

On This Day: March 17, 1997 – Monday Nitro: Sting Has Come Home

Monday Nitro #79

Date: March 17, 1997

Location: Savannah Civic Center, Savannah, Georgia

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

It's the night after Uncensored and the big story is that Sting has declared his loyalty for WCW by attacking the NWO to close the show last night. At the same time though it's not all good for the purple and gold (WCW for you young people out there) as the NWO won the main event last night, basically giving them unlimited power in the company. There are eleven matches tonight so expect some quick finishes. Let's get to it.

Rey Mysterio vs. Psychosis

Mysterio takes him to the mat to start and controls from behind.

Psychosis takes him to the mat as we see the Japanese announce table which has Ultimo Dragon sans mask. Rey tries to do his kickoff out of a test of strength position but they mistime it horribly. A springboard headscissors sends Psychosis to the floor and Rey follows it with a rana off the apron. Back in and Psychosis rams him stomach first into the buckle. Psychosis misses a charge into the post and Rey hits a flip dive to the floor. West Coast Pop is HORRIBLY botched as Psychosis' head is drive into the mat ala a piledriver for the pin.

Rating: C-. I haven't seen Rey botch this much stuff in years. The ending was almost scary as Psychosis just stopped moving when his head got driven into the mat like that. The match wasn't horrible but with two noticeable botches in three and a half minutes, how good can you consider a match?

Arn Anderson says Sting came home last night, but that's not what he's here to talk about. He was injured at Halloween Havoc and has to have

neck surgery. Arn talks about how his grandmother stayed alive long enough to see him become a mature adult. Last night he saw his family, the Horsemen, mature. He also saw Sullivan's son recently and it looks like the Sullivan family has broken up completely. Anderson says he'll be back, but he never would be, at least not in the ring.

We recap last night with Savage and Liz attacking Kimberly and Page. They spray painted Kimberly when page was down.

Maxx vs. Diamond Dallas Page

Maxx is a muscle guy who is part of the Dungeon of Doom. There's a slight chance that he's the same guy that played Maxx Muscle, who was Page's bodyguard back in 1995. This is a squash, with Page hitting a top rope splash of all things. He escapes a full nelson and hits the Cutter for the quick pin in maybe a minute and a half.

Page says he's hunting for Savage and Liz. We're also told possibly for the first time that Page and Kimberly are married in real life. Savage is a dead man walking. Page starts to leave but Savage and Liz are in the crowd. Savage says he's the icon and Page is the wrestler with no name. Talk of a non-sanctioned match is mentioned but Savage says it'll be later. Page charges into the crowd but Savage gets away.

Hugh Morrus/Konnan vs. Renegade/Joe Gomez

Before the match here are Bischoff and the Outsiders to take over the announce desk. Actually scratch that as they just have an announcement: they'll be getting in the ring tonight but no opponents are mentioned. Apparently them getting to challenge for any title they want according to the stipulations from the main event last night now means the champions get to pick when they wrestle ever.

Back to the match which starts with Morrus jumping Gomez and working over his knee. Konnan comes in quickly and kicks at said knee. The Dungeon trades off a few times but the offense doesn't improve at all. The announcers talk about Spring Stampede a bit as not much is going on during the match. A clothesline puts Gomez down and Konnan comes back in for a half crab. After about three minutes of leg work Gomez finally tags

in Renegade. He cleans house for about fifteen seconds and then tags back out when Gomez can't even stand. It takes about ten seconds to hit No Laughing Matter for the pin on Joe.

Rating: D. This was a dull match and it seems like they were trying to set up a feud between Renegade and Gomez for who knows what reason. The match was boring as it was about four minutes of leg work followed by the angle to end the show. Gomez stayed around for a long time and never did anything at all.

US Title: Dean Malenko vs. Scotty Riggs

Malenko won the title last night. Riggs lost a strap match to Bagwell last night so he gets a title match tonight. Makes perfect sense right? Scotty hits a quick dropkick to start but it only gets two. Dean will have none of that and sends Riggs to the floor and into the barricade. Back in and we get a pinfall reversal sequence for some two counts. Riggs makes a quick comeback with his jobber level offense before he gets caught in a hot shot. Dean grabs a rolling cradle for the pin to retain fast.

Lex Luger/The Giant vs. The Knuckles

That would be Knuckles Nelson and T. Rantula. I don't know about you, but I'm smelling an upset here. Giant and Rantula start us off and the man who would be Peter Parker is thrown back into his own corner quickly. Nelson comes in and this is squash territory already. Giant works him over in the corner for awhile until Rantula comes in to help. That goes nowhere either and it's a chokeslam for Nelson. Luger walks in without a tag and powerslams Rantula as Giant pins Nelson. Luger Racks Rantula post match. Total squash.

Luger and Giant talk about Sting coming back last night. We get some clips from the show with Sting destroying the NWO as Giant talks about seeing the light at the end of the tunnel. Luger says it made him believe in Santa Claus, the Tooth Fairy and the Easter Bunny. These guys do know they lost the main event right?

