

# Summerslam Count-Up – 2009: Jeff Hardy's Swan(ton) Song

## Summerslam 2009

Date: August 23, 2009

Location: Staples Center, Los Angeles, California

Attendance: 17,129

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

Not a lot has changed in the last year other than some names have risen up the card. Jeff Hardy is the Smackdown Champion and is defending tonight against the on fire CM Punk who is now a heel, bragging about how great he is due to being straightedge. We also have Orton vs. Cena #875 although only their second match here at Summerslam. It's a decent looking card on paper so let's get to it.

The opening video is set up like a movie theater, but DX takes it over by making shadow puppets on the screen. Shawn wins by putting up Abraham Lincoln. They finally break the projector but Shawn says he can fix it. He turns it into a DX highlight video but breaks the camera one more time.

## Intercontinental Title: Rey Mysterio vs. Dolph Ziggler

Rey is defending after a long but awesome feud with Jericho. Ziggler pounds him down into the corner before getting two off a powerslam. Dolph throws him over his shoulders to the top but Rey bounces off with a moonsault press for two. Out to the floor and a cameraman is taken out via I think a hurricanrana. Back in and Ziggler catches (kind of) a rana off the top in a buckle bomb for two to take over.

We hit the chinlock before Dolph gets two off a side slam. The jumping elbow gets two and it's back to the chinlock. Back up and Rey drop toeholds him into the corner before, only to have his head taken off by a clothesline for another near fall. A fireman's carry gutbuster gets two and it's back to the chinlock. Rey fights up again and hits a hard kick

to the head for a near fall of his own. Dolph comes back with a dropkick to take down a flying Mysterio for two more as these covers are getting very hot.

Back up and Rey tries to roll up Ziggler's body into a sunset flip but Ziggler falls onto him for two. A wicked clothesline gets two more for the challenger but Rey kicks him into 619 position, only to have Ziggler drop to the floor. Back in and the Fameasser gets two for Dolph but Rey gets the same off a sunset flip.

Rey hits a kind of tornado DDT for two more and an armdrag sets up the 619 but Ziggler avoids the springboard splash. Ziggler gets a quick near fall off the miss and the fans are split on who to cheer for. A kick to Rey's head sends him to the apron so Ziggler loads up a top rope gutbuster, only to have Rey counter into a hurricanrana in mid air to retain the title.

**Rating:** B+. Excellent opener here with Ziggler being able to go move for move with one of the best high fliers of all time. It was clear that Dolph was going to be a big deal and this was a great example of why. Rey was on fire at this point but he would be derailed by a Wellness violation a few weeks later, forcing him to drop the title to John Morrison.

Jack Swagger and MVP are in the back. Swagger says his match with MVP tonight is a culture clash between the All American American and an ex-con. MVP is nothing but a stepping stone but MVP says he made some bad decisions. Tonight he's teaching Swagger a lesson and the teacher is an MVP.

### Jack Swagger vs. MVP

MVP jumps over Swagger in the corner and hits a quick clothesline for two to start. Swagger rolls to the floor to avoid the Ballin Elbow, only to be caught by a suicide dive. Back in and Swagger gets in some shots to the ribs to take over followed by a forearm to the back. MVP counters another shot with an elbow to the face, only to get caught in an abdominal stretch.

A hard clothesline puts MVP down for two and it's off to a camel clutch. MVP stands up and breaks the hold with an electric chair for two. This is really basic stuff and the fans aren't all that thrilled. Back up and MVP pops him in the jaw with a right hand, setting up the Ballin Elbow for two. A big boot in the corner sets up the Playmaker for the pin on Swagger.

**Rating:** D. The match wasn't even that bad but it was very dull. Neither guy did anything special out there and it was about six minutes of boring, yet acceptable, wrestling. Swagger would go on to a world title the following year for reasons no one can quite fathom while MVP would do nothing of note for the rest of his WWE run.

Luke Perry is here.

Video on celebrities guest hosting Raw. Did we really have to relive this stupid idea?

Nancy O'Dell from Access Hollywood is here to talk about her ALS charity. No one cares. At all. She interviews Freddy Prinze Jr., one of the recent guest hosts. O'Dell sounds like any other celebrity who has never watched a wrestling show before.

Tag Titles: Chris Jericho/Big Show vs. Cryme Tyme

Jericho and Show (I can't stand those combined names) are defending and the belts are unified at this point, meaning the champions have two belts apiece. Jericho says he and Show are the real celebrities here tonight and that's about it. JTG (how is he still employed in 2013? Seriously, I want an answer to that) starts against Jericho and a nice flip neckbreaker gets two on Chris. A quick Walls attempt is countered and JTG hits a middle rope leg lariat for two.

Todd Grisham: "They bring the right kind of flava eh JR?" JR: "Flava? Like barbecue or cheddar?" Off to Big Show who knocks JTG into the corner and puts on a hard headlock. JTG gets up a pair of boots in the corner before bringing in the much bigger Shad Gaspard. Jericho charges in but gets caught in a gorilla press. The distraction is enough to let Show run Shad over to take control again. A hard chop in the corner puts Shad down

and it's back to the Canadian.

Shad gets in a jawbreaker but Jericho is smart enough to knock JTG to the floor before there's a hot tag. Show puts on a full nelson but throws Gaspard down to bring Jericho back in. We hit the chinlock before Shad fights up and hits a powerslam to put both guys down. The hot tag brings in JTG but the fans don't care at all. Everything breaks down and a clothesline sends Shad and Show to the floor. JTG is put in the Walls but makes the rope, only to be knocked out by Big Show to retain the titles.

**Rating:** C-. The match was ok but I don't think anyone believed the titles were in jeopardy. Cryme Tyme was a fun team (on occasion) but most of the time they were jobbers to the stars. Jericho and Big Show at least gave the tag titles some fresh life for a few months so I can't complain about them all that much. The match was standard stuff though.

Punk has a screenplay called the Jeff Hardy Story. In the movie, Jeff survives and beats Punk tonight in the TLC match. That's as phony as everyone here in LA, where the only real person is Punk himself. Punk goes on a rant against America's obsession with cool pop culture and says no one makes movies about him because he doesn't support the Hollywood lifestyle. Punk is FEELING IT here.

### Kane vs. Great Khali

Here's a Wrestlemania rematch that no one was asking for. Kane is the heel here and has attacked Khali's brother a few times before this. Khali shoves him into the corner to start and throws Kane out to the floor. Back in and Khali clotheslines him down but misses a legdrop, allowing Kane to hit a low dropkick for two. Both guys break up chokeslams and Khali takes over again.

He pounds Kane on the mat for two and hits a hard chop in the corner. Khali charges (and I use that word loosely) into a boot in the corner, allowing Kane to hit the top rope clothesline for two. We hit the chinlock before Khali makes a slow motion comeback and chops Kane down for two. Kane pulls Runjin Singh (Khali's brother) in and the distraction lets Kane dropkick Khali's knee. A bad looking DDT is enough for Kane to get the pin.

**Rating:** D-. Erg why do they keep doing these battles of the giants when they know they're going to suck? Khali was getting so slow at this point and it was easy to see where the insults about his abilities were coming from. Kane would float around for most of the next year until he saved Undertaker and won the world title as a result.

Slash, Robert Patrick and Maria Menunos are here.

We recap DX vs. Legacy. Rhodes and DiBiase had been destroying HHH for months so he made a call to Shawn. HHH then had to get Shawn out of his job as a short order cook (don't ask) and tonight is the big reunion match against Legacy.

### Legacy vs. D-Generation X

DX comes in on a tank, trailing behind a bunch of soldiers on an Army jeep. Ok points for an AWESOME entrance. HHH starts with DiBiase as Ted fires off right hands in the corner. They have even less effect than you would expect so HHH suplexes him down and drops a knee for two. Off to Cody who walks into the high knee to the face from the Game and slaps Shawn as a result. Shawn gets the tag to a big pop but gets slapped again after running the ropes a bit.

Fed up, Shawn tackles Cody down but gets pounded in the face a few more times. Shawn comes back with a Thesz Press and right hands to another big reaction. The Band is tuned up but Cody bails to the floor and comes back in to a headlock. A belly to back suplex puts Shawn down and it's off to DiBiase to keep up the punching motif. Ted slams him down to stay on Shawn's back but Michaels gets a quick neckbreaker for a breather.

The hot tag brings in HHH to clean part of the house but Cody breaks up a Pedigree attempt. Everything breaks down and HHH backdrops Michaels over the top and onto Cody. Ted gets in a cheap shot on HHH to take over, meaning we're in for a long one here. Legacy takes over on the Game in the corner and the double teaming begins. DiBiase hooks a long chinlock, but HHH keeps fighting to get to Shawn. See how easily that can be done? Instead of just laying on the mat until it was time for the comeback, HHH is constantly moving and trying to keep the fans alive. That's such a lost art and it's rather sad.

Anyway HHH suplexes out of the hold but Cody comes in with a DDT to stop the tag to Michaels. Off to a front facelock and of course this time HHH lays on the mat after I praised him for one of the few times after the year 2000. HHH powers out of the hold but DiBiase breaks up another hot tag. You know HHH isn't going to stand for that for very long so he launches Ted over the top and out to the floor and finally makes the tag to Shawn.

House is really cleaned now with Shawn picking Rhodes apart. The atomic drop sets up the flying forearm but DiBiase breaks up the nipup attempt. Everything breaks down and HHH sends DiBiase into the stands as Cody goes up, only to miss a top rope elbow. Shawn loads up his own elbow but gets crotched down onto the buckle. He can still block a superplex though and now the elbow launches, only to hit Cody's knee. Shouldn't that hurt the leg a lot more than Shawn?

There's no DiBiase to tag so Shawn gets up and puts on a Figure Four, only to have DiBiase make the save. HHH can't hit a Pedigree as Cody takes him down and actually hits Cross Rhodes on Shawn for two. Now a Pedigree connects on Cody but DiBiase hits Dream Street (cobra clutch slam) on Shaw. HHH and Ted fight on the floor as both guys are down in the ring. Both guys get up at the same time and it's Sweet Chin Music to knock Cody senseless for the collapsing pin from Shawn.

**Rating:** B+. Another excellent match here with all four guys working the tag team formula to perfection. Shawn continues to be able to time a comeback like no one ever could and HHH was clicking tonight. Legacy looked great and would actually beat DX in the next month's match. I was surprised by how well the rookies looked here and DX actually had to sweat a bit here. I wouldn't say they were in jeopardy but it wasn't an easy win by any stretch.

#### ECW Title: Christian vs. William Regal

Christian is defending. Remember Matt Hardy vs. Mark Henry going 32 seconds last week? This is a quarter of that as Christian grabs the Killswitch as Regal is taking his robe off for the pin to retain.

Post match Regal's heavies Vladimir Kozlov and Ezekiel Jackson lay out

Christian so Regal can put on the Regal Stretch.

Video on the Summerslam festivities in Los Angeles.

We recap Orton vs. Cena. Orton has dominated the year and Cena is the latest guy to try to take the title. Not much here but do these two really need a backstory?

#### Raw World Title: John Cena vs. Randy Orton

Orton is defending. Cena takes him down with a front facelock but Orton counters into a hammerlock. Randy takes him into the corner and kicks at the ribs a bit, cuing a Cena comeback with rights and lefts. Orton comes back with an elbow to the face and his VERY slow stomping. This is the main criticism of Orton around this time: he wrestled in slow motion and it makes for very dull matches. The big knee drop to the chest gets two.

Cena comes back with some right hands but walks into the backbreaker for two. We hit the chinlock and the dueling chants begin. Cena finally powers up and initiates his finishing sequence. The Shuffle connects but Orton escapes the FU into the powerslam (NOT A SCOOP SLAM COLE, YOU STUPID STUPID MAN!) for two. Orton misses a knee drop but Cena's shoulder block only hits air, sending him out to the floor. The Elevated DDT is good for two as Orton keeps things slow.

Cena gets in another shot and pops up top for the Fameasser, good for two. Orton grabs the ropes to block the FU and a double clothesline puts them both down. They slug it out with Cena taking over and speeding things up, but Orton shoves the referee for the LAME DQ. To be fair though it was the first fast paced thing he did all match.

Lillian, Rhodes Scholar that she is, calls Cena the new champion before saying Vince gave her word that the match restarts and if Orton gets DQ'd again he loses the title. This would be an entirely pointless bit that stopped the match cold. Back in and Orton takes over before whipping Cena into the steps. Orton slams him down and goes to get the title and walk out. We get the same announcement and the match continues again.

Back in and the STF, RK0 and FU are all countered and Orton grabs a

rollup with his feet on the ropes for the pin. As you might expect, we're STILL not done as a second referee comes out and tells the first what happened. So on the third restart Cena puts on the STF but a "fan" runs in for a distraction, stopping things cold again. Cena walks around with his hands on his hips but Orton comes in and hits an RKO to retain the title. For real this time.

**Rating:** D. On top of the INSANE overbooking, the match was really boring with Orton being his usual slow self. These two would feud forever and trade the title back and forth. The matches would get better but people were sick of seeing them fight at the end. This match was a great example of how overthinking can screw up a match. Brett DiBiase was the fan but that was never acknowledged on TV and I don't think it was ever addressed again.

We recap the main event. This is a pure culture clash with Jeff Hardy being the free spirit and Punk being the serious straightedge guy who lives a very strict life. Punk cashed in MITB against Hardy at Extreme Rules but Jeff won the title back two months later. This gets the music video treatment with a song featuring lyrics of "I don't want to be like you." Nice touch.

