

Andre The Giant Memorial Battle Royal Moved To Wrestlemania Pre-Show

No reason given but it's likely due to it being a TWO HOUR pre-show and needing more than one match. I'm not sure if they have enough to fill in the PPV now but they did it with seven matches last year.

WWE Fans Are Stupid: Countdown Edition

So I watched the latest episode of Countdown (great way to kill forty five minutes to an hour) and the topic was International Sensations. Then this happened. Here's their top ten. Remember that these are voted on by the fans, though I believe there's a list of options provided.

10. Cesaro

Not exactly a huge resume but some of his displays of strength are amazing. This is fine.

9. Fabulous Rougeau Brothers

They have a great theme song, but they never even won the Tag Team Titles. I'll give them this though: they did translate the French in All America Boys, which turns out to be insulting America. That's amusing but this should have been an honorable mention.

8. Santino Marella

And we're done. Santino is a comedy character (if you call that comedy of course) and not exactly the most interesting guy in the world. Yeah he's a popular guy now, but ten biggest international stars ever? Ok fine. We'll get to the bad stuff in a bit.

7. Nikolai Volkoff

This would be part of the bad. Volkoff is a name and nothing more. Other than winning the Tag Team Titles a few times with Iron Sheik, he never did anything people remember. Oh wait scratch that. He lost. A lot. Like, A LOT.

6. British Bulldog

No issue here.

5. Great Khali

Eh.....I'm not sure on this one. Yeah he won a World Title and is a huge star in India, but fifth best ever? That's a stretch.

4. Rusev

Maybe in five years, but this meant we could look at Lana more so I could live with it.

Now let's pause for a second here and consider the names we have left:

Bret Hart

Bruno Sammartino

Chris Jericho

Andre the Giant

Rey Mysterio. What? They mentioned him at the beginning of the show, and remember he's from that far off nation of San Diego.

Trish Stratus

Bad News Barrett. If the Fabulous Rougeaus can be on the list, why can't Barrett?

I'm sure I'm forgetting some people, but that's quite a list to pick three from.

3. Bruno Sammartino

You hold the World Title for eleven years and you're not even in the top two? There are only two names that could possibly top him from a star power standpoint.

2. Sheamus

This isn't one of them. I'm a big Sheamus fan and have been for years, but second ever? Alberto Del Rio has won more world titles than Sheamus and he can't even make the top ten?

1. Iron Sheik

Did Iron Sheik wrestle a classic and win the World Title in two different matches at a great Wrestlemania? Ever headline the biggest show of all time? Ever BEAT HULK HOGAN FOR THE WORLD TITLE? Actually no, as he lost that match after holding the title for all of a month. He isn't even Ivan Koloff but he's the #1 international star of all time? I'm done.

This one actually made my head shake and that's not supposed to happen on a show like Countdown. I've clearly failed as an educator to the masses.

Wrestlemania Count-Up – Wrestlemania VI: See? Warrior Was Good

Wrestlemania VI

Date: April 1, 1990

Location: SkyDome, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Attendance: 67,678

Commentators: Jesse Ventura, Gorilla Monsoon

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

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

Robert Goulet sings O Canada.

Rick Martel vs. Koko B. Ware

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

and this time the Crab ends Ware.

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

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

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

Tag Titles: Colossal Connection vs. Demolition

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

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

Off to the Tongan nerve hold by Haku for a bit before Andre chokes in the corner. Andre hasn't actually been in the match yet. A shoulder breaker gets two for Haku but he misses a charge into the corner. Hot tag brings in Smash to clean house and a flying forearm gets two. Everything breaks

down and Andre is taken down by a double clothesline. Haku accidentally superkicks Andre into the ropes and the Decapitator gives Demolition their third tag titles.

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

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

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

Hercules vs. Earthquake

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

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

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

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

Brutus Beefcake vs. Mr. Perfect

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

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

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

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

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

Roddy Piper vs. Bad News Brown

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

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

Rating: D. Instead of a brawl or something entertaining, this was much more of a bizarre spectacle than anything else. Brown would be gone soon after this while Piper would shift into the broadcast booth to take over for Jesse. The fight was a lot weaker because of how much stuff there was to distract from the action which is never a good thing.

