

Royal Rumble Count-Up – 2010: The One Before The One

Royal Rumble 2010

Date: January 31, 2010

Location: Phillips Arena, Atlanta, Georgia

Attendance: 16,697

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler, Matt Striker

We're getting close to the end of the run here with only three shows left. Tonight we've got the Rumble of course along with Undertaker defending against Mysterio and Sheamus defending against Orton. I remember really liking this one as the new generation had arrived and was rising up the card. Let's get to it.

The opening video is about the Road to Wrestlemania is beginning and how it determines what happens for months to come. This is called the most star studded Rumble ever, which is a tagline that has been used before.

ECW Title: Christian vs. Ezekiel Jackson

Christian is defending and man that ECW ring announcer has an annoying voice. Regal is with Jackson here. According to Striker, Jackson went to Columbia Law School. Now there's a factoid that fell through the cracks. Jackson shoves Christian into the corner and then does it again into the ropes so the champion slaps him in the face. After a brief chase, Christian dropkicks Jackson out to the floor.

The springboard plancha takes Jackson out and we head back in. Christian finally gets caught in the corner and pounded on before having the Killswitch easily blocked. Instead Christian chokes away on the ropes and hits another shot to the face. Jackson throws Christian to the floor where Regal tries to throw him back in, earning himself an ejection. Off to a neck crank back inside which Jackson picks up into a kind of cobra clutch slam for two.

A vertical suplex gets two for Big Zeke and it's time for more choking. A

sunset flip is easily blocked by Jackson and it's back to the chinlock. Striker tries to figure out what a peep is, as he knows it as a something made of chocolate. Some shots to the face get Christian out of trouble for awhile, or at least until a clothesline to the back of the head gets two.

Jackson hooks both of Christian's arms back for another hold before putting the champion on top. The superplex is blocked and Christian hits a top rope back elbow for two (LOVE that move). Jackson's big clothesline misses and a middle rope dropkick gets two for the champion. A spinwheel kick gets two on Jackson but a swan dive misses and gives Zeke a near fall as does a backbreaker.

The tornado DDT gets ANOTHER two for Christian so Jackson takes his head off with a clothesline. Off to a sleeper from Christian when the Killswitch doesn't work but Jackson counters into a powerslam position to ram Christian's back into the buckle. Christian slides down Jackson's back and grabs the Killswitch out of nowhere to retain.

Rating: C+. Trim two minutes out of this and it goes WAY up in quality. The period of near falls went on too long without getting any significant heat from the crowd. Jackson would get the title in a little over two weeks on the final episode of ECW because if there's one man that should be the final ECW Champion, it's a musclehead that could barely get through a five minute match most of the time.

Cryme Tyme come in to try to get a second spot in the Rumble from Teddy and Tiffany. Khali says "no dice homeslice" to selling their spot because he's keeping it real. Apparently he's learned his English from Family Matters (Singh's words, not mine). Ok then. Anyway US Champion the Miz comes in and laughs which causes him to have to defend against MVP.

Orton is in the back when Cody Rhodes comes in. He's there for Randy in the title match tonight but that's not all. Apparently DiBiase isn't in on this because his mind is on winning the Rumble and taking the title from Orton.

US Title: The Miz vs. MVP

A quick clothesline gets two for MVP and he works on the champ's ribs to start. Miz gets a boot up in the corner to slow him down but MVP comes right back with a belly to back suplex for two. They head to the floor for this gem from Striker: "Miz is one of the most recognizable faces on this planet." I don't think Miz is one of the most recognizable faces in this match.

Back in and Miz sends MVP to the apron and gets kicked into the table on the floor. Not that this is treated like anything of note because the announcers are laughing about Sherri Shepard from The View. Miz sends shoulders into MVP's ribs in the corner followed by the running corner clothesline. A top rope double ax gets two for Miz and we hit the chinlock.

After that eats up some time, MVP pounds away with all of his usual stuff. Ballin hits and a running boot to the side of the head gets two for the challenger. A big shoulder block gets the same for MVP but he misses a running boot in the corner. MVP grabs three straight quick near falls but gets caught in a small package for the pin to keep the title on Miz.

Rating: D+. If there was a reason for this to be on PPV other than the show was running short, I don't know what it was. Miz didn't look like anything special out there but somehow he would be world champion a year later. MVP on the other hand would be out of the WWE but he did well enough in Japan. Nothing to see here other than a filler match.

Post match MVP hits the Playmaker on Miz and gets booed LOUDLY. He lost completely clean so the booing is deserved.

Show and Jericho, the former tag team champions, run into each other. Show accuses him of being jealous of the chemistry Show and Miz have but Jericho brushes it off. He calls the crowd gelatinous worms before pointing out all of the similarities he and Miz have. Show says he'll throw both Miz and Jericho out to win the Rumble. R-Truth pops up and says he'll do the same. Show leaves Jericho standing there much to Jericho's chagrin.

DiBiase wishes Orton luck and says he's got Randy's back. Orton asks

where Cody is but DiBiase doesn't know. This was during the time when Legacy was about to die and both members were trying to get on Randy's best side. DiBiase claims that Rhodes only wants to win the Rumble but Orton has heard enough. He doesn't want anyone's help and gets a clear face pop in response.

The National Guard is here.

Raw World Title: Sheamus vs. Randy Orton

Sheamus won the title in a shocker last month at TLC and is heel here. He's also still not that good and wouldn't really hit his stride for about a year and a half. They stare at each other to start and my goodness is Sheamus pale. A dropkick puts the champion down but he comes right back with a running ax handle. Sheamus gets in a shot to the arm and we head to the floor where said arm is sent into the steps.

Back in and Orton goes for the knee and things slow down a bit. Orton wouldn't really pick up the pace of his offense until about the following year which made his matches pretty hard to sit through. Sheamus comes back by sending Orton's shoulder into the post twice and hitting some shoulder blocks in the corner. That gets him nowhere though as Orton takes out the knee again and knocks Sheamus to the floor.

They head inside again and yet AGAIN momentum shifts back to Sheamus as he hits a DDT on the arm for two. Off to an armbar for a bit before they slug it out to the boo/yay chants. Orton wins the slugout but walks into the Irish Curse for two. The High Cross is escaped and Orton kicks Sheamus in the head to send him to the outside. Orton gets ready for the RK0 but Rhodes jumps the guardrail and blasts Sheamus in the back before running away. The referee sees it though and despite Orton hitting the RK0, he's disqualified and Sheamus keeps the title. Lamé ending to a pretty lamé match.

Rating: D+. Like I said, Sheamus just wasn't very good yet. He was still this big imposing brawler who pounded on people and that's about it. There was indeed a story in the match but it wasn't a very entertaining one as they just kept beating on each other's limbs but when there's no difference because of the beating, the story doesn't work. The ending

didn't help either but it did set up something in the future.

Post match Orton snaps on Cody as DiBiase comes down to save his partner. While Orton yells at Cody in the corner, Sheamus comes back in and lays out Randy with a Brogue Kick.

We recap Mickie vs. McCool. This was an awkward feud as Mickie won the title shot in a triple threat and then Laycool made fun of Mickie for being fat. This is of course odd as Mickie is a professional athlete and gorgeous and would only be called fat by a crazy person. It's also pretty disturbing when you consider how WWE pushes the Divas as role models. The final bit of it was a segment where Mickie got beaten down and covered in food.

Women's Title: Michelle McCool vs. Mickie James

Pre match Michelle runs her mouth about how fat Mickie is and accuses her of skipping out on the match. Michelle offers cake and here's Layla in a Mickie Pig costume. The real Mickie sprints to the ring and hits a Thesz Press on Layla on the floor. She heads inside, sends Michelle into Layla and hits the MickieDT for the pin and the title in 20 seconds.

Post match the other Divas bring out a cake and smash it into Laycool's faces.

We recap Mysterio vs. Undertaker. Rey won the shot by slamming a cage door onto Batista's head to escape because that's what heroes do. Taker said he'll show no mercy on Mysterio so Rey uses the same line everyone does on Taker: he isn't afraid. Batista beat up Mysterio as well, claiming that Undertaker and the world title was his.

Smackdown World Title: Rey Mysterio vs. Undertaker

Mysterio, in the deep south, comes out wearing a white hood. Striker talks about Lawler being in the ring with Kamala and Lord Humongous (Sid) because he thinks it makes him sound interesting. He's trying to make a comparison to being in the ring with Undertaker, but if he was as smart as he thinks he is, he would ask Jerry what it's like to be in the ring with Undertaker himself, which would save a lot of headaches.

Rey fires off some shots in the corner before Taker grabs him by the neck and throws him up and over the top and out to the floor. That looked awesome. Back to the apron and Rey fires off strikes to the face, only to get punched right back down to the floor by a single shot. Taker misses the legdrop on the apron but hits it the second time before heading back in. Rey counters a chokeslam into the 619 but Taker easily grabs the legs. Tombstone is countered and Taker misses an elbow drop.

Rey tries a springboard cross body but jumps into a boot to the chest. We head to the floor again and there's another big boot to the head to take Rey down. A third big boot keeps Rey down but the fourth misses and Taker sends his leg around the post. Rey hits a baseball slide to send the leg into said post and Taker is in trouble. The seated senton off the apron is caught and Taker puts him back on the apron, only to be caught by an Asai Moonsault to put both guys down.

Taker grabs Rey by the throat and slams him into the barricade. The champion's nose is busted a bit. Taker does that lifting wristlock of his to crank on the arm a bit before punching Rey down in the corner for a bit. A big side slam gets two for the guy who would use a side slam in this match as Striker goes into this big speech about how the blood shows that undertaker is mortal. Seriously, it's a BLOODY NOSE. Watch the freaking Lesnar match in the Cell when the blood is literally dripping from Taker's head and down onto Lesnar's body.

Rey starts firing off some punches but a single shot from Taker is enough to put him back down. A jawbreaker finally staggers the big man and they do a kind of cross body, although Taker counters into something like Langston's Big Ending, so it's hard to say which hurt worse. Taker sits up so Rey kicks him in the face. Why has no one done that before? Rey drops the dime (springboard legdrop) for two but Taker kills him with a big clothesline. The Last Ride is countered and the 619 hits as does a second one, but the West Coast Pop is countered into the Last Ride to retain the title.

Rating: B. This was solid stuff for the most part for a few reasons. First of all, they didn't make Taker look ridiculous to get into position for Rey's moves. That's my biggest issue with most of Rey's battles

against giants: how stupid the big men look. The other good thing here is that Taker wasn't knocked silly after just a few moves. Rey only hit maybe a dozen offensive moves here other than basic strikes and it wouldn't have made sense to have Taker in major trouble. Finally, Rey can bump like crazy when he's trying to. The only issues here are the lack of a threat to Taker and Striker's commentary. Chill out already man.

Shawn is watching in the back when Kane comes in and says Shawn's obsession with Taker is unhealthy. This is KANE calling something unhealthy. He warns Shawn to cool it with Taker because it won't end well. Kane leaves and HHH comes in. Shawn apologizes for whatever happened on Raw which apparently isn't important enough to specify. HHH agrees Shawn vs. Taker is meant to be, but it won't be by wining the Rumble.

Rumble by the Numbers time:

23 Winners

627 entrants eliminated

36 eliminations by Austin

11 eliminations by Kane in 2001

2002 was the last Rumble in Atlanta

62:12 Rey was in the Rumble in 2006

2 seconds was the record for 20 years until Santino broke it last year

3 wins for Austin

2 win for #1, the same as #30

70% of the winners win at Mania

Royal Rumble

Dolph Ziggler is #1 and Evan Bourne is #2. Bourne snaps off a headscissors to start and follows up with a spinwheel kick to take Dolph

down. Ziggler comes back with the Zig Zag but can't throw Evan out. Bourne decks Ziggler and hits Air Bourne as CM Punk of the Straightedge Society is #3. He slams the other two guys' heads together and dumps them out one after the other. Punk gets a mic and says that tonight is the greatest night in the history of the Straightedge Society. These two are just the first of 29 men who will challenge him, but they can be saved.

The clock starts running down, so Punk gives us the line of the night: "Excuse me, it's clobberin time." JTG is #4 and after a few clotheslines, he poses like an idiot in the corner and gets dumped. Punk gets the mic again and says that not everyone can be saved because they don't have his dedication. Great Khali is #5 and Punk immediately says he can make Khali greater by saving him. He asks Khali to raise his hand for the Straightedge Pledge but Khali lowers the hand onto Punk's head for the chop.

There's the Khali Vice and in less than 90 seconds, Beth Phoenix of all people is #6. She stares down Khali and gets picked up and placed on the apron. Beth kisses Khali but in the process pulls him over the top to eliminate him. Phoenix gets back in and BEATS UP PUNK, only to get caught in a GTS to the chest. Would that really knock her out? Before she's dumped out, here's Zack Ryder at #7.