We get some stills from last night with Mortis vs. Glacier. Wrath debuted

post match to beat down Glacier.

Bobby Eaton vs. Ultimo Dragon

Dragon stalls on the floor to start so Eaton punches him in the face. And never mind as Dragon puts him on top and hits a rana for the pin. This wasn't even a minute and a half.

Here's the NWO in full force. Hogan and Bischoff brag about winning last night and talk about being able to challenge for any title. That would be the TV and US Titles, unless you want to count the Women's belt if that exists yet. Savage says he'll face Page at some point. Nash says the Outsiders will face the Steiners at Spring Stampede. That would wind up being Rick vs. Nash for the titles. During this announcement, Hall takes a beer to the head. In PERFECT response, he wipes his hair as he is known to do.

Call the NWO hotline!

Hour #2 begins and it seems a lot later than usual. We do the usual recap.

Alex Wright/Mark Starr vs. Jeff Jarrett/Steve McMichael

Jarrett and Wright start things off with Alex firing off some dropkicks. Jarrett takes him down and Mongo drops an elbow on the back of Wright's head to take over. There's a side slam and it's back to Jarrett. Tony calls that a solid tag. How can a tag exactly be solid? Everything breaks down with Starr diving over Mongo which is called a chop block. Figure Four ends Starr quick.

Public Enemy comes out and beats up the Horsemen post match. The Horsemen fight them off and then go to talk to Gene. Apparently these teams are going to be fighting at the PPV. Debra screeches a bit and Jarrett says he's walking the walk now. Mongo dares the people to boo Debra, again not seeming to know if he's a face or a heel.

Lee Marshall does his schtick.

Scott Norton vs. Chavo Guerrero Jr.

Norton runs him over and Chavo bails to the floor. Back in and Chavo goes after the knee but Norton won't go down. Two more shots to it and he still won't go down. A missile dropkick won't put Norton down and a sunset flip doesn't either. Norton powerbombs him to death to end this. Norton wouldn't sell a thing here.

Hogan and Rodman talk about nothing of note.

Chris Benoit vs. Billy Kidman

This doesn't even last a minute with the Crossface ending it. That hadn't been his finisher long at all at this point.

Benoit and Woman have something to say but Flair comes out before they can start. Benoit talks about Sullivan of course and Flair blames Piper for the loss last night. Ric isn't worried about Arn because he's tough. As for Piper, he can come be a Horseman and take Arn's spot. That's quite the offer.

Steiner Brothers vs. Harlem Heat

Scott and Booker get us going with Booker hitting a fast side kick. He walks into a gorilla press slam though and it's off to Rick. Stevie comes in to stomp away and adds in some punches for good measure. They trade powerslams as it's time to talk about Sting. Booker comes in and side slams Rick down but it's off to Scott who cleans house. Everything breaks down and it's the NWO in for the DQ.

Rating: D+. The match was just filler until the NWO got there for no apparent reason. I guess it was to beat down the tag teams like the black and white used to do but it didn't quite work as well. These teams seem a level or two beneath the NWO, but at the same time the NWO has beaten up everyone so many times that it doesn't mean much when they beat up the main event guys anymore.

Luger and Giant come out for the save and clear the ring. Sting drops from the ceiling to end the show. He stands with WCW and that's it. Hogan is terrified.

Overall Rating: D+. WCW hit a MAJOR funk over the summer, as the world

title wouldn't be defended on PPV from March until August, making most of the PPV main events totally worthless. Spring Stampede would be Savage vs. Page, the next month would be a six man tag and the third would be Rodman/Hogan vs. Luger/Giant. There were no major matches to build to so there was little going on in the way of television. This was a good example of that, as aside from Page and Savage getting set up, almost nothing happened here. That would be the case for the next few months.

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Wrestlemania Count-Up – Wrestlemania VIII: SHOW ME THE PICTURES!

Wrestlemania VIII

Date: April 5, 1992

Location: Hoosier Dome, Indianapolis, Indiana

Attendance: 62,167

Commentators: Gorilla Monsoon, Bobby Heenan

We're into another huge stadium here and the interesting thing is that Hogan, while in the final match, isn't in the title scene at all. We've got a double main event here of Hogan vs. Sid in Hogan's "retirement" match and the still pretty new Flair defending the world title against Randy Savage in a match built not only around the title but also Liz, which we'll get into later. Let's get to it.

The opening video talks about how it's a double main event. They're not really going for the epic feeling here it seems.

Reba McIntyre sings the national anthem.

Tito Santana vs. Shawn Michaels

Tito is El Matador now and Shawn is freshly heel. Bobby says Reba is Tito's sister: Arriba McIntyre. Say it out loud and you'll get the joke. After taking forever to get Sherri to the floor, Tito gets a fast two off a cross body. They head to the mat for a headlock on Shawn which doesn't last long. Michaels avoids a punch to the face but gets clotheslined out to the floor instead.