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

Hart Foundation vs. Bolsheviks

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

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

Tito is ready for Barbarian and Heenan.

The Barbarian vs. Tito Santana

This is Bobby Heenan's debut as Barbarian's manager. Barbarian takes him into the corner to start but Tito comes back with punches to send Barbie

to the floor. Back in and a big hip toss puts Tito down but Santana comes back with right hands to the head for two. They run the ropes and Barbarian kicks Santana's head off to take over. When all else fails, kick the other guy in the face.

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

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

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

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

Dusty Rhodes/Sapphire vs. Queen Sherri/Randy Savage

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

The genders have to match here so the guys start things off. Sherri tries to interfere but Sapphire makes the save. Dusty throws Sherri into Savage and we're off to the women. Sapphire shakes her hips into Sherri and hooks an airplane spin for bad measure. Sherri tries a slam which goes as

well as you would expect it to. Off to the men again with Sapphire getting in a few slaps from the apron.

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

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

Liz, Sapphire and Dusty dance.

Another Mania 7 ad.

Bobby Heenan is nearly speechless over Andre beating him up.

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

Savage and Sherri freak out a lot.

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

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

Warrior throws Sean Mooney away, saying Sean doesn't deserve to breathe

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

Orient Express vs. Rockers

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

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

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

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

Dino Bravo vs. Jim Duggan

These two feuded for a long time. Earthquake is here with Dino, sending Gorilla into a rant about how you can't be a wrestler and a manager.

Kazarian would disagree. Jesse brings up how stupid it is to bring an American flag to Canada (against a Canadian at that). This is power vs. power and AMERICAN power takes over early on, sending Bravo out to the floor.

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

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

Duggan gets crushed by Earthquake post match.

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

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

Million Dollar Title: Ted DiBiase vs. Jake Roberts

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

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

floor when the referee isn't looking. They head to the floor where the Million Dollar Dream is put on again. Jake sends DiBiase into the post but Ted gets back inside anyway to retain.

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

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

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

Boss Man doesn't have much to say.

Big Boss Man vs. Akeem

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

The fans don't care about Rhythm and Blues.

Mary Tyler Moore likes Wrestlemania.

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

The attendance record is announced: 67,678.

Rick Rude vs. Jimmy Snuka

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

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

We recap Hogan vs. Warrior. They wound up being the only two guys in the ring at one point in the Rumble and the reaction to their fight was great. They then had some run-ins on SNME and the Main Event and that's about it. This is much more about a battle of respect and they certainly don't hate each other.

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

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

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

Back in and the brawl is on with Hogan's knee being fine and not ever

mentioned again. Hulk takes over and pounds away at Warrior's head before getting two off a pair of elbow drops. Off to a front facelock and a small package for two. Hogan hooks a chinlock and pounds away on Ultimate's head. After a brief break we're right back to the chinlock followed by a belly to back suplex for two for Hulk.

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

Hogan fights out of the hold with some solid rights to the head but on the breakup, the referee is taken down. Warrior hits a pair of ax handles off the top and starts to get fired up. The shoulder block misses though and Hulk drives him head first into the mat, but there's no referee. Warrior suplexes Hogan down but there's still no count. A rollup gets a VERY close two for Hogan and it's time for the punches.

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

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

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

Overall Rating: C+. This is one of those shows that is completely dependent on the main event. Other than that there's almost nothing here

at all, although there's nothing that horrible. It's mainly a big group of random(ish) matches with stories to most of them, but almost none of them are anything of note. Still though, it's pretty fun stuff overall and the main event is must see. It's not a great show or anything but it's worth checking out.