As Ryder gets in, Punk grabs the mic and says Zack has potential. PREACH IT BROTHER! Punk starts offering him a spot but his Ryder with the mic before he gets done with it. The fans are going nuts for Punk now and there goes Ryder. Punk talks about how great he is and wants to know who is next, but whoever it is, they're inferior to Punk. In at #8 is HHH as we enter the second segment of the Rumble.

They stare each other down and HHH starts punching. The facebuster has Punk staggered and a spinebuster puts him down as Drew McIntyre is #9. That gives us a tag champion in HHH and the IC Champion in Drew at the moment. HHH is looking a bit flabby here. He hits the high knee on McIntyre and escapes the GTS to eliminate Punk. DiBiase is #10 as we're flying through this.

HHH gets double teamed down in the corner until John Morrison, the guy

that lost the title to McIntyre, is #11. He takes both heels down and pounds away on them before hitting a jumping DDT on Drew. Starship Pain almost completely misses Drew and HHH clotheslines John down. Kane is #12 and comes in with the top rope clothesline to HHH. There's a double chokeslam to McIntyre and Morrison before Kane tries to dump DiBiase.

Rhodes is #13 and saves Ted as he comes in. Morrison is sent to the apron and springboards back in, only to get dropkicked out of the air. Legacy goes after Kane but HHH saves him for no apparent reason. Cody saves himself from being eliminated and MVP is #14. Miz runs up behind him though and blasts MVP with the US Title. Morrison hits the Moonlight Drive on McIntyre to break up the Future Shock on Kane. HHH is in trouble in the corner and MVP is carried to the back.

Carlito is #15 and the ring is starting to get full. There's a Backstabber to HHH and one for Drew and Ted as well. Miz is #16 and hits a quick Finale on Carlito. Cue MVP to clothesline Miz out and eliminate himself in the process. Matt Hardy is #17 and lasts about 20 seconds before Kane puts him out. HHH immediately dumps Kane too and the ring is a lot more empty all of a sudden.

HHH starts laying out everyone and Shawn is #18. Carlito is backdropped out, Rhodes and DiBiase are tossed, Morrison gets dumped, and DX puts out McIntyre to get us down to DX. Before anything can happen though, Cena is #19 to get us to the final third of the match. Cena cleans house and hits a double Shuffle before getting caught in the Pedigree. Out of nowhere Shawn superkicks HHH out to pop the crowd BIG.

Shelton Benjamin in that stupid gold period is #20. He hits Paydirt on both guys but gets dumped by Cena in less than 50 seconds. Yoshi Tatsu is #21 and doesn't even make it 30 seconds. Big Show is #22 and Cena is shaken. Big Show RUNS down to the ring and house is cleaned. Shawn and Cena try to eliminate each other but Show pulls Shawn back in for some reason. What's up with that tonight?

Mark Henry is #23 and we get a quick battle of the giant. Who would think those two would have a world title feud a year and a half later and be REALLY popular? Henry slams Show and falls on Cena as he tries an AA.

Show spears Henry down and Chris Masters is #24. Masters tries the Masterlock on Show and gets dumped for his efforts. Now Henry goes after Show but Shawn breaks it up for some reason. R-Truth is #25 and actually dumps BOTH big guys. There's something you wouldn't expect.

Truth hits a Stroke on Cena and Jack Swagger is #26. All three guys get Vader Bombs and Swagger goes old school with a very slow Oklahoma Stampede. Jack knocks Michaels to the apron but can't get the elimination. Kingston is #27 and cleans house on Swagger, hitting the Boom Drop and dumping him out with a nice leverage move. Truth puts Kofi on the apron but gets pulled out by a reverse headscissors.

Jericho is #28 but after cleaning about half the house, Cena grabs an AA to put him down. Shawn adds the top rope elbow and tunes up the band but Kofi hits Trouble in Paradise to take him out. Cena dumps Kofi but walks into a Codebreaker. Everyone is down and EDGE makes his big return at #29. That's rather brilliant instead of waiting for the big surprise at #30, we get a SWERVE that actually makes sense.

Everyone gets a spear and Jericho is out. Edge is back about six months early and it's Edge-0-Matics all around. Batista is #30, giving us a final four of Shawn, Cena, Edge and Batista. Not bad at all. It's power all around but Edge spears him down. Everyone is down now Shawn gets up first and hits the forearm on Cena followed by the nipup.

Shawn slams every American in sight and drops the top rope elbow on Cena. Batista takes one too as Edge is still down in the corner. Sweet Chin Music hits Cena and there's one for Batista as well. Edge clotheslines Shawn to the apron and Michaels superkicks Edge back in, only to get knocked out by Batista. The crowd gasps HUGE at that and Shawn is about to cry. Shawn gets back in and superkicks the referee to vent some frustration. Shawn FINALLY leaves and Cena escapes the Batista Bomb before dumping Batista out. Edge misses the spear but throws out Cena a second later to go to Wrestlemania.

Rating: A-. This is kind of a hard one to grade. They definitely followed the three act structure which helped a lot and the match was VERY fast paced. I mean, the longest anyone was in there was Cena and he barely

broke 20 minutes. The problem with that is it doesn't give anything time to develop. The main story was Shawn which is fine and he would get to Mania at the end of the day anyway. It's a really fun Rumble but not one of the best ever.

Overall Rating: B. The Rumble is very solid and the rest has nothing terrible so we'll call it a good show overall. Things would get a lot more interesting soon after this with the rise of the Nexus and a very solid Wrestlemania. This was also a time of transition for the company as a lot of the guys in this show would be gone by the end of the year. Anyway good show here and worth checking out.

Ratings Comparison

Christian vs. Ezekiel Jackson

Original: C+

Redo: C+

Miz vs. MVP

Original: B-

Redo: D+

Sheamus vs. Randy Orton

Original: B

Redo: D+

Mickie James vs. Michelle McCool

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

Undertaker vs. Rey Mysterio

Original: C-

Redo: B

Royal Rumble

Original: A

Redo: A-

Overall Rating

Original: A-

Redo: B

Dang I liked Sheamus a lot more than I thought I did.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/01/29/royal-rumble-count-up-2010-one-of-the-best-ever/>

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up the Monday Nitro and Thunder Reviews Volume VI: July – December 1999 in e-book or paperback. Check out the information here:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2017/11/22/new-book-kbs-monday-nitro-and-thunder-reviews-volume-vi/>

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Royal Rumble Count-Up – 2009: Like It Would Be Anyone Else

Royal Rumble 2009

Date: January 25, 2009

Location: Joe Louis Arena, Detroit, Michigan

Attendance: 16,685

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler, Jim Ross, Todd Grisham, Matt Striker, Tazz

This isn't so much the Royal Rumble as much as it is HHH and Randy Orton are in a match and 28 other guys happen to be in the ring too. Other than that we have Edge challenging the NEW WWE Champion Jeff Hardy and Cena defending against JBL, who has Shawn Michaels and his crisis of conscience working for him at the moment. This wasn't the best year for WWE so let's get to it.

No intro video this year. That's interesting.

ECW Title: Jack Swagger vs. Matt Hardy

Swagger won the title about two weeks ago and this is Hardy's rematch. We actually get big match intros for this, which is a rare sight for an ECW Title match. Matt takes him into the corner to start before punching Jack in the face. Striker calls that a pugilistic endeavor to sound smart. Another punch sends Swagger to the floor and we head back inside for a clothesline from Matt.

Jack heads to the floor to hide after Matt swings again. Back in and Swagger takes Hardy to the mat and cranks on the arm a bit. Hardy comes back with a dropkick in the corner and a bulldog for two, only to go up and get shoved down to the floor. Back in and Swagger starts in on the arm but Hardy quickly escapes a key lock. A punch to Hardy's arm blocks a clothesline and a big boot gets two for the champion.

Back to the key lock as Jack stays on the arm. He lifts Hardy off the mat by the arm a few times as the fans cheer for the challenger. Matt fights

back but he's basically fighting with one arm here. A bulldog puts Jack down for two and a middle rope elbow to Swagger's back gets the same.

Hardy walks into a belly to belly suplex from Jack for two though and both guys are down. A DDT on the arm gets two for the champion but Matt blocks a belly to back superplex. Matt hits a decent looking moonsault for two and the fans are getting into these kickouts. The Twist is countered and Jack sends Matt shoulder and possibly head first into the post. The Swagger Bomb retains the title.

Rating: B-. Better match than I was expecting here with both guys looking good out there. Matt was getting close to being something decent as a singles guy and this was his way off ECW and onto Smackdown. Swagger would go on to win a world title and shock the world in the process before falling through the floor soon after. Solid opener here.

Orton arrives and gets glared at.

Women's Title: Beth Phoenix vs. Melina

Melina is challenging and Beth has Santino with her here. Beth shoves her around to start before easily breaking out of a headlock. A LOUD Santino chant starts up as Beth throws Melina around. Melina comes back with a shot to the head but gets shoved down immediately again. The challenger hooks an armbar of all things but Beth easily stands up while Melina stands on her shoulder.

Melina gets on Beth's shoulders again but Beth shoves her down in a crash. A running Umaga attack in the corner puts Melina down again and Beth is in full control. In a freaky looking move, Beth grabs Melina's leg in a kind of ankle lock position and bends the leg forward to make Melina kick herself in the back of the head. FREAKING OW MAN! Melina escapes a gorilla press and fires off some forearms before getting two off a sunset flip. Two knees into Beth's back have her staggered and a hair drag gets two. Out of nowhere, Melina grabs a spinning rollup for the pin and the title. As sudden as it sounds.

Rating: D+. Not terrible here and the girls looked good so I can't complain much. That leg lock thing of Beth's was SICK and it's one of

those moves that just looks painful all around. At the end of the day though, does it matter who has either of the female belts? They're completely interchangeable and this one was retired the next year.

We recap JBL vs. Cena, which is basically the Shawn Michaels Story. Basically the story went that Shawn was crushed by the financial crash and JBL offered to hire him to help win the title. Shawn helped JBL win a #1 contenders match and the question is will he screw over Cena tonight and compromise his morals? There was a VERY real argument to be made for Shawn vs. JBL at Mania for the title, so this wasn't a layup. The problem with this story is still there though: Shawn is a world class wrestler with the top company in the world....and he's broke? He may have lost his savings but he's not unemployed.

JBL tells Shawn if he wins the title tonight, Shawn is free with a huge payday and he can be in the Rumble tonight, which at the moment he isn't. Bradshaw leaves and Taker shows up, saying that sometimes it's a nightmare getting to Heaven.

Raw World Title: John Cena vs. John Bradshaw Layfield

Cena is defending in case you skipped the previous parts. We get the big match intros here and even a weapons check for old times' sake. Cena takes him to the mat with a headlock to start but JBL counters into one of his own. A shoulder block puts JBL down and out to the floor as we take a breather. JBL whispers something to Shawn before heading back inside for some clubbing forearms to the back.

Cena slams him down for two though and we're still in the early stages. JBL heads to the floor again but this time Cena goes after him. He runs into Shawn though and stops cold, allowing JBL to get in a shot to take over. Shawn didn't move at all. Back in with JBL in control and a standing clothesline gets two. Presumably that one was only from Hoboken.

Off to a chinlock from the challenger as we keep things at JBL's slow pace. A side slam gets two on Cena and he rolls out to the apron. Layfield knocks him to the floor and then sends him into the stairs for two back inside. Cena fights out of a superplex attempt and hits the top rope Fameasser for two of his own. The champ initiates his finishing

sequence with all of his usual stuff including the Shuffle. Shawn hasn't been a factor in the first nine minutes or so of the match.

JBL escapes the AA but gets caught in the STF instead. Shawn starts grabbing the ropes but doesn't do anything. Cena lets go of the hold anyway, allowing JBL to kick Cena to the floor. JBL's Clothesline gets two so he glares at Shawn for some reason. A quick AA attempt misses and JBL kicks the referee down by mistake. The Johns double clothesline each other and it's time for the big moment.

Shawn gets in the ring and is staring at both guys. Both guys get up and Shawn superkicks John. As in the challenger/him employer. He also kicks the champion/the guy he was hired to take out before leaving. Shawn puts JBL's arm across Cena, causing the fans to chant for the champ. Another referee comes out and gets a two count for Layfield and both guys get up. Cena hits a quick AA on JBL to retain.

Rating: C-. The match itself was pretty dull but the drama worked well enough to make up for it. At the end of the day, JBL simply wasn't good enough at this point to hang in a world title match. Cena had to tone it WAY down to let JBL keep up with him and it showed badly. Still though, Shawn more than makes up for it and would go on to have a masterpiece with Taker at Mania so all is well and good.