Back to the chinlock which doesn't go anywhere this time either, so Shawn takes over in the corner. That also goes nowhere so Santana punches him in the face and takes it right back to the mat. Shawn finally comes back and pounds away even more, this time sending Tito out to the floor. A backbreaker gets two for Shawn and we hit the chinlock again, this time by the future world champion. Santana fights up but walks into the superkick for no cover.

The Backdrop Suplex (Shawn's old finisher) is countered and there's the flying forearm to send Shawn to the floor. Back in and a slingshot forearm puts Shawn down again as does a big atomic drop. Tito's forearm to the back of the head sends Shawn to the outside again, only to have Sherri trip Tito up on a suplex attempt to give Michaels the pin.

Rating: C. This was ok but it was a lot of kicking and chinlocks for an opening match. Tito was good for giving you a guaranteed decent performance out there, so putting him against Shawn was a good move for the most part. The match wasn't great or anything but it did a decent job at what it was supposed to do.

Gene is on the old school interview platform and calls out the Legion of Doom. With them however is their former manager Paul Ellering complete with the rolled up Wall Street Journal. Ellering talks about bringing the LOD together before talking about how this is the beginning of the end. They want the tag titles back but would never get them again. Hawk says they were a runaway train, but now look who's driving it. They don't care who the champions are, because they're coming for the gold.

Jake Roberts says there's no truth to the rumor of him bringing a snake to the ring. We get a clip of Jake slamming Taker's hand in a coffin and laying out a helpless Paul Bearer.

Jake Roberts vs. Undertaker

A right hand to the face has no effect on Taker so Jake pounds away so more. Heenan is already freaking out about how Taker can't be hurt as is his custom. Jake knocks him to the floor but Undertaker lands on his feet. Roberts is pulled to the floor as well and rammed into the post to give the dead man control. Heenan cracks jokes and says he thinks he has two brilliant minds. Gorilla: "I'm in big trouble."

As Heenan talks about Bearer earning the Urn, Taker chokes away in the corner and pounds on Jake for a bit. An elbow drop keeps Jake down and there's the jumping clothesline for good measure. Out of NOWHERE, Jake hits the DDT to put Taker down but he sits up a few seconds later and grabs Jake by the throat. A second DDT puts Taker down again but Jake goes after Bearer instead. There's the sit up and Undertaker follows Jake outside, hitting a tombstone on the FLOOR to end Jake and make Undertaker 2-0.

Rating: C-. The problem with these early Wrestlemania matches for Undertaker is that they didn't have a ton of story or drama to them. Jake was in his last match for the company here before he went to WCW for a cup of coffee, so he didn't seem to be giving it his all out there. The kicking out of the DDTs was impressive as was the Tombstone, but that's about it.

Piper and Bret are facing each other later tonight and Piper talks about growing up near the Hart Family. Some jokes are cracked and Bret doesn't take too kindly to it. Things get testy when Bret wants the IC Title back. This is much more of a match of respect than hatred.

Intercontinental Title: Roddy Piper vs. Bret Hart

Piper is defending. There's a story here actually: Bret was "sick" and lost the title to Mountie, only to have Piper win it about a day and a half later. This is Bret's rematch. Heenan: "How would you handle Piper if you were Bret?" Gorilla: "I would use my speed advantage. You?" Heenan: "Waffle him with a tire iron." Bret takes him down to start and Piper spits in his face, basically becoming the heel of the match early on.

They trade arm holds to start but Piper can't escape Bret's non-evil clutches. Once he finally frees himself, it's a dropkick to put Roddy down instead. Bret might have hurt his shoulder in the process, but of course he's goldbricking, which gives him a two count via a small package. Piper slaps him in the face so Bret cross bodies both guys to the outside. Back in and Piper gets in a cheap shot which apparently busts Bret open. This was a big deal actually as Bret claimed it was a legit cut but in reality he bladed and lied to prevent punishment and still make it look good. Smart guy that Hitman.

Roddy pounds away for awhile and is reverting to his old style far more than he has in years. Bret comes back with a sunset flip for two and the mat is getting bloody in a hurry. Piper punches him down for two but Bret comes back with a forearm to send the champion to the outside. Back in and a double clothesline puts both guys down. Piper's head lands on Bret's ribs which should be a count but the referee sits up instead. Roddy goes up but Bret is goldbricking again, allowing him to slam Piper face first into the mat.

A suplex gets two for Hart and it's time for the FIVE MOVES OF DOOM. Piper blocks the Sharpshooter though, so Bret settles for the middle rope elbow. Roddy blocks that too though with a boot to the face and they slug it out again. There goes the referee and Piper clotheslines Bret to the outside. As they come back in, Roddy grabs the ring bell to complete the heel turn. He lifts it up to crush Bret, only to stop himself and put on a sleeper instead. That proves to be his downfall though as Bret climbs up the corner and falls back on Piper for the pin and the title.

Rating: B+. This might be Piper's best matches ever but even rarer is seeing him pinned in the WWF. Piper was VERY protective of his character, meaning that he was very rarely pinned. The match was great here and wound up being Piper's last match in the company for several years. Really good stuff here as Bret is on the verge of shooting up the card to the world title in the fall.