#### Smackdown World Title: Jeff Hardy vs. CM Punk

TLC match here. They fight over a lockup to start until Punk takes him into the corner for some knees to the chest. He stomps Hardy down and throws him to the floor before grabbing the first chair. A shot to the ribs and back allows Punk to go up but Hardy makes a quick save. Hardy stomps him down in the corner and hits the slingshot dropkick before going up. This time it's Punk making the save but Hardy sends him into the ladder to put both guys down.

Back up and Hardy loads up Poetry in Motion but Punk drops him onto the open chair to take over. A series of ladder shots to the back have Hardy in big trouble. Punk sends him to the floor and hits a suicide dive but misses a chair shot. Hardy sends him into the post and gets in a chair shot to the elbow to take over. This is a slower paced match so far which is usually the best way to go about TLC matches. Now Poetry In Motion



hits against the barricade and Punk is in trouble.

Hardy puts him on a table but Punk moves before Hardy can splash him through it, sending Hardy down in a big crash. We get another ladder in the ring as JR calls this a carcinogenic match. Punk goes up but Jeff literally jumps over him to go after it himself, only to get caught in an electric chair, only to counter that into a sunset bomb to put both guys down. The champion goes up first but Punk shoves him onto the corner in a SCARY landing with Jeff's leg hitting the rope.

Punk says on him with a superplex onto the ladder in another cringe inducing landing. Somehow Jeff snaps off a quick Twist of Fate but the Swanton hits knees. Punk hits the running knee in the corner but the bulldog is countered by Hardy throwing Punk over the top and through a table. Jeff starts to climb but Punk is back up to dropkick Hardy off the ladder. They head outside with Punk's knees being sent into the steps, allowing Hardy to go NUTS on Punk with a chair.

Hardy loads up a table next to the ring and this Punk in the head with part of the announce table and a monitor. A chair shot puts Punk down again as Hardy is in full control. Jeff sets up the big ladder and hits an INSANE Swanton Bomb through Punk through the announce table. That looked NUTS but the crash was great. Both guys are checked on as the stretcher is brought out. Hardy is taken out but Punk is crawling towards the ladder. Jeff gets off the stretcher and goes after Punk, only to be kicked off the ladder in another big crash, giving Punk the title.

**Rating:** A-. This was an excellent war with a great story being told: Punk played it safe while Hardy lived for the moment and lost the title as a result. The Swanton spot looked amazing and it was the last straw for Hardy as he just couldn't keep getting up from all these crashes. Awesome match here and a great bit of storytelling.

Punk stands over Hardy with the title in the air and the lights go off. A gong strikes and the lights come up with Undertaker in Hardy's place. He hits a huge chokeslam on Punk and poses on the stage to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** B. There's some bad stuff on here but the good stuff far outweighs it. Its biggest problem is the Orton vs. Cena match which was

slow and dull leading up to the STUPID ending. The other big matches delivered though and the opener is excellent. The show is worth watching, but pop in the Cena vs. Orton match from Breaking Point instead. Good show here that could have been a classic with a better Raw Title match.

### Ratings Comparison

Dolph Ziggler vs. Rey Mysterio

Original: A-

Redo: B+

Jack Swagger vs. MVP

Original: C

Redo: D

Chris Jericho/Big Show vs. Cryme Tyme

Original: D+

Redo: C-

Kane vs. Great Khali

Original: D+

Redo: D-

D-Generation X vs. Legacy

Original: A

Redo: B+

William Regal vs. Christian

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

John Cena vs. Randy Orton

Original: B-

Redo: D

CM Punk vs. Jeff Hardy

Original: A

Redo: A-

Overall Rating

Original: A-

Redo: B

The Cena vs. Orton match carries or sinks this show depending on how you look at it.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/08/12/history-of-summerslam-count-up-2009-punk-in-another-main-event-3/>

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# So I've Been Blocked By a Wrestler on Twitter

Apparently Angelina Love has been granted her release from GFW. I went to get the Tweet for a story about it on Wrestlingrumors and it turns out she's blocked me. I've never spoken/Tweeted to her directly but apparently I must have said something about her that she didn't care for. I think I'm honored in a way.

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## Smackdown – March 13, 2003: Working All The Angles

### Smackdown

Date: March 13, 2003

Location: Mellon Arena, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Michael Cole, Tazz

It's a big night in Pittsburgh as the hometown boy Kurt Angle is defending the Smackdown World Title against former champion Brock Lesnar. WWE has hyped the heck out of having the Wrestlemania main event two and a half weeks early and that almost guarantees some kind of a screwy finish. Let's get to it.

A fired up Lesnar arrived earlier in the day, as did a zombie-esque Angle, who is sporting a VERY black eye.

Opening sequence.

## Team Angle vs. Rey Mysterio/Billy Kidman

Non-title. Kidman shoulders Charlie down to start and there's an armdrag to Shelton for good measure. Rey gets in a headscissors for two and Shelton isn't sure how to keep up with Mysterio's speed. It's off to Kidman as the Angle vs. Lesnar hype continues. Shelton avoids a charge in the corner and Kidman goes shoulder first into the corner so the champs can take over. Shelton and Charlie take turns on the arm before Benjamin does his jump over Charlie onto Kidman's back (that really needs a name).

Kidman finally gets in a dropkick and brings in Mysterio to clean house. Rey tries a hurricanrana on Shelton, who shoves him away, right into a moonsault press for two on Haas. Everything breaks down and Kidman easily reverses Charlie's powerbomb (as you might expect). Shelton is sent outside and the 619 hits Haas. Kidman adds the shooting star press but Shelton gets up for a save. Mysterio is cut off and it's the superkick into the German suplex to put Kidman away.

**Rating:** C+. Good action between four talented people, but more importantly it was nice to see Haas and Benjamin FINALLY get a win. I have no idea what the mentality is behind putting titles on people and then have them lose over and over again. A win like this helps, but they need to retain in a big title defense or there's not much of a point to keeping the belts on them.

Stephanie McMahon is on the phone when Brian Kendrick comes in with some flowers. This goes nowhere.

Jamie Noble went to the Playboy Mansion to yell about Torrie Wilson being in Playboy instead of Nidia. After some plugs for the Girls Gone Wild show, security takes him away.

## Chuck Palumbo vs. Rikishi

Rikishi goes after the other Italians and walks into a superkick from Palumbo for an early two. A belly to belly gets the same and it's time for the required interference from the Italians. Rikishi comes back with some right hands in the corner and the Italians get on the apron. Cue Los Guerreros to take care of them though, allowing Rikishi to hit the Rump

Shaker for the pin.

Undertaker finds Nathan Jones in a dark room. Apparently you can't get the prison out of the wrestler. Undertaker doesn't care, as long as Jones is ready for Wrestlemania.

### A-Train/Big Show vs. Funaki/Tajiri

Big Show BLASTS Funaki with a clothesline at the bell and adds a gorilla press. It's off to A-Train as Show sits in on commentary. Some kicks stagger A-Train but he knees Tajiri in the ribs to cut that off in a hurry. A dropkick to the knee allows Funaki to hit a springboard dropkick but they can't drop the big bald. Tajiri's kick to the face puts A-Train down so Big Show comes back in with the chokeslam. A-Train's Trainwreck ends Funaki.

**Rating:** D. Just a squash and unfortunately a good way to show how generic a power team Big Show and A-Train really are. These power battle matches rarely work and I have a bad feeling about what we might be in for at Wrestlemania. The fact that Jones isn't being allowed to get in the ring suggests a lot of problems and that's a really bad idea going into the biggest show of the year. As a side note, is there any reason Tajiri and Funaki aren't a regular team? They'd be fine as a midcard tag act.

We look back at Lesnar beating Heyman last week.

Fans are split on who will win the title match tonight.

Dawn Marie is sad about not being in Playboy. Sean O'Haire comes up and says that she should show off her body tonight by flashing the audience.

Torrie Wilson unveils her Playboy cover by holding up the magazine.

Here's Dawn to say she has a nice body. She unbuttons her shirt and flashes the announcers, with the top rope covering everything up. Tazz: "THAT'S WHY THEY CALL IT THE MELLON ARENA!"

John Cena talks about being a Viagra triple shot while Brock Lesnar is a limo biscuit.

## Los Guerreros vs. Rhyno/Chris Benoit

The winners get Haas and Benjamin for the titles at Wrestlemania. The opening bell never rings as Chavo and Benoit fight over arm control. It's off to Eddie and the fans seem appreciative of seeing these two together. Therefore it's off to Rhyno before anything happens and a hard shove sends Eddie sprawling into the corner. For once Chavo actually does better as a snapmare into a basement dropkick has Rhyno in trouble.

Rhyno launches Eddie into the air for a crash to take over again though and it's back to Benoit for a knee to the ribs. Benoit belly to backs Chavo for two but Eddie comes back in for a good looking dropkick. In a surprising move, Eddie calms Chavo down from getting too involved to prevent a potential DQ. It's for Wrestlemania after all so that makes sense. Things settle down enough for Chavo to chinlock Benoit as the pace slows.

Tazz talks about dogs and cats for some reason as Chavo does one of the most obvious spot calls I've seen in years. Eddie's slingshot hilo gets two and we hit the armbar. Chavo comes back in and charges straight into a Crossface but he's too close to the ropes. Benoit rolls outside with him and it's Eddie diving onto Benoit, followed by Rhyno running Eddie over as we take a break.

Chavo grabbing a Crossface on Benoit (and being pretty bad at it) but Rhyno tags Benoit's boot to come in for the save. A belly to belly into a chinlock slows Chavo down but he's right back up with a middle rope dropkick. It's back to Eddie vs. Benoit with Guerrero winning a slugout and grabbing a hurricanrana. He takes a bit too much time slapping his chest though and Benoit catches him on top, only to get caught in a sunset bomb for two.

Rhyno throws Chavo outside and still manages to break up a small package on Benoit. Chavo comes back in but gets caught in the Crossface, onto to have Eddie break it up with a frog splash. There's a Gore to Eddie but Chavo hurricanranas him out to the floor. That leaves Benoit to roll some German suplexes on Eddie, who pops right back up with Three Amigos. Benoit will have none of that though and reverses into the Crossface but

Eddie gets his hand out, earning himself even more German suplexes...and here's Team Angle for the no contest after twenty minutes.

**Rating:** B. They were really starting to roll when the stupid finish happened. If Haas and Benjamin were just going to run in and end the match that way, why did they wait that long to do so? Anyway, Rhyno has fit right back into this show and is a nice power addition to go with the high fliers and technicians. You know this is setting up a triple threat at Wrestlemania and while I'd rather have Benoit do something important on his own, at least he's in a title match.

We look back at last week with Hulk Hogan and Vince McMahon agreeing to a fight at Wrestlemania. Well at least they were gentlemen about it. For some reason we also have to hear them go on about all their history together, because, again, fans care SO MUCH about lawsuits and wrestlers jumping ship seven years ago.

Stephanie tells Team Angle that they'll be facing both teams at Wrestlemania.

We get a clip from 1984 of Vince introducing a clip of Hogan beating Iron Sheik for the title, which transitions into a Hogan video package, including several Hogan Wrestlemania moments. That's it for the fun stuff as we now go to an interview from some DVD of Hogan talking about being the one out there doing all this stuff. Vince threw him the ball and Hogan ran with it. It's capped off by a clip from 1992 of Vince and Hogan sitting together before Hogan's "retirement" match where they shake hands and thank each other.

Vince makes us watch the final part two more times and says that's the only time Hogan ever thanked him for anything. What an ingrate. They used to be the best of friends but then Hogan changed. That change hurt Vince's family and business which cut him to the bone. That clip wasn't Hogan saying thank you but rather SCREW YOU VINCE.

We hear about how horrible it was for Hogan to jump to WCW again and Vince reiterates that it's a fight instead of a match. We go to an extreme closeup as Vince says that after Wrestlemania, he is going to be devastated because Hogan has forced him to kill one of his own creations.



For that, he can never forgive Hogan.

Cole says the contract signing for Hogan vs. McMahon is next week in the historic Freedom Hall in Louisville, Kentucky. Freedom Hall is not historic Cole.

Here's Matt Hardy, who has never locked his keys in his car and hates cleaning his carpet, to issue an open challenge to anyone under 220lbs, save for Mysterio of course.

### Matt Hardy vs. Pittsburgh Penguin

Non-title and it's Brian Kendrick under a mask with a carrot for a nose. Tazz: "So this guy can fly then?" The Penguin tries to speed things up to start and hits a dropkick. Sliced Bread #2 is broken up so it's a headscissors out of the corner to send Hardy flying. The Ricochet gets two though and Matt stomps away on the back. A tilt-a-whirl slam gets two and there goes the mask, revealing Kendrick in not the best surprise. Kendrick gets two off a facebuster and something like a tornado DDT gets two more. Shannon offers a distraction but Kendrick is able to grab Sliced Bread anyway. That's enough for Matt as he takes the countout.

**Rating:** D+. Not terrible and the surprise (as obvious as it was) wasn't the worst idea in the world. Having Kendrick win via countout makes him look good, though I'm not sure how smart it is to do that to a champion right before the biggest show of the year. Just have him beat Shannon instead as it's not like that means anything.

After a break, Rey praises Kendrick.

Long recap of Lesnar vs. Angle.

