

Monday Night Raw – August 5, 1995: Sign Me Up For Winterfest



IMG Credit: WWE

Monday Night Raw

Date: August 5, 1996

Location: Key Arena, Seattle, Washington

Attendance: 6,755

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Jim Ross

We're coming up on Summerslam and Shawn Michaels is still on high. For some reason, tonight's main event is a battle royal with the winner getting a title shot AFTER Summerslam, because it's never too early to start planning ahead. Shawn Michaels has all he can deal with for Summerslam with Vader though. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Jerry Lawler is in the ring to start and he has a bottle wrapped in brown paper to talk about Jake Roberts. He wants Roberts to write a tell all book about his drinking but shifts over to Aldo Montoya, who beat him on Superstars last week. Montoya comes out so Lawler pulls out a bottle of Jim Beam as Roberts' partner.

Aldo Montoya vs. Jerry Lawler

Lawler grabs the mic and talks during the match, before dropping it to ask if Montoya has anything to say to him. The beating is on in a hurry and Lawler drops him with a suplex. Montoya is back with a bunch of right hands and a hard whip into the corner, followed by a top rope right hand to the head. The DDT (how Montoya won last week) sends Lawler into the corner to grab the referee so Montoya hits a backdrop instead. Lawler is right back with the piledriver though and a second finishes Montoya off. Energetic while it lasted.

Post match Lawler pours the booze into Montoya's mouth. Lawler: "Hey Jake, don't get jealous!" Referees break it up but Lawler manages to do it again because referees are horrible at their secondary jobs.

New Rockers vs. Bodydonnas

Hillbilly Jim is on commentary and the Rockers jump the Bodydonnas at the entrance. Zip gets dropped onto the top rope to start but manages a small package for two on Jannetty. Everything breaks down with Jim thinking they have a lot left in them. The match has been on for a minute and a half so I'd hope so.

Jannetty sends Zip into the ropes so Skip makes a blind tag as we go split screen to Skip and Faarooq Asaad. Next week Faarooq debuts against Skip, as Sunny's new man is going to prove that her old man just doesn't measure up. Faarooq rants about being a tiger from birth and being a maneater. Dude she's right next to you. Back to full screen with Zip chopping at Cassidy and cutting off Jannetty despite a second blind tag.

As Jim gets in his fifth "you know what I mean" in about three minutes, we cut to the Godwinns and the Smoking Gunns watching the match. As in we aren't seeing the match at all at the moment. Back again with Skip hitting a top rope headbutt for two on Marty, who is right back up to throw Skip over the top. Cassidy hits a neckbreaker on the floor and throws Skip back in for the two. It's off to Cassidy to slug away at Skip as we go split screen AGAIN to look at Jim on commentary.

After fifteen seconds of full screen, we look at Gorilla Monsoon

reinstating Crush (not named) after weapons and drug charges. Marty pulls Skip down by the trunks and sends him into the corner as we take a break. Back with Cassidy getting crotched on top so Skip can go up, only to have the Gunns run in for the DQ. Jim asks "WHAT'S GOING ON" about five times in a row.

Rating: D. Not only was the match boring and longer than it needed to be before a bad (though logical) ending, but sweet goodness I've never seen a match where the company was so uninterested in watching it. This was designed to set up a four way Tag Team Title match at Summerslam but they need a better way to make me interesting. Really dull match here and the cuts made it worse.

Post match the Godwinns come in as well and clear the ring with the Bodydonnas.

Shawn Michaels has been beaten up lately, including by Vader in a six man tag at In Your House IX. He could lose at any given time but he isn't losing to Vader at Summerslam. Nothing matters to him as much as being WWF Champion and he'll do anything to keep it. To take it from him means beating everyone behind him and that isn't happening. Oh and he'd love Bret Hart being back because it's like peanut butter without jelly. Uh, peanut butter on its own is quite delightful. Shawn talks about how great he is to wrap it up.

As appropriate as it is, we go to clips of Shawn at a house show. In Montreal.