Piper puts the title on Hart after thinking about clocking him with the belt.

We hear from WWF Bodybuilding Pro Lex Luger. He wouldn't have a major appearance again until January of 1993. Again, who thought bodybuilding on PPV was a good idea? That would be Mr. XFL, Vince McMahon.

The Mountie, the Nasty Boys and the Repo Man laugh evilly.

Duggan, Slaughter, Virgil and Boss Man respond with nothing of note to say.

Jim Duggan/Sgt. Slaughter/Virgil/Big Boss Man vs. Nasty Boys/Mountie/Repo Man

Just a collection of lower midcard guys getting a Wrestlemania payday here. Neither team gets an entrance. Instead, Ray Combs of Family Feud is guest ring announcer for this and cracks a few jokes about the heels pre-match. The good guys clean house to start and hit a quadruple clothesline to clear the ring. Heenan announces that Shawn Michaels has left the building. Gorilla sums up our responses: "WHO CARES???"

Anyway Duggan and Sags start things off and it's Jim hitting a few clotheslines to take over. Off to Slaughter who gets poked in the eye, allowing for the tag to Knobs. Slaughter pounds away to take over before it's off to Boss Man for a boot to the face. Brian avoids a charge into the corner and Boss Man's splash misses Repo Man as well, giving the heels control for a bit. Repo crotches himself and Boss Man slugs him down for good measure.

Off to Virgil who seems to mess up almost anything where he jumps into the air. Duggan tries to come in to save his partner but it's back to Sags to beat on Virgil even more. A pumphandle slam gets two on Virgil and it's back to Mountie. Everything breaks down and in the melee the Nastys are rammed together, allowing Virgil to steal the pin.

Rating: D. As I said, this was nothing more than a way to throw a bunch of guys onto the show at the same time. This was a much better idea than having four matches eat up a few minutes each as it accomplishes the same goal here. They were out there as filler before the world title match and there's nothing wrong with that at all.

Flair and Perfect smile over having a large centerfold of Miss Elizabeth. I can't imagine how teasing this angle was for thirteen year old boys. They say Savage is losing tonight and that Liz is leaving with Flair.

Savage won't give any interviews.

To recap the world title match, Flair claims that he had a relationship with Liz before she was married to Savage, so tonight Savage is out for revenge and the title. Flair had some doctored photos and that's about it, so it was more about humiliation than anything else. It's a great angle and would still work perfectly to this day if done right.

WWF World Title: Ric Flair vs. Randy Savage

There's no Liz in sight to start and Savage comes to the ring last. Oh and Mr. Perfect is in Flair's corner which will come into play later. Flair tries to walk up the aisle so Savage decks him from behind. Perfect makes a save by throwing Randy down as things are looking chaotic already. They get into the ring and Savage starts fast with some shots into the corner and punches down onto Flair's head.

Heenan is at his most biased ever and his voice is almost cracking already. A clothesline puts Flair down and a back elbow gets two. Flair comes back with a big backdrop to put Savage out on the floor as the champion takes over. Flair rams Savage's back into the apron and takes over with a few suplexes including a belly to back for two. Heenan wants to see the pictures and I can't say I blame him.

A big chop puts Savage down for two and we head to the floor. Savage has his back rammed into the apron again and Flair suplexes him back into the ring for two more. Randy comes back with a single right hand and the place ERUPTS. A swinging neckbreaker puts Flair down but he pokes Savage in the eye to take him down. The champ goes up top, only to jump into a clothesline from Savage. Savage whips him into the corner and we get a Flair Flip to the apron where Ric runs up top, only to jump into another clothesline for two.

Savage hits his third clothesline in a roll to send Flair out to the floor. A top rope ax handle sends Flair into the barricade followed by a

shot into the post. Flair is busted open and there's the Flair Flop on the floor. A suplex puts Flair down on the floor again as Heenan is begging for the match to be stopped. Back in and Savage pounds away before hitting a top rope ax handle for two.

The top rope elbow hits but Perfect breaks up the pin. Thankfully the referee doesn't call for the bell as Perfect throws something to Ric. The referee is bumped but it's not that bad. A shot to the face with the object puts Randy down but it only gets two. The fans are losing their minds on these kickouts. Flair pounds away and is pulled away by the referee, allowing Perfect to blast him in the knee with a chair.

This brings out Liz who marches through some suits (one of which being worn by Shane McMahon) as Flair works over the leg. The knee crusher sets up the Figure Four (complete with interference from Perfect). Heenan: "SHOW ME THE PICTURES!" Randy turns the hold over but Flair breaks it quickly. Savage's leg is done but he grabs a two count off a small package. Flair says this is for Liz as he stomps on the knee even more. He grabs Savage's leg but Savage gets in a quick right hand and rolls Flair up (with a handful of trunks) for the pin and the title.

