar Dream.

Brutus gets to the rope so they slug it out some more with the barber taking over. Now Beefcake throws on his own sleeper but gets sent out to the floor in a counter. Virgil interferes a bit to distract Beefcake but DiBiase stupidly goes out to the floor as well. They brawl to a double countout to a big boo from the crowd.

Rating: C-. This was mainly a punching match as well as a pretty big fall for DiBiase. To go from the main event to the third match on the card in a year is a pretty big fall, which is saying a lot as DiBiase was still a very evil heel. Brutus was getting very popular very fast and would be paired with Hogan soon after this for a BIG rub.

Brutus beats up Virgil post match and chases them off with the hedge clippers. You know, assault with a deadly weapon as Jesse calls it.

We go to the Wrestlemania brunch with the Bushwhackers eating a lot and trying to talk about their match with the Rougeaus.

Bushwhackers vs. Fabulous Rougeau Brothers

ALL AMERICAN BOYS BABY! That would be the Rougeau's theme song and one of the most awesome entrances in company history. Seriously, go Youtube that thing. Jimmy Hart loses his jacket somehow but the Rougeaus save it in a humane act. Not that it matters as the Bushwhackers clear the ring a second later. Luke and Ray start things off and Ray quickly takes him down. I turn my head for a minute and come back to hearing Jesse say "So as far as you're concerned, tear down the Statue of Liberty?" Like I said, commentary was a bit different back then.

Luke and Butch clear the ring of Rougeaus again before it's down to Luke and Jacques. Butch tries to interfere for no apparent reason and Luke gets caught in a Boston Crab. In a sequence that has haunted me for years, Ray loads up Luke for a slam and while Luke is upside down, he rubs Ray's crotch. There's nothing more to it than that and to this day I don't know why he did that.

Anyway Ray puts on an abdominal stretch as a fan or two chants USA. In theory that would be for the Rougeaus here who are the All American Boys facing the guys from New Zealand. The Rougeaus prematurely hug and get

caught by the Battering Ram and a double gutbuster is good for the pin on Ray out of nowhere.

Rating: D. It's a comedy match and not a very fun one. This is called a big upset but I don't really see how you can call it that. It's not like either team is great or even good here and the Bushwhackers were still brand new here, so presumably they had won most of their matches up to this point. I don't get it but whatever.

Sean Mooney is licked by the Bushwhackers and says words can't describe it. As someone who has been licked by one as well, that's very true.

Mr. Perfect vs. Blue Blazer

That would be Owen Hart in a kind of superhero gimmick that eventually led to his death. Perfect is pretty new here too and I believe is debuting his singlet look. Hennig hits a quick hiptoss that doesn't do much at all. Blazer blocks a slap and takes Perfect down to stagger Hennig a bit.

They slightly botch a flip out of a hiptoss and Blazer dropkicks Perfect to the floor. Blazer hits a quick hiptoss (why is that so popular here?) of his own and a dropkick for no cover. A modified northern lights suplex gets two for Blue but a top rope splash hits knees. Off to a reverse chinlock for a few moments by Perfect but Blazer fights up and hits a standing powerslam and a belly to belly for two each. A crucifix gets two more but Blazer spends too long arguing with the referee and the PerfectPlex ends this clean.

Rating: C+. This match is popular for some reason but it's only pretty good. Owen would get to show off a lot better later on and the Blazer gimmick didn't stick around that long. The ending here was clean too which is what Perfect would get quite often around this time. He wouldn't really do anything of note for about a year though until having a house show feud with Hogan.

Jesse is presented to the crowd again like last year.

Mr. Fuji allegedly runs a 5K run in a tuxedo.

To really make this show feel bloated, here's Run DMC with the Wrestlemania Rap.

We recap the double tag team turn at Survivor Series 1988 with Fuji leaving Demolition to hook up with the Powers of Pain.

Demolition says they're ready for Fuji the Stooge.