Wrestlemania Moment: Hogan vs. Andre. That works.

### Smackdown World Title: Brock Lesnar vs. Kurt Angle

Angle is defending in his hometown. Kurt comes to the ring with his hood up and immediately drops to his knee in the corner with his face against the buckle. Brock jumps him from behind and fires off the shoulders to the back as the hood is still up. The F5 connects but Brock lets him up

at two because that's not Kurt. Cue Team Angle for a distraction so the real Kurt can switch with whoever was in the ring. Angle small packages Brock to retain in maybe 90 seconds.

Kurt bails so Brock hits the F5 into the post on the other Angle, who Tazz recognizes as Kurt's brother Eric, to end the show. Basically Kurt's neck was destroyed and he didn't think he'd be able to do Wrestlemania. This match was going to be a quick title change but Angle opted for surgery after working Wrestlemania because Angle is, shall we say, freaking crazy.

**Overall Rating:** D. That ending felt straight out of WCW and really brings down the rest of the show. It's all they were talking about for most of the night and that's not how you want to wrap up one of the last shows of the year before Wrestlemania. On top of that, the Vince vs. Hogan stuff is getting old in a hurry and the rest of Smackdown's stuff isn't all that great. Bad show this week as the main event cuts the legs off what could have been a good, or at least ok, night.

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# Main Event – August 10, 2017: The Chris Jericho Tribute Match

## Main Event

Date: August 10, 2017

Location: Air Canada Center, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Corey Graves

The show heads north of the border this week and there are some options for this show. Monday's Raw didn't feature several names and since no one works twice around here, there's a good chance we could be seeing some bigger names around here. Oh and Curt Hawkins. Never forget Hawkins. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

## Apollo Crews vs. Curt Hawkins

See, I told you there would be a Hawkins sighting. They pose at each other to start but Crews pops off a dropkick to take over. Hawkins is smart enough to choke on the ropes and grabs a belly to back suplex for two. A regular suplex gets two and we hit the chinlock. Back up and Crews hits a running kick to the face, followed by the enziguri and standing moonsault for two. Hawkins comes back with an enziguri of his own but what looks like a running right hand is countered into the Toss Powerbomb to give Crews the pin at 4:29.

**Rating:** D+. As usual, the best thing about a Hawkins match is his awesome entrance. It's a shame that something so funny is being wasted on someone who is nothing but a jobber to the stars. Crews continues to be insanely athletic but he still needs charisma and a character, which is only going to be done so well by Titus International.

From Raw, part one.

We start fast this week as Miz and company are in the ring for MizTV. Miz

is tired of being blindsided on his own show so he wants Jason Jordan out here right now. It's Kurt Angle instead, who has his own guest for the show: Brock Lesnar. The place goes coconuts for Lesnar and Paul Heyman, but Miz cuts Paul off because this is his show. Miz talks about how it's almost a guarantee that Lesnar is losing the title because all three challengers are going to gang up on Lesnar. And remember, if Brock loses, he's gone for good. If Miz is a betting man, he's picking one of the challengers to leave as champion.

It's time for Heyman to talk and he gets straight to the point: "Do you and your wife ever role play?" Heyman loves the idea of role play so let's have Miz play Roman Reigns, Bo Dallas play Samoa Joe and Curtis Axel play Braun Strowman. Now let's preview Summerslam. Three F5's later, Lesnar calmly leaves.

And the sequel.

Here's Finn Balor for a chat. After some required T00 SWEET chanting, Balor talks about kicking Bray's teeth down his neck last week. If there's one thing Finn knows, it's that you have to kick fear in the face...and here's Wyatt to interrupt. Bray appears in the ring but Balor is on the top. They fight for a bit until Bray disappears, only to reappear on screen to say he enjoys Balor's bravery.

Before the next match, we're graced with a song from Elias about how horrible Canada is with all of its ugly citizens. Cue a well known Canadian for the save.

### Elias vs. Kalisto

Kalisto says he wants to walk with Elias but settles for sending him outside for a hurricanrana off the apron. We take an early break and come back with Elias pulling Kalisto's arm down onto the apron, earning them both a series of TEN counts. The arm goes into the apron again and it's time for an armbar.

Kalisto reverses into a rollup for a quick breather but Elias kicks him in the shoulder again. A hammerlock belly to back suplex gets two and we hit the third armbar. An armdrag gets Kalisto out of trouble and he rolls

over to kick Elias in the head, only to have the Salida Del Sol reversed into Drift Away for the pin at 10:02.

**Rating:** D-. It's hard to find a really bad Main Event match but they pulled it off here. How in the world can you have a ten minute match with three armbar included? Elias is going to be used as something special in WWE though I still have no idea what that's going to be. Kalisto is a good jobber to the stars, though I still have no idea why he beat Braun Strowman earlier in the year.

Quick look at Bayley's injury.

Finally from Raw again.

### Braun Strowman vs. Roman Reigns

Last Man Standing. Reigns meets him in the aisle but gets thrown from the floor into the ring. It's too early for a Samoan drop as Strowman pounds Reigns down for an early five count. Reigns is sent outside and we take a break. Back with Strowman throwing the steps inside but Reigns slugs away for a breather. A pair of big boots stagger Strowman and a shot with the steps puts Strowman on a knee.

Reigns hits him in the face with the steps and Strowman goes down, allowing Reigns to hit him in the chest with the steps over and over. Back up at seven and Strowman blocks the Superman Punch by sending Reigns into the corner. That spinning Big Ending gives Braun a breather but Roman gets in a quick Superman Punch to put both guys down. Strowman is back up with a dropkick of all things but he misses a charge and hits the post, knocking him out to the floor.

Reigns gets in the apron dropkick and it's table time. He takes too long with it though as Strowman clotheslines him down again and sets up the table in the ring. Again it takes too long though and Reigns hits a Samoan drop through the table, only to have Strowman roll outside to get on his feet. Reigns goes after him so Strowman LAUNCHES the timekeeper's chair at him, knocking Reigns completely silly for nine. Great visual and if Strowman doesn't win, I have no idea why he didn't do it there.

They fight into the crowd and up to the announcers' table with Reigns hitting another running dropkick. Strowman is up again and throws Roman into the screen. The announcers' table is loaded up but Reigns gets to his feet for two Superman Punches. The spear is blocked with a big boot, only to have Reigns pop back up and hit the spear. Reigns pulls himself up...and Samoa Joe reaches out from the crowd to put Reigns in the Koquina Clutch. The THANK YOU JOE chant starts up and Strowman is up at nine for the win at 22:00.

**Rating:** B-. This got going once they brought the table in and I REALLY like that ending. Strowman wouldn't have gotten up without the delay in the count thanks to Joe and Joe himself looks like the real winner, which makes sense considering he wasn't even on the show so far. It's not a classic or anything but the ending was the perfect call, outside of MAYBE a double knockout.

**Overall Rating:** D. Pretty weak show this time around and that's not the biggest surprise in the world. MizTV was fun, the Last Man Standing match was brutal, the Balor segment was stupid and the original matches ranged from "we've seen this before" to a tribute to Chris Jericho's ARMBAR list. This was one of the worst shows they've done in a good while and that's hard to do for Main Event.

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# Summerslam Count-Up – 2008: One of the Good Ones

## Summerslam 2008

Date: August 17, 2008

Location: Conseco Fieldhouse, Indianapolis, Indiana

Attendance: 15,997

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

For the first time in a few years, it feels like we've got a big card tonight. It's a double main event with Undertaker vs. Edge inside the Cell and Cena vs. Batista for the first time ever. I remember being very fired up for this show when it first aired so hopefully it lives up to the hype after some very lackluster entries the last few years. Let's get to it.

The theme this year is that this is the ultimate summer blockbuster. I've heard worse. This shifts into your standard opening video.

It's another good song here with Ready to Roll by Jet Black Stare.

We run down the card because you might have ordered the show blind or something?

## MVP vs. Jeff Hardy

Jeff is in the middle of the biggest story of his life, as he's been chasing the world title all year. This resulted in one of the highest number of buys ever for the Rumble, yet he's opening the show here in a midcard match. Makes sense in WWE world I guess. There isn't much of a story here other than MVP has been messing with Jeff lately. Hardy starts with two right hands to send MVP to the floor and there's a whip into the barricade. Back in and a slingshot legdrop gets two for Jeff and we hit

the armbar.

MVP makes the ropes and the referee has to keep pulling Jeff out of the corner. Jeff eventually gets free and charges right into a snap belly to belly for two. MVP kicks him in the back and puts on something like a crucifix hold before rolling over into a camel clutch. Off to something like a side leg bar but MVP eventually lets it go. Jeff goes to the apron but MVP knocks him out of the air to break up a springboard, getting two.

Jeff is put in the Tree of Woe so MVP picks him up and slams the top of his head into the mat. That's a new one. MVP loads up something like a Gory Bomb but Jeff slips down the back and neckbreaks his way to freedom. The slingshot dropkick in the corner is countered by two feet to Hardy's chest but Jeff avoids the Drive By kick in the corner. A sunset flip gets two for Jeff and the Whisper in the Wind puts MVP down again. Cue US Champion Shelton Benjamin to distract Hardy from the Swanton, allowing MVP to move. The Drive By kick is good for the pin on Jeff.

**Rating:** B-. Summerslam almost always has good openers and this is a good example. I never got into MVP like a lot of people did but this was a solid performance from him. Shelton had been involved with this feud as an accessory on Smackdown but it's not exactly enough of a connection for the run-in here to work. Good match though.

Glamarella (Santino and Beth) is ready for their mixed tag winner take all match with Kofi and Mickie. Santino talks about the unibrow and how the tabloids love the new name for the two of them. Maria, Santino's ex, is doing the interview so we get a stare down between the girls.

Intercontinental Title/Women's Title: Glamarella vs. Mickie James/Kofi Kingston

Mickie and Kofi have both belts coming in but the winning team walks out with all the gold. Kofi is still relatively new here and has only won the IC Title once, as opposed to his 89 or so reigns now. The girls get things going with Beth easily overpowering James. Mickie comes back with some quick dropkicks for two before it's off to Santino. James easily monkey flips him over before it's off to Kofi for some of his usual stuff. The jumping punches in the corner have Santino on the floor where



Beth yells at him.

Kingston loads up a charge but hangs on, only to send Santino jumping into Beth's arms. Kofi pulls him back in but gets his neck snapped across the top rope for one. Beth beats on Kofi for a bit before bringing Santino back in for his basic offense. A suplex sets up a chinlock but Kofi fights up and butts heads with Santino, allowing for the double tags to the girls. Mickie cleans house and clotheslines Beth down before snapping off her hurricanrana on Beth. Kofi comes in and misses a charge like an idiot but the MickieDT puts Santino down. Beth decks Mickie and hits the Glam Slam for both titles.

**Rating:** D+. The match was nothing special and could have been on any given Raw. I don't know of a better way they could have gotten the title on Santino though so you can't fault the for trying. Kofi would begin his long float in the midcard which would last for the next several years other than a cup of coffee in the upper midcard. The girls looked good here but that's about it.

Santino gets on Beth's shoulders to celebrate.

Video on Shawn Michaels' eye injury. He may not be able to continue wrestling due to the eye and for the first time he's listening to his doctors. If they tell him it's too bad, he's walking away.

Here's Shawn with his wife for the announcement. Shawn talks about how his doctors have re-evaluated his eye and it looks like he's going to have to walk away. He remembers his first Summerslam and since then the fans have let him become the Heart Break Kid and Mr. Wrestlemania. He's also the guy who screwed Bret Hart (wasn't that Hebner?), the man who formed DX, the man who lost his smile and the man who retired Ric Flair. Now though he can be a full time husband and a full time father....and here's Jericho, the man who injured Shawn's eye.

Jericho, currently an awesome heel rocking a suit, says that he's not accepting this. Shawn isn't leaving due to an eye injury on his own terms. He wants Shawn to admit that he's walking away because of what Jericho did to him and nothing else. Shawn gets serious and says to get out of the ring but Jericho wants to hear that Shawn is leaving because

of him. Shawn needs to admit it to his wife, his children, himself and to Jericho. All of Shawn's accomplishments don't matter because the epitaph of his career will be that he was forced to walk away because of Chris Jericho.

Shawn says he'll admit it and tell his wife and kids what Jericho wants to hear on one condition: if Jericho goes home to his wife and kids and tells them that he never could be Shawn Michaels. BURN! Shawn goes to walk away but Jericho swings, only to hit Shawn's wife, knocking her out cold. What a man that Shawn is, ducking when his wife was behind him. You know it's on at Unforgiven now and the fans are eating this stuff up. This was the feud of the year in 2008 and there's no arguing that.

#### ECW Title: Mark Henry vs. Matt Hardy

Matt earned the title by doing something not important enough to explain to us. These two teamed up on ECW with Mark attacking his partner, injuring his ribs. Mark hits a quick forearm to the back but misses a charge, allowing Matt to hit the Twist of Fate, drawing in Henry's manager Tony Atlas for the DQ 30 seconds in.

Jeff Hardy comes out to make the save and the Hardys suplex Henry.

We recap CM Punk vs. JBL. Punk cashed in the MITB case a few weeks ago on Raw to bring the World Heavyweight Championship to Raw. JBL bullied Punk and called him a footnote in wrestling. It's a basic story but sometimes that's the best idea, which is the case here.