Ratings Comparison

Rick Martel vs. Koko B. Ware

Original: D

Redo: D+

Demolition vs. Colossal Connection

Original: C-

Redo: C-

Earthquake vs. Hercules

Original: D-

Redo: D

Brutus Beefcake vs. Mr. Perfect

Original: C

Redo: C-

Roddy Piper vs. Bad News Brown

Original: A

Redo: D

Hart Foundation vs. Bolsheviks

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

Barbarian vs. Tito Santana

Original: D

Redo: C-

Dusty Rhodes/Sapphire vs. Randy Savage/Sensational Sherri

Original: D-

Redo: D

Orient Express vs. Rockers

Original: C

Redo: C+

Jim Duggan vs. Dino Bravo

Original: D+

Redo: D

Ted Dibiase vs. Jake Roberts

Original: C

Redo: C-

Big Boss Man vs. Akeem

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

Rick Rude vs. Jimmy Snuka

Original: C-

Redo: D

Ultimate Warrior vs. Hulk Hogan

Original: A+

Redo: A

Overall Rating

Original: C+

Redo: C+

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

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

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

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book on the History of Saturday Night's Main Event at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00SATPVKW>

And check out my Amazon author page with wrestling books for under \$4 at:

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

Wrestlemania Count-Up – Wrestlemania V: BOOM

Wrestlemania V

Date: April 2, 1989

Location: Trump Plaza, Atlantic City, New Jersey

Attendance: 18,946

Commentators: Gorilla Monsoon, Jesse Ventura

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

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

Hercules vs. King Haku

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

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

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

The Rockers say they can handle the Twin Towers.

Rockers vs. Twin Towers

That would be Big Boss Man/Akeem. Shawn makes his Wrestlemania debut by starting against Big Boss Man and the little guy takes over quickly. He

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

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

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

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

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

Ted DiBiase vs. Brutus Beefcake

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

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

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

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

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

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

Bushwhackers vs. Fabulous Rougeau Brothers

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

Luke and Butch clear the ring of Rougeaus again before it's down to Luke and Jacques. Butch tries to interfere for no apparent reason and Luke gets caught in a Boston Crab. In a sequence that has haunted me for

years, Ray loads up Luke for a slam and while Luke is upside down, he rubs Ray's crotch. There's nothing more to it than that and to this day I don't know why he did that.

Anyway Ray puts on an abdominal stretch as a fan or two chants USA. In theory that would be for the Rougeaus here who are the All American Boys facing the guys from New Zealand. The Rougeaus prematurely hug and get caught by the Battering Ram and a double gutbuster is good for the pin on Ray out of nowhere.

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

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

Mr. Perfect vs. Blue Blazer

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

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

Rating: C+. This match is popular for some reason but it's only pretty good. Owen would get to show off a lot better later on and the Blazer gimmick didn't stick around that long. The ending here was clean too

which is what Perfect would get quite often around this time. He wouldn't really do anything of note for about a year though until having a house show feud with Hogan.

Jesse is presented to the crowd again like last year.

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

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

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

Demolition says they're ready for Fuj the Stooge.

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

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

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

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

mistake. The Demolition Decapitator is enough to end Fuji and retain the titles.

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

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

Ronnie Garvin vs. Dino Bravo

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

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

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

Brain Busters vs. Strike Force

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Morton keeps blowing smoke in Piper's face as Piper makes fun of Downey for having warts on his face. Piper gets annoyed with the smoke and Downey calls him a transvestite. Roddy asks for a smoke of his own and

sprays Downey with a fire extinguisher. This took FIFTEEN MINUTES, as in longer than all but the main event tonight.

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

Donald Trump likes hosting Wrestlemania.

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

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

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

Andre the Giant vs. Jake Roberts

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

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

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

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

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

Greg Valentine/Honky Tonk Man vs. Hart Foundation

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

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

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

long.

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

Intercontinental Title: Ultimate Warrior vs. Rick Rude

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

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

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

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

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

Bad News Brown vs. Jim Duggan

This show MUST continue! Again no reason to this match and they're just fighting to fill in another five minutes on this already WAY too long card. They punch each other a lot and Duggan knocks him to the floor. Brown comes back in with his judo stuff but misses the Ghetto Blaster (running enziguri). Bad News gets annoyed and goes to the floor for a chair but Duggan hits it with the board for the double DQ.