Tag Titles: Demolition vs. Powers of Pain/Mr. Fuji

Demolition is defending and this is a handicap match. Warlord and Ax get things going with Ax pounding him down quickly. Smash comes in for a double beatdown and it's off to a neck crank. Back to Ax for the same move and he yells at Fuji a bit. The Demolition beatdown ensues but Warlord powers Ax over to the corner for a tag to Barbarian. He shoves Smash into the corner and is immediately clotheslined down by a fresh Ax. The crowd is dead here.

Barbie gets double teamed by the champions and Ax hooks a neck crank. Back to Smash who gets chopped down before it's back to Warlord. The advantage lasts for all of three seconds before the Powers finally get some successful cheating going on. Off to Fuji for the first time for some old man offense that is far better than Heenan or Hart at least. Barbarian comes in again and the yet to be named Kick of Fear puts Ax down again for no cover.

The match continues to stay in second gear at best with both teams barely moving at all. Fuji tries the flashiest move of the match by going up top, only to miss Ax. Gorilla: "He hasn't wrestled in years, just like us." Jesse: "Us? For Fuji and I it's been years. For you many years." Barbarian gets clotheslined down again and it's off to Smash as everything breaks down. Fuji loads up his salt but hits Warlord by mistake. The Demolition Decapitator is enough to end Fuji and retain the titles.

Rating: D. I'm a fan of Demolition but this was a REALLY weak performance by both teams. The Powers would split soon after this which was the best idea for both guys as they were never going to break through the ceiling with Demolition on top. The title reign would continue to go on for

another two months or so, reaching at nearly a year and a half.

Randy Savage has nothing to say other than he's ready for Hogan.

Ronnie Garvin vs. Dino Bravo

For absolutely no apparent reason, Jimmy Snuka is brought out after the wrestlers' intros. Bravo jumps him from behind to open the match before it's off to a bearhug. That goes about three seconds do Dino loads up a powerbomb instead. Garvin escapes and starts a flurry of offense and gets two off a jackknife cover. A sleeper is easily broken up by Bravo and he breaks up a piledriver as well. Garvin tries to pound away in the corner but gets caught in an atomic drop and the side suplex for the pin by Bravo.

Rating: D. This didn't do anything to get the crowd going which is a big problem with this show: the crowd doesn't care about most of this stuff and why in the world would they? This is a random match between two guys that have no reason to fight and have no future as a main talent. Nothing to see here at all.

Frenchy Martin, Dino's manager, gets beaten down by Garvin post match just because.

Brain Busters vs. Strike Force

This is the return of Strike Force after Martel had a bad injury. Blanchard and Martel start things off and Rick almost immediately has to punch out of the wrong corner. Off to Anderson who gets rammed face first into the mat before being put in his own test of strength on the mat. Arn catches Martel in a body scissors but Rick turns it over into his signature Boston Crab.

Blanchard makes the save but Tito immediately comes in to put him in the Figure Four. Martel puts one on Anderson as well as things break down. We get some near falls by Tito but he accidentally hits the forearm on Martel to take him out. Rick gets ticked off as Tito is basically in a handicap match. The Busters get to take over on Tito but you know Santana can hang with either guy.

Arn goes up but gets slammed down, allowing Tito to set up a hot tag to...no one. Martel drops down to the floor and walks out on his partner, officially making it a handicap match. The yet to be named spinebuster from Anderson plants Tito and it's back to Blanchard. Tully blocks a monkey flip and the spike piledriver kills Tito dead for the pin.

Rating: B-. Best match of the night so far as all four guys were moving out there. Tito could go with the best of them and he had some of the best of them to do that with in this one. Martel and Santana would feud on and off for about a year until they just stopped fighting out of nowhere.

Martel says he's tired of carrying Tito and that's that.

It's time for the return of Roddy Piper in Piper's Pit, but after a long introduction by Fink, we get Brother Love in a kilt instead. You younguns might know him as Bruce Prichard from Gut Check. Love interviews "himself" and does one heck of a Roddy Piper impression in the process. Morton Downey Jr., a kind of forefather to Jerry Springer, is the actual guest. He runs to the ring and immediately lights up a cigarette and gay jokes about about Love.