We recap Edge vs. Hardy. Hardy shocked the world (including me) at Armageddon by winning the title, but a few weeks later he started having a string of "accidents" including having pyro go off in his face and nearly getting killed by a crazy driver. Everyone blamed Edge but he denied responsibility. The question is who is behind all this stuff. Hardy hasn't had a match that I know of in the meantime. I went to a house show during this period and Hardy didn't wrestle.

Smackdown World Title: Edge vs. Jeff Hardy

Vickie makes it No DQ for no apparent reason and Chavo is in Edge's corner because he's familia. Jeff spears Edge into the corner to start and pounds away as fast as he can. The fans almost immediately start chanting WE WANT CHRISTIAN. Now remember that line as I'll get back to it later on. Christian had left TNA and word hadn't broken yet on if he had

signed with WWE yet (I don't think). Anyway, Jeff tries to bring in a chair but Edge kicks it out of his hands before it gets inside.

Hardy pounds away but Edge gets in a shot to take over for the first time. Edge sends him to the floor but can't hit a baseball slide, allowing Hardy to hit a clothesline off the apron. Back in and Jeff tries a springboard but gets kicked down to the floor for the third time. Edge rams him into various hard objects including tables and the barricade and then another table.

We head back inside again with Edge in full control including a spear in the corner. Jeff grabs a quick two off a sunset flip but gets clotheslined right back down. Off to a body vice by Edge to slow things down a bit. Jeff fights up and hits a mule kick before going up top, only to jump into a dropkick from Edge for two. Now Edge goes to get two chairs but Jeff spears him down off the apron before it can be brought in.

Edge gets back to the apron but gets pulled down into a Twist of Fate onto said apron, sending both guys down onto the floor. Since it's Jeff vs. Edge, here's a ladder. Jeff spreads Edge out on the table but Chavo climbs up to slow Jeff down. Edge moves, so Jeff hits a HUGE splash to put Chavo through the table instead. Back in and Jeff gets two off a high cross body. Edge gets up first and pulls a buckle off, only to get caught in the Whisper in the Wind for two.

Out of nowhere Edge counters the Twist into a DDT for a very close two. We're pretty clearly in the final stages of this match which means it's getting awesome. Edge counters the slingshot dropkick into a kind of hot shot into the exposed buckle for ANOTHER two. The spear is countered into a Twist of Fate so Jeff goes up. After kicking Vickie away, the Swanton hits but Vickie pulls the referee out. Cue Matt to send Vickie into the ring and pick up a chair. To the shock of a lot of people, Matt cracks Jeff with the chair to give Edge of all people the world title.

Rating: B. This too awhile to get going but once they hit their stride they started acting like Edge and Jeff Hardy in a big match. The No DQ stuff wasn't needed here but it made things work a bit better. At the end

of the day, these two work best when they can turn off the rules and go nuts, which is what they did here.

Now remember earlier that I mentioned Christian. He was originally supposed to be in Matt's spot, setting up a reunion with Edge. However, WWE felt the fans figured this out so we got Matt in his place. This also happened in 2012 with Sheamus winning the Rumble instead of Jericho. Based on this theory, Shawn should have kept the title at Wrestlemania 14 because almost everyone knew that Austin was winning.

That makes no sense and I don't get what they think this is accomplishing. It didn't work out well for Russo and it won't work out for the WWE. Matt vs. Jeff didn't work at the end of the day, mainly because I don't think people wanted to see them fight. I'll give them this: they did come up with a logical reason for Matt to turn so it's not a terrible idea. It just wasn't the best option they had.

Orton says he'll win. Jericho pops in to thank Orton for punting Vince on Monday but Randy will probably get fired for it.

Rumble by the numbers which is roughly the same as the previous year.

Royal Rumble

Mysterio is #1 and Morrison is #2. Rey kicks him in the face a few times to start but gets put on the apron for trying his sitout bulldog. A springboard cross body puts Morrison down and there's a big headscissors to take Morrison down. John gets sent to the apron but hangs on by the top rope, even when Mysterio dropkicks him in the ribs. Carlito is #3 and is the second tag champion in here along with Morrison. Those titles would be unified at Mania.

Rey tries a standing moonsault but gets caught in a modified swinging neckbreaker instead. Carlito hits a gorgeous double jump moonsault to take Morrison down and stomping ensues. MVP, currently on a winning streak after losing forever, is #4. There's Ballin on Morrison and a facebuster to Carlito. Rey get sent to the apron but he saves himself almost immediately.

Great Khali with the awesome dance music is #5. Everybody gets a chop and Khali poses a bit. Mysterio tries to springboard onto him and Carlito tries a Backstabber, both to no avail. Kozlov is #6 and immediately headbutts Khali out by himself. MVP misses a running kick in the corner and he's gone too (BIG heat on Vlad for that). Carlito is gone after jumping into a spinebuster and Mysterio looks to be up next, but heeeeeeeeeere's HHH at #7.

Since no one else can get a good match out of Kozlov, you know HHH is going to try his hand at him. They stare each other down and Kozlov hits the headbutt to take him down. The facebuster stuns Kozlov and HHH throws him out with ease. It's HHH, Morrison and Mysterio in there at the moment with Rey chilling in the corner. The knee to the face puts Morrison down and Orton is #8.

The battle of Evolution continues and the backbreaker puts HHH down. Both finishers are countered with Morrison breaking up the Pedigree. Rey hits a seated senton on Orton and the 619 on Morrison before JTG is in at #9. Orton tries to put Mysterio out as people start pairing off. Ted DiBiase, as in one of Orton's lackeys, is #10. Mysterio and DiBiase immediately fight to the apron with Rey doing some gymnastics to stay alive.

Jericho is #11 and goes right for Orton. He can't get him out so there's a Lionsault to HHH instead. Jericho is knocked to the apron and Mike Knox is #12. Orton and DiBiase focus on JTG as Knox beats on Rey. HHH saves the masked dude for no apparent reason and Miz is #13. He goes right after JTG and hits something like the Skull Crushing Finale before going after the Game.

Morrison and Mysterio team up on Orton but John and Miz both take RKOs. There's one for JTG but HHH hits a Pedigree to stop Randy dead. HHH dumps Miz and Morrison to prove how awesome he is and Finlay is #14. Jericho backdrops Mysterio to the floor but he lands on Morrison and hops onto Miz to get back to the ring. Finlay beats on everyone in the ring until Cody Rhodes, the other of Orton's goons, is #15.

We currently have Mysterio, HHH, Orton, JTG, DiBiase, Jericho, Knox, Finlay and Rhodes. Legacy (the collective name of the trio) starts

picking off people one at a time, starting with Finlay. They don't actually put anyone out but they get to beat on everyone at least. Rey dives at Orton but gets caught in an RKO in a nice counter. The Undertaker is #16 and here come the punches. His only victim at this point is JTG to clear the ring out a bit.

Goldust of all people is in at #17 and immediately goes for DiBiase. Rhodes pulls his real life brother (Goldust) off so Goldie sends him to the apron a few times. That's as far as he can get though as an RKO puts Goldust down and Rhodes gets to dump him out. Punk is #18 and happens to be the IC Champion at this point. There's a GTS for HHH as RKO works on Y2J. Mystério gets sent to the apron by Knox and Finlay works on Taker.

Mark Henry is #19 and throws a lot of people around but can't get anybody out. Shelton Benjamin is #20 to fill the ring up even more. Jericho and Punk go up top for no apparent reason other than for Shelton to charge the corner and hit a kind of double DDT to bring them both back down. Billy Regal is #21 and goes right for Punk, who beat him for the IC Title a week or so again.

Mystério dumps Henry off camera to thankfully get someone out of the ring. HHH is upside down in the corner but he winds up sitting on the apron. Here's Kofi at #22 to speed things up as well as he can with so many people around him. Taker dumps Benjamin and Kane is #23. After beating up a few people he stares his brother down before they start working together to chokeslam some people.

Punk pulls Regal out and brags about it without getting thrown out. R-Truth is #24 and nothing happens. Rob Van Dam makes a one night only return at #25 after not having been seen in the WWE in about a year and a half. That at least wakes the crowd up but there are too many people in there for his style of stuff to work. He loads up the Five Star but Truth is too close so he has to bail out in mid air.

The Brian Kendrick is #26 back when he was actually a big deal. To show how big he is, he manages to dump Kofi and get thrown out by HHH in about fifteen seconds. Dolph Ziggler gets lucky #27 but only lasts about six seconds longer than Kendrick with Kane getting the point. Your future

World Heavyweight Champion ladies and gentlemen. Santino is #28 and breaks Warlord's record of two seconds in the Rumble by being clotheslined out by Kane before he can even stand up straight.

Jim Duggan makes his token Rumble appearance at #29 and he punches everything in sight, including knocking the Dead Man down. Big Show is #30, giving us a final group of Mysterio, HHH, Orton, DiBiase, Jericho, Knox, Finlay, Rhodes, Undertaker, Punk, Kane, R-Truth, RVD, Duggan and Big Show, or half the field in the entire match. Nearly everyone goes after him at once but it's Duggan that gets tossed instead.

Jericho tries to put a sleeper on Show but it gets about as far as you would expect. Taker throws Punk to the apron as Show dumps Truth. Punk fires off some kicks and hangs on three times so Show finally knocks him out cold and out to the floor. Show knocks out Knox and Mysterio as Horny gets in for no apparent reason. Finlay tries to save him and gets dumped for his efforts at good parenting.

Jericho hits a Codebreaker on Kane and Orton hits the Elevated DDT on HHH. Taker and Show have their required staredown and RVD hits the Five Star on Orton. Jericho comes up behind Van Dam to dump him while Rob holds his ribs. That's his last WWE appearance to date. Chris turns around and sees Taker who tosses him with glee. Legacy teams up to put Kane out and we're down to Taker, Big Show, HHH and Legacy.

The trio surrounds Undertaker as HHH gets chokeslammed. Taker does the same to most of Legacy so the giants punch each other a lot until Show gets knocked to the apron and hangs on with his feet flying off the apron. THAT was cool. Not that it matters anyway as he gets RK0'ed out a few moments later but it still looked good. Show pulls Taker to the floor a minute later because that's how he rolls.

So as people expected at the time, it's HHH vs. Legacy for the Rumble. Taker and Show fight into the crowd for no apparent reason. HHH goes after Rhodes first but the numbers catch up with him. He gets beaten down and Orton says pick him up. The RK0 is countered though and HHH sends Orton to the apron. There goes DiBiase and Rhodes follows, but Orton sneaks up on HHH and throws him out to win the Rumble.

Rating: D. This was one of the weaker Rumbles there's ever been. For one thing, it was clear that Orton was going to win no matter what happened. Second and probably more important, they got caught in the classic Rumble trap of having WAY too many people in there at once. They didn't even try the three act structure here and it showed badly. That's something Pat Patterson was absolutely amazing at and he was gone by this point.

Overall Rating: C-. It's clear that the company was in a transitional period here and that makes this a hard one to get through. There's enough good stuff here to check it out, but it's nothing worth going out of your way to see. The only really solid match is Edge vs. Hardy and even that is nothing really worth seeing. This is a rare instance where the Rumble didn't dictate how the show went as the rest of it is a far easier sit than the Rumble itself.

Ratings Comparison

Jack Swagger vs. Matt Hardy

Original: B

Redo: B-

Melina vs. Beth Phoenix

Original: C-

Redo: D+

John Cena vs. John Bradshaw Layfield

Original: C

Redo: C-

Edge vs. Jeff Hardy

Original: B-

Redo: B

Royal Rumble

Original: D

Redo: D

Overall Rating

Original: B+

Redo: C-

So let me get this straight: every match is literally within a single grade of the original but the original is nearly two grades higher? Dang I was REALLY feeling generous that day. A show with an hour long match that gets a D doesn't sound like a B+ overall to me.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/01/28/royal-rumble-count-up-2009-the-voices-tell-me-no-one-but-orton-has-a-chance/>

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up the Monday Nitro and Thunder Reviews Volume VI: July – December 1999 in e-book or paperback. Check out the information here:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2017/11/22/new-book-kbs-monday-nitro-and-thunder-reviews-volume-vi/>

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

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

Royal Rumble Count-Up – 2008: Jeff Could Win

Royal Rumble 2008

Date: January 27, 2008

Location: Madison Square Garden, New York City New York

Attendance: 20,798

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler, Michael Cole Jonathan Coachman, Joey Styles, Tazz

We're in New York City again and there are three main events tonight. We have the usual Rumble and Edge defending the Smackdown Title against Mysterio, but the interesting one here was Orton defending against Jeff Hardy. I don't know how they did it, but the company did an OUTSTANDING job of making Hardy seem like he had a very real chance of taking the title tonight and shocking the world. I had no idea who was going to win and I LOVED that feeling. Let's get to it.