Battle Royal

Undertaker, Mankind, Sid, British Bulldog, Justin Hawk Bradshaw, Owen Hart, Steve Austin, Goldust, Marc Mero, Savio Vega, Ahmed Johnson

The winner gets a WWF Title shot in two weeks, Ahmed Johnson's Intercontinental Title isn't on the line and he has a bad kidney coming in. Undertaker SPRINTS to the ring to go after Mankind and they're both eliminated in about ten seconds. They fight to the back, leaving the other nine to fight on the ropes and tease eliminations. Johnson throws Bulldog out as I try to get my head around Austin having writing on his

trunks.

Sid backdrops Bradshaw out in an elimination that would mean a lot more a long way down the line. There isn't much going on in between these eliminations, making it a pretty typical battle royal. Mero throws Owen out and the big fit takes us to a break. Back (after a video of British Bulldog powerslamming Savio Vega thanks to Jim Cornette) with all six still in it and Mero being backdropped out before I can finish a sentence. Savio hits his running spinwheel kick in the corner but eliminates himself by mistake. Nitwit.

Undertaker and Mankind fight through the crowd, back into the ring, and then back into the crowd. Johnson hits a hard clothesline on Goldust but stops to try and get rid of Austin. Goldust breaks that up as this has slowed way down in a hurry. Sid saves himself and then saves Ahmed as Vince plugs Summerslam every chance he can. Goldust is sent to the apron but pulls himself back in, only to walk into a spinebuster.

We see Undertaker and Mankind brawling in the back and take another break. Back again with the same final four and Sid powerbombing Goldust. He does the same to Austin and grabs a reverse chinlock as Goldust hits a Curtain Call on Johnson. The match is so boring that we go to the back to watch previous clips of Undertaker beating up Mankind.

They do throw in some fresh brawling before we come back to see the same four people having the same fight. Cue Owen and Bulldog for a distraction so Austin can eliminate Sid. Goldust stands back as Austin stomps on Johnson before going with the double cross. Austin saves himself from being eliminated and hammers on Goldust until Johnson kicks him in the ribs.

Johnson and Goldust team up (?) to toss Austin and it's Ahmed slugging away as we're down to two. A shot to the face puts Johnson down and Goldust drops an elbow on the bad kidney. There's a piledriver and we take ANOTHER break as this match just can't end. Back with Ahmed grabbing....a bodyscissors? They get up and collide next to the rope but Ahmed hangs on by the legs to survive and win the title shot.

Rating: D-. Oh sweet goodness no. I'm not sure what they were thinking

here as the match ran about twenty four minutes counting commercials and had the final four after about ten minutes. That's a very strange layout and it's not like the sections with the final four or three were anything spectacular. I don't get this one, but dang Ahmed could have been something had he been remotely healthy.

Post match Ahmed says he and Shawn are friends but a match against Vader sounds like a party. Faarooq runs in for the brawl to end the show.

Overall Rating: F. Justin Credible and Jerry Lawler just had the match of the night and it didn't even break three minutes. WCW is just killing them at this point and that is getting very obvious in a hurry. The company is looking like a zombie and this show was horrible, with nothing looking interesting outside of Undertaker vs. Mankind. If this is supposed to make me want to see Summerslam, sign me up for Winterfest.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up the paperback edition of KB's Complete 2004 Monday Night Raw Reviews (also available as an e-book) from Amazon. Check out the information here:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2019/08/26/new-book-and-e-book-kbs-complete-2004-monday-night-raw-reviews/>

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

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

Monday Night Raw – October 28, 1996: The Fire In His

Eyes

Monday Night Raw

Date: October 28, 1996

Location: War Memorial Coliseum, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Jerry Lawler

Things picked up last week and it couldn't have come at a better point. The company basically has to restart after years of putting on horrible shows with uninteresting characters and it just happens to be up against one of the hottest angles of all time over in WCW. They have their work cut out for them but they also have Bret Hart and Steve Austin. Let's get to it.

We open with clips of Austin destroying Brian Pillman's ankle to write him out of the ring due to his horrible car wreck that basically ended his in ring career.