Rating: A. If you ever want a match based on the good guy overcoming insurmountable odds, this is pretty high up on the list. Savage came back from EVERYTHING and while Liz was there, she wasn't a major factor at all. The match is a masterpiece with both guys looking great. Savage was in a career resurgence, despite being world champion only three years earlier. Anyway, great match here and it still holds up very well today.

Post match Flair tries to kiss Liz, triggering another brawl. Perfect helps take Savage down and lets Flair pound away for a bit. Referees finally break it up and Savage is announced as the new champion to a big roar.

Flair, Perfect and Heenan go on a huge rant against Savage with Flair saying that Savage is going to be lying about being champion and lying about having the love of Liz. They tell Savage to do it again and claim that Savage was a cheater which won't work again.

Savage gives a rebuttal, saying that he's going to go after Flair no

matter where or when it is. He hands Liz the title and says that it's hers. As for Flair, Savage is for him and it's going to continue. I love these two promos and they still work very well.

We recap the Wrestlemania VII press conference where Hogan was announced as the #1 contender. Sid wasn't happy but joined Hogan in a tag match on SNME. However he turned on Hogan and left him alone against Undertaker and Flair. Sid then destroyed Beefcake's Barber Shop set and wound up with a bunch of shampoo on his face in an unintentionally hilarious scene. We also get a montage of Sid beating up jobbers and Virgil.

Rick Martel makes a stupid joke about Tatanka scalping tickets.

Rick Martel vs. Tatanka

There are Indians at ringside chanting for Tatanka. This is about two months after Tatanka debuted on TV so you should be able to figure out what's going to happen pretty quickly here. Tatanka start off hot as Heenan explaining that Flair did nothing wrong. Gorilla shouts that Heenan is a liar, so Heenan challenges him to a fight. Martel makes a quick comeback and sends Tatanka out to the floor. Back in and Bobby makes Indian jokes as Martel stomps away a bit more. Rick goes up and gets crotched, allowing Tatanka to pound away even more. Out of nowhere a cross body pins Martel.

Rating: D+. The match was ok but it was nothing more than a way to give the fans a breather. Like I said, no one knew Tatanka at this point due to how little time he had been on TV. Martel was in total jobber to the stars territory by this point and would be gone pretty soon. Nothing to remember here at all.

Money Inc. isn't worried about the Natural Disasters because they've stolen the Disasters' manager in the form of Jimmy Hart.

The Disasters say they're ready and are after the titles and Jimmy Hart.

Tag Titles: Money Inc. vs. Natural Disasters

Money Inc. is defending and is comprised of Ted DiBiase and I.R.S. DiBiase and Earthquake start things off with the heels (Money Inc.)

getting beaten down and the rich man being knocked to the floor. Off to Typhoon vs. I.R.S. For some arm work by the big guy. Typhoon misses a charge into the corner and it's off to DiBiase...who is immediately beaten down as well. Typhoon misses a splash against the ropes and falls over the top and out to the floor.

I.R.S. cranks on a front facelock for a bit as Ted hits an ax handle off the middle rope for two. A double clothesline puts both guys down as this match is DRAGGING. Everything breaks down and the challengers take over. A clothesline puts DiBiase on the floor and there's the big splash from Typhoon. Jimmy Hart pulls Irwin out to break up the Earthquake splash and the champions walk out to retain the titles.

Rating: D-. I have no idea what the point of this was. The match wasn't entertaining, it wasn't good, and the match didn't accomplish anything. I'm guessing this was supposed to be filler between the other matches, but we already had one of those and that's what we're about to get next. Nothing to see here at all.

Brutus Beefcake supports Hogan.

Owen Hart vs. Skinner

Skinner catches him with the tobacco juice to the face to start and hits a shoulder breaker for no cover. Skinner's reverse DDT gets two but Owen gets tired of selling and rolls him up for the pin. This was about a minute long.

Gene is with Sid and the tall man calls him a fat bald headed oaf. Sid guarantees this is Hogan's last match, which triggers an interview with Hogan where he says he isn't sure if he's retiring or not. Sid doesn't care.

Hulk Hogan vs. Sid Justice

With the music still playing, Sid jumps Hogan but Hulk pounds back and knocks Sid to the apron. The music is still playing and Hogan hits a forearm to the chest and a clothesline to put Sid on the floor. AWESOME opening sequence here and it still works really well. Back in and they

stare each other down but Hogan knocks Sid right back out to the floor. Back in again and Sid wants a test of strength.

Sid puts Hogan down but Hulk makes the big comeback to the delight of the crowd. Justice gets knocked into the corner but Sid's manager Harvey Wippleman (totally unneeded here) distracts Hulk, allowing a chokeslam to put him down. Hulk gets knocked to the floor and hit with Wippleman's bag, setting up a nerve hold by Sid.

Hogan fights up, only to get put right back down in a side slam. The powerbomb gets two and it's Hulk Up time. Sid eats a few buckles and it's big boot, slam, legdrop....TWO? This is assumed to be a screwjob by Sid but in reality, the scheduled run-in by someone we'll name in a second was late so Sid had to kick out. Anyway there's the DQ by Wippleman to end things.