Now the real Piper comes out to make fun of Love for being feminine. Roddy won't let Love answer any questions by saying he doesn't really want to know that badly. Morton is on his fifth cigarette or so at this point. This goes on FOREVER until Love says he's a bit Scotch. You know, as in from Scotland. Piper rips off Love's kilt and the Brother sprints off. Finally we get to Downey who implies he slept with Piper's mom.

Morton keeps blowing smoke in Piper's face as Piper makes fun of Downey for having warts on his face. Piper gets annoyed with the smoke and Downey calls him a transvestite. Roddy asks for a smoke of his own and sprays Downey with a fire extinguisher. This took FIFTEEN MINUTES, as in longer than all but the main event tonight.

We get an ad for No Holds Barred, Hogan's acting debut.

Donald Trump likes hosting Wrestlemania.

Ventura goes into a hilarious rant against Hogan for invading Hollywood because Hogan needs a job after Savage beats him tonight. Jesse shouts that Hulk can drive his limo and storms off.

We recap the Megapowers feud as intermission continues. Basically Savage won the title at Mania 4 then teamed up with Hogan. Hogan kept getting the pins and finally at Main Event II, Savage accidentally wiped out Elizabeth. Hogan took Liz to the back to get attention but it left Savage alone. Finally Savage slapped Hogan and turned heel again, leading to the heel promo of a lifetime as he ERUPTED on Hogan, letting out every bit of his pent up rage and jealousy before blasting Hogan with the title in the medical room.

Hogan says it was Savage eaten alive by the jealousy and the title is coming home tonight. This somehow turns into a talk about destroying the Trump Plaza, which I think he touched on last year too.

Andre the Giant vs. Jake Roberts

Big John Studd is referee and comes out to what would become Jim Duggan's music. This was supposed to set up Andre vs. Studd but Studd left before it went anywhere. Sometime before the match, Andre and Heenan get the turnbuckle pad off and Jake goes face first into the steel. Ventura and Gorilla talk about David vs. Goliath (Jesse: "He used a foreign object.") as Jake reaches for the snake bag. That goes nowhere so Studd crushes him in the corner.

Andre looks so different than he did two years ago. In Detroit he looked like a killing machine but here he looks like a lumbering oaf. Giant steps on Jake a few times but Roberts comes back with some strikes. He knocks Andre into the ropes and chokes away, only to see Andre get his arm loose and choke Jake right back.

In a moment that I've never seen explained, Andre fires some shoulders into Jake in the corner, only to stagger backwards. I'm guessing Jake was supposed to knee him (the announcers suggested he did) but Jake's legs never moved. Either way, Roberts pounds away a bit before being knocked to the floor. Studd and Andre get in a shoving match as Ted DiBiase runs out to steal the snake. Andre chokes Studd until Jake chases DiBiase down

and gets the snake back. He slides Damien in and the giant runs from the smaller referee giant, giving Jake the DQ win.

Rating: D. ANOTHER match that didn't go anywhere here as it was hard to buy Jake as being a threat to Andre while at the same time it was hard to be intimidated by the Giant due to how old and banged up he was. Nothing match here which was supposed to set up Andre vs. Studd, but instead Studd retired so Andre got a tag title reign instead.

Sensational Sherri wants to fight Rockin Robin and hopes Liz gets hurt today.

Greg Valentine/Honky Tonk Man vs. Hart Foundation

Valentine and Honky aren't Rhythm and Blues yet. Bret and Honky start and it's atomic drops all around. Honky sells his hilariously but Greg plays it a bit more serious. Off to Anvil for some power but Bret misses the middle rope elbow. The beating begins and you know Hart is going to sell things very well. Valentine gets to pound away as Gorilla says Greg isn't warmed up yet.