#### Raw World Title: CM Punk vs. John Bradshaw Layfield

Punk was basically a glorified midcarder at this point but his time would come. JBL shoves Punk into the corner to start and a hard shoulder puts the champion down. Punk comes back with a flying forearm to send him to the outside and a suicide dive fires the fans up even more. Back in and a high cross body gets a one count for Punk but another shoulder block puts him down. Punk tries to go up, only to be taken down by a middle rope fall away slam for two.

JBL goes after the back and we hit the bearhug. This is a basic big guy

vs. little guy formula so far but again there's nothing wrong with that at all. Punk fights out of it as the fans are getting rowdy. We stay on the back as JBL continues his basic power offense. Back to a side grip on Punk's ribs on the mat before we go old school with an abdominal stretch. Punk fights out and hits the knee in the corner/bulldog combo but the ribs give out on the GTS attempt. JBL takes him back down and drops some elbows for two.

The clothesline misses and Punk starts firing off his strikes, hitting a high kick to the head for two. A springboard clothesline is countered into a powerslam for two and JBL yells at the referee a lot. Another clothesline attempt from JBL is countered with a leg lariat to put both guys down. They hit heads as JBL fell and Punk is busted open from the back of his head. Layfield blocks another knee/bulldog combo by putting Punk on the buckle for a belly to back superplex. There much be something really wrong because Punk pops up and hits a quick GTS to retain. Oh yeah there's a BIG blood spot from where Punk was laying on the mat.

**Rating:** C+. This needed a few more minutes but with a legit cut that bad you have to go home in a hurry. Obviously Punk was going to win the entire time so it's not like the ending was changed that badly. What we did get was good stuff with a basic story that is going to work time after time and did so here.

We recap HHH vs. Great Khali. Again not much to say here: HHH won the Smackdown Title and dominated for a few months until Khali was one of the few challengers he had left. Again it's your basic hero vs. monster but the question coming in is can HHH Pedigree Khali. He tries for weeks leading up but never could pull it off.

#### Smackdown World Title: HHH vs. Great Khali

The Game is defending. HHH is a very tall man in his own right and is probably a foot shorter than Khali. The champion pounds away but has to stick and move to not get killed. That doesn't blow HHH's skirt up though so he tries the Pedigree. Khali easily grabs HHH and hits his Punjabi Plunge (two handed chokeslam finisher) but doesn't cover. Instead he loads up his Vice (head squeeze) but HHH kicks at the long legs to

escape. A chop block puts Khali down and out to the floor where his manager Runjin Singh tries to calm him down.

HHH, ever the bright guy, charges at Khali again and is chopped down with ease. Back inside and Khali pounds away with some elbows in the corner to drop the champion. The fans tell Khali that he can't wrestle as he puts one foot on HHH for a cover. Off to a nerve hold by the challenger followed by a slam and legdrop. Back to the nerve hold for a bit before HHH fights up and hits the facebuster. It doesn't put Khali on the mat but it does tie him up in the ropes.

Khali will have none of this being in trouble though as he lifts up his boot to kick HHH down before freeing himself from the ropes. Back up and HHH tries the Pedigree again, only to be backdropped out to the floor. A hard chop puts HHH down again and as they come back in there's the vice grip again. HHH almost breaks the hold but Khali gets it back on for a few more seconds. A charge misses the champion in the corner and he FINALLY hits the Pedigree to retain the title.

**Rating:** C+. This match, while slow, was a great example of psychology in a wrestling match. HHH knew that there was only one move he could use to hurt Khali and give him a chance for the win so it was the only thing he tried for most of the match. This was HHH working around someone and it worked quite well as HHH is a very talented wrestler, which unfortunately is often forgotten.

We recap Cena vs. Batista. Cena accidentally punched Batista in a tag match on Raw, triggering a brawl between the two. It became exactly what it should have been: a showdown between the two guys who had carried the company for the last three years. This was one of the few dream matches they had built up for years and belonged as a PPV main event. Cena said he had been wanting this match for six years because he just didn't know if he could beat Batista.

### John Cena vs. Batista

Batista shoves Cena back to start before grabbing a headlock. Cena comes back with a quick slam and Batista stops to take a breather. A big clothesline puts Cena down and a Jackhammer gets two. Cena comes right

back with a suplex of his own for two but Batista puts him down with a side slam. A quick FU attempt is countered and Batista goes after the leg. Off to a Figure Four on Cena (just like Flair, he puts it on the wrong leg) who can't power out so we get a rope grab instead for the break.

Back up immediately and Cena throws Batista to the floor in something resembling an FU before collapsing down. Back in again and Cena fires off the shoulder blocks and the ProtoBomb to set up the Shuffle. The FU is countered again and Batista kicks him in the face to put both guys down. Batista drives shoulders into the corner and catches him in the spinebuster to put Cena down. Cena backdrops out of the Batista Bomb and hits a DDT on the leg to set up the STFU. Batista FINALLY crawls over and gets a rope to shock Cena.

Batista gets up and escapes another FU to hook a rear naked choke of all things. Cena fights out of a hold as well, only to get caught by a spear for a VERY close two. They're in full on main event mode here and it's getting very awesome. Cena counters a powerslam into an FU but can't follow up due to exhaustion. It's finally good for two so Cena goes up with nowhere else to go.

Batista is up as well and they slug it out on top with Batista being knocked to the mat. Cena tries the Fameasser but gets caught in a Batista Bomb....for two, plus a neck injury that required three months off (I seem to remember that happening earlier but WWE said it was here). Not that it matters as Batista goes into Animal Mode and ENDS Cena with a Batista Bomb for the pin.

**Rating:** A-. This is exactly what it was supposed to be: the two top guys in the company going to war with only one left standing. It's a great fight in the vein of Rock vs. Austin from back in the day. Almost no complaints here and it felt like a major match on a major stage. What else can you ask for here?

The Cell is lowered.

We recap Edge vs. Undertaker. They fought for the world title at Wrestlemania with Taker winning the title (duh) before Edge's wife Vickie

Guerrero stripped him of the title for using the Hell's Gate, which was declared illegal. Edge won the title in a TLC match and Taker left for a bit, but Edge got caught cheating with his wedding planner (Alicia Fox). Vickie reinstated Taker and set up the Cell match here tonight. Edge got Mick Foley to try to find out how to beat Undertaker in the Cell (even though Foley lost) and was told to bring back the Rated R Superstar inside of him. Edge beat up Foley and was back.

### Edge vs. Undertaker

It takes two minutes and forty five seconds from Taker's gong to him slamming the Cell door closed. Edge fires off right hands in the corner but walks into a big boot. We head outside the ring so Edge can be rammed into the steel. A series of headbutts puts Edge down and Taker whips him hard into the steps. Vickie and company (La Familia) is watching in the back.

Back inside now but with steps involved as well. The Snake Eyes drop Edge on the steps but he blocks the big boot and sends Taker into the steps instead. Edge hits a spear to a seated dead man but doesn't go for a cover. Instead he grabs a table but stops to knock Taker out with the steps to the head. Edge gets another table but doesn't slide either of them into the ring. The table is set up on the floor instead but Edge has to fight out of a chokeslam attempt instead of sending Taker through it.

Now it's chair time with Edge dropping Taker again. Here's a third table but the first one actually brought into the ring. Edge pulls out a ladder as TLCHIAC continues. Another chair shot puts Taker down as we have a ladder, a table and steps in the ring. Three of the four things are used as Edge puts Taker on the table and picks up the chair before climbing the ladder. He drives the dead man through the table in the same spot he used on Foley a few weeks ago. Nice touch.

It's only good for two though so it's time for a Conchairto, only to have Taker grab Edge by the throat. Edge breaks free but gets caught in a big right hand to put him back down. A bit boot sends Edge into the cage and Taker crushes his head with the steps for good measure. Edge posts Taker to get a breather and uses the steps as a launching pad to knock Taker

through the Cell. Taker's arm is bleeding a bit.

They fight at the announce table before Edge is sent into the barricade to put him down again. Taker misses a monitor shot to the head, allowing Edge to crack him in the head with it instead. In the big spot of the match, Edge runs the announce tables for a big spear to Undertaker, putting both guys down. Edge can't follow up so Taker wins a slug out and they head back inside, drawing some moderate booing. Back in and a ladder to the face gives Edge control again and a chair shot gets two.

Taker counters the spear into a chokeslam for a close two and Taker is getting frustrated. The Last Ride is countered by a low blow and an Impaler gets two. Back up and Taker loads up the Last Ride again but wants it through the tables on the floor. Edge slips over the top and hits the spear for a very close two. Now the Last Ride connects but Edge gets out at two.

Taker loads up a tombstone off the steps but Edge counters into an Edge-O-Matic onto the steps for two. Now Edge loads up Old School but Taker crotches him down and chokeslams him through the tables on the floor. Back in and Undertaker spears Edge down and breaks a camera over his head. A Conchairto crushes Edge's skull and the tombstone finally ends this.

**Rating:** A. THIS is how you blow off a feud. Edge was completely destroyed at the end here with Undertaker hitting every big move he had and Edge not kicking out of them at all. These two had some great action all year long and the Cell is the best way to blow the whole thing off. Having it as a TLC match inside the Cell was fine and it made for a great main event.

Taker leaves but Edge very slowly gets up. The big man goes back inside and sets up the ladder before lifting Edge onto it. Taker throws in another ladder and climbs up next to Edge so he can throw the Canadian down through the mat. He raises his arms up and lights the hole on fire to end the show in a corny moment.

**Overall Rating:** A-. This was pretty awesome all around. The opener was good, one match didn't count, the title matches were both decent to good

and the main events both rocked. You could say the tag match wasn't very good but it's less than six minutes long and Santino makes it entertaining enough. This is one of the better shows they've had in the series and it's well worth checking out.

### Ratings Comparison

MVP vs. Jeff Hardy

Original: B

Redo: B-

Kofi Kingston/Mickie James vs. Glamarella

Original: D

Redo: D+

Matt Hardy vs. Mark Henry

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

CM Punk vs. John Bradshaw Layfield

Original: B-

Redo: C+

Great Khali vs. HHH

Original: B+

Redo: C+

Batista vs. John Cena

Original: A

Redo: A-



Edge vs. Undertaker

Original: A-

Redo: A

Overall Rating

Original: A-

Redo: A-

Yep, it's still great.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/08/11/history-of-summerslam-count-up-2008-punk-as-champion-thatll-never-happen-again/>

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# Smackdown – September 30, 2005: Not Bad For An Old Guy

## Smackdown

Date: September 30, 2005

Location: Laredo Entertainment Center, Laredo, Texas

Commentators: Michael Cole, Tazz

Welcome back to the “I Have No Idea Why This Was Requested Corner”. This would be coming up on No Mercy 2005 so Eddie Guerrero is chasing Smackdown World Champion Batista. It’s also a pretty forgotten era for Smackdown but things would get shaken up in a hurry due to a horrible tragedy. Let’s get to it.

Opening sequence.

Cole gives us a quick travelogue about Laredo, which really isn’t how I expected this to start off.

JBL comes out for a tag match, wearing an inner tube, carrying a Mexican flag, wearing a sombrero and holding a burro on a leash. Naturally he speaks some Spanish and hopes that someone with a Green Card (“If you can find one.”) can translate. He stops to threaten a call to INS to clean out this arena before saying it’s not that he doesn’t like foreigners. We get some insults about Laredo but more importantly, he’s gone to see Mysterio’s family in Mexico.

Everything he’s carrying is from one of the relatives, including an inner tube that belong to 28 of Rey’s closest family members. Now it’s time to get serious though as JBL heads outside and points to the burro, which represents the mouths that people like him have to feed when people come to this country without being able to make a living. The other end of the burro reminds him of the rest of these people, because it makes him sick. There are some great Americans but none have as great of a name as his partner tonight.

John Bradshaw Layfield/Mr. Kennedy vs. Rey Mysterio/Hardcore Holly

Kennedy thinks the burro is Tony Chimmel and insults him as such. He also does his own entrance as we're over ten minutes into this show and about eight of that has been spent on talking before the match starts. We're ready to go after a break with Rey doing a Mexican hat dance around the sombrero. Kennedy tries to stand up for Mexican pride but gets legdropped for his efforts.

JBL hits Rey with the inner tube though and Kennedy gets in a cheap shot to take over. It's off to JBL vs. Holly (He's the best you can do?) with a suplex getting two on Bradshaw. The announcers start talking about Raw Homecoming this week, which would kick off the start of the Raw vs. Smackdown feud which would dominate the fall. JBL kicks Rey in the ribs though and the beating begins. The 619 is broken up and it's time to choke with the Mexican flag.

Back in and the fall away slam sends Rey flying and we hit the bearhug, which isn't something you expect to see from JBL. Kennedy eats the sitout bulldog though and the hot tag brings in Holly to...well about the reaction you would expect off a hot tag to Holly. A full nelson driver plants Kennedy and the dropkick puts JBL down. Kennedy is back up to snap Holly's throat across the ropes though, setting up the Clothesline From JBL for the pin.

**Rating:** C. JBL's promo before the match was great but there's not much else to brag about on here. That was the case for him a lot of the time though as JBL could often talk his way into a big match but he rarely had the in-ring abilities to back it up, at least at this point. Holly continues to feel completely out of place here and is a great example of how you just can't take a career lower midcarder, put him way above his pay grade and expect it to work. All I see is the guy who used to be Sparky Plugg or the guy who says he used to call himself the Super Heavyweight and had a bunch of unfunny hardcore matches. It just doesn't work.