Jesse Jammes vs. Salvatore Sincere

Jammes is the REAL Double J despite the original Double J being nowhere to be seen. Well save for on Nitro that is. Jesse starts fast with a few right hands and clotheslines to send Salvatore to the floor. Back in and Sincere gets in a few shots, only to be slammed off the top to put him on defense again. A full nelson slam puts Sincere away a few seconds later.

Rating: D-. It's always amazing to see what stupid gimmick could evolve into a moneymaker like the Road Dogg. This is one of those ideas that is so stupid and they had to know it was dead in the water but that's what you have to work with. Jammes wound up turning it into something special because he has talent and because the company eventually realized the gimmick sucked. Why that isn't the case today isn't clear but I'm sure it's NOT the company's fault because that just can't happen.

Dok Hendrix is ready to talk about the Hall of Fame but Austin cuts him off because no one cares about old people. Instead Dok runs down the Survivor Series card (including the debut of one Rocky Maivia, which is completely glossed over) and mentions that Bret is in Calgary tonight.

Austin is NOT happy with that one and lets Dok have it as a result.

Crush vs. Aldo Montoya

JR comes out for commentary and keeps up his stupid heel run which went nowhere and no one wanted to hear because heel commentators get annoying in a hurry. Crush throws Aldo around to start but stops to yell at fans for calling him Jailbird. JR asks if the jockstrap on Aldo's face was Vince's idea as Crush ends it with the Heart Punch. JR: "That wouldn't work on you Vince." Just a squash.

Crush beats up a fan for calling him Jailbird.

We look back at Mr. Perfect swerving Marc Mero out of the Intercontinental Title last week. Perfect has been suspended, meaning he's gone and off to WCW.

Speaking of Mr. Perfect, he wins his first round match in the Karate Fighters tournament.

We're told that we'll hear from Bret at his home tonight and Pillman from his home next week so Austin starts yelling again about how he had to go all the way to Connecticut instead of having the cameras come to Texas. Fair point actually. We'll stick with Austin for now though and look at the attack on Pillman's leg again. Austin wouldn't even let Pillman be taken away in an ambulance. He'll be at Pillman's house next week and OH MAN IT'S THAT SHOW! Austin doesn't want to hear about Vince caring about Bret because he's just a greedy promoter.

We go to Bret's house but freaking SUNNY'S music cuts it off as the audio screws up. She comes out to sit on Lawler's lap and it's time for guest commentary.

Billy Gunn vs. Freddie Joe Floyd

Yeah this instead of Bret's response to Austin. Thanks WWF. The Gunns have basically split at this point without officially doing so. Freddie works on an armbar to start as Sunny talks about liking Billy's smile. Billy sends him outside and here's Bart to yell at his brother. That goes nowhere so Freddie hammers away and gets in an elbow to the jaw. A

hotshot drops Freddie Joe and Billy's top rope legdrop gives him the pin. Of note at the end: Vince says Sunny is just like Hillary Clinton who Sunny says will be the next President.

Rating: F. This was all about Billy getting a singles push, which just happened to be on the same night as the beginning of Jesse Jammes' singles push. I love that kind of coincidence and it's not something you're going to see that often. You will however see a match like this again and the fact that it cut off the great Austin vs. Bret stuff makes it even worse.

Back to the debate with Bret giving his normal calm response which Austin interprets as Bret being scared. Bret doesn't know if Austin has what it takes to beat him and the look on Austin's face is downright scary. Vince asks Bret why Austin issued the challenge but Austin says it's not over no matter what happens in the match. If Bret wants to get rid of him he'll have to kill him.

Bret tries to get in his catchphrase but Austin cuts him off again before telling Bret to say something. Austin goes off on a production guy for counting him down to commercial and beats him up as a result. The fire in Austin gave me chills here and you can see the future right in front of your eyes.