Honky hits the Shake Rattle and Roll but tags in Valentine for the Figure Four instead. Greg gets rolled up for two instead as Gorilla goes NUTS complaining about Honky not covering. The hot tag brings in Anvil again to clean house on both heels. A great clothesline gets two on the Hammer before it's back to Bret for the middle rope elbow. Everything breaks down and Bret gets Jimmy Hart's megaphon to drill Honky for the pin.

Rating: D+. Enough filler matches already! This is probably the fourth match out of ten so far that have been there with no particular reason for it to happen. The show is already well over two and a half hours now and there are still four matches to go. That's one of the problems with the late 80s: they made the shows long for the sake of having them be long.

We recap Rude vs. Warrior which is basically just because Rude attacked Warrior at the Rumble Super Posedown and the champion wants revenge.

Intercontinental Title: Ultimate Warrior vs. Rick Rude

Warrior is defending but Rude has the belt imprinted on his tights. Rude tries a knee to the ribs but hits the belt by mistake. Warrior immediately takes over with the power game and LAUNCHES Rude into the corner. The champ throws on a bearhug for a bit until Rude finally pokes him in the eyes to escape. Rude busts out a MISSILE DROPKICK for two but gets launched off Warrior on the kickout.

Back to the bearhug but Rude gets out the same way as he did the first time. Warrior responds by biting Rude in the face but the splash hits knees. A piledriver puts Warrior down but Rick can't immediately cover. It only gets two but the kickout is much weaker than earlier. Rude tries to swivel his hips but his back is too messed up. He cranks back on Warrior's arms but the champion gets to the ropes and starts shaking away.

Here come the shoulders from Warrior and he plants Rude face first into the mat a few times. Warrior tries a slam or something but drops Rude and almost puts him on the floor. Rude gets a boot up in the corner to stop a charging Warrior but the Rude Awakening is broken through pure power. Rick is clotheslined to the floor and Warrior suplexes him back in, only to have Heenan trip Warrior up and hold down his foot for the shocking upset and the title to Rude. This might have been Warrior's first televised loss but I don't think it was.

Rating: B. This is one of those pairings that just worked no matter what you had them do. You often hear about people having chemistry and that's what you had here: these two could just work well together for no apparent reason and this is a fine example. Warrior would get the title back later in the year before moving to the world title scene a few months later. Good match here.

Warrior beats up Heenan post match. Remember that for later.

Bad News Brown vs. Jim Duggan

This show MUST continue! Again no reason to this match and they're just fighting to fill in another five minutes on this already WAY too long card. They punch each other a lot and Duggan knocks him to the floor. Brown comes back in with his judo stuff but misses the Ghetto Blaster

(running enziguri). Bad News gets annoyed and goes to the floor for a chair but Duggan hits it with the board for the double DQ.

Rating: D-. This is the twelfth match on this show and we're over three hours and three minutes into it already. There is no reason at all for this to be continuing but it is anyway just because. Duggan would go on to feud with whoever he could find as would Brown, showing why this match didn't need to happen at all.

Red Rooster says he'll beat Heenan and it'll be a great day in the barnyard.

Red Rooster vs. Bobby Heenan

There's actually a backstory: Heenan managed Rooster but said he was limited so Rooster dumped Heenan. Bobby is hurt so he brings the Brooklyn Brawler with him. Those sentences take as long to type as the match lasts as Rooster hits him once, Heenan misses a charge into the post, gets whipped into the buckle and the match is over in 30 seconds. To recap, Rooster beat him with an Irish whip.

Just to drag this out EVEN LONGER, the Brawler beats the Rooster up, because WE HAVE TO PUSH BROOKLYN FREAKING BRAWLER.

Liz says she'll be in a neutral corner tonight and won't cheer for either guy in the main event.

Tony Schiavone and Sean Mooney fill in even MORE time.

WWF World Title: Hulk Hogan vs. Randy Savage

This is huge and Savage is on fire here. As I said Liz is in a neutral corner despite never being Hogan's manager as a singles guy ever. Savage comes out first for no apparent reason. Savage immediately heads to the floor to stall as you would expect him to do. The fans HATE him at this point after loving him like crazy a year earlier. Hogan finally shoves Savage down and it's time to stall some more.