We look back at last week when Eddie Guerrero claimed food poisoning to get out of a tag match where he was to be Batista's partner. Batista got him a prostate exam but Eddie came in with a frog splash to help beat MNM anyway.

Eddie is eating some Mexican food when Batista comes up. Guerrero promises that they'll win the Tag Team Titles tonight but Batista takes the food away. Just looking out for his partner's stomach you see.

Melina was on the phone in the parking lot earlier today when a motorcycle rode by. It was Christy Hemme as a biker (that works very, VERY well) and they get in a shouting match over Christy breaking Melina's nail.

#### Melina vs. Christy Hemme

Melina has MNM with her. They lock up to start with Melina backing her up to the ropes for some mouth running. It's off to an early armbar which keeps Christy in trouble for far longer than an armbar should. A neck snap across the ropes gets a pair of twos with Melina screeching a lot off the kickouts. Christy's sunset flip out of the corner gets two and she's all fired up. A kick to the ribs sets up a jackknife cover for two on Melina but Johnny Nitro trips Christy up to give Melina the pin.

**Rating:** D. This was ALL about showcasing Christy and there's good reason for that. In addition to being insanely gorgeous and rocking the heck out of her outfits, she had some great charisma and could have been a big deal if she wasn't so horrible in the ring. Melina was far more polished in the ring of course but she needed someone better to work with.

Melina keeps running her mouth post match so Christy elbows her, only to have MNM come in. The Snapshot is loaded up but the Legion of Doom (Animal and Heidenreich) come in for the save.

We look back at the Ortons holding a funeral for Undertaker's career. Of course the real Undertaker was in the casket and the beating was on.

#### Bob Orton Jr. vs. Undertaker

Bob, a Hall of Famer, is only 55 here so this isn't the biggest stretch in the world. He's calling out Undertaker tonight because he knows Randy will do the real work at No Mercy. Some early jabs just seem to annoy Undertaker so it's off to the floor for a breather. Undertaker stares him down so Orton asks for a time out, earning himself a beating in the

corner.

The ref is bumped in a hurry though and we're just waiting on Randy at this point. Orton hits one heck of a low blow (the old guys knew how to do those better than anyone) and here's Randy to drop some knees. The beating heads to the floor but Undertaker kicks out of Randy's neckbreaker at two. Randy comes back in but the RKO is countered, followed by a Tombstone to put Bob away (now that the referee has FINALLY come back to life).

**Rating:** D. Nothing to the match but it helped set up the handicap match at No Mercy. Bob was still able to go out there and look respectable, which is more than a lot of people his age could do. If nothing else Bob is basically a fancy lackey but that's still a lot better than most people get.

We look at Bobby Lashley debuting last week and squashing Simon Dean.

#### Bobby Lashley vs. Russell Simpson

Lashley powers him around to start and drives a hard shoulder into the ribs in the corner. A charge misses though and Simpson starts in on the leg. It goes as well as you would expect as Lashley shrugs it off, tosses Russell into the corner and finishes with a Dominator. Squash.

Post match here's Simon Dean to say Lashley impressed him last week. He offers Lashley a Simon System product to help him get ready for their rematch at No Mercy and Lashley isn't sure what to think. As confused as he is, he's able to drop the shake on the floor and stomp on it. What a jerk. Dean goes after him but gets a right hand blocked and a gorilla press out to the floor.

It's time for Christian's Peep Show and he'd like to talk about pinning US Champion Chris Benoit a few weeks back. He's so good that he's beaten up more people by mistake than Benoit has done on purpose. Cue Booker T. and Sharmell with the latter saying that Booker should be getting the shot at Benoit at No Mercy. Booker reminds Christian that he beat him last week but here's the eternally worthless Orlando Jordan to interrupt.

See, he should be getting the rematch because Benoit has made fun of him ever since Benoit took the title from him at Summerslam (in about 24 seconds). Jordan brags about Benoit not being able to beat him in thirty seconds last week, which Booker says took him longer to say than it took Benoit to make Jordan tap. Those are fighting words so here's the Mack Militant to make a triple threat match with Benoit watching and getting to pick his opponent.

#### Orlando Jordan vs. Booker T. vs. Christian

Joined in progress after a break with Booker cleaning house to start. Christian pulls him to the floor but gets sent into the barricade for his efforts. Jordan goes into the steps, leaving Christian to crank on Booker's neck back inside. Booker fights to his feet and loads up a superplex, only to have Jordan come in to make it a Tower of Doom for two. A side kick sets up the Spinarooni but Christian avoids the ax kick. Booker loads up a catapult on Christian but gets rolled up to give Jordan the cheap pin.

**Rating:** D. Jordan is one of those guys who had no reason to be involved in anything significant as he's just not good. He doesn't have any special skills, a special look or any special abilities on the microphone. For some reason he was given a midcard push, even when there was no reason whatsoever for that to be the case.

Benoit immediately comes out and says he's not sure who should get the shot. All three of them are good options but since he's Benoit, he'll fight all three of them at once. So yeah, this match really didn't mean a thing.

Teddy Long and network representative Palmer Cannon (he's a nobody) are talking about sending Smackdown talent to Monday's Raw Homecoming. Vince McMahon comes in and asks about their plans for Monday's show. Teddy lists off some names he has showing up but he doesn't have a match picked yet. Cannon talks about nothing of note and Vince really doesn't seem impressed.

#### Smackdown Tag Team Titles: Legion of Doom vs. Eddie Guerrero/Batista

Animal and Heidenreich are defending and for the life of me I have no idea why this team existed. Like...who in the world thought this needed to be done or that it was a good idea in the slightest? Batista gets one heck of a pop, as was always the case around this time. The bell rings and we go to a break less than fifteen seconds later. I'd love to see who finds that to be a good idea so I can throw sandwiches at them.

Eddie chases Heidenreich around until it's off to Animal vs. THE Animal. Batista grabs a suplex to start but Animal is up for a standoff. Eddie tags himself in instead but gets punched in the jaw by the now legal Heidenreich. For some reason Eddie tries to kiss Heidenreich's foot, which earns himself a trip to the corner for a slam from Animal. A side slam gives Heidenreich two as the fans are staying behind Eddie.

We hit a cobra clutch for a bit before Animal gets in a hard powerslam (THUD) for two. Eddie hurricanranas his way out of the Doomsday Device and it's off to Batista. Everything breaks down and it's a spinebuster to Heidenreich and the spear to Animal. A not great Batista Bomb gets two on Heidenreich but here's MNM to go after Animal for the DQ.

**Rating:** D+. It's still weird to see Animal teaming with that guy who may or may not have raped Michael Cole at one point. Heidenreich really wasn't the best in the world but he had a certain odd charm to him. Unfortunately that didn't translate to the ring, leaving Animal to do most of the work himself, which goes about as well as you would expect. Of course this was more about story building than the wrestling but thank goodness they didn't change the titles.

Post match Eddie takes a chair away from Nitro but hits Batista by mistake. In classic Eddie, he throws the chair to Mercury and plays dead, earning Mercury a beating to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D+. Not terrible here but it's not a good era for Smackdown. Undertaker was transitioning over to his part time status and having him fight Bob Orton isn't the most thrilling time in the world. Of course none of this is going to matter in a month due to the Eddie tragedy but it was good to see him doing some of his best work just before he left us. It's not the worst show in the world but there's

nothing to see here.

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## **Lucha Underground – August 9, 2017: Anyone Could Win**

### **Lucha Underground**

Date: August 9, 2017

Location: Lucha Underground Temple, Boyle Heights, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

It's time to set the final four in the Cueto Cup as we'll be having the final two quarterfinal matches tonight. In addition to that though, we're restarting the process of putting together the Gift of the Gods Title and that means it's time to find some people to possess the medallions. Let's get to it.

The opening video of course looks at the tournament so far, plus the Worldwide Underground getting a chance to win three medallions tonight.



## Aztec Medallions: Rabbit Tribe vs. Worldwide Underground

The winners all get medallions of course. Before the Worldwide Underground comes out, the Rabbit Tribe (Paul London/Saltador/Mala Suerte) dance around Melissa Santos, who doesn't seem to mind. Taya and Saltador start with the latter sliding between her legs and shoving her down by the back of her trunks. Ricky Mandel comes in and takes a hurricanrana, followed by a standing moonsault for two.

Taya charges into a clothesline but sends Suerte into the corner. All three members of the Tribe get in the corner for a Bronco Buster because we've somehow teleported back to the Attitude Era. Everything breaks down and the Underground is knocked out to the floor, leaving Mandel to get caught in a neckbreaker. London adds a shooting star for the pin and the medallions at 4:36.

**Rating:** D+. Not long enough to get anywhere but the Tribe's oddness is starting to grow on me. I get that it's the idea but for once it's actually working. It's also interesting to see the Underground lose as you would have guessed the three of them would make it to the seven way but a bit of a surprise can be a nice thing.

Post break, the Underground's agent yells at the losing team and says they would be fired if not for Johnny Mundo's intervention.

## Cueto Cup Quarterfinals: Jeremiah Crane vs. Mil Muertes

Muertes jumps him in the aisle and the fight is on in a hurry. Muertes throws him through some boxes and we take a break with no bell. Back with Crane being thrown through a door as Striker says this is going to be a No DQ match. They fight in the balcony above the announcers' area with Crane being thrown down to a lower balcony as this has been one sided so far. Crane fights back but gets sent into the post for his efforts, followed by going into the apron.

They finally get inside and I guess the match has already started as there's no bell. Crane is quickly sent back outside and through some empty wooden chairs. Some chops have no effect on Muertes so Crane tries a lap around the ring, only to get cut in half by a spear. Muertes throws

some chairs into the ring and a backbreaker puts Crane through them for two.

Crane gets all fired up and hits Muertes in the head with a chair over and over to get a breather. The chair is set over Muertes' throat and Crane pounds it down with the other chair. Now it's table time (duh) but Muertes spears him down instead. Muertes drops him face first onto the apron and it seems like it's time to wrap things up.

Back in and another spear is countered with a guillotine choke but Muertes drops him down for the break. Muertes throws in a table but Crane puts him through it instead for a very close two. Jeremiah goes to the middle rope and dives right into the Flatliner to send Muertes to the semifinals at 10:15 (with the clock starting when they first got into the ring).

**Rating:** B-. Crane has gotten a huge rub from this tournament and it's kind of sad to see him eliminated. Muertes is the right choice to go forward though as even though he's not as dominant as he used to be, there's always the chance that he could go on a tear and destroy everyone else to win the tournament.

Catrina kisses Crane, who seems to like it. That earns him a hard kick to the head and the villains leave.

An FBI agent comes to see Dario Cueto and says that the Order has chosen him to replace Councilman Delgado. The death seems to be news to Cueto but he's a bit shaken by the agent's presence. The agent says he's a big Pentagon Dark fan but even his skin will burn when the war comes. All that matters is bringing the gods back to power.

#### Cueto Cup Quarterfinals: The Mack vs. Pentagon Dark

Texano goes right after him and gets two off a leg lariat. Pentagon knocks him outside though and nails a big running kick to the head. A Codebreaker with Pentagon hanging over the ropes gives Texano control again and he sends Pentagon hard into the barricade. Cue Famous B. and Brenda for a distraction, allowing Pentagon to hit back to back Sling Blades.

Texano kicks him down again though, only to charge into a Backstabber out of the corner. Something like an Indian Deathlock has Pentagon in trouble but he's quickly in the ropes. Texano puts him in the Tree of Woe for a delayed dropkick, followed by a middle rope leg lariat for two. Famous B. tries to throw in a horseshoe but Pentagon takes it away and knocks Texano out for the easy pin at 6:08.

**Rating:** D+. The Famous B. stuff feels so out of place in the tournament, which is one of the biggest things Lucha Underground has ever done. B. is pure comedy (not exactly funny comedy that is) and that's not what you should be having with one of the most serious characters in the company.

The semifinals are now set:

Pentagon Dark vs. Mil Muertes

Prince Puma vs. Fenix

Post match Pentagon loads up Texano's arm but B. calls him out. That earns B. his second broken arm but Pentagon isn't done. After leaving for a bit, Pentagon comes back to break Brenda's arm to end the show.

Catrina is meeting Captain Vazquez, who she seems to know. Katrina says the gods don't fear her and Vazquez talks about the gods using Cage's gauntlet as a gateway. They both pull out their halves of the medallion and Vazquez says only one man in the Temple can take the gauntlet from Cage. He just so happens to answer to Katrina (Muertes' name isn't mentioned but it's heavily implied), but she points out that without her half of the medallion, Vazquez will no longer be immortal. Katrina says the gods will learn to fear a thousand deaths and leave, after saying goodbye to her mother. Now that's a twist.

**Overall Rating:** B-. This show did what it needed to do as we can see the end of the tournament from here. Things have really picked up and now that we have two great matches next week and then the big show, things should start getting back to the point that made this show such a hit. Throw in the storylines FINALLY picking up and this was one of the more entertaining shows they've done in a good, long while.

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# Summerslam Count-Up – 2007: Guess Who's Back

## Summerslam 2007

Date: August 27, 2007

Location: Continental Airlines Arena, East Rutherford, New Jersey

Attendance: 17,441

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

It's still an awkward period for the company as there isn't much going on and they're sort of just going through the motions. The big things tonight are the rise of Randy Orton and the return of HHH to face King Booker in the Game's first match since December. Other than that there's nothing noteworthy on the show. It's just such a dull time for the company and it shows in their major events. Let's get to it.