The opening video focuses more on the show being in MSG than anything else.

Ric Flair vs. MVP

Flair's career is on the line but MVP's US Title isn't. Flair talks about having his first match here in 1976 but MVP's music cuts him off. MVP takes him into the corner to start and he's BALLIN already. Flair goes after the arm for a second before chopping away at the jumpsuit. MVP comes back with a running boot to the head for two before hooking a chinlock. The fans tell MVP that he sucks as he cranks on the chin.

Flair fights up and picks the leg, only to get small packaged for two. A backdrop puts Flair down and there's a running boot to the face in the corner for three, but Flair has his foot on the rope. You know MSG isn't buying that one. Flair tries to steal the pin but gets clotheslined down for his efforts instead. A superplex gets two for MVP and a double clothesline puts both guys down. Flair starts trying for some fast pins before slugging away. MVP punches him down and hits a facebuster, but the

Playmaker is countered into a quick Figure Four to end this.

Rating: C. This was about what you would expect. At the end of the day, everyone knew Flair wasn't going to lose this but it was a way to give him one last moment in MSG before retiring in April. I'm not wild on him beating the US Champion clean but the title hasn't meant anything in years anyway so what difference does it make?

Vince talks to Horny about the Rumble. This is during the "Vince is Hornswoggle's dad" phase. Vince tells him to not trust Finlay but he has to win. Finlay comes in and takes some offense to Vince telling them not to trust each other.

Mike Adamle is introduced as the newest broadcaster. Oh dear. For those of you that don't remember him, imagine Cole but with something resembling charm.

We recap Jericho vs. JBL. JBL cost Jericho the title at Armageddon and tonight is the blowoff. JBL brought Jericho's children into this too, saying Jericho would have to admit to them that he's a coward. Jericho would use this same line against Shawn soon after this.

Chris Jericho vs. John Bradshaw Layfield

Feeling out process to start with JBL hiding in the corner and ropes a few times. Jericho forearms him down and pounds away but gets sent to the floor. That doesn't last long as he slides right back in and hooks the Walls but JBL immediately grabs the rope. A baseball slide keeps Jibbles on the floor where he is sent into the steps. Back in and Jericho charges into a hot shot to put both guys down.

A clothesline (not the one from down under) puts Jericho down as apparently he has a bad throat and neck coming into this. Bradshaw slingshots Jericho throat first into the middle rope and hooks a quick sleeper. Jericho fights out of it and hits a clothesline of his own, only to charge into a big boot. John sends him shoulder first into the post which busts his head open somehow. Back in and JBL pounds away at the cut as a villain would do. Jericho comes back but they botch a clothesline, causing both guys to get booed loudly. A Cactus Clothesline sends them to

the floor where Jericho cracks JBL with a chair for the LAME DQ.

Rating: D+. This didn't work at all for the most part. Jericho didn't work at all as a face with the short hair during this comeback and I think everyone knew it. Thankfully he would turn heel over the summer and have the feud of the year with Shawn. The ending to this sucked and I don't think they had any other matches after this.

Jericho destroys JBL post match and chokes him with a cord, which is what JBL did to him. That gets Jericho cheered at least.

Santino tells Ashley that Maria won't do Playboy. Thank goodness he was wrong.

We recap Edge vs. Mysterio. Edge is with Vickie now who just happens to be the corrupt GM. Mysterio won a Beat the Clock challenge by beating Edge himself to earn the shot. Edge is annoyed that Rey is claiming that Edge is just using Vickie, which of course he is.

Smackdown World Title: Edge vs. Rey Mysterio

Edge is defending if that's not clear. Vickie, Hawkins and Ryder are at ringside as well. After some big match intros we're ready to go. The fans LOUDLY boo Rey and cheer for Edge as Rey kind of messes up a rana. Edge runs him over but Rey speeds things up, causing Edge to panic a bit. Rey gets sent to the floor where Hawkins and Ryder go after him, only to stop when they're nearly caught. The referee ejects them anyway.

Back in and Rey almost hooks the 619, only to have the champion bail to the floor. Rey is perfectly cool with diving to the floor to take out Edge, drawing boos in a bizarre sequence. Back in and a seated senton gets two for Rey but Edge takes his knee out to take over. Edge pounds away and hooks a half crab for a little while. Rey comes back with kicks to the face to escape and you would think he was choking a kitten from the crowd's reaction.

Rey loads up the 619 but charges into a powerslam for two. Off to a kind of ankle lock hold but bending the knee instead of the ankle. Edge tries to take the knee brace off of Rey but gets caught in the sitout bulldog

to put both guys down. Mysterio uses his good leg to kick Edge in the face for two before hitting another kind of seated senton for two. Like an idiot, Rey goes up and hits a double stomp for two. Smart move on a bad knee Rey. Edge is sent to the floor where Rey slide through the ropes into a tornado DDT for two back inside.

Back in and Edge kicks Rey right in the face to put him down again. Why over complicate things? The spear misses so Rey hits the 619 and the top rope splash, but Vickie pops out of her wheelchair to break up the count. Edge misses another spear and puts himself in 619 position, but Vickie jumps onto the apron to take the hit, allowing Edge to hit the spear for the retaining pin.

Rating: C+. This was ok but you kind of expect more from Edge vs. Rey Mysterio. The ending was about Vickie, which would become a running theme over the next few months. Edge being all conniving and backstabbing the already evil Vickie was awesome stuff, but getting there was tedious at times. Still not a bad match at all though.

Mr. Kennedy is waiting for Flair when he gets out of the shower in a towel. Shawn comes in before anything happens and shakes hands with Flair. Shawn: "Imagine, a loud mouthed platinum blonde with a catchphrase. That gimmick will never work." Batista comes in (pop), as does HHH (lesser pop). HHH: "I've said this a lot of times before Ric, but put your pants on." It turns into a merchandise plug in a cute bit.

Maria comes out to do the Royal Rumble Kiss Cam. This eats up some time until Ashley comes out to ask Maria to be in Playboy again. Santino comes out to insult the fans (and the Giants), saying the people would cheer if you asked if they wanted hepatitis. He brings out Big Dick Johnson with a rubber chicken and wearing a half Patriots jersey. You can figure this one out for yourself.

WrestleMania ad featuring Mae Young as a lifeguard. Ok then.

Mike Adamle introduces us to the next match, featuring Randy Orton vs. Jeff Harvey.

We recap Hardy vs. Orton, which is based on three simple words: Hardy

could win. Apparently this match drew HUGE numbers for the Rumble, which showed why they held out on Hardy winning the belt for nearly a year. Hardy hit a HUGE Swanton off the set on Raw, which made you wonder how far he would go to win here. The video is a mini-history of Orton's career to this point, which isn't really a good idea for a heel. This is followed by a music video about Jeff Hardy set to the song Rooftops by the Lost Prophets, which really fits him well. I remember being very excited for the match and this video was a big reason.

Raw World Title: Randy Orton vs. Jeff Hardy

Jeff is Intercontinental Champion. Feeling out process to start with Jeff taking over via a headlock on the mat. An atomic drop gets two but Orton hits him in the face and brags to the crowd about it. Orton gets sent to the floor and a baseball slide sends him into the barricade. Hardy follows with a plancha to the floor as JR SCREAMS to get Orton back in the ring. Randy tries to walk out with the belt but Hardy will have none of that. Orton is rammed into the announce table and back inside we go.

As Hardy tries a springboard, Orton dropkicks him right back to the floor in a big crash. There's the Orton Stomp and some choking as Orton shows off his wide range of offense. This is before Orton was orange so the visuals aren't all that bad. A pair of knee drops get two on Hardy as Orton asks the fans if they believe in Jeff still. Hardy sends Orton over the top to the floor, followed by a bad clothesline off the apron (it hit Orton's arm and completely missed his neck and chest).

Back in again and Jeff misses a charge into the post, giving Orton both a two count and control again. Randy hooks a chinlock with a bodyscissors followed by a powerslam for two. Back to the chinlock (yep it's an Orton match) to fill in some time. Jeff fights up again and takes Randy down with a clothesline but can't follow up. Jeff starts striking with everything he's got and hits the Whisper in the Wind to fire up the crowd even more.

That's one thing I haven't talked about enough here: the fans are WAY behind Hardy here. It isn't the usual New York reaction to a face. They want Jeff to win the title NOW. Hardy hits the slingshot dropkick in the

corner but before he can hit the Swanton, Randy bails to the floor. Jeff is cool with that and hits (kind of at least) a moonsault to the floor. Back in and Jeff loads up the Twist but Orton counters into the RKO out of nowhere to retain.

Rating: C+. That's a really bad finish for a few reasons. First of all, it's WAY too sudden. If they were shooting at punching the audience in the stomach I guess they accomplished that, but it doesn't do much else. Hardy winning was an option, but at the end of the day they made the right move here....I think. I was disappointed Hardy won, but thankfully WWE stretched it out for a LONG time before he got the title, which was the right move at the end of the day.

Hardy gets a well deserved standing ovation. His time would come.

We get the Rumble by the Numbers video, which is always a favorite of mine. Here are those numbers:

20 years of history

21 winners

569 superstars in the Rumble

36 eliminations (by Austin, since broken by Shawn)

11 Rumbles for Shawn (since broken by Kane)

11 eliminations for Kane in 2001

3 identities under which Foley entered the Rumble in 1997

2 feet that must touch the ground

1 woman in the Rumble (Chyna, since joined by Beth Phoenix and Kharma)

62:12 of time that Mysterio was in the Rumble

2 seconds that Warlord lasted in the Rumble (since broken by Santino)

3 wins for Austin, still a record

1 is the spot that has the same amount of wins as #30 (Shawn and Undertaker)

4 men that have won the Rumble from the 27 spot, the most ever

73 percent of the Rumble winners have won the title at Wrestlemania

I love that.

Royal Rumble

As introduced by Michael Buffer (only the Fink gets all caps in the Garden), #1 is Undertaker, #2 is Shawn Michaels,. Now how's THAT for an opening pair? Isn't it amazing how a RANDOM pairing finishes the match the previous year and opens it this year? 90 second intervals here which seems to be the right amount of time most of the years. Taker powers Shawn around to start and elbows him in the corner.

Shawn gets crotched on the ropes but Taker GOES AIRBORNE with a running boot that misses in the corner. Shawn charges into the grip of Taker as he gets back in but there's no chokeslam. Taker kicks him in the face instead as Santino is #3. Twenty five seconds later Shawn superkicks him and Taker gets the elimination. Shawn tries to dump him but Taker hangs on and works on the arm.

Old School is countered and Shawn hits an atomic drop as Great Khali is #4. Taker jumps him as he comes in as Shawn is down from something we missed. The big chop puts Taker down as the fans tell Khali he can't wrestle. They grab each other by the throat but Khali misses a chop and gets eliminated. Shawn never touched Khali but charges at Taker when it's just the two of them.

Hardcore Holly is #5 and is a tag champion here. Taker slugs Holly down but Shawn tries to dump the big man again. John Morrison, also a tag champion but with Miz instead of Cody Rhodes like Holly, is #6. Morrison looks at Taker and immediately goes after Holly instead. Shawn dumps him to the apron but John gets back in. That winds up being bad for him as he get slammed down by Shawn followed by the top rope elbow.

Shawn tunes up the band but Morrison blocks the kick. Tommy Dreamer is #7

to a big pop and a LOUD Tommy Dreamer chant. #8 is Batista as we get another good blast of energy. Big Dave and Taker knock everyone down (no eliminations) and they stare each other down, only for Dreamer to charge at Batista, earning himself an elimination. Shawn goes after Batista now but Dave spears Morrison down instead.

Hornswoggle is #9 and immediately dives under the ring without ever getting in. Batista and Taker hammer on each other in the corner as Holly clotheslines Shawn to the apron. Chuck Palumbo, a lame biker at this point, is #10. Taker flips Morrison to the apron but he hangs on again. Shawn and Morrison fight on the top rope as Jamie Noble, Palumbo's enemy at this point, is #11. Noble has taped up ribs so his offense can't last long. Palumbo dumps him after less than a minute.

At the moment we have Taker, Shawn, Holly, Batista, Palumbo and Morrison in the ring with Horny underneath. #12 is CM Punk as Morrison makes ANOTHER impressive save. Punk is insanely popular in New York of course and fires off running knees in the corner to everyone he sees, only to charge into a clothesline from Undertaker. Morrison, the guy that took the ECW Title from Punk, pounds away on him. Punk takes Palumbo out but gets jumped from behind by Shawn.