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

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

Red Rooster vs. Bobby Heenan

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

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

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

Tony Schiavone and Sean Mooney fill in even MORE time.

WWF World Title: Hulk Hogan vs. Randy Savage

This is huge and Savage is on fire here. As I said Liz is in a neutral corner despite never being Hogan's manager as a singles guy ever. Savage comes out first for no apparent reason. Savage immediately heads to the

floor to stall as you would expect him to do. The fans HATE him at this point after loving him like crazy a year earlier. Hogan finally shoves Savage down and it's time to stall some more.

Back up and Hogan shoulders him down again for the third trip to the floor for Savage. As Jesse and Gorilla get in an argument over the value of managers, Savage grabs a headlock. Hulk shoves him off and Randy heads outside, only to hide behind Liz in a truly evil move. Back in again and Hogan actually uses a nice amateur move and hooks a front facelock. That wasn't bad at all. Savage powers out of it (surprising as well) and pokes Hogan in the eye to take over.

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

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

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

Rating: B-. It's Hogan vs. Savage so these two are always going to have at least a watchable match, but at the end of the day this was pretty much designed to be a Hogan win and that's what it wound up being. The smart move would be to have Savage keep the title by DQ or something,

causing Hulk to chase the title until Summerslam for the title change. But instead we go with the easy (and not horrible) ending. It's a good match here but not great.

Hogan celebrates forever to end the show.

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

Ratings Comparison

Hercules vs. King Haku

Original: C-

Redo: C-

Twin Towers vs. Rockers

Original: C

Redo: C

Brutus Beefcake vs. Ted DiBiase

Original: D+

Redo: C-

Bushwhackers vs. Fabulous Rougeau Brothers

Original: D-

Redo: D

Mr. Perfect vs. Blue Blazer

Original: B-

Redo: C+

Demolition vs. Powers of Pain/Mr. Fuji

Original: C-

Redo: D

Dino Bravo vs. Ronnie Garvin

Original: F

Redo: D

Brain Busters vs. Strike Force

Original: B-

Redo: B-

Jake Roberts vs. Andre the Giant

Original: D

Redo: D

Hart Foundation vs. Honky Tonk Man/Greg Valentine

Original: D+

Redo: D+

Rick Rude vs. Ultimate Warrior

Original: B

Redo: B

Jim Duggan vs. Bad News Brown

Original: F

Redo: D-

Red Rooster vs. Brooklyn Brawler

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

Hulk Hogan vs. Randy Savage

Original: C+

Redo: B-

Overall Rating

Original: D+

Redo: D

Wow that was a rather boring redo.

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

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

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Wrestlemania Count-Up – Wrestlemania IV: Everyone Loves Tournaments!

Wrestlemania IV

Date: March 27, 1988

Location: Trump Plaza Hotel and Casino, Atlantic City, New Jersey

Attendance: 18,165

Commentators: Jesse Ventura, Gorilla Monsoon

Well the crowd is only about 1/5 the size of the one we had last year but there are even more matches this year. This is a one idea show: we've got a tournament. The WWF Title is vacant due to the ending of Hogan vs. Andre II at The Main Event (for you ratings people, this show earned a 15 rating on NBC live on a Friday night. Wrestling used to be HUGE.) when there was a twin referee brought in to cost Hogan the title. The title is now vacant and will be decided tonight. Let's get to it.

Before I forget, it should be noted that as this aired, the NWA (WCW) was airing the first live Clash of the Champions for free on TBS. That show would have one of the best matches the company ever produced with Sting challenging Flair for the world title for the first time.

Here are the tournament brackets.

Hogan

BYE

Andre

BYE

Jim Duggan

Ted DiBiase

Don Muraco

Dino Bravo

Ricky Steamboat

Greg Valentine

Randy Savage

Butch Reed

Bam Bam Bigelow

One Man Gang

Rick Rude

Jake Roberts

Gene welcomes us to the show and presents Gladys Knight to sing America the Beautiful.