The opening video comes off like a long TV show intro. Mysterio is back tonight and Batista gets another world title shot. The main event is

covered a bit as well and they get ready to throw it to the arena but the video is hijacked by a \$6 Million Man bit about rebuilding HHH. He's already hijacking things.

### Kane vs. Finlay

Kane has banged up ribs due to a recent attack by Finlay. Apparently Finlay knocked some coffee onto Kane and didn't apologize. I've heard worse reasons for a brawl. Kane starts fast and uppercuts Finlay down in the corner and drops him with a back elbow to the jaw. The ribs are already bothering the big bald but he pops Finlay in the chin with more uppercuts. Finlay gets a boot up in the corner but Kane pops him with a right hand so hard it sends him to the floor.

Back in and Finlay gets in a shot to the bad ribs to knock Kane to the outside. A backsplash to the bad ribs is good for two and Finlay puts on a half crab. This has been very physical so far. Kane finally powers up and hits an enziguri to escape. A big boot drops Finlay and some clotheslines in the corner stagger him. Kane hits a one armed side slam which is a bit of a stretch given the rib injuries. JBL is doing a great job on commentary here, talking about how a rib injury affects how you move in the ring.

The top rope clothesline connects but he can't follow up. Kane misses a charge in the corner and gets dropped by a clothesline. Cue Hornswoggle who runs from Kane, allowing the big man to hit a big boot on Finlay. Horny is thrown back inside but shoved down. Kane tries the chokeslam on Finlay but the ribs give out, allowing Finlay to hit a DDT for two. In a classic heel move, Finlay goes to unhook the buckle and uses the distraction to go for his club but the referee catches him. Horny throws in another club but Kane kicks out at two. Finlay misses a charge into the corner and the chokeslam is good for the pin.

**Rating:** B-. That's probably high but I was really liking this match. It was a good choice for an opener with both guys working hard and pounding on each other with some solid force. The fans were into it too and popped quite well for almost everything in there. Kane sold the ribs well and the fans liked his comeback. Nice choice for an opener here.

All the GM's are in the back at a party when Vince comes in and wants to know why there are no women here. That's a good question actually. Vince says the mother of his illegitimate son will be here tonight. Santino comes in and suggests he's the illegitimate son but Regal yells him away. MVP comes in as well to complain about Teddy Long and issue an open challenge to Matt Hardy for anything other than a wrestling match. He leaves and Regal suggests that he himself is the son. Now Regal leaves and Coach suggests it might be Regal, but Vince apparently doesn't like English women.

Rey Mysterio is coming back! Tonight! Why did we need a promo for this?

### Intercontinental Title: Mr. Kennedy vs. Carlito vs. Umaga

No real story here other than Umaga is defending and these two are at the Intercontinental level. Kennedy tries to negotiate and gets punched in the face by Umaga. Carlito loads up the apple but gets punched as well, giving the champion complete control so far. The challengers fall out to the floor and finally start going after Umaga at the same time, though it has the same result. Carlito gets in a cheap shot from behind to send Umaga to the floor and Kennedy rams the champion into the steps.

Back in and Carlito gets two off a rollup but gets caught using the ropes. Everyone in this is either a heel or close enough to call them one. Carlito hits a springboard back elbow to the jaw for two on Kennedy but gets caught in a Stroke for no cover. Instead Kennedy goes after Umaga but gets pulled to the floor instead of getting in a cheap shot. Umaga hits a middle rope headbutt on Carlito but Kennedy saves Carlito from a charging Samoan.

Carlito knocks Kennedy to the floor and gets two on the champion before asking for an alliance with Kennedy. The champion won't be double suplexed but easily hits one on the other guys. Umaga is back up first to clean house and a spinning Rock Bottom gets two on Kennedy. A superkick puts Carlito in the corner and a running hip attack crushes him again. Kennedy sends Umaga to the floor and hits a rolling senton on Carlito, only to have Umaga come back in with the Samoan Spike on Kennedy for the pin.

**Rating:** D+. The match wasn't bad but this could have been on any given episode of Raw. Umaga was fine for a monster and would soon be slain by Jeff Hardy. Kennedy was supposed to be in a huge story coming up but a Wellness violation derailed those plans. As for Carlito....there's just nothing interesting to say about him. He exists and that's about it.

Undertaker is coming back. Again. Seriously there's at least a five hour DVD of just his returns.

We recap Rey Mysterio vs. Chavo Guerrero. This time it's a more standard story: Chavo is jealous of Rey's success and injured Rey's knee, setting up this match for revenge. Chavo even dressed up as Rey and wrestled a match to destroy a jobber's knee.

### Rey Mysterio vs. Chavo Guerrero

For some reason Rey's torso is covered in silver paint. The fans are all over Chavo to start as you would expect. The heel goes right after the knee of course but Rey slips away before the damage can be done. They do the gymnastics routine out of a test of strength as the fans chant for Eddie. Rey's paint is already coming off, making him look really stupid. Chavo tries to bend the knee around the ropes but is sent to the floor for a big dive from Mysterio.

Back in and Rey goes up but gets caught in the Tree of Woe which is similar to what hurt his knee in the first place. Guerrero goes right for the knee and asks him if he quits. Off to the Brock Lock (Chavo bends the knee around his neck) but Rey counters into a headscissors. Chavo stays on him though and hooks another leg lock until Rey FINALLY gets out with a kick to the head.

He tries for 619 but the leg gives out, allowing Chavo to put on a half crab. Mysterio finally gets to the ropes but the knee is still too hurt to follow up. This time it's Chavo going up but getting pulled down into the Tree of Woe so Rey can go after the knee. The paint is entirely off Rey's chest now, making it look like he's been fixing up his house.

Rey hits a seated senton off the apron before hitting a hard kick to the head for two. Chavo catches a springboard moonsault press but gets

countered into a tornado DDT for two. Chavo comes right back with a Gory Bomb for two followed by two of the Three Amigos. Rey spins out of the third and takes Chavo into the ropes for the 619 and the springboard splash for the pin.

**Rating:** C-. The match was ok but at the end of the day there was no doubt that Rey was winning at all. It wasn't boring but I liked last year's action more. The story this year was better, but the paint and the obvious ending didn't do it any favors. Chavo doesn't work that well as a heel whatsoever.

King Booker says he'll beat HHH tonight. That's hilarious.

### Divas Battle Royal

Beth Phoenix, Torrie Wilson, Victoria, Layla, Brooke, Kelly Kelly, Kristal Marshall, Michelle McCool, Mickie James, Jillian Hall, Melina, Maria

The winner gets a title shot at Candace Michelle at some point in the future and you don't have to go over the top rope. It's a Divas battle royal so you know this is going to come down to about three people as potential winners. It's a huge brawl to start with Brooke (Miss Tessmacher) being sent out early. Jillian Hall eliminates Maria and those great little shorts of hers. Layla, who looks much better with curly hair, is out and the loud screaming continues.

Kristal actually knocks Victoria out and Michelle puts Kristal out a few seconds later. Kelly is thrown out and Mickie helps Michelle eliminate Jillian. Melina dumps Mickie and we're down to Torrie, Melina, McCool and Phoenix. Melina screams a lot and takes Torrie down but gets clotheslined out by Michelle. Torrie and McCool go after Beth but Wilson is quickly tossed. Beth easily tosses for the win.

**Rating:** D. There's just NOTHING to talk about in these things. It's all about the girls looking good and while that worked, it doesn't make for an interesting eight minutes of "action." Beth would go on to dominate the division for several years as the wrestling was phased out in favor of models who MIGHT wrestle a match here or there. Then they brought in a second belt for some reason that didn't work. Less than nothing of value



here, other than looks.

Here's MVP for his challenge to Matt Hardy as Beth's music is still playing. He says no one bought a ticket to see the girls (likely true) so here's the US Champion to entertain you. MVP talks about growing up drinking beer but now he drinks the finer beverages. Tonight though, he's lowering himself to challenge Matt to a beer drinking contest. This was the latest in a LONG series of challenges before these guys actually had a match. It went on for over six months before Matt actually won the title at Backlash. They would even win the Smackdown Tag Titles in a few days.

Anyway Matt comes out for the contest and sounds drunk before the first can is opened. Matt says MVP isn't better than anyone and is proud to be a common man. He knows he can out drink MVP, but tonight he isn't going to try. A few weeks back MVP brought in a substitute for a boxing match against Hardy: former world champion Evander Holyfield.

The fans immediately get what's going on and here's Austin to drink for Matt instead. Gee good thing he was in the building and Matt knew it would be a beer drinking contest. Cole says this is fair. JBL: "THIS IS NOT FAIR! EVANDER HOLYFIELD IS JUST EVANDER HOLYFIELD!!! THAT IS FREAKING STONE COLD!" Austin does warmups before the contest and Stuns MVP before they drink the first beer. It's hard to argue with these nostalgia moments as the fans went NUTS for Austin.

Wrestlemania 24 is in Orlando.

Cryme Tyme comes in to see the GM's and Vince and suggest they might be Vince's son. They start talking about that money money yeah yeah and since this is WWE, it turns into a dance off with Regal stealing the show as always. Cue Ron Simmons for the obvious punchline.

ECW Title: CM Punk vs. John Morrison

Morrison is defending, having taken the title from Punk at Vengeance in what was supposed to be Benoit winning the title. John is freshly changed over from Johnny Nitro so he's still rocking the poetry. Punk takes him down by the legs to start but John has him in a chinlock a few seconds

later. They trade hiptosses until Punk slams him down to take over. Punk dropkicks Morrison down onto the apron but John blocks a suplex back in with a neckbreaker onto the apron.

Morrison pounds away at Punk and puts on something vaguely resembling a Tazmission. A knee to the ribs gets two and it's back to the chinlock. Back up and Punk misses the backfist but gets two off a rolling sunset flip out of the corner. A spinning cross body out of the corner gets the same and there's the running knee in the corner. The bulldog, of course, doesn't work but a powerslam gets another near fall for Punk.

Morrison comes right back with a backbreaker and neckbreaker for two but CM counters the flip neckbreaker (Morrison's finisher) into a clothesline. A moonsault of all things gets two for Punk and he crotches John on the top rope. Punk clotheslines him down for two and a high kick has Morrison in trouble, but he manages to block a middle rope hurricanrana and put his feet on the ropes to retain.

**Rating:** C. Again this match could have been on any given episode of ECW on Sci-Fi, which is exactly where it was when Punk won the title nine days later. Why they didn't just do that here is anyone's guess, but I don't think anyone really gave much thought to what was going on with ECW anyway. The match was pretty good but it needed more than seven minutes.

We recap HHH vs. Booker, which doesn't have much of a story to it. King Booker was going after Lawler and Ross for not respecting him enough and HHH, noted defender of the little guy, is coming back to defend their honor. The hook is King vs. King but in other words, HHH is returning from injury and we need to feed him someone with some credibility.

#### HHH vs. King Booker

HHH's return is of course over the top and not as good as the one in 2002. Booker gets in a cheap shot to start but HHH comes back with right hands. A clothesline puts Booker on the floor and a second clothesline does the same. Back in and Booker gets in some forearms but walks into the facebuster for two. Queen Sharmell finally helps her man out and Booker goes after the injured leg.

HHH counters a slam and takes out Booker's leg before putting on a Figure Four. Sharmell interferes again to break the hold and a quick kick to the face gets two for Booker. Back up and they slug it out with HHH taking over by sending Booker to the floor. HHH whips Booker into the steps and gets caught in a spinebuster back inside for two. The Pedigree is escaped and the Book End gets two. The Houston Hangover misses though and the Pedigree is good for the pin.

Rating: D+. One former world champion squashed, dozens to go. HHH is back and the match was never in doubt at all. The match wasn't even eight minutes long and yet again Booker looks like a goon against HHH, albeit with roles reversed from Wrestlemania XIX. Nothing to see here and HHH didn't look like anything great.

We recap Batista vs. Khali but there isn't much to say. Khali won the title in a battle royal due to Edge being injured. Batista challenged him to try to slay the beast. Khali is using a vice grip around this time.

#### Smackdown World Title: Batista vs. Great Khali

Khali immediately takes him into the corner and chops him down. Some elbows to the head put Batista down again and there's a hard clothesline for good measure. All champion so far. Batista falls down to the floor and gets back in for the big chop for two. Big Dave is sent shoulder first into the corner and there's a nerve hold to really keep up the suck. The hold stays on for over a minute and a half, drawing a boring chant.

Batista finally hits a jawbreaker but Khali chops him down for two. Cole even acknowledges the boring chant. Batista blocks the vice grip to finally wake the crowd up a bit before hitting a spinebuster. The champion escapes the Batista Bomb and catches him coming off the middle rope in the Punjabi Plunge for two. Then to really screw over the fans, Khali's manager sends in a chair and Khali whacks Batista for the DQ.

**Rating:** F. Oh come on. They've GOT to be screwing with us right? This wasn't even seven minutes long and over a minute and a half of that was in a nerve hold. The fans were absolutely right in booing the match but the worse sign is they cheered for the comeback. It was clear they cared

about Batista and wanted to see him win but the solution is to make them wait so Batista could win the title next month in a stupid three way.

Batista destroys Khali with the chair post match. Even JBL rips into Khali for such a lame ending.