Cody Rhodes is #13 before he means anything at all. Yes he's a tag champion, and yes I stand by what I just said. Cody goes after Punk before shifting over to Taker like an idiot. Umaga is #14 to a decent pop. He spikes Holly out and gets to try on Batista for a bit now. Shawn gets backdropped to the apron but hangs on of course. Snitsky is #15 and badly pounds on everyone at once.

Rhodes jumps on Snitsky's back and they both head to the apron but no further than that. Taker gets headbutted by Umaga as the ring is starting to get too full. Miz is #16 with those stupid shorts of his. He goes after Punk as Taker tries to put Umaga out. Shelton with his even stupider gold hair of his knocks both Miz and Morrison off the top and onto the ropes but not out, before walking into a superkick from Shawn for the elimination in less than 20 seconds.

Jimmy Snuka of all people is #18 to a HUGE pop. He goes after Morrison as

the fans do Snuka's barking kind of chant. Taker gets a headbutt which staggers the dead man before Snuka goes after Miz. At #19 here's Roddy Piper to an even BIGGER pop. He takes his shirt off and causes about half the audience to faint before having a showdown with Snuka, which the rest of the match (remember this includes Umaga, Taker and Shawn) stops to watch. Piper pokes Jimmy in the eyes and the match finally picks up a bit.

Kane is in at #20 to hopefully clean out the ring a bit. Yep he knocks out Piper and Snuka before chokeslamming Miz. Taker loads up a chokeslam on Kane but before he grabs the throat, he spins around and grabs Michaels instead. Carlito is in at #21 and spits the apple at Rhodes. Punk and Morrison pick up Carlito but he kicks off the ropes and sends them both into them. Punk kicks Morrison in the head but gets caught by a Backstabber. Cool little sequence there.

Mick Foley is #22 and you know the fans freak out for him. A double arm DDT takes Kane down as Umaga hits a Samoan Drop on Taker. The ring is WAY too full now with Taker, Michaels, Morrison, Batista, Punk, Rhodes, Umaga, Snitsky, Miz, Kane, Carlito, Foley and Horny under the ring. Morrison hits a springboard kick to take Foley down and Kennedy is #23. I'll say this: the ring has some star power in it.

There's a Mic Check to Miz and a kick to Taker after he sits up from something. A chokeslam puts Kennedy down and Taker starts beating up everyone. Here's Big Daddy V at #24. Taker shoves Snitsky out, Shawn superkicks Taker out and Kennedy throws Shawn out. The only question I have from that: why is Taker on his feet after being superkicked? Taker drops a leg on the announce table on Snitsky because he's a big jerk at times.

Kennedy and Rhodes fight to the apron as Henry is #25. Horny comes out from under the ring and pulls Miz out from the ring for an elimination. Horny goes back under the ring as V is trying to put out Morrison and Kennedy. Chavo is #26 and freshly ECW Champion, thereby making it clear that the ECW Title isn't a world title. Kane sends Morrison to the apron and then to the floor with a big boot.

Horny comes in again as V and Henry double team him. Finlay runs out ahead of the gun (presumably at #27) and blasts both guys with the club. He and Horny leave through the ropes and don't return, with the official statement being that Horny was eliminated for leaving and Finlay was disqualified. In the Rumble. Yeah this story was just badly done overall. Elijah Burke (D'Angelo Dinero) is #28.

Chavo dumps Punk after taking his title on Tuesday. That's just overkill man. Umaga spikes Batista under the ropes and out to the floor. HHH is #29 which leaves a hole at #30. Basically every major star has entered and the announcers aren't sure who is possibly left. Rhodes, V, Foley and Burke all go out at HHH's hands before he pounds on Umaga. The countdown begins for #30.

The roof is blown off the Garden, because JOHN CENA is #30. This is shocking as Cena had torn his pec and had announced that he would be gone until Wrestlemania at the earliest. Imagine that: lying about an injury and getting a big response from the crowd. Who would have ever thought of that, and in wrestling of all things? Carlito, Chavo and Henry are all gone in about fifteen seconds before it's HHH staring Cena down.

We've got Cena, HHH, Batista, Kane, Umaga and Kennedy to go. HHH takes Cena down with a spinebuster but walks into a superkick from Umaga. Batista takes Umaga down with the spinebuster and dumps Kennedy to get us down to five. There goes Umaga and we're down to four. HHH and Batista dump Kane and we've got three left. Batista gives the double thumbs down, Cena says you can't see me and HHH says suck it. They are fighting catchphrases and it's on.

Trips and Cena go after Big Dave but he clotheslines them both down. The spinebuster plants Cena and another one takes HHH down. The fans don't seem thrilled with Batista so they cheer when Cena backdrops him down. HHH clotheslines Batista out and we're down to HHH vs. Cena.

Since this is New York, the fans hate Cena by default and it's boo/yay time. Triple H pounds away but walks into the Protobomb and the Shuffle. The finishers are both countered and they clothesline each other down. Cena can't FU HHH out and gets caught in a DDT. The finishers are

countered again until Cena hits the FU on HHH for the elimination and the win.

Rating: C+. It took awhile to get through the bad parts but once Cena's music hit the place was electric. The fans booing Cena doesn't surprise me at all because that's how New York works. Cena would wind up facing Orton at No Way Out for some reason, resulting in a three way at Mania with HHH involved as well.

Cena celebrates to end the show.

Overall Rating: C-. Well it definitely wasn't terrible but at the end of the day, nothing is really all that good here at all. The best match is probably Hardy vs. Orton and that's just ok. On the other hand though, nothing is really bad here and you likely won't be bored with the show. It's one of those shows where you watch it and other than Cena's return, you probably won't remember watching it two days later.

Ratings Comparison

Ric Flair vs. MVP

Original: B-

Redo: C

John Bradshaw Layfield vs. Chris Jericho

Original: D+

Redo: D+

Edge vs. Rey Mysterio

Original: A-

Redo: C+

Jeff Hardy vs. Randy Orton

Original: C-

Redo: C+

Royal Rumble

Original: C-

Redo: C+

Overall Rating

Original: C+

Redo: C-

Wow the Smackdown title match really changed things around here.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/01/27/royal-rumble-count-up-2008-screw-wwes-list-this-is-the-1-rumble-moment/>

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<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

Ring of Honor TV – January 17, 2018: He'll Be Your Hero and He'll Be Your Villain

Ring of Honor

Date: January 17, 2018

Location: 2300 Arena, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Ian Riccaboni, Colt Cabana

We've got a stacked show this week, including something resembling a dream match (I use that term kind of loosely) between Jay Lethal and Will Ospreay. In this case dream means more like "it should be very good", which is certainly not a bad thing to say about a match. Other than that there's probably more from new World Champion Dalton Castle so let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Jay Lethal vs. Will Ospreay

Ospreay's IWGP Junior Heavyweight Title isn't here yet so non-title. They fight over a wristlock to start and it's Jay being flipped over off a wristlock. Jay pops back up and shows Ospreay how to do a wristlock but the cartwheel into a basement dropkick is cut off. Lethal gets sent outside but is ready for Ospreay's handspring dive, grabbing his hands to take Will down.

The three straight suicide dives send Ospreay over the barricade and it's Marty Scurll coming out as we take a break. Back with Marty on commentary, explaining that he won at Final Battle because he brought out the old Lethal. Marty also demands a World Title match and that works very well for me. Ospreay knocks Lethal into the corner and lights up his chest with a chop.

A tilt-a-whirl backbreaker gets Lethal out of trouble and he scores with an uppercut. Ian: "To the European himself." Marty found that one

HILARIOUS and....eh I love easy jokes but not really. Back up and Ospreay kicks Lethal in the chest, followed by an enziguri in the corner. Will sends him outside and the Flying Space Tiger Drop (cartwheel into a moonsault over the top) crushes Jay as we take a second break.

Back again with the Oscutter being caught in a torture rack (Marty: "THE LETHAL EXPRESS!"). Jay rolls it forward like a reverse Regal Roll (Ian: "HE'LL BE YOUR HERO!") for two and Marty is losing it on these near falls. Ospreay is right back with a reverse Impaler for two of his own, only to walk into the Lethal Combination. Jay's Figure Four is countered into a small package but Jay counters the Oscutter into a cutter of his own. The Lethal Injection puts Ospreay away at 16:37.

Rating: B. Yep it was a very good match and again, that's all you need on something like this. They were trading the big bombs here but they also played up the idea that they knew each other very well, which makes for a nice story. The Oscutter into the cutter was a very cool counter and Marty wanting to face Jay again could set him up for the title shot in New Orleans.

It's time for Coleman's Pulpit with guest Jonathan Gresham, who is in a much higher chair. Because he's not that tall you see. Coleman starts in with the short jokes but Gresham talks about being trained by Mr. Hughes in Atlanta. We hear about Gresham's not great win/loss record and Coleman laughs a bit. Gresham talks about mastering his style and the rules he would like for people like him. Sounds like a return of the Pure Rules format. And that's it, ending another, ahem, thrilling, Coleman's Pulpit. This is one of the lamest interview segments in wrestling history and it's not getting any better. Just drop it already.

Kenny King vs. Brian Milonas

Milonas is the big fat guy who was pretty terrible in the Top Prospect Tournament. Brian throws him into the air but King lands on his feet out of a hiptoss. A kick to the head doesn't do much to Brian but Kenny low bridges him to the floor with some more success. The corkscrew dive barely connects but let's stop for a picture with a fan. Back in and King chops away to little avail as the big splash in the corner cuts him off.

A twisting sunset flip out of the corner doesn't work but King avoids the sitdown splash. King kicks him in the head and finally drops the big man. The springboard Blockbuster ends Milonas at 3:54.

Rating: C-. There's only so much you can do in something like this and Milonas isn't exactly much besides a tree to be knocked down. King needs to be built back up, especially for what seems to be a rematch for the title in King's hometown of Las Vegas for the Anniversary Show. Not a terrible match and about as good as it could have been.

Post match King wants to fight Silas Young and gets his wish, only to get jumped from behind by Milonas. Beer City Bruiser gets back in for the beatdown, meaning Milonas is Bruiser's partner as they go after the Tag Team Titles. I've...well I'm sure of a worse sounding team somewhere, though Bruiser has been growing on me.

So Cal Uncensored is in the ring for a chat. Before they can get very far though, ROH COO Joe Koff comes out to say the fans don't want to see him. They want to see the best wrestlers, but that's not what So Cal Uncensored is. They're the most disruptive though and Koff should just fire them right now. Daniels threatens to go to TNA or WWE and tell his new bosses all of Koff's plans for expansion. Koff isn't worried because Daniels' contract expires in a year. Therefore, at Final Battle 2018, the Addiction is done. ENOUGH WITH THE CORPORATE STUFF! It's annoying in WWE and it's even worse elsewhere. Cut it out already.

The Briscoes want their titles back.

The Kingdom vs. Dalton Castle/The Boys

O'Ryan and Castle start things off with the champ taking TK down without much effort. Back up and a ducked clothesline allows Dalton to hit the peacock pose, only to get jumped by the now legal Marseglia. Boy #2 (according to Ian, after a debate) tags himself in and it's #1 springboarding in with a crossbody for two. Taven comes back in and demands to face Castle as we hear about him wanting the title. Egads please don't do that as I can't handle the promos.

Castle wrestles him down again but can't get a German suplex. Taven

scores with a running enziguri though, only to be sent outside. Castle loads up a dive but stops for that long striding strut of his. #2 dives in with a stomp onto Marseglia's arm as we take a break. Back with #1 being sent into the barricade twice in a row to really put him down.

A good looking double flapjack sets up a backsplash/legdrop combo for two as the beating continues. Taven tells O'Ryan to let the Boy go and a missed charge allows #1 to get over to Castle for the hot tag. Dalton gets to clean house until he tries a Tombstone on Taven, leading to seven or eight reversals, capped off by Castle planting Matt. The Bang A Rang drops Taven again and the Julie Newmar (close to a crossface chickenwing) makes Marseglia tap at 11:53.

Rating: C. The match was fine, though my complete lack of interest in all things Kingdom isn't changing anytime soon. It doesn't help that O'Ryan and Taven look alike, but it's just Taven and two goons, which doesn't help the fact that Taven isn't very interesting on his own. Castle continues to look like a star though and I'd actually be really interested to see him vs. Scurll down the line. The star power is there and I'm glad they took a chance on him at Final Battle.

Overall Rating: B-. Pretty good show here with only the worthless Coleman's Pulpit holding things down. It's too early to start worrying about the next pay per view but for now, things are looking fairly solid around here. Castle is an energetic champion, the Briscoes are looking more awesome by the week and King vs. Young could be a nice feud. I'm liking things around here right now and that's not something I can say around here very often.

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WWE Announces #1 Moment in Raw History

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/1-moment-monday-night-raw-history/>

Again?