Rating: D. Well that sucked. It's about twelve minutes long and went nowhere at all due to the majority of the match being spent in a nerve hold. Well maybe not the majority but far longer than it should have been. Anyway, this was nothing of note and saving Sid was stupid due to him being gone in a few weeks due to failing a drug test. Nothing to see here, until after the match.

Post match, Papa Shango of all people (the guy who missed his cue) runs out and beats down Hogan along with Sid until the Ultimate Warrior makes a legitimately shocking return for the save. A lot of posing ends the show.

Overall Rating: B-. You have two classics, a huge shocking return, and some other decent stuff in there. What else do you want from a Wrestlemania, especially in 1992. Good stuff here as the Hogan era is definitely coming to a close. He would somehow get another world title the next year and the main event here sucked, but things were moving beyond him and it was clear that things would survive. Good stuff here.

Ratings Comparison

Shawn Michaels vs. Tito Santana

Original: B-

Redo: C

Undertaker vs. Jake Roberts

Original: D+

Redo: C-

Bret Hart vs. Roddy Piper

Original: A

Redo: B+

Big Boss Man/Virgil/Sgt. Slaughter/Jim Duggan vs. Repo Man/Nasty Boys/Mountie

Original: F

Redo: D

Randy Savage vs. Ric Flair

Original: A+

Redo: A

Tatanka vs. Rick Martel

Original: D

Redo: D+

Natural Disasters vs. Money Inc.

Original: D-

Redo: D-

Owen Hart vs. Skinner

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

Sid Justice vs. Hulk Hogan

Original: D

Redo: D

Overall Rating

Original: B-

Redo: B-

It's the same overall despite some of the main stuff being different.
That's interesting.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/03/15/history-of-wrestlemania-with-kb-wrestlemania-8-hogan-who-needs-the-bald-man/>

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Monday Nitro – October 27, 1997: Starrcade Is Coming

Monday Nitro #111

Date: October 27, 1997

Location: Cox Arena, San Diego, California

Attendance: 6,281

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Tony Schiavone, Bobby Heenan

We're past Halloween Havoc now where Piper beat Hogan in one of the more confusing cage matches you'll ever seen. At that point though I think

they knew everyone was going to buy Starrcade so why bother putting in the effort at the other PPVs? Other than that, Hennig retained the US Title over Flair and Rey Mysterio won the Cruiserweight Title in arguably the best match WCW ever produced. I'm guessing nothing tonight is going to top it. Let's get to it.

Apparently this show is three hours, which I believe is a forerunner to the three hour broadcasts which are coming soon.

Here are Hogan and Bischoff to open the show. Eric brags about how Hogan is still world champion and says that Hogan will be champion for as long as he wants. Hogan says that he's tired of the word icon being thrown around so freely so let's just call Hogan God. He challenges anyone in WCW or in the crowd to come fight him right now. That's not a bright thing to say after a fan climbed into the cage last night.

Bischoff says this network will soon be named Hogan Network Television and plugs Assault on Devil's Island tomorrow night. We get a clip from the movie which looks like a bad TV movie. I actually watched it once and it certainly lived up to what it looked like in the trailer. It says a lot that Hogan keeps getting these movie roles when he is such an abysmal actor.

Cruiserweight Title: Rey Mysterio vs. Dean Malenko

Rey won the title last night. Dean immediately takes it to the mat as is his nature but Rey counters into a hammerlock. Back up and the champion hooks an armdrag to send Malenko right back down. Rey tries a test of strength for some reason and does as well as you would expect him to. Raven and the Flock are here as they are every week. A rollup gets two each but Dean charges into a boot in the corner to stagger him. Rey goes up, only to have Malenko catch him with his awesome top rope gutbuster for a very close two. A standing rana is countered into the Texas Cloverleaf but Rey rolls through into a cradle to retain.

Rating: C+. This was your usual solid match between these two and that gutbuster is awesome as usual. Rey getting another win after the excellent match last night was a good move and having it be over one of the best in the division like Malenko worked well. These two always had solid chemistry together.

Here's more about lucha libre from Mike Tenay. This time we hear about the merchandise in Mexico before transitioning into wrestling families. El Hijo del Santo talks about how devastating his father's death was. I wish would could get stuff like this today instead of the same gags and segments over and over again.

Glacier vs. La Parka

La Parka takes over to start and hits a few fast right hands but Glacier comes back with a few kicks of his own. The masked dude is knocked to the floor and Glacier hits a cross body to take him down again. Back in and La Parka hits a kick and a piledriver of all things, but instead of covering it's DANCE TIME. Another kick sends Glacier to the floor and there's a nice corkscrew plancha to take him out again. La Parka loads up a chair but takes too long going up, allowing Glacier to crotch him. Glacier launches him into the chair before heading back in for the Cryonic Kick for the pin. Nothing match but a nice dive by Parka.