Vince and Coach are wondering where the aforementioned woman is when Regal pops in to say she's here. Say it with me: here are Mae and Moolah. Apparently Mae wants to give Vince another illegitimate son and you know what's coming: Mae nearly molests Vince to death until Regal and Coach drag her off. Vince seems to like it. COMEDY!

We recap the main event. Cena has been champion for eleven months and Orton has been rising up the card as the legend killer. He was named #1 contender on Raw and spent the next several weeks RK0ing Cena.

#### Raw World Title: John Cena vs. Randy Orton

They lock up to start with Cena taking over via a headlock. A hard shoulder puts Orton down and the fans aren't pleased at all. Cena takes him down with a headlock takeover but Orton fights up quickly. Back up and Orton hits a shoulder and headlock takeover of his own to take over. The fans hate Cena as he tries to grab the STFU but Orton makes it to the rope and pops Cena in the face to a big reaction. Orton was a mega heel coming into this match so the fans cheering him is very bizarre.

Orton pounds away even more but Cena comes back with a bulldog for two. A forearm to the back of John's head puts him right back down for two though and momentum shifts again. Cena tries a leapfrog but Orton stops on a dime and blasts him in the head instead. Randy knocks him from the apron onto the announce table as the head trauma continues. Back in and Orton takes Cena down with a chinlock as the champion is in trouble.

Randy even lays on his back to crank even more but Cena fights up again, countering with a belly to back suplex to put both guys down. Back up and Cena misses a charge, going head first into the buckle to shake up the head again. Orton stomps away on Cena including a hard shot to the back of the champ's head. A knee drop misses Cena's head but Orton takes him down with a powerslam for two.

Back to the chinlock for a bit before Orton snaps off a gorgeous dropkick for two. We hit chinlock #3 but this time the suplex is countered into a headlock takeover to keep Orton in control. Orton hooks a bodyscissors to go with the chinlock but John fights to his feet and powers out of the hold before initiating his finishing sequence. The ProtoBomb puts Orton down but the Shuffle is countered by Orton's over the back backbreaker. Orton's Elevated DDT (Cena's feet hanging on the middle rope) gets a very close two count and Randy is getting a look in his eyes.

Orton's RKO (jumping cutter) is countered but Cena charges at Randy, only to go sailing over the top and out to the floor. Randy rams him into the steps and Cena is in big trouble. Back in and Cena gets in a quick shot to stagger Orton but gets crotched as he goes up. A superplex is blocked though and Cena hits the top rope Fameasser, but Orton blocks the FU. A shot to the head puts Cena down again but his running punt to the head misses. There's the STFU but Randy grabs the rope. Back up and the RKO takes Cena down for two. They get up again and the FU hits to retain Cena's title.

**Rating:** B-. While this wasn't the epic showdown they were hoping for, it definitely was a good fight. Orton going after Cena's head and not worrying about the consequences for the sake of winning the title made him seem ruthless but Cena never giving up was exactly what you would expect from him. Good stuff here but not great.

**Overall Rating:** D+. The show isn't bad but I'm looking for more out of Summerslam than this. Orton vs. Cena was the match of the night and that's just ok. That's the best way to sum up most of these matches: just ok. Only two matches crack nine minutes here and that's just not enough time for a lot of them. The show isn't worth seeing, but brighter days were ahead.

### Ratings Comparison

Kane vs. Finlay

Original: C

Redo: B-

Carlito vs. Mr. Kennedy vs. Umaga

Original: C+

Redo: D+

Rey Mysterio vs. Chavo Guerrero

Original: B-

Redo: C-

Divas Battle Royal

Original: F

Redo: D

CM Punk vs. John Morrison

Original: B+

Redo: C

HHH vs. King Booker

Original: B-

Redo: D+

Great Khali vs. Batista

Original: D-

Redo: F

John Cena vs. Randy Orton

Original: B

Redo: B-

Overall Rating

Original: B

Redo: D+

DANG I liked this way too much the first time.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/08/10/history-of-summerslam-count-up-2007-hhh-is-back-again/>

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# **Impact Wrestling – August 10, 2017: For Those Of You Who Like To See Me Rant**

## **Impact Wrestling**

Date: August 10, 2017

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Josh Matthews, D'Angelo Dinero, Jeremy Borash

The battle between Alberto El Patron and LAX continues but this time around LAX has some help in the form of Low Ki. Last week Low Ki helped LAX against El Patron and his family, revealing himself as the newest member of the team. Other than that we'll find out the other finalist in the Super X Cup tournament. Let's get to it.

We open with LAX and the Veterans of War brawling in the parking lot. They'll fight for the Tag Team Titles later tonight. I like the idea of pushing the Veterans of War but is there a reason they weren't even mentioned last week?

Video on the Last Knockout Standing match between Sienna and Rosemary with Sienna narrating about how you have to govern in light or darkness but the hero always falls.

Opening sequence.

Sienna is sitting in the ring and says she's the epitome of a champion. She's dealt with every challenge Karen Jarrett has thrown at her but now she has a mystery opponent at Destination X. This show isn't continuing until she gets some answers, so here's Karen to respond. Sienna says no one can be ready for her in a week but Karen says the opponent is always ready. In the worst surprise ever, it's Gail Kim. I'm laughing. Really, I am. We're supposed to be stunned that Gail Kim is getting a title shot. I'm laughing. The fight is on with Gail diving off the apron with a clothesline and some right hands. Referees break it up.

Joseph Park gives Grado a pep talk before they have a handicap match against Kongo Kong later. Park says his football coach taught him that the fear of the hit is worse than the fear itself. Grado doesn't know what that means and Park doesn't either. Grado: "Why don't you call and ask him?" Park: "He died a few years ago."

Laredo Kid/Garza Jr. vs. Hijo de Fantasma/Naomichi Marufuchi

Fantasma and Kid start things up with an exchange of non-near falls into a standoff. Garza comes in and eats a basement dropkick for two but catches Marufuchi with a Codebreaker for the same. Everything breaks down with Kid and Fantasma both hitting huge dives to the floor. Back in and a



hurricanrana sets up a frog splash for two on Garza but Kid takes Fantasma down with a tornado DDT.

In quite the complicated spot, Garza picks Fantasma up for a powerbomb while also holding Marufuchi in a World's Strongest Slam. At the same time, Kid adds a top rope leg lariat to Fantasma to make it kind of a Doomsday Device to put both opponents down at the same time. Naturally, it gets two. Kid misses a Phoenix Splash and it's time for that stupid deal where you throw partners together and make one DDT the other.

We pause for Garza to take off his pants but thankfully the distraction lets Marufuchi and Fantasma superkick him down. Something like a GTS puts Marufuchi down but a double kick to the head drops Fantasma and Kid to put all four on the mat. Since they haven't gotten enough stuff in yet, Fantasma hits a dive onto Kid, leaving Garza to get in the stripping. He misses a moonsault to give Marufuchi two but Sliced Bread #2 finally puts Garza away at 9:20.

**Rating:** B-. Here's the thing: this feels like they're trying to channel the Monday Nitro cruiserweight formula and while the match was entertaining, it doesn't quite work as well. There's probably a half dozen promotions on YouTube offering either something similar or better and that keeps this from feeling as special. When you have people like Will Ospreay, Ricochet or others like them out there, this doesn't quite measure up. It also didn't help that it felt like they were just cramming stuff in for the sake of cramming stuff in, which made the match feel a bit longer than it should.

That being said, there's FAR worse stuff they could be using this time for and the match was fun. It's just not as awesome as I think GFW thinks it is. If nothing else, it would be nice to have them put some of these teams towards a title instead of just having them out there doing random flips and superkicks.

#### Kongo Kong vs. Grado/Joseph Park

Grado starts, looks at Kong, and hands it off to Park. Joseph hurts himself on a headbutt attempt but Kong misses a Cannonball. Some splashes in the corner have Kong in some trouble but he runs them over with

clotheslines. The Cannonball puts Park away at 2:46. Remember a few years ago when Park was one of the most entertaining characters in wrestling because he got to show off how good he could be with comedy and let you see how much more he could do than Abyss? Well screw that because we need this fat, embarrassment to wrestling named Kongo Kong to get a monster push instead.

Post match Kong loads up a top rope splash to both of them but Laurel Van Ness comes down and slaps him. Kong loads her up for something but Tyrus of all people comes down for the save. Laurel and Kong bail.

Low Ki, Trevor Lee and Lashley are ready for a six man tag tonight. Low Ki speaks Spanish and rants about Alberto turning down an offer from Konnan.

Video on Trevor Lee stealing Sonjay Dutt's X-Division Title and declaring himself the real champion. Lee says he never got his rematch and he has the belt so he's the title's rightful owner. They meet in a ladder match next week.

Jeff Jarrett talks about Lashley being a pro wrestler and an MMA fighter. The head of Lashley's MMA gym wants him to pick MMA but he and Jarrett have agreed to work together.

Dutch Mantel sat down with Matt Sydal and Lashley to talk about their upcoming match. Lashley says he might be the #1 athlete in the world because he dominates two sports. Sydal says he's the #3 X-Division athlete in the world, which Lashley laughs off because Sydal is just an X-Division guy. A fight nearly breaks out and security makes the save.

#### Tag Team Titles: LAX vs. Veterans of War

LAX is defending and this is a street fight. Before the match, Konnan brags about how awesome LAX is. The brawl is on in a hurry on the floor with some trashcan lid shots putting LAX in early trouble. Santana gets belly to belly suplexed onto the ramp and it's already table time. The Veterans botch the MOAB through the table on Ortiz but Homicide pulls the referee out at two.

Back from a break with Mayweather handcuffed to the ropes and LAX stomping away. Wilcox cleans house with a Samoan drop but Ortiz sends him into a chair in the corner for two. Something like Poetry in Motion puts Wilcox through a table in the corner to retain the titles at 11:37.

**Rating:** C-. This was two different matches with the break changing everything. As usual, the tag division has one set of challengers at a time and since LAX is apparently the most amazing team EVER, the Veterans are easily dispatched. As usual, the numbers game dominates everyone, except for Alberto of course after he beat the whole team in about nine minutes a few weeks back.

Matt Sydal, Alberto El Patron and Sonjay Dutt are ready for the six man.

Super X Cup Semifinals: Taiji Ishimori vs. ACH

ACH headlocks him down to start but Ishimori spins away and grabs a headscissors to put ACH on the floor. Back from a break with Ishimori hitting a double stomp out of the corner for two. ACH gets in a hard clothesline but his back gives out on a suplex. Ishimori's superkick is no sold so ACH hits a clothesline for two. Ishimori hits a gutbuster and a 450 for the pin at 10:28.

**Rating:** C. Yeah whatever. This is a great example of all the problems in this company in a nutshell: it's a tournament for a prize that hasn't been around in over ten years between people who have barely ever wrestled here. All we've seen are a few entertaining matches between the participants and the same promo from all of them.

That's not enough to make this feel important and the tournament just keeps going with no reason for fans to care. That's the promotion in one statement: these people are having watchable matches but there's no reason to care about any of them. That's really not good and it's plagued this company for years.

Dezmond Xavier comes out to stare Ishimori down.

Recap of Low Ki joining LAX.

We run down the Destination X card.

## Trevor Lee/Bobby Lashley/Low Ki vs. Sonjay Dutt/Alberto El Patron/Matt Sydal

Alberto goes after Low Ki to start and it's quickly off to Dutt and Sydal for stereo standing moonsaults. Sydal stays in and kicks away at Lashley but gets taken down with a crossbody. Back from an early break with Sydal getting choked by Lashley and then chopped by Low Ki. Pope: "There's something about Low Ki that makes you think HITMAN!"

Lee comes in to beat on Sydal too and Lashley adds a running shoulder in the corner. Matt gets out of an abdominal stretch but gets put in a dragon sleeper. Low Ki misses a charge into the corner though and it's off to Dutt for a hurricanrana. A roll into a dropkick drops Lee but Lashley comes in for a Dominator to Dutt.

Sonjay finally gets in a tornado DDT to escape and the hot tag brings in Alberto, because he's always the one who gets to do the big house cleaning segment. Alberto powerslams Low Ki and hits a suicide dive onto Lashley. Everything breaks down and Alberto hits everyone in the knees but Dutt springboards into a powerslam from Lashley. The Warrior's Way ends Dutt at 17:48.

**Rating:** C-. Totally standard (and WAY too long) six man tag with Low Ki getting a push towards next week's World Title match. Everything else was just filling time because, as usual, this company seems to have no idea how to use its time well. This felt like they were trying to stretch a match because that's what a main event should be, even though it did very little to make me want to see the three matches next week.

**Overall Rating:** D. Sweet merciful goodness I'm glad this is over. GFW has gone from a watchable enough promotion to one of the most dull, lifeless places I've seen in years. There's no reason to care about anything on this show and they cram in so much stuff that it feels like it's about 19 hours long every week.

You know what would help this promotion a lot? Some promos. When is the last time you had someone in this company come out, talk for three to five minutes about what they're doing and why the fans should care without being interrupted by either one of the three bosses (yes three

bosses) or the person they're feuding with to start a brawl? You'll get one every now and then but more often than not it's all rushed along because we need to get in some international tag match or an extra ten minutes on the main event or another tournament match in a tournament with no meaning or significance whatsoever.

There's no connection to any of these people and it's killing the shows. Why should I care if Grado can't stay in the country? Or why should I want Alberto to overcome LAX? Or why should it matter which newcomer wins the Super X Cup? I have no idea, because none of these people are presented as anything more than people who come in, have a match, and then get off screen as fast as they can so we can move on to something else.