So WWE has put together the top 100 moments in Raw history with the top 25 being voted on by the fans. This Monday a countdown video was released and the top five were:

5. The First Stunner to Vince
4. Chris Jericho Debuts
3. Occupy Raw
2. Pipe Bomb
1. Austin and the Beer Truck

I'm kind of stunned that the Pipe Bomb was allowed to be mentioned but it had to be on there. The beer truck....ok I guess, but it never struck me as being head and shoulders above everything. Actually it was the beer truck that was also voted the #1 moment at the ten year anniversary.

I'd have gone with Foley winning the title for the first time. It's emotional, memorable, entertaining and FREAKING LOUD. That one sticks with a lot of people and almost every big name in the company is right there for it.

2017 Awards: Moment of the Year

I saved this one for last for...well no apparent reason actually.

While there are all kinds of great matches and promos, sometimes it's something very simple that work better than anything else. The moments are the things that you remember more than anything else and some of these are bigger than others. Some of them are important moments and some of them are just fun, but they all belong on here.

Before we get to the regular nominees, we need to get a quick honorable mention. The night after Wrestlemania, Vince McMahon was about to announce the new General Manager of Raw. He mentioned the new GM being bald....and here comes Teddy Long to accept the offer. Teddy started making a tag match but Vince said it wasn't him. Teddy said "my bad" and danced off into the back. I laughed very hard and while it wasn't important, it entertained me when I was sick and I'll always take that.

Sticking with the night after Wrestlemania, there was the opening of Raw. Just...WOW. The opening sequence felt like it went on for an hour with the THANK YOU TAKER chants but once Reigns came out, the fans absolutely went off on him because he had taken their hero. This was pure anger from the crowd and that's exactly what it was supposed to be. The follow up

needed to be better but what an opening to the biggest Raw of the year.

What was the follow up? That would be Braun Strowman turning over an ambulance with Reigns inside. I'm not even sure what to say about that. Of course the visual was faked but at the same....HE TURNED AN AMBULANCE OVER! What else can you really ask here? It was one of the coolest visuals WWE has put together in a long time and made Strowman feel like a star.

It's been too long since we've gone down to NXT so we'll have to look at Aleister Black saying Velveteen Dream's name. I called this a promo but when the whole thing is four words long, I'm not sure you can really call it a promo. The idea of giving Dream everything that he wanted in the worst circumstances was poetic justice and an amazing moment at the same time.

We'll stick around in NXT with Tommaso Ciampa turning on Johnny Gargano to split up DIY. They took the perfect amount of time to make this work and the Chicago fans were STUNNED. This is going to set up one of the biggest matches NXT has had in years and when Ciampa comes back, likely to screw Gargano over somehow, the reaction is going to be amazing. The split couldn't have been better though and the beatdown worked very well also. Throw in the awesome shock and it's very high on the list.

In a moment that I was lucky enough to be there for, we have the Hardys returning to WWE at Wrestlemania. I was in the stadium for that and heard New Day say that there was going to be another team. During the pause, I got to my feet and said out loud "they wouldn't". And then they did with the Hardys returning only a night after having a huge ladder match in Ring of Honor. This felt big and was the big moment that Wrestlemania needed. Well one of them at least.

The final two are about as different as you can be and we'll

start with the comedy option. Back on February 13, Chris Jericho was trying to show Kevin Owens that they were still great friends. This led to Jericho, in a shiny outfit that only he could pull off, presenting Owens various presents (including a painting involving the two of them and Jericho without pants) but the big finale made the whole thing. Owens gave Jericho a new list but it had Jericho's name on it. Jericho pulls the list out of the box....and it was the List of K0. The beatdown was on and the Wrestlemania match was made.

They got me. I'm not exactly easy to surprise in wrestling but I was actually shocked when that List of K0 appeared. It was the perfect way to split up the team and Owens looked like the biggest heel in the world. At the same time though, Jericho looked like he was trying to be a good guy but Owens just turned on him. That's how to make Jericho a face, and it worked to perfection. Amazing segment here and it's going to take something special to top it.

And then the Undertaker retired (I'm going with that until I see otherwise). He took his gear off and stood in the middle of the ring in front of the Orlando crowd and then put it back on for one final time. When I looked at him, I saw Mark Callaway in Undertaker's clothes, which was the first time that had ever been seen. Undertaker walked up the aisle and then descended through the stage to say goodbye. This one doesn't need much more of an explanation and if it stands, will be one of the best moments in wrestling history.

2017 Awards: Non-Wrestler of

the Year

Who says you have to be a wrestler to be in wrestling?

While this might as well be called the Paul Heyman Award, there are certainly several candidates for it this time around. It might be an announcer or an interviewer but there are a variety of options this time around. I'm not sure if anyone is going to get past Heyman this year, but when you show up every now and then, it's easier to look great.

Actually yeah, this year someone can pass Heyman for the exact reason mentioned: he's not around very often and that brings him down a lot. Sometimes you need to do more than talk about how awesome Brock Lesnar is and while Heyman can do that better than anyone else, I'd like to see him around a little more often to declare him the best in this role.

We'll go with someone who is more of a jack of all trades now with Corey Graves. Is there anything this guy can't do? He hosts shows, he does commentary on both major shows and he rips on Byron Saxton like no one else can do. Graves is fun to listen to and has some rather good heel roles in there, which few others know how to do anymore. He's very talented and I'd love to see him do this for a very long time to come.

There's also perennial nominee Dario Cueto, who brings a completely new dimension to this by being an actual actor. He's capable of being incredible menacing while also calculating, but that evil smile is just perfect for looking like the biggest villain in the world. I'm really hoping he's back for the next season as the show really wouldn't work without him.

If Corey is a jack of all trades, Renee Young is a jill of them. She's the perfect combination of smart, funny, edgy, flirty and interesting that you can imagine her pulling off anything you ask her to do. She does the occasional storyline

but for the most part, she's the most polished interviewer WWE has had in a very long time. There's a certain charm to her that you can't make up and it works like a...well a charm actually.

Above all though, there's Zelina Vega. To have showed up from pretty much nowhere and become the best manager in NXT is quite the accomplishment. Vega and Andrade Cien Almas are one of the best pairings around as Vega is the perfect compliment to her. She's stunning, manipulative, evil, conniving and can be physical when she needs to be. It's made Almas interesting, which seemed to be one of the most impossible tasks in all of NXT. Vega pulled it off though and that's enough to win this hands down.

2017 Awards: Show of the Year

It all kind of depends on this no?

Sure there are good matches and good promos, but which of them come together to make the best overall presentation? Some of them are of course better than others and some don't need to exist (which they don't) but when they work well, they can be some of the best shows you'll see in a long time.

We'll start things off at the beginning of the year with Wrestle Kingdom XI. The Wrestlemania of New Japan almost never fails to impress The main event was one of the best matches of the year and while I liked Kushida's match better (which tends to be the case more often than not), this was an excellent show from top to bottom. A bit long for my taste, but the biggest show of the year should be longer.

Speaking of the New Japan Wrestlemania, I'll throw in the

WWE's Wrestlemania as well. The show didn't quite live up to the standards of some of its predecessors but that's not to say it wasn't very good. The Hardys return was a great surprise and the ending made it feel historic, definitely giving this some great moments top to bottom. If this had that one blow away match, it would probably win the whole thing.

We'll wrap up the main roster portion here with Royal Rumble, which did have that blow away match as John Cena defeated AJ Styles to win his sixteenth World Title. The Rumble itself might not have been the classic it needed to be, but the drama near the end was very good and there wasn't a really bad match on the show. It's one of my favorite shows of the year and this one didn't disappoint whatsoever.

But yeah, this is all about Takeover and that's really not a surprise. We'll start with Takeover: Chicago, which had the Match of the Year in Tyler Bate vs. Pete Dunne II but also a heck of a ladder match for the Tag Team Titles, followed by the awesome split of DIY. The triple threat for the Women's Title was very good and the NXT Title match worked as well, because as is the rule in NXT: you really don't have a single bad match.

Overall though, Takeover: WarGames is the Show of the Year and it's not even close. Where do you begin with this one? The NXT Title match was a great surprise, WarGames actually delivered in spades and there's the amazing (and still underrated by me) Velveteen Dream vs. Aleister Black match. The Women's Title was won by someone new and the opening hoss fight were good as well. This one delivered as only NXT can and it beat everything else in the year.

Impact Wrestling – January 18, 2018: Nope. No No, No No No, No No, NO!

Impact Wrestling

Date: January 18, 2018

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Jeremy Borash, Josh Matthews

This is another interesting show as the main event is a big barbed wire match between LAX and OVE. Well in theory at least, as for some reason that is airing on Impact's new Twitch channel just after the regular show ends. Not that they advertised that last week or anything. There's also a "World Title match" in the form of more clips from another promotion's show. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

X-Division Title: Dezmond Xavier vs. Taiji Ishimori

Xavier is challenging. An early lockup sees the champ driven into the corner and it's an actual clean break. Ishimori's break isn't as clean and things get a bit testy, all the way to an armdrag. A twisting rollup gives Ishimori two and they trade dropkicks as things speed up in a hurry.

Back in and Dezmond strikes away in the corner before grabbing a chinlock. Something close to a Last Chancery keeps Ishimori in trouble but as usual, it doesn't last long. Back up and another dropkick sends the champ outside and a suicide dive puts him over the barricade. Dezmond hits a huge flip dive from the ring over the barricade to drop the champ (that's some impressive athleticism) and we take a break. Back with Dezmond hitting a jumping cutter, followed by a dropkick to the back of the head for two.

Ishimori is fine enough to hit a delayed superplex for two of his own and

they're both down again. A Vader Bomb hits Dezmond's raised boot though and the Final Flash gets two. Back up and Dezmond slips out of a Tombstone attempt before hitting a standing moonsault for two more. That just earns him a gutbuster, followed by Ishimori's 450 to retain the title at 16:33.

Rating: B-. If that's their big, blow away match for the division, they're going to be having some problems. The match was completely acceptable and little more, mainly because there's not much of a story being told. They were doing their moves to each other and while those looked good, I need a little more than just "here are some nice moves".

OVE promises to take over everything tonight.

Long recap of OVE vs. LAX, including their battles over the titles and OVE bringing in Sami Callihan as backup. This eats up nine minutes. My goodness stop acting like this is Edge and Christian vs. the Hardys vs. the Dudleys. A barbed wire match isn't all that impressive.

Video on American Top Team taking out James Storm and Moose trying for revenge. This show is starting to feel like a pay per view pre-show instead of a regular episode.

Flashback of the week: Aron Rex wins the first Grand Championship.

Video on Ethan Carter III vs. Matt Sydal for the Grand Championship.

Video (COME ON ALREADY!) on Gail Kim vacating the title and Laurel Van Ness winning it, much to Allie's annoyance.

Allie is ready for her title shot next week because she's tired of being treated so badly by Van Ness. This was an old school style promo and it worked quite well.

Kongo Kong vs. Chandler Park

I did not wait for nearly an hour for a freaking Kongo Kong match. Chandler's strikes to the chest have no effect but Kong's missed charge gives him a breather. That's about as long as it lasts too as Kongo whips him into the corner for a Cannonball. An over the shoulder sitout

Tombstone is good for the pin on Park at 1:57.

Kong gives Chandler a top rope splash and Joseph throws up the injury X. This is what the world was waiting for: more Kongo Kong.

Johnny Impact wants to take the World Title back to Los Angeles. Drake is from LA too, so does he want Eli to retain?

Alberto El Patron is in Detroit for the sole purpose of taking the Impact Wrestling World Title.

Eli Drake is ready to defend the title anywhere, including Detroit.

Impact Wrestling World Title: Eli Drake vs. Alberto El Patron vs. Johnny Impact

Drake is defending and this is at another poorly lit Border City Wrestling show. It's a brawl to start with the ropes looking very loose. Impact is sent shoulder first into the post and Drake powerslams Alberto for two. They head outside (likely to be away from the unsafe looking ropes) with Drake chairing Impact down.

We're clipped (erg) to Alberto hitting double knees in the corner on the champ for two but Impact comes out from underneath a pile of chairs to blast both guys. The breakdancing legdrop gets two on Alberto but Eli comes back in with something resembling a ProtoBomb for two of his own with Alberto pulling the referee out. Patron can't hit the Gravy Train on Drake but a Backstabber gets two with Johnny pulling the referee out.

Now it's Johnny hitting his flip neckbreaker on Alberto but, say it with me, Drake pulls the referee out. The referee yells at all of them so it's a triple superkick to take him down. Another referee comes in to count two on Johnny after a low blow and it's Drake taking over. Drake isn't happy with a two count so the second referee takes a Gravy Train. The locker room empties out and the match is a no contest at around 7:20.