British Bulldog vs. Shawn Michaels

Non-title again and Owen Hart is out for commentary. Bulldog runs him down with a shoulder to start and they have some miscommunication on a Bulldog leapfrog, resulting in an armdrag sending Smith out to the floor. Shawn tells him to bring it and lays on the top rope as Bulldog takes a long break. Of course there's no counting or anything but that's not the storyline so of course it doesn't happen. Back in and Shawn grabs a headlock as we hear about the production guy calling the cops on Austin.

We take a break (and sit through a commercial for WWF Full Metal) and come back with Shawn fighting out of a chinlock but getting slammed down by the hair. That always makes me cringe. There's the delayed vertical suplex from Bulldog and it's back to the chinlocking. Shawn fights back again and gets two off a sunset flip before Bulldog runs him over again.

We take a second break and come back with Bulldog running into the flying forearm. The powerslam doesn't work and Shawn drops the top rope elbow, only to have Owen come in for the DQ.

Rating: B. These two always had some awesome chemistry together and they almost never had a bad match over several years. Shawn was clearly looking tired and it was time for a change but who else could they swap in that could come even close to his level of quality? He was going to have a good to excellent match against anyone he was in there against and that's all that mattered at this point.

Sid comes in for the save so Owen issues a challenge for a tag match next week.

Austin is being arrested but he's not worried because Vince will take care of his meal ticket at Survivor Series.

Overall Rating: D+. Steve Austin is a star and there's no way anything is going to stop him. You can't take your eyes off of him any time he's on screen with the fire in those eyes staring holes through anything in front of him. The match with Bret can't get here soon enough but there's something very important to get through next week. The main event helps this out a lot but there are still a lot of bad things hanging around and they're holding the rest of the show down. However, every time you see Austin you forget about all that stuff because he's just that great right now.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book, KB's WWE Grab Bag at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01IH70904>

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

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

Monday Night Raw – December 12, 1994: How Bob Backlund Is Like Steve Austin

Monday Night Raw

Date: December 12, 1994

Location: Liberty High School, Liberty, New York

Attendance: 1,400

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Shawn Michaels

So I just knocked out the show from the previous week and it occurs to me that I could actually get a lot of these done in a hurry. At this point I've done just under half of the episode of Monday Night Raw and I really could add to that with a lot of the earlier years. Therefore, I might as well take care of some of them as I could do a month's worth of shows in the time it takes me to do a single pay per view. Let's get to it.

Bob Backlund rants about Doink besmirching the WWF and leading it into hypocrisy.

Doink is ready to show off his amateur background. What a bizarre main event choice.

Opening sequence.

Bob Backlund vs. Doink the Clown

I'd like to remind you that Backlund was WWF World Champion about two and a half weeks ago. I can't get over the fact that they're actually in a high school gym. It's something you would expect to make a TNA joke over but here it is on Raw. Dink comes out for a distraction so Doink can jump Backlund from behind. Maybe Backlund is right about Doink being evil.

Back up and they stare at each other for a bit as the fans are entirely

behind Doink. Backlund takes him down and rides him a bit until Doink grabs the ropes for the save. So we've got a crazy man and a clown having an amateur wrestling match. I guess Vince was right with his "anything can happen in the World Wrestling Federation" line. A nice amateur trip sets up a rollup for two on Bob, who has a bunch of Doink's makeup on his back.

Backlund has to flip out of a headscissors before walking into a hiptoss for two. They get up again and Bob nails him with a hard forearm to the face before starting in on the arm. We take a break and come back with Bob holding a Fujiwara armbar. That's too interesting so it's off to a regular wristlock as Shawn keeps talking about managing Backlund. How bored were they to come up with this kind of stuff?

Somehow we're about ten minutes into this match (not counting the commercial) as Backlund works on a hammerlock. Doink FINALLY comes back with a middle rope cross body and a small package for two, only to miss an elbow drop. That means the chickenwing to make Doink tap.

Rating: F. There was a match back in 2001 with Steve Austin vs. Chris Benoit where Austin started doing a bunch of amateur stuff to shock Benoit. The thing is, that match worked because Austin knew how to play to a crowd and make the match fun. Other than an interesting idea here, this was one of the least interesting things I've seen in a long time as Doink could have been anyone and had the same match. That's never a good thing and made for a waste of the one good idea they had here.