Here's DDP with something to say. Actually it's Gene with something to say as he talks about all of the injuries that Page had coming into his loss to Savage last night. Page knows it was Hogan as Sting last night (shocker there) and says Savage knows that one on one, Page is the better man. If Hogan has an open challenge for tonight, DDP will take him up on it. Ok then.

After a break here's Larry Z with something to say. He's glad of what he did last night when he reversed the decision of Hall vs. Luger and has a piece of paper which apparently is a one way ticket to Larryland. After some more insults here are Hall and Syxx with Scott saying that Larry has

shown he can't do anything in the ring. Scott thinks Larry couldn't even beat Bischoff and we get a clip of Eric beating up Larry from a few weeks ago. Hall still won't agree to fight Zbyszko and that's about it.

Lex Luger vs. Stevie Ray

Feeling out process to start with Luger grabbing a headlock to control. They trade shoulder blocks but neither guy moves. A clothesline puts Ray down but Stevie comes right back with a shoulder of his own to put Luger down. Lex comes back with a few slams but misses that big elbow of his. The move we would call the World's Strongest Slam gets two for Ray and it's off to a bearhug. Luger counters into a quickly broken bearhug of his own but the clotheslines he uses work a bit better. The Rack is blocked though and a bicycle kick puts Luger down. Lex comes back with a powerslam and the Rack for the win.

Rating: C. This was FAR better than I was expecting with Ray actually looking like a threat to Luger. For a guy who never did a single thing as a singles wrestler, that was pretty impressive. Luger was never in any significant danger but at least we were convinced that he was. Nice little match here.

Raven sits in a tree and talks about not liking the dark.

Eddie Guerrero vs. Chris Jericho

We get clips from Jericho's match last night with Gedo where Jericho landed on his head in a botch off the top rope. Feeling out process to start but Eddie goes after Chris' bad shoulder. Jericho comes back with a spinwheel kick and some chops in the corner, but Eddie gets in a shot to Jericho's shoulder again to take him down. A dropkick to the back of Jericho's head keeps him in trouble as does one to the shoulder.

Jericho ducks a right hand and hits a HUGE release German suplex for two.

A butterfly powerbomb puts Eddie down but the Lionsault misses. Eddie's Frog Splash is countered by a good old fashioned crotching and a superplex, but Jericho can barely stand up. Jericho escapes a powerbomb and suplexes Eddie to the floor. That destroys Jericho's shoulder and he falls to the mat in pain, allowing Eddie (who landed on his feet on the floor) to come back in with the Frog Splash for the pin.

Rating: C+. This was your usual good match between these two guys with a fine story about Jericho's shoulder. The ending was a creative one too as Jericho just couldn't fight all the way through the pain he was in. Eddie getting another win is a good thing after the loss from last night against Mysterio.

Chris Benoit vs. Fit Finlay

These two know each other very well from other countries. Finlay runs him over to start but charges into a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker and some HARD chops. Finlay tries a headlock but Benoit suplexes him right back down. An enziguri puts Fit down and they head to the floor for a HARD forearm by Finlay. Benoit gets dropped face first onto the barricade and goes shoulder first into the post for good measure. They head back inside for some stiff kicks to Chris' back.

Off to a chinlock by Fit before he slams Benoit down. Finlay steps on Benoit's chest to get to the corner for a Vader Bomb for two. Back to the floor but one of those hard chops by Finlay hits the post instead of Benoit. Finlay comes back immediately by sending Benoit into the barricade before heading back inside. A charge in the corner misses Benoit though and the Canadian hits a German suplex to set up the Swan Dive for the pin.

Rating: C+. Another good match here in a complete different style from the previous few matches. That's one of the things Nitro did best: they could show off a bunch of different styles in one show such as a squash, a lucha libre match and then a stiff brawl like this one. That's the

benefit of the huge roster WCW had at this point and the international flavor helped a lot as well.

Here's Flair with something to say. He talks about how close he got to beating Hennig within an inch of his life last night and if he sees Hennig tonight, Hennig is a dead man. As for the rest of the show though, Flair gets Savage and then after that he's getting Liz.

Raven vs. Scotty Riggs

Richards, Saturn, Kidman and Sick Boy all jump the railing with Raven. Tenay calls them the Flock, I believe for the first time. Richards says this has to be Raven's Rules. Raven says there's no point to them fighting tonight, because Riggs can join the Flock instead. Riggs wants to fight and is shoved into the corner almost immediately. Raven offers him a hand up but Riggs wisely doesn't take it. A suplex puts Riggs down and we get an ECW chant. Saturn throws in a chair and Riggs gets caught in a drop toehold, sending him eye first into the chair. The match is stopped and Raven goes back to his seat in the crowd.

Diamond Dallas Page vs. Hulk Hogan

Non-title of course and amazingly this isn't the main event. Page of course has taped ribs as he always does. Hogan immediately shoves Page into the corner but Hogan takes him down with a hammerlock. Page is in jeans here. Hogan slugs him down as Tony plugs Assault on Devil's Island some more. All Hollywood so far as he clotheslines Page down for two. A jumping knee to Page's face puts him down again but DDP comes back with the driving shoulders.