Battle Royal

Bret Hart, Jim Neidhart, Jim Powers, Paul Roma, Sika, Danny Davis, B. Brian Blair, Jim Brunzell, Bad News Brown, Sam Houston, Jacques Rougeau, Ray Rougeau, Ken Patera, Ron Bass, Junkyard Dog, Nikolai Volkoff, Boris Zhukov, Hillbilly Jim, Harley Race, George Steele

Just for a big trophy here. Steele chills on the floor and Bob Uecker is in on commentary here. Sam Houston is put out quick as is Sika. Brunzell is sent to the apron by Nikolai but he makes the save. Both Bee's are sent to the apron but Steele pulls Neidhart out to the floor. Both of the Bees are put out as is Ray Rougeau as the ring is thinning out a bit. Dog puts Bass out but has to fight off the Bolsheviks.

Hillbilly Jim is put out and Roma puts Davis out as well. We're down to nine and Powers is out too. We've got Volkoff, Zhukov, Hart, Roma, Jacques Rougeau, Race, Brown, Patera and Dog. Race and Dog headbutt each other with the canine man winning. Nikolai is dumped by Patera and Zukov gets the same treatment.

Patera is pulled to the floor by Volkoff as Race and Rougeau go out. So it's JYD, Hart and Brown to go. Dog gets on all fours to headbutt both heels but they finally catch up on him with some double teaming. He gets dumped out and Hart and Brown seem to be willing to split the win. Brown of course turns on Hart and dumps him out to win the trophy.

Rating: D+. This was nothing of note other than the potential beginning of Bret's first aborted singles push. The problem with battle royals is the same most of the time: there's no reason for most of them to happen

and with no story, there's not much interest in the match. Sometimes you'll get a good one, but this wasn't it.

Brown stands next to the trophy (which stands about 6'0) but Bret jumps him and destroys the trophy.

Fink explains the tournament structure (mainly time limits and saying it's winners only advancing) and introduces Robin Leech (hosted a show called Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous) to read a proclamation.

WWF World Title Tournament First Round: Ted DiBiase vs. Jim Duggan

DiBiase is one of the favorites here as he tried to buy the title which started the whole mess. Andre and Virgil are with him here. Ted immediately hides in the corner as the Battle of Mid-South begins. Duggan wins a slugout and an atomic drop puts DiBiase on the floor. I could watch DiBiase fall over the top all day. He was always great at falling over and made it look like a science.

Back in and Jim clotheslines him down before pounding away a bit more. DiBiase charges into a boot in the corner and hits a middle rope ax handle for two. Duggan comes back with a sunset flip of all things for two and to give Jesse a shock. A suplex puts DiBiase down and he jumps into a punch in the ribs to slow him down even more. Duggan slams him down but Andre trips him before the three point clothesline can be launched. Jim looks at Andre but gets caught in the back by a knee, sending DiBiase to the quarterfinals.

Rating: C-. DiBiase's flipping was a good touch and they got to do some decent stuff in less than five minutes. That's one of the problems with tonight's show: since there are so many matches they have to keep things short. Duggan would eventually feud with Andre in some surprisingly decent matches.

Gene is with Brutus and while looking him up and down says "Brutus this is incredible what a package." After that unintentional comedy, Gene asks Brutus if he's worried about Jimmy Hart interfering in the IC Title match tonight. Brutus says Hart will get a haircut if he intereferes.

WWF World Title Tournament First Round: Dino Bravo vs. Don Muraco

Bravo shoves him back into the corner to start to win the first power battle of the match. Muraco hammers him down and tries something like a Vader Bomb but basically just lands next to Bravo instead. Dino comes back with an elbow to the face and a gutwrench suplex for no cover. A knee in the corner misses Muraco so he starts hammering on the knee.

A spinning toehold has Bravo in trouble but Don gets kicked away and gets his head caught in the ropes. Dino uses Muraco's own piledriver to get two but a second attempt is countered with a backdrop. They clothesline each other but it's Muraco up first. He hits a flying forearm which works so well that he tries it again, but Bravo pulls the referee into Muraco for the DQ.