We look at the brackets for the Tag Team Title tournament.

Tatanka/Bam Bam Bigelow

Men on a Mission

Headshrinkers

Jim Neidhart/Owen Hart

Heavenly Bodies

Bushwhackers

Smoking Gunns

Well Dunn

Shawn has no thoughts on the tournament because he isn't involved. Instead, he shows us some Raw on SNES. There's even a VHS with tips and strategies. Allow me to simplify things: punch and kick a lot then pin the other guy.

Jeff Jarrett is moving to Las Vegas and is going to have a sweepstakes. Uh...yeah.

Razor Ramon vs. Mark Starr

Non-title of course. Razor starts with the driving shoulders as Shawn makes fun of Barbara Walters. Some very loud chops have Starr reeling but he gets in a cross body. Razor actually botches the catch into the fall away slam but is smart enough to turn it into a knee injury to protect himself. That kind of on the fly thinking is never seen these days and it's sad. Razor just blasts him with a forearm though and it's the belly to back superplex and Razor's Edge for the easy pin.

Rating: D. That knee injury thing was such a breath of air. I mean, the match was still a squash but it was so nice to see them not just waste time and make the match look fake. Nothing else to see here, though Starr would actually be put in a low level tag team in WCW in a few years.

Make-A-Wish ad.

It's time for another King's Court which really is the best way to showcase Lawler at this point. In this case, he tells the kids to close their eyes and imagine what they'll get for Christmas. "Now what do you see? Nothing! Exactly what you'll get!" The guest tonight is IRS, who has Undertaker's druids with him as part of one of the lamest feuds in company history.

Lawler wants to talk about athletes making a fortune and then charging for autographs. On top of that (which is really pitiful in the first place), they're not even paying taxes. The biggest tax cheat of them all though is the Undertaker, who claims to have the power of the urn. IRS

however has the power of the Million Dollar Man's money, which is more than enough to make Undertaker pay. Also, IRS is going to make Lex Luger pay next week and promises to have friends behind him.

Hakushi is still coming.

Aldo Montoya vs. Nick Barberri

Montoya recently turned down a spot on Ted DiBiase's Million Dollar Team and Shawn just rips him apart for his decision. Nick tries to get Montoya in an early wheelbarrow slam only to be sent throat first into the middle rope. Harvey Wippleman comes out to watch as Aldo cranks on an armbar. Barberri sends him into the buckle as we're promised Well Dunn vs. the Bushwhackers AGAIN next week. Egads what is wrong with this company? Aldo makes his comeback as Shawn points out that Montoya's mask is a jockstrap. Montoya finishes with a quick middle rope bulldog.

Wippleman yells at the Fink, who will be in the Bushwhackers' corner next week.

Clips from the 100th episode of WWF Mania.

King Kong Bundy vs. Bobby Knight

Knight (dang I wish it was the famous one) bounces off Bundy to start and is sent hard into the post for his efforts. Back in and Bundy yells a lot before actually going to the middle rope, only to have Knight bail to the floor out of self preservation. Bundy slowly pounds him down and finishes with the Avalanche (big splash) for a five count.

Rating: D. Yeah what do you want from me here? This was longer than it needed to be and there's only so much you can get out of King Kong Bundy in 1994. Nothing to see here, as is so often the case with most of the shows from this era. Bundy was actually a decent choice for a monster with no upside, which is what he needed to be for the most part.

Santa Claus comes out and gives Shawn a toy Ladies Title to end the show.

Overall Rating: F. Oh yeah this was bad. That Santa bit at the end was the best thing of the night and it was all of a minute long. It's bad

enough that it's this year and now I have to sit through the Christmas season as well, meaning everyone isn't interested in trying? Horrible show here and one of the weakest I've ever seen. At least it was short though.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of the History of Wrestlemania at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B0188BJRGU>

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

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