The commentary isn't helping either. The three of them are really just there to do their individual thing. Pope is the guy who gets excited about moves, Josh is the self obsessed heel and Jeremy is the guy who plugs everything. Not once do you see them slow down for a second and add any emotion to anything. All those times when JR and King would have a camera on them talking about how important something was actually mattered. They gave you a connection to the stories and that makes a difference. I know more about Pop's sitcoms than I do about why Alberto and Low Ki are fighting for the World Title next week.

I'm really hoping that this hyper focus on the X-Division changes after Destination X because it's crippling the show. There were three different matches (out of five) involving the X-Division tonight and none of them felt like anything more than run of the mill X-Division stuff. Having the people come out and do the flips and such is fine, but it needs to be part of a package instead of the focal point of the show.

This show was a mess but it's just a part of the bigger problem. The promotion seems to think that throwing as much stuff as possible at the fans is the way to go but don't seem to understand that you need a reason to care about someone. Fans gravitated to Austin, Hogan, Cena, Bryan and any other top face you can think of because they either felt a connection to them or were sucked in by their personalities and charisma. GFW offers neither of those and it makes for really hard to sit through television a

lot of the time, which is what happened tonight. Bad show, and it's for one big reason.

### Results

Hijo de Fantasma/Naomichi Marufuchi b. Laredo Kid/Garza Jr. – Sliced Bread #2 to Garza

Kongo Kong b. Grado/Joseph Park – Cannonball to Park

LAX b. Veterans of War – Flip dive through a table

Taiji Ishimori b. ACH – 450

Trevor Lee/Bobby Lashley/Low Ki b. Sonjay Dutt/Alberto El Patron/Matt Sydal – Warrior's Way to Dutt

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# **WWF New York City House Show**

# – August 7, 1976: In Which Stan Hansen Gets Squashed

## WWF House Show

Date: August 7, 1976

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

Attendance: 22,000

Commentator: Vince McMahon

This was added to the Network recently and I almost always enjoy these older shows. There's something about going this far back into history and seeing how things really were back in a different era. The main event, or at least the featured match as the last match wasn't always the biggest, is Stan Hansen challenging Bruno Sammartino in a rematch of their original rematch at Showdown at Shea. Let's get to it.

A note on the Network says this isn't the complete show. I'll try to let you know if anything is missing as far as I know.

Vince welcomes us to the show and explains the main event.

## Johnny Rivera vs. Jose Cadiz

The ring announcer says there are nine matches on- the card but I can only find eight. Maybe something is missing from the records or maybe they're counting a 2/3 falls match as two matches. He also has some of the worst charisma I've ever heard. It's also weird to see the referee in khakis and such a dark atmosphere.

Rivera grabs some armdrags to start and Cadiz is already frustrated. A headlock slows things down a bit and this is just such a culture shock compared to modern stuff. Cadiz fights off the mat and puts on a fireman's carry with some choking at the same time. That's not cool with a fan who is seemingly well known to both Vince and the rest of the crowd. Rivera flips over the back and dropkicks him to the floor for a breather.

Back in and something like a Wasteland gives Cadiz two but Rivera spins up into a sunset flip for two. Rivera misses a flip splash and gets covered for one as this is trying to speed up a bit. A few snapmares set up a chinlock from Cadiz as Vince is surprised that someone can do this well in their Garden debut. Rivera fights up and gets the better of a full nelson before a not terrible ankle scissors gets two. Cadiz grabs a headscissors on the mat but Rivera just backs away for the escape.

Back up and Rivera snaps off a hurricanrana but misses a dropkick, allowing Cadiz to bite his face (no reaction from Vince on that). With nothing else working, Cadiz ties him into the ropes for a running knee to the ribs. How dastardly of him. Rivera slips out and gets in a dropkick before grabbing a chinlock of his own. That's finally enough as Rivera hits a few dropkicks and a high crossbody for the pin at 10:41.

**Rating:** C. These are going to be on a slightly sliding scale as there's such a difference in eras at this point. The match wasn't horrible but it would have been better served with about three minutes cut out. Rivera had some nice high flying (for its time) stuff and Cadiz was more of a vicious heel than I was expecting. Not terrible here but Rivera kept slowing down instead of stringing much together.

#### SD Jones vs. Johnny Rodz

Rodz is more famous as the trainer of Tommy Dreamer and the Dudleyz among others. They trade control on the mat to start with Rodz likely choking to take over. We hit the armbars for a bit and Rodz pulls whatever he can to stay in control. Jones finally shoves him off and Rodz backs off in the corner like a good heel should. Some stomps and a middle rope kick to the back of the head gives Rodz a one count but he hurts his hand punching Jones in the jaw.

Rodz wants time out so Jones delays a bit before sending Rodz into the corner. That's kind of nice of him in a rather mean way. Rodz gets in a cheap shot and some middle rope elbows to the neck but Jones shrugs it off and knocks him into the corner without much effort. They very slowly slug it out (it's only been eight minutes) until Rodz tries a bridging German suplex but Jones lifts his shoulder to pin Johnny.



**Rating:** D. This really didn't work as they didn't have much to offer other than punching each other. Jones looked like someone who was there for charisma (a common trait back in the day) because all he seemed to do was throw punches and then counter a suplex for the pin. Rodz was billed as Unpredictable but he wasn't much outside of the norm. Pretty dull match and the fans didn't seem to care until the ending.

Tag Team Titles: Executioners vs. Jose Gonzalez/Dominic DeNucci

Two out of three falls and DeNucci (Mick Foley's trainer) and Gonzalez (the guy who murdered Bruiser Brody) are challenging. The Executioners are your standard monsters in masks but they're played by Killer Kowalski and Big John Studd. Gonzalez and we'll say #2 (normally Studd and that's clearly him) start things off with #2 grabbing a headlock and grinding the much smaller Gonzalez down.

It's off to #1 vs. Dominic with the rather popular DeNucci getting cheered as he chops and slugs away. Double teaming keeps Dominic down and we have a double stomach claw to show that it really is 1976. The champs slowly take turns hammering on Dominic in the corner and it's off to another stomach claw. Dominic finally gets over for the hot tag off to Gonzalez as everything breaks down.

The Executioners are whipped into each other for a BIG reaction and Gonzalez slams #1 for two. A sunset flip gets the same and it's back to Dominic for some double arm shots to the back. #1 gets tied in the rope and Dominic goes for the mask but can only get it over the chin. A catapult sends #1 into the corner and #2 gets slammed for two as everything breaks down again. The referee gets Gonzalez out of the ring and that means a double backbreaker puts DeNucci away for the first fall at 10:12.

After a brief breather, DeNucci bails into his corner and almost seems scared of the Executioners, which makes them quite the imposing force. #1 sends DeNucci's back into the corner over and over before stomping away as the champs have a target. Now it's a back claw, which makes it look more like a massage than anything painful. Gonzalez finally comes in to try for a save, only to not be there when Dominic gets over for a tag.

Man you had ONE JOB.

A top rope stomp to the back doesn't even get a cover and DeNucci gets over for the tag, which is allowed despite clearly not being seen. Gonzalez cleans house and dropkicks one over the top as the referee has no idea who is legal (fair enough in this case as save for a bit of hair sticking out, the Executioners are nearly identical). With regular strategy not working, Gonzalez just unloads on #1 and keeps ramming him face first into the mat. Simple stuff often does it better. DeNucci comes in to hammer away with some more of those double shots, followed by an airplane spin of all things to tie it up at 19:12 total.

There's a quick break (which might have been missing tape) and we come back with DeNucci punching a dizzy #1 into the corner as the crowd is losing it over this stuff. A backdrop is enough to allow a tag off to #2 and the match just kind of stops for a bit as #1 can't get back up.

We settle down to Gonzalez being backdropped but #1 can't even get up to the top out of exhaustion. It's back to Dominic to slug away on #2 and load up the airplane spin, only to have #1 make the save. Gonzalez and starts cleaning house again but a slam on #2 is broken up by a kick from #1, causing #2 to fall on top to retain at 25:37 total.

**Rating:** C+. I liked this more than I was expecting as Gonzalez was a good fast paced guy while DeNucci, with that odd double strike style, made for a good veteran presence. The Executioners were a good team and would have been better off with Lou Albano talking for him, though he wasn't here for some reason. Good match here and the time didn't actually bother me all that much, which is rather surprising.

#### Bruiser Brody vs. Kevin Sullivan

Sullivan is billed as popular (right) and Brody is #1 contender in his MSG debut. Brody wastes no time in hammering away on Sullivan whose shots to the ribs have no effect at all. A whip into the corner allows Brody to pound away even more, followed by some no selling of the right hands. Brody throws him up in a rack for the submission at 2:29. Total squash and Brody did little more than forearm/punch until the end. He looks AWESOME though and that's all that matters.

## Chief Jay Strongbow/Billy White Wolf vs. Baron Mikel Scicluna/Rocky Tamayo

Strongbow and White Wolf are a big time team and #1 contenders. Tamayo and Strongbow start things off but hang on a second as we have to wait for the microphone to be raised. Jay starts a crisscross before sliding between Tamayo's legs for a fairly fast paced spot for these days. An armdrag sends Tamayo down so it's off to the Baron, who gets caught with a foreign object. The nitwit of a referee doesn't actually take it away from him so Baron gets in a cheap shot with the object to take over.

Tamayo kicks away from the apron and more foreign object shots have White Wolf reeling as well. It's back to Tamayo as the slow beating continues. The Baron allows White Wolf to roll over for the hot tag to Strongbow and that means it's time for the chops. Everything breaks down and the good guys clean house, capped off by a double chop to put Tamayo away at 5:56.

**Rating:** C. This was straight Memphis with the foreign object before the Indians (which they were called over and over again during the match) started picking up the pace. That was the most entertaining part of the show so far and it was a face paced ending. I could have gone for more here, which I didn't expect to say in the slightest.

## WWF World Title: Bruno Sammartino vs. Stan Hansen

Bruno is defending inside a cage with elimination only to win. Hansen has long blond hair here and it's a very weird look for him. Bruno takes a bit for his entrance and the fans get more and more excited until he finally comes out, getting easily the biggest reaction of the night so far. As you might expect, Stan jumps Bruno as he gets in and the fight is on in a hurry. The place just goes NUTS for Bruno's comeback though and it's easy to see why he stayed on top for so long with this kind of reaction.

A knee to the ribs cuts Bruno off and Hansen stomps away, only to get sent into the cage. The wall rocks backwards, which makes for a cool visual compared to the rigid cage you see today. Bruno kicks away and even blocks the lariat, sending the crowd into an even bigger frenzy. Hansen elbows and forearms his way to freedom but Bruno is right back

with knees to the back to set up a reverse chinlock (which Vince calls a Boston crab).

A quick attempt to escape gets Hansen beaten up even more and Bruno just chokes away. Stan hits him in the throat and goes up as a drunk fan is carried out through the entrance. There's a low blow to Stan as this is almost all Bruno so far. Hansen elbows the cage (which Vince calls the lariat) and Bruno keeps kicking away. Stan goes for the door again and earns himself another beating.

Some shots to the back have Bruno in the closest thing to trouble he's had all match but he sends Stan into the post for his efforts. Hansen is busted open and Bruno takes off Stan's elbow pad (which may have been loaded) to go after the cut. Bruno just unloads on him with shots to the head and Hansen is DONE. Sammartino looks at Hansen as he's draped over the ropes and then walks out to retain at 10:33.

**Rating:** B-. Sammartino was getting vicious here but this was basically a squash as Hansen only got in a few brief bursts of offense. Other than that it was Bruno kicking the stuffing out of him for about nine out of the ten and a half minutes. It was rather odd to see Hansen destroyed like this but it gives Bruno the definitive win, which is probably the idea they're going for here.

Hansen poses on top of the cage and then collapses backwards in a funny bit. Even Vince says this was annihilation.

### Bobo Brazil vs. Doug Gilbert

Brazil is 52 years old here because I don't think he was ever actually young. Gilbert jumps Brazil before the bell and hammers away but a kick to the head and the Coco Butt (headbutt) send Gilbert outside for the countout at 35 seconds. Were they running REALLY short or something? Bobo never even took his vest off.

### Ivan Putski vs. Skandor Akbar

Before the match, Putski says he wants Hansen. Akbar is far more famous as a manager but he did wrestle too. He looks a bit like Rusev. Putski

grinds on a headlock to start and hits him in the face a few times. Grabbing the trunks doesn't get Akbar out of trouble but raking the eyes does.

Vince admires Putski's thighs and calves as Akbar chokes on the ropes. Putski shrugs it off, hammers away, hits the Polish Hammer (running ax handle to the chest) and hits a seated senton for the pin at 2:56. My guess is they had to wrap it up early for the sake of the curfew (in MSG you had to be done in a hurry or the match would be stopped).

I'm not sure what was up with the announcement about the show being in its most complete form as every match was there according to every card I can find.

**Overall Rating:** C. I liked the show well enough but it was only going to be so good. The version on the Network runs about an hour and forty minutes, though the intermissions to put up and take down the cage are of course gone. There's some good wrestling on here but the 1970s were a VERY different time and it was all about the personalities instead of any of the in-ring work. It's still cool to see all these famous names in their primes though and it's so awesome that the Network is there to let us see all these things. Check out some of these old school shows, if nothing else just to say you saw them.

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