Rating: D+. this was slow and plodding but it wasn't horrible. Muraco was far better when he was less muscular and evil and this part of his career never quite worked that well. One very nice thing here is Jesse freaking out when Bravo got disqualified but then saying it was correct when seeing Bravo pull the referee on the replay. It's very refreshing to see something like that.

Bob Uecker warns Honky Tonk Man about getting beaten up by Brutus. Honky makes fun of Uecker's batting average and threatens to backstroke up the Mississippi River. Uecker: "You guys ain't never coming to my house!"

WWF World Title Tournament First Round: Greg Valentine vs. Ricky Steamboat

Should be good. Steamboat brings the future Richie Steamboat to the ring with him in matching outfits. Feeling out process to start with Steamboat taking him down via an armdrag. Gorilla says Ricky has excellence of execution to coin a phrase. A few shoulders get two on Valentine so he throws Steamboat over the top. That of course doesn't work on the Dragon so he comes back with a dropkick and a crucifix for two.

Valentine comes back with his usual elbows and forearms to put Steamboat down. He pulls Steamboat off the ropes so Ricky drops onto the back of his head. This allows Gorilla to bust out the term "external occipital

protuberance”, to which Jesse replies “THE WHAT?” The voice Ventura says that in is hilarious. Apparently it’s that little bump on the back of your head. Steamboat reverses a suplex into one of his own and hooks an armbar. Jimmy Hart goes a rant of instructions to the Hammer which is such a lost art in wrestling.

Steamboat gets dropped on the back of his head, allowing for another discussion of whatever that thing is called. Gorilla: “External occipital protuberance.” Jesse: “Oh ok. Back of the head for all you normal people back there.” Valentine pounds away with elbows as Gorilla says they’re “right in the kisser, right between the eyes.” His biology knowledge is all over the place. Donald Trump is in the front row. Steamboat comes back with some chops for two but Greg puts him right back down with a gutbuster.

Valentine goes after the leg but the Figure Four is broken up. They chop it out with Steamboat taking over, only to charge into a boot in the corner. Valentine hits a top rope forearm but still can’t put the Figure Four on. Steamboat hits an elbow to the face and a top rope chop for two. He rams Valentine into the corner ten times and shoves the referee away when he tries to break it up. Ricky goes up and hits the cross body but Valentine rolls through to eliminate Steamboat.

Rating: C+. Like I said, decent stuff here although Steamboat would be gone pretty much immediately over wanting to take some time off. Vince said no so Ricky left wrestling for about nine months. Anyway, good stuff here from two guys that know how to work whatever kind of a match you ask them to. Valentine was great in a role like this where he wasn’t going to win anything but he could fill in a spot and do just fine.

Steamboat waves goodbye to the crowd so yeah this was it for him.

The British Bulldogs with their recently returned dog Matilda declare her a weasel dog for their six man against the Islanders and Heenan. Oh and Koko is here too.

Bobby Heenan gets a package and actually tips the delivery guy. Ok then.

WWF World Title Tournament First Round: Randy Savage vs. Butch Reed

Macho and Liz come out in matching blue and Liz really is beautiful. She's also one of the few females in wrestling that stayed classy (until Russo got ahold of her) for almost her entire run. This is power vs. speed with Reed getting Savage in the corner early on. Jesse asks Gorilla if he would buy a car from Slick (Reed's manager). Gorilla says no. Jesse: "Not even a bright blue Caddy?" These two are just freaking fun together. They knew how to work off each other so well and it made the late 80s a ton of fun.

Reed pounds away on Savage and guillotines him on the top rope and out to the floor. Back in and Butch stomps on Randy a bit before elbowing him right back down. Savage gets in a kick to the face and fires off some punches, only to get clotheslined down again. Reed goes up top but takes WAY too long to jaw at Liz, allowing Savage to slam him down and drop the elbow for the pin. The pop when Savage hits the elbow is HUGE. You could hear it starting last year in Detroit and now it's full fledged here.

Rating: C-. This was basically a squash until the very end. Savage was great at building up sympathy from the crowd which is why the pops were so huge when he won here. Reed would also head to the NWA soon after this to do nothing for a year before joining Doom. Not much to see here but again, the time crunch hurts things a lot.