Back up and Hogan shoulders him down again for the third trip to the floor for Savage. As Jesse and Gorilla get in an argument over the value

of managers, Savage grabs a headlock. Hulk shoves him off and Randy heads outside, only to hide behind Liz in a truly evil move. Back in again and Hogan actually uses a nice amateur move and hooks a front facelock. That wasn't bad at all. Savage powers out of it (surprising as well) and pokes Hogan in the eye to take over.

A top rope ax handle gets one on Hogan and it's off to an armbar. In something you don't often see, Hogan is pulled down to the mat by his hair. It feels weird even typing that. Hulk uses a handful of trunks to launch Randy out to the floor and Jesse freaks out. Back in and a clothesline puts Randy down, followed by a series of elbow drops. Hulk is bleeding above the eye.

Randy gets in a shot to the face and puts on a fast sleeper which is transitioned into a chinlock. Hulk comes back with an atomic drop but an elbow drop misses. A shot into the buckle sets up a rollup with trunks for two on Hulk. Savage stomps on his fingers which ticks Hogan off. Hogan slams Savage to the floor where the champion doesn't want Liz's help. Hulk follows him out and rams Randy's face into the barricade.

Savage escapes being posted and sends Hogan in by mistake. After sending Hulk back in, Randy yells at Liz a bit more and shoves her up the aisle. The referee ejects Liz, making the only interesting factor a nonfactor. Back to the floor and Savage drops the ax handle off the top to send Hogan throat first into the barricade. Savage goes after the throat with various evil measures but the elbow only gets two. Hulk Up, big boot, leg drop, new champion.

Rating: B-. It's Hogan vs. Savage so these two are always going to have at least a watchable match, but at the end of the day this was pretty much designed to be a Hogan win and that's what it wound up being. The smart move would be to have Savage keep the title by DQ or something, causing Hulk to chase the title until Summerslam for the title change. But instead we go with the easy (and not horrible) ending. It's a good match here but not great.

Hogan celebrates forever to end the show.

Overall Rating: D. This was pretty terrible. The main words you probably

heard me say in here were things like “it keeps going” or “filler”. That’s the problem with this show: there’s WAY too much stuff going on with 14 matches, that stupid rap, and the fifteen minute Piper segment. This show runs nearly three hours and forty minutes which is WAY too much for a single show given what they had going on at this point. Probably five matches at minimum could be called filler here. That’s WAY too much and I can see why this is considered such a lame show.

Ratings Comparison

Hercules vs. King Haku

Original: C-

Redo: C-

Twin Towers vs. Rockers

Original: C

Redo: C

Brutus Beefcake vs. Ted DiBiase

Original: D+

Redo: C-

Bushwhackers vs. Fabulous Rougeau Brothers

Original: D-

Redo: D

Mr. Perfect vs. Blue Blazer

Original: B-

Redo: C+

Demolition vs. Powers of Pain/Mr. Fuji

Original: C-

Redo: D

Dino Bravo vs. Ronnie Garvin

Original: F

Redo: D

Brain Busters vs. Strike Force

Original: B-

Redo: B-

Jake Roberts vs. Andre the Giant

Original: D

Redo: D

Hart Foundation vs. Honky Tonk Man/Greg Valentine

Original: D+

Redo: D+

Rick Rude vs. Ultimate Warrior

Original: B

Redo: B

Jim Duggan vs. Bad News Brown

Original: F

Redo: D-

Red Rooster vs. Brooklyn Brawler

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

Hulk Hogan vs. Randy Savage

Original: C+

Redo: B-

Overall Rating

Original: D+

Redo: D

Wow that was a rather boring redo.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/03/12/history-of-wrestlemania-with-kb-wrestlemania-5-hogan-vs-savage-and-thats-about-it/>

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NXT – March 13, 2013: Conor O'Brian Is...Delicious?