Rating: D+. It was better than when they did this a few weeks ago but it's still coming off as this match not being important enough to air in the Impact Zone. Having a small, dimly lit arena hosting a World Title match makes the title feel small and the match wasn't even very good.

Just treat the World Title like it means something. That really shouldn't be too much to ask.

Rosemary vs. KC Spinelli

Josh hypes up all the available DVDs of wrestlers who aren't on the roster anymore. Way to promote your current talent. Rosemary gets her choke over the ropes as JB mentions that next week it's Drake vs. El Patron vs. Impact for the title in a cage as the main event of Genesis. Yes that feud continues, but yes next week is also a special episode, which I don't recall hearing until just now. Spinelli kind of dances into a hip attack in the corner, followed by a bulldog for two. A discus lariat gives KC two but Rosemary fakes her out with the mist, setting up the Red Wedding for the pin at 3:38.

Rating: D. The match was a quick win for Rosemary but the announcers treated it as a place to put all of its announcements. I'm assuming Rosemary will be in the title hunt soon enough, presumably feuding with Taya Valkyrie once she get the whole visa situation sorted. Other than that though, this was just more filler on a show full of it.

Post match Rosemary says she wants to face Laurel but has to wait for our favorite bunny Allie to get her chance. Rosemary wants the next shot but gets jumped by Hania, who has wrestled for Ring of Honor before. Hania lays her out with a reverse DDT on the steps.

In case you didn't get the idea earlier, here's a seven minute video on the barbed wire match.

Genesis preview.

The entrances for the barbed wire match wrap us up and it's off to the Twitch channel. And that's the show. I'll edit in the match after it airs on Twitch.

Overall Rating: D-. The ONLY reason this isn't a failure is the opener was pretty good. This show was a joke as they spent two hours hyping up this barbed wire match, which better be the most amazing thing anyone has ever seen. The World Title match felt like an afterthought, Kongo Kong

won a squash and Hania debuted. Other than that, this was ALL about the barbed wire match, which apparently they can't even air on TV. That didn't stop them from hyping it up last week, but now we have to go somewhere else to see it. This show was bad, but worse than that it felt like a waste of my time, which just doesn't work.

LAX vs. OVE

Six man tag with the ropes replaced by barbed wire. They slug it out to start and head outside with OVE staring up at LAX. Shouting ensues until Santana hits a running flip dive to take everyone out. Callihan and Ortiz head inside and they have....forks. The Abdullah the Butcher tribute begins before they both get in a stab to the forehead. Ortiz is tossed into the barbed wire and Callihan is sent in a few seconds later.

A spear sends Dave Crist into a barbed wire board in the corner but Ortiz takes a slow motion charge into it as well. Jake Crist tries an O'Connor Roll for the sake of being kicked into the wire. Homicide wraps the wire into Jake's mouth and it's time to head outside for more violence. Chairs and barbed wire boards are swung, followed by a double suplex onto another barbed wire board.

Back in and Homicide pours alcohol onto Dave's open wounds, only to have Sami DDT him onto a trashcan lid for two. Jake gets suplexed through a barbed wire board on the floor, followed by Homicide hitting a cutter "onto" the barbed wire board. The Gringo Killer is broken up and Homicide is suplexed onto the ropes, breaking them down. We take a break (because this was originally set up for TV) with Jake being sent through more wire and onto a table.

The wire is still wrapped around Jake but Santana cuts him free so he can be Death Valley Driven through a barbed wire board for two. Dave spears Santana through a table to the floor, leaving Homicide to be tombstoned onto a chair wrapped in barbed wire for two. Sami loads up two tables in the ring but stops to piledrive Dave instead. A ladder is brought in but Konnan hits Callihan with a barbed wire bat. Ortiz stabs Dave with some wooden spikes and superplexes him through the two tables for the pin at 16:57.

Rating: N/A. I rate wrestling, and this had nothing to do with it. I hate this death match bull**** and all of the morons who try to tell me that it's REAL wrestling. This was a bunch of stupid spots with people torturing themselves for the sake of trying to get people to watch their stupid show because they're so freaking pathetic that they have to air commercials for this stuff instead of a regular show. This nonsense ticks me off like nothing else and makes me want this stupid company to finally die so it can stop embarrassing the wrestlers who work hard but get stuck dealing with this kind of garbage.

Results

Taiji Ishimori b. Dezmond Xavier – 450 splash

Kongo Kong b. Chandler Park – Sitout Tombstone

Johnny Impact vs. Alberto El Patron vs. Eli Drake went to a no contest

Rosemary b. KC Spinelli – Red Wedding

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<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

Royal Rumble Count-Up – 2007 (2018 Redo): The Texas Hogan vs. Warrior

Royal Rumble 2007

Date: January 28, 2007

Location: AT&T Center, San Antonio, Texas

Attendance: 13,500

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler, Tazz, Michael Cole, Joey Styles, John Bradshaw Layfield

This show received the same amount of votes as 2001 and sounded intriguing so here's a bonus redo. We're back in Texas here with Undertaker and Shawn Michaels both in the Rumble, meaning good things should be happening. There's also a well remembered John Cena vs. Umaga match, which should be a lot of fun. Let's get to it.

The opening video is your standard look back at the history of the show, including what it means to win and go to Wrestlemania. Well that's certainly a big deal. The rest of the card (not so big of a deal) is discussed as well, mainly focusing on Cena vs. Umaga.

We hear from all six announcers because WWE thinks we need to have six announcers. Just wait until there's basically a press row.

MNM vs. Hardy Boyz

The Hardys had made a comeback late in 2006 and their main rivalry was with MNM. Joey Mercury is coming in with a shattered nose, meaning he's got a face mask. MNM has Melina in their corner and just...wow. That's really all that needs to be said. Matt comes in with a dislocated jaw and Jeff is Intercontinental Champion, showing you how balanced the team was. Nitro jumps Matt from behind to start and Mercury comes in to go after Matt's injured face.

Matt takes over though and brings Jeff in, meaning it's time for the

WOOing from the crowd. It must be a North Carolina thing. Jeff's atomic drop into the legdrop between the legs gets two and it's back to Matt. Johnny sends him into the buckle though and we're down to the beating. A good looking/hard kick to the head has Matt in trouble as MNM stays on the face for the sake of revenge. Makes sense actually and the kind of thing you wouldn't see a lot of the time.

Melina hits the screeching because...that sound made me lose my train of thought so we'll go to Matt being caught in a chinlock. Mercury misses a middle rope elbow though and it's off to Jeff to speed things back up. A facebuster gets two on Johnny, followed by a Whisper in the Wind for the same with Mercury having to make a save. The Hardys hit their top rope legdrop/splash combination but Jeff is banged up and Nitro stays on the ribs.

We hit the waistlock for a bit until Jeff reverses into a rollup for two. Nitro grabs a bodyscissors as you certainly can't fault their psychology so far. Jeff finally backdrops his way to freedom but, of course, the referee doesn't see it so Matt stays in trouble. Double teaming doesn't work so well though as Jeff sends MNM into each other, meaning it's off to Matt so house can be cleaned.

The bulldog/clothesline combination gets two but Jeff has to break up the Snapshot (elevated DDT) as everything breaks down. Poetry in Motion is broken up and Nitro's rollup gets two (and more screeching). The Twist of Fate into the Swanton (with Nitro rolling over so it can hit) gives Jeff the pin.

Rating: B. Good but not great match here as the Hardys were only going to be able to do so much at this point. I'm not sure what the point was in having MNM lose the matches like this when you need to build younger teams up but at least they were pushing the heck out of the Hardys while they could. Jeff would of course break free and go on to some huge things, but it was WAY too early to realize that yet.

Jonathan Coachman (Raw Executive Assistant) and Teddy Long (Smackdown General Manager) are holding the Rumble drawing (SWEET). After the standard bickering over who will win, Edge comes in to pick his number

but first we look at Kelly Kelly (my goodness the WWE women were stunning back then).

Edge's partner Randy Orton (Raw Tag Team Champions) comes in to draw his own number. Orton threatens to eliminate Edge and we get the standard "I'll show you mine, you show me yours" exchange. King Booker comes in to say tell me you didn't just say that. I miss these segments and I have no idea why they don't exist anymore. You can get some nice character development in all of a few seconds with no effort put in. Probably not high concept enough for WWE or something.

We recap Test vs. Bobby Lashley. Test wanted a title shot and is on a roll so he gets to be the sacrificial lamb to the monster champion. It sounds good, but it's Test in 2007.

ECW Title: Test vs. Bobby Lashley

Test is challenging while Lashley does the Brock Lesnar jump to the apron entrance, complete with the same pyro. They start a little slowly until Lashley spears Test down, sending the Canadian bailing to the ropes. Back up and Lashley avoids a charge and snaps off a great looking t-bone suplex. If he could have talked, he would have block Lesnar's career out of the water.

With the wrestling not working at all, Test tries posting Lashley instead to actually take over. Back in and we hit the armbar for a very, very long time, because that's exactly what you would expect in an ECW match (To be fair, people like Lashley and Test never would have been in ECW to begin with. And there's the whole WWE aspect so maybe the armbar isn't as big of an issue as it seems. Maybe that's enough filler to get through this armbar and...oh sweet we're on to something else.).

Test gets suplexed again but the shoulder gives out, allowing Test to get in the big boot for two. That's his big shot so Test tries a TKO, only to get countered with a belly to belly. A clothesline puts Test on the floor...and that's a countout. Egads this needs a rematch? For TEST? Someone thinks this is worthy of a second match?

Rating: F. Just no all around here, between a big power guy using an

armbar for such a long stretch of the match, Test in general, the stupid ending and thinking that a pay per view as big as the Royal Rumble isn't enough of a stage to end this nothing feud. Terrible match here and it didn't even feel like a TV main event.

Lashley beats Test up again. Why in the world was this not a clean pin? Lashley pinned him in an even shorter match on the following episode of ECW TV, so what was the point here?

John Cena's ribs are banged up but he'll defend the title anyway. Vince comes in and mocks You Can't See Me, saying he won't be seeing Cena as WWE Champion after tonight. Funny enough line, but Vince vs. Cena doesn't do anything for me.

We recap the Smackdown World Title match with Mr. Kennedy winning a Beat the Clock Challenge to earn the shot at Batista. Kennedy cheated Undertaker out of the shot so Undertaker went after him, only to hit Batista by mistake. That would be saved for Wrestlemania XXIII though, with Kennedy getting the shot and bragging about beating six World Champions leading up to lucky #7 tonight.

Smackdown World Title: Mr. Kennedy vs. Batista

Batista is defending and easily tosses Kennedy around with raw power. Back up and some right hands stagger Batista as JBL sings Kennedy's praises. A suplex takes Kennedy down again though and it's time to head outside. Kennedy gets in a shot to the leg to slow Batista a bit and it's time to go to work back inside. We hit a reverse Figure Four of all things (I haven't seen that in years) until Kennedy gets caught in the ropes. A running boot in the corner keeps Batista in trouble as this has been almost one sided so far.

Kennedy grabs a half crab to stay on the leg for a good while until letting go, allowing Batista to snap off a spinebuster. After some holding the knee, Batista starts the comeback with clotheslines and a backdrop, followed by a Kenton Bomb (Kennedy's Regal Roll). The Batista Bomb is broken up though and a ref bump allows Kennedy to get in a low blow. Kennedy's neckbreaker (finisher) gets no count but the fans are chanting for Kennedy. For some reason Kennedy goes to the middle rope but

dives into a clothesline. The Batista Bomb retains the title.

Rating: D+. Not the worst match in the world here as they didn't bother having Kennedy trying to do more than he could have done. Batista wasn't exactly great against smaller guys so there was definitely a styles clash here. At least the match had a point and felt like a TV main event, which is all this should have been. The fans reacted to Batista's win though and seemed to like Kennedy, even if this really didn't rocket off the launch pad.

JBL is FURIOUS over the non-count off the neckbreaker.

Kevin Thorn and Ariel try to draw a number when Hornswoggle (nearly feral at this point) comes in to do the same. Coach makes a short joke and gets bitten and attacked. Great Khali comes in for the visual joke, followed by grabbing three balls. He leaves two, which Kelly Kelly picks up. You know the joke and you know what Ron Simmons comes in to say.

We recap John Cena vs. Umaga. Cena escaped with a fluke win at New Year's Revolution but Umaga's manager Armando Alejandro Estrada decided the rematch should be a Last Man Standing match. Umaga injured Cena's ribs coming in for a pretty simple but perfectly acceptable story.