Page tries for the Cutter but Hogan immediately bails to the floor. Back in and the discus lariat takes Hogan down and out to the floor again. Hogan gets back in and slams Page down before dropping some elbows and choking away. Page is sent to the floor and out into the barricade before suplexing Page down on the floor. Back in and Diamond grabs a quick

neckbreaker for two but gets caught in an atomic drop for the same for Hogan.

Hollywood goes after the ribs and hits a BIG running clothesline in the corner. Hogan hits a suplex for three straight two counts before DDP comes with with a bunch of punches to send Hogan to the floor. That goes nowhere so it's back inside for the big boot from Hogan to stop Page cold. The legdrop misses though but a fake Sting (might be Syxx) comes out and jumps into the Diamond Cutter as the bell rings for a DQ.

Rating: C-. Not the worst match in the world as Hogan actually went almost fifteen minutes for free on television. It was his usual heel stuff with really basic moves, but he had the crowd riled up which is what Hogan was a master at doing. Page hung in there and the run in finish was the only thing they could do here. Decent match though.

Post match here the NWO for the big beatdown (including Syxx so he wasn't the fake Sting) until the real Sting makes the save and beats up everyone. A long point at Hogan has the champion terrified. Scott Hall stays in the ring and gets caught in the Death Drop, as does Hennig.

TV Title: Disco Inferno vs. Goldberg

No match as Alex Wright jumps Goldberg on the way to the ring. Goldie throws him into the ring for a Jackhammer before hitting both signature moves on Disco. Mongo comes out for a brawl to end this. The bell never rang.

Here are a ticked off Hogan and Bischoff to say that they're tired of Sting and that Page isn't in Hogan's league. They plug the movie premiere tomorrow night and say that if Sting wants to come see him in Vegas, they can sign the contract there. That's a big step.

The Steiners say it's been a tough year but anyone that wants a title

shot can come get it.

Tag Titles: Steiner Brothers vs. Public Enemy

Scotty and Rocco start things off with Rocco being press slammed very quickly. The challengers (Public Enemy if that's not clear) bails until we get back to Grunge vs. Rick. A powerslam puts Grunge right back on the floor and starts the stalling process as we take a break. Back with Rocco knocking Scotty out to the floor for some cheating from Grunge. Johnny sends him into the steps for good measure as the referee continues to be clueless. The announcers are about the same as they spend the whole match talking about the Hogan/Sting contract signing.

Back in and the challengers elbow Scotty down so that Grunge can chinlock him for a bit. Scotty tries to fight up but charges into a knee as it's back to Rocco. A swinging neckbreaker puts Steiner down again but Scott comes back with a clothesline to both Enemies. The hot tag brings in Rick and house is cleaned until it's the Steiner Bulldog for the pin on Rock.

Rating: D+. Very basic tag match here which didn't work all that well. This would set up a rematch in a street fight next week for no apparent reason. This was a clean win for the Steiners, so why should we need to see this match all over again? Nothing to see here at all and the match was dull.

US Title: Booker T vs. Curt Hennig

Main event time and Curt is of course defending. Booker starts fast with some clotheslines and a shoulder to knock Hennig down. Curt bails to the floor but comes back in with a rake to the eyes and some loud chops. A neckbreaker puts Booker down and we hit an early chinlock. Booker fights up and they head to the floor with the champion taking over, only to be rolled up for two back inside. Booker takes over as Liz comes out for a distraction. While she has the referee, Savage comes in to deck Booker, drawing in Flair for the DQ. Too short to rate but nothing of note.

Ric Flair vs. Randy Savage

This is joined in progress after a break with Flair pounding away in the crowd. The referee is knocked down as this is a brawl instead of a match. They fight against the barricade with Flair in complete control. A low blow keeps Savage down as they head back to ringside. Savage gets in a microphone shot to Flair's throat but Flair chops him down. Savage tries to hide behind Liz so Flair kisses Savage's shield. Smart man.

They finally head inside with Savage being taken down by an elbow so Flair can dance a bit. Liz rakes his eyes, allowing Savage to send Flair back to the floor. Ric is sent into the steps and choked down, allowing Macho to load up the top rope ax handle, only to crash into the railing. They head back inside but here's Hennig for the DQ. Yeah after all that we get a DQ.

Rating: C. This was a wild brawl but that's all you need sometimes. The idea of Flair being in such a rage that he couldn't wrestle a match was a fine idea and Savage just happened to be the victim at this point. Surprisingly enough, this would be the last time that these two would fight on Nitro.

Flair is beaten down to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. This show was about advancing stuff after last night. The contract signing would show where the end of the year was heading and that's when things get awesome. If nothing else we don't have to hear about Hogan's movie anymore which is always a good thing. Good show tonight, but the three hour shows are going to be torture when they're a regular thing.

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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 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 they 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 Doomsday 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/>

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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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