NXT

Date: March 13, 2013

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Tony Dawson, William Regal

We have a #1 contender now with O'Brian winning the triple threat last week. On top of that we had a lot of storyline development as Bo Dallas seems to be going to war against the Wyatt Family. Last week was all about setting up the future shows which should make for some entertaining TV today. Let's get to it.

Kassius Ohno vs. Derrick Bateman

Regal on Bateman: "If brains were elastic he wouldn't have enough to make a frog's jockstrap." Bateman quickly takes him down with an armdrag before hooking an armbar. Apparently Alberto Del Rio and Ricardo are here tonight. Bateman chops away as Regal is very focused on Ohno here. This is Derrick's return from a knee injury. Ohno is sent into the corner and slammed down for two. Almost all Bateman in the early going.

Kassius is sent to the apron where he hits a cravate Stunner onto the top rope. A running boot to Bateman's jaw puts him down and Ohno drops a pair of sentons for two. Back to the cravate on Bateman but Derrick makes his comeback with some clotheslines and shots to the face. He loads up the falling bulldog but Ohno shoves him off because it's too stupid of a move to sell. Kassius kicks him in the face for the pin at 4:20.

Rating: D+. Neither of these guys are anything of note and the fans weren't impressed either. Bateman is back from an injury but this everyman gimmick does nothing for me. I still don't get the appeal of Ohno, at least not in this gimmick. As best I can tell he's supposed to be a ruthless striker but his signature move is a cravate. His character isn't working for me and doesn't seem to be for the crowd either.

Post match Ohno puts Bateman in an STF with a cravate headlock until Regal makes the save. These two need to fight already.

Bo Dallas says Bray Wyatt has his attention after Wyatt cost him both the tag team and NXT Titles.

Regal apologizes for what he did.

Emma vs. Summer Rae

Emma is the bad dancing klutz. A quick rollup gets two for Emma and Rae

is frustrated. Wait, dance time. Rae is knocked into the corner for a cross body but she comes back with a snapmare to send Emma's leg into the ropes. We're told it's Dallas vs. Wyatt later tonight as Summer stays on the leg. Summer goes VERY old school with an Indian Deathlock (the version with both girls on their backs) before choking Emma with her long legs. Back up and a dropkick puts Emma down before Rae does Paige's scream. Emma comes back with a clothesline for two, only to be caught by a bad spinwheel kick to give Rae the pin at 3:51.

Rating: D+. Summer looks good in the outfits and has a lot of Maryse in her with the blonde bombshell look, but her stuff in the ring isn't all that great. She's a good enough antagonist though and beating up a goofy character like Emma here was a decent enough idea. They're just waiting on Paige to come back for the revenge though.

Apparently that revenge is right now because here's Paige to chase off Summer. The place went NUTS for Paige.

We recap Oliver Grey being laid out by the Wyatt Family last week.

Adrian Neville issues an open challenge to any member of the Family for next week.

Big E. Langston says that last week Conor O'Brian defeated two men to earn his title shot. However, this is Langston's first defense, so he's going to make sure it's dominant, destructive and delicious.

Bray Wyatt vs. Bo Dallas

Wyatt talks about how in his world there are no distractions and no communication. The women take care of the young and the men aren't afraid to make the ultimate sacrifice to protect what is theirs. He wants to know how far Dallas is willing to go to get what he wants. Wyatt takes him into the corner but then hides from a right hand. Bray starts to

laugh at Dallas (his real life younger brother if you're not familiar with your family trees) before hooking a headlock.

Dallas tries a headlock of his own but Wyatt hits a hard cross body for two. We take a break and come back with Dallas in a chinlock. Back up and Bo is whipped hard into the corner and a slam gets two for Bray. In a unique submission hold, Wyatt sits on Dallas' ribs and pulls back on his head in a kind of reverse camel clutch. Dallas gets up again and tries a sunset flip but Bray drops down, only to hit the mat. The look on his face from missing is great as he looks like he was shot.