Raw World Title: John Cena vs. Umaga

Cena is defending, Umaga has manager Armando Alexjandro Estrada in his corner and it's Last Man Standing. It's almost weird to hear Cena get a pretty strong face reaction but it's still in full force here. Cena tries to slug away and even hits a jawbreaker, only to have a single shot to the ribs put him on the floor. Umaga sends him into the steps and it's time to knock Cena up the aisle.

For some reason Cena tries to send Umaga head first into the apron and is promptly beaten down for his efforts. Serves him right. Back in and Cena charges into a clothesline for an eight count. Umaga throws the steps in but Cena snaps Umaga's neck over the top and throws the steps over the top and down onto Umaga's face for another near win. It looked great if nothing else and that's what they were going for there.

Back in and Umaga, whose head is hard enough to survive having steps thrown at them, grabs a bearhug into a belly to belly. Umaga puts the steps up in the corner but the running Umaga Attack only hits steel. Another steps to the head shot drops Umaga again but Cena's high crossbody (Just...why?) is countered into a swinging Rock Bottom (Oh...that's why.). A low blow gets Cena out of trouble and he hits the Throwback onto the steps. The entire finishing sequence is initiated onto the steps but Umaga is too heavy for the FU, sending Cena head first into the steps and busting him open in the process.

That's only good for nine and the fans think Cena sucks (now that's more like it). Cena somehow gets all fired up and tells Umaga to bring it, meaning a bunch of right hands and a Samoan drop to crush Cena all over again. So I guess that's Umaga bringing it. Cena gets tied in the Tree of Woe but Umaga misses a running headbutt. A whip sends Umaga into the post, followed by a heck of a monitor shot to the head. I mean, it shouldn't work on Umaga but that's what they do around here.

For some reason Cena dives at him and gets driven back first into the post to change control again. You would think Cena would learn at some point. It's time to load up the announcers' tables and since there are three of them, Cena is laid on the third one for a running splash but Cena moves, likely clued in by the running Samoan charging at him. That's only good for nine so Estrada unhooks a rope for the sake of setting up the finish. The turnbuckle is ripped off and Cena grabs an FU before choking Umaga out with the rope in the STF to retain at 23:10.

Rating: B+. There wasn't exactly any subtlety in this one and there's nothing wrong with that. Last Man Standing matches are designed to be wild brawls with both guys beating the heck out of each other which is exactly what we got here. Cena had to go to another place to retain the title here and that's the kind of match he needed to boost him to another level. Really fun brawl here with Umaga playing his role perfectly as the monster that has to be stopped somehow.

Wrestlemania ad.

Sandman goes to pick his number but sprays beer everywhere instead. Ric

Flair comes in and Kelly hits on him. The lights go out and the rest of Extreme Expose (Brooke Adams and Layla) come in to dance. Again: back in the day when there were jobs for sexy women whose job was nothing more than to be sexy and dance in tiny outfits. There is something to be said about the old days.

We look back at various famous Rumble moments and winners in a nice touch as this is the 20th Rumble. That being said, how many times can we have THE MOST STAR STUDDERED ROYAL RUMBLE IN HISTORY???

Royal Rumble

Ninety second intervals with Ric Flair in at #1 (That's the second time he's been #1. In five appearances he entered #3, #1, #5, #30 and #1 for some of the worst luck ever in this thing.) and Finlay in at #2 in what could be a very interesting midcard match if they were given some time. The promos alone could be interesting. Finlay easily wins a battle of the forearms and catches Flair with a backdrop. A rake to the eyes gets Flair out of trouble and it's Kenny Dykstra (a twenty year old who has given Flair some issues before) in at #3.

Kenny knocks Flair down but has to save himself from Finlay. Some chops cut Kenny off and it's Matt Hardy in at #4. Still not much going on aside from a bunch of right hands so it's Edge in at #5 for some spears. Flair is knocked through the ropes to the floor and comes up with a pair of chairs. Matt cuts Edge off with a clothesline but Edge is still up to get rid of Flair without much effort. Edge tosses Dykstra as well and Tommy Dreamer is in at #6. Matt can't get Edge out as the announcers joke about how Lawler survived for a long time by hiding underneath the ring. To be fair, it was a smart idea.

Sabu is in at #7 and sets up a table at ringside to fulfill general expectations. Dreamer clotheslines him out of the air though as Jerry impresses the commentators by remembering all of Sabu's nicknames. Cruiserweight Champion (for a YEAR now) Gregory Helms is in at #8 as this isn't exactly lighting the world up so far. More eliminations are teased but there's just nothing going on at the moment and it's really starting to show. Shelton Benjamin is in at #9 and nearly gets Matt out but can't

quite put him near the tables.

Matt can't suplex Shelton out either and it's Kane in at #10 (CLEAN THE RING OUT!), giving us a group of Finlay, Hardy, Edge, Dreamer, Sabu, Helms, Benjamin and Kane. House is cleaned in a hurry with a tilt-a-whirl powerslam to Helms and a chokeslam to Edge. Dreamer and Sabu, the latter via a chokeslam through the table, are tossed without much effort (good, as they were nothing more than filler anyway as no one took ECW seriously at this point). CM Punk, not yet a big star, is in at #11 and goes right for Edge which just feels right. We're getting back into the same lull we were in earlier, just with some bigger names.

Finlay punches Punk down but can't get him out (I'm as shocked as you are). King Booker is in at #12 and quickly eliminates Helms. Matt and Finlay can't get rid of Kane so people keep running around and punch each other until Super Crazy (complete with lawnmower noises to start his entrance) is in at #13. More eliminations are teased with no eliminations so Jeff Hardy comes in at #14, hopefully firing things up a bit. We get some double teaming but NO ELIMINATIONS, even when they get in a fight with Kane.

The Sandman, coming through the crowd, is in at #15, cracks some people with the kendo stick, and is eliminated by Booker in about fifteen seconds. Jeff and Punk both manage to survive and it's Randy Orton (with the sweet Burn in My Light theme) in at #16. Orton and Edge immediately get together to eliminate Crazy and both Hardys, thankfully clearing some of the ring out. US Champion Chris Benoit is in at #17 and slugs away at Booker before grabbing some German suplexes on various people. There's very little to talk about between these entrances aside from kicking and the occasional suplex.

Rob Van Dam is in at #18 and starts firing off the kicks. Kane gets rid of Booker, who gets back in and dumps Kane like a royal jerk. The fight continues at ringside as Viscera, complete with smoking jacket, is in at #19. Rob hammers on Finlay as the announcers make a bunch of fat jokes about Viscera. Johnny Nitro is in at #20, giving us Finlay, Edge, Benjamin, Punk, Orton, Benoit, Van Dam, Viscera and Nitro. It also gives us another section of NOTHING HAPPENING until Benoit throws Shelton over

the top but since that might be interesting, Benjamin gets back in.

Kevin Thorn is in at #21 giving us another meaningless body in there. A dropkick knocks Nitro into Viscera but some clotheslines can't get rid of the big man. Hardcore Holly comes in at #22 and the crowd is just DONE. How boring of a match does it take to kill the freaking Royal Rumble crowd? Rob hangs on off a catapult to the apron as there are way too many people in the ring as we wait on someone to come in and clean house.

A bunch of people can't get rid of Viscera so it's hometown boy Shawn Michaels in at #23 and PLEASE HELP US!!! Shawn hits a Thesz press on Finlay (the only person not trying to get rid of Viscera) and dumps him without much effort. Viscera is finally dumped after a superkick from Shawn and everyone else getting together. Shawn gets rid of Shelton and somehow the ring is still overcrowded. Chris Masters is in at #24 and Benoit eliminates Nitro. Chavo Guerrero is in at #25 to really bring up the energy.

Benoit gets rid of Thorn as well and Rob can't find someone to kick. MVP is in at #26 and dang I missed that clock entrance. Rob dropkicks Masters out as they're doing a good job of keeping the total about the same at worst and going down when they can. Some right hands from Orton can't get rid of Punk and it's Carlito in at lucky #27. JBL insults Cole as is his custom while Shawn is put to the apron and BARELY hangs on in a spot that wakes the crowd up a bit. Great Khali is in at #28 and he has get rid of a bunch of people. Everyone gets chopped down with Holly being the only one eliminated.

Miz (JBL: "Don't worry King, I hate him too.") is in at #29 and Khali gets rid of him in short order. Van Dam, Punk, Carlito, Chavo and Benoit all go out at Khali's hands and it's a Punjabi Plunge to Shawn. There's one name left and there's the gong to give fans hope over Khali. Of course it's Undertaker in at #30, giving us a final group of Edge, Orton, Shawn, MVP, Khali and Undertaker. The giant slugout is on with Undertaker getting the better of it and clotheslining Khali out to REALLY wake the fans up.

Old School hits MVP and we're down to four in a hurry. MVP grabs a chair

but Orton takes it away and caves in Undertaker's head. Edge teases spearing Orton but Randy has to catch Shawn with an RKO, sending him underneath the ropes to the floor. A bloody Undertaker gets beaten down by Edge and Orton but of course comes back with right hands and running clotheslines in the corner. The double clothesline puts them down again and it's Snake Eyes into the big boot on Edge.

A chokeslam on Orton is broken up with a spear and Edge blasts Undertaker with the chair. JBL points out the problem that knocking him down makes it even harder to throw him out, which is the only smart point he's made all night. A Conchairto is loaded up but Shawn comes back in to get rid of Orton and Edge. Shawn collapses and it's Undertaker sitting up, closely followed by Shawn's nip up and you it's on now.

Undertaker misses a charge in the corner and Shawn hammers away but gets whipped hard over the buckles. Shawn hangs on with one arm (like he did in 1995) and punches his way out as you can feel the energy here. Another Flair Flip in the corner puts Shawn on the apron but Undertaker misses a running boot and winds up on the apron. Shawn's running forearm can't get rid of him and a second attempt eats an elbow, allowing Undertaker to get back in.

Shawn grabs a swinging neckbreaker and both guys are down again. That means it's time for the slugout as the fans are almost entirely behind Shawn. A big boot cuts Shawn down but he hangs on the apron again. Undertaker puts him on top and they slug it out with Shawn doing some of the best milking of the drama that you'll ever see. Shawn FINALLY knocks him back to the mat and drops the top rope elbow.

Sweet Chin Music is blocked though and it's a chokeslam to put Shawn down again. Somehow Shawn pops up with another superkick and they're both down for what feels like the fifth time. Shawn tries another superkick with Undertaker against the ropes (how Shawn won in 1996) but gets backdropped out to the floor to give Undertaker the win, making him the first #30 entrant to ever win.

Rating: C-. Shawn and Undertaker just came as close as you can get to saving a really boring match with a ten minute segment. That was some of

the best drama you'll ever see and you could actually feel the drama at the level you almost never get in the Rumble, right up there with Hogan vs. Warrior back in 1990. Absolutely incredible finish there and they would have been crazy to not run that match at Wrestlemania at some point. It took two years but I'd say it worked well to put it mildly.

The rest of the Rumble though....egads. This was a wreck with WAY too many stretches of people laying around and doing almost nothing at all. You shouldn't have more than eight or nine people in the match but for some reason they had over ten in there multiple times. There was almost nothing in there until Undertaker came in and that's WAY too late to make this work. It doesn't help that almost no big story for the first eighty percent of the match, which really makes the match a chore to sit through. Just check out the ending though because that stuff is incredible.

Shawn looks like he's about to cry and Undertaker points at him. Undertaker soaks in the victory and does the pose at the Wrestlemania sign to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. The ending of the Rumble helps this a lot and the Last Man Standing match is great but the rest of the show just wasn't working at all. This wasn't the best time for the company as they were trying to develop some midcard talent but it wasn't quite there yet. It was still a good show but there was a lot to be desired, especially in the Rumble. Give the Rumble a better middle and this show goes way up. As it is though, it's just pretty good.

Ratings Comparison

Hardy Boyz vs. MNM

Original: B-

2013 Redo: B

2018 Redo: B

Bobby Lashley vs. Test

Original: D-

2013 Redo: D

2018 Redo: F

Mr. Kennedy vs. Batista

Original: B-

2013 Redo: D+

2018 Redo: D+

John Cena vs. Umaga

Original: C

2013 Redo: B+

2018 Redo: B+

Royal Rumble

Original: B

2013 Redo: C+

2018 Redo: C-

Overall Rating

Original: B

2013 Redo: C+

2018 Redo: C+

My jaw kept falling lower and lower with each of those original ratings. The Rumble rating just shouldn't have been that high either time though.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/01/26/royal-rumble-count-up-2007-the-b>

[est-spot-finally-wins/](#)

And the 2013 Redo:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2013/01/21/royal-rumble-count-up-2013-redo-2007-the-battle-of-texas/>

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<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2017/11/22/new-book-kbs-monday-nitro-and-thunder-reviews-volume-vi/>

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