Bo starts his comeback with a forearm but gets caught in a big release Rock Bottom for two. A big splash in the corner crushes Bo and it's time to dance with Dallas' limp body. He dances a bit too long though and it allows Dallas to come out of it with a belly to belly suplex for the pin at 6:21 shown of 9:51.

Rating: C. This wasn't much and I'm not sure on having Wyatt lose in I believe his third singles match. Dallas has flashes of good stuff but for the most part he still doesn't do much for me. I like the belly to belly FAR better for him than the spear though, as a guy that size has no business using the same move that Goldberg or Roman Reigns uses.

Post match here's the Wyatt Family to destroy Dallas as Wyatt laughs. Dallas makes a comeback and beats them both up, only to be caught in Bray's Downward Spiral.

Justin Gabriel says he's heard of Leo Kruger before. Back when Gabriel lived in South Africa he heard of Kruger being in the South African militia and apparently it messed with his head. Gabriel wants a match with Leo next week.

Here are Ricardo and Alberto to a very nice ovation. Del Rio does his old bit of "My name is Alberto Del Rio" which draws a small SI chant. He says he's the new world champion here so this must be an old show. Del Rio

talks about how there's a lot of talent in the back and someone back there will be WWE or World Heavyweight Champion someday. Instead of a new superstar though, here's Antonio Cesaro to challenge Del Rio to a champion vs. champion match. This brings out Dusty Rhodes who says that the Swedish guy in the ring doesn't make matches. Cesaro can have a champion vs. champion match, but against this guy.

Big E. Langston vs. Antonio Cesaro

Non-title here. Langston shoves him down and we're ready to go. We take a break before there's any contact (why not just have the bell after the break? Is it really that hard?) and come back with Langston easily breaking a wristlock. A lifting wristlock has Antonio in trouble as Big E. is easily throwing him around. Langston LAUNCHES him across the ring with a beal but Cesaro comes back with the European uppercuts and a knee lift for one.

Off to a kind of cobra clutch on Big E. but the NXT Champion easily fights up. Cesaro goes up top and dries Langston down with a knee before hitting his really impressive gutwrench suplex for two. Cesaro hooks a sleeper but Langston easily fights out of it and clotheslines Cesaro down. Five knees to Cesaro's ribs have him in trouble and Big E. runs him over, but here's Corey Graves for the DQ at 5:23 shown of 8:53.

Rating: C. The match was ok and at the end of the day, it's a good move to not have Cesaro lose clean here. I get that it's just NXT, but you don't want to have the US Champion losing in less than ten minutes like that. Granted it never stops them on Raw but that's besides the point. I hope we don't get a triple threat with Langston defending against Graves and O'Brian, but it seems to be the only way to get the title off of Langston without hurting him.

Graves is run over post match but here's O'Brian to pound on Big E. Corey helps O'Brian and Langston is laid out to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. This is NXT's bread and butter: week to week booking that makes you want to come back and see where all this stuff is going. We got some matches that were set up last week as well as some stuff that was set up for next week. That's very efficient and far better than what we get on the main shows. This show is still a treat to watch and I'm genuinely interested in where the stories are going. That's good stuff.

Results

Kassius Ohno b. Derrick Bateman – Big Boot

Summer Rae b. Emma – Spinwheel Kick

Bo Dallas b. Bray Wyatt – Belly to belly suplex

Big E. Langston b. Antonio Cesaro via DQ when Corey Graves interfered

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Rob Van Dam's Contract Expires, Currently A Free Agent

Apparently RVD's contract is up and therefore he's a free agent, meaning he could sign with WWE if he wants, or he could go anywhere else he would like. This would be another high profile TNA star that has had his contract expire in recent days and the first to actually be remembered on time.

I wouldn't mind if he left TNA. He hasn't had anything of note to do in months as he spent five months as X Champion and spent the entire time fighting Kenny King and Zema Ion in

throwaway matches. Why stick around when you're just there to fill in a spot on the card?