Uecker talks about trying to get with Vanna White tonight when Heenan and the Islanders come in. Heenan: "You talk about writing letters. You had 700,000 votes for the Hall of Fame. You would have had more but you ran out of stamps. Heenan isn't worried about the six man later.

WWF World Title Tournament First Round: Bam Bam Bigelow vs. One Man Gang

Gang pounds away in the corner to start and Bigelow is in trouble. This is one of those big guys that pound away on each other with basic stuff but it looks better because they're huge matches. Bigelow comes back with a forearm and a low splash for two. Bam Bam pounds away and hits a headbutt and then about four more to take over. He hits the ropes and Slick pulls the rope down though and Gang pounds on him on the apron enough to cause a countout. Too short to rate but this was lame. I think Bigelow had a bad knee here too.

Hogan goes into one of his most bizarre and over the top promos here. He talks about slamming Andre and breaking the United States in half, sending Andre and his next two opponents into the ocean. The rest is going to be nearly verbatim because a description won't do it justice. Talking about them falling into the ocean:

“And so will Donald Trump and all the Hulkamaniacs, but as Donald Trump hangs on to the top of the Trump Plaza with his family under his other arm, and as they sink to the bottom of the sea, THANK GOD Donald Trump is a Hulkamaniac. He'll know enough to let go of his materialistic possessions, hang onto the wife and kids and dog paddle all the way to safety. But Donald, if somehow you run out of gas, and all the Hulkamaniacs happen to run out of gas, just hang onto the largest back in the world and I'll dog paddle and backstroke (wouldn't the people on his back drown?) all of us to safety.”

So Hogan has just declared himself Jesus. You knew it was coming eventually.

WWF World Title Tournament First Round: Rick Rude vs. Jake Roberts

This is part of a BIG feud over Rude trying to get with Jake's wife. Jake immediately goes for the part of Rude's body that would mess with Rude the most: his face. Rude comes back with a slam and some right hands so Jake comes back with some slams of his own. Rude winds up in the corner with the snake and bails right into an arm wringer by Jake. Try as he might, Rude can't fight out of the wristlock as it's pretty clear this is going to last for awhile.

The hold is finally broken by Rude putting him on the top rope but Jake comes off the middle rope with a jumping knee lift to send Rick to the outside. Rude gets slammed again but this time the knee lift misses and Rick stomps away. Rick drops a knee and gets a VERY slow two count. We hit the chinlock and I open a book because we're going to be here for a long time.

After about two minutes, Rude hits a token clothesline before hooking the chinlock all over again. Jake tries to fight back but gets launched into the head and dropped on his face. A top rope fist to a downed Jake gets

two and it's back to the chinlock. You can hear the fans booing now. Roberts tries a belly to back suplex but Rude still doesn't break the hold.

Now the boring chants begin so Jake FINALLY hits a jawbreaker to get out of the hold and get the crowd going a bit. The short clothesline looks to set up the DDT but Rude rams him into the corner. Jake is suplexed out of a headlock for two and both guys are down. Rude tries a pin with his feet on the ropes and the time runs out. The fans are NOT happy with that one.

Rating: D-. What in this is supposed to be appealing? We don't get a DDT, we don't get any comeuppance for Rude, we don't get a winner, and we don't even get a beating for Heenan. This was long and very dull with at least five minutes out of fifteen being spent in a chinlock. If you need to have two guys get eliminated to prevent another match later, wouldn't it make sense to have this one go fast instead of going the time limit?

Gene and Vanna White look at the brackets so we'll do that too.

Hogan

Andre

DiBiase

Muraco

Savage

Valentine

One Man Gang

BYE

Vanna has no idea who Bob Uecker is but she wants Hogan to win.

Hercules vs. Ultimate Warrior

They collide to start as the announcers recap the tournament. Hercules hits three straight clotheslines to put Warrior down to Jesse's

amazement. Warrior fires off some chops but gets backdropped out to the floor. They brawl on the floor for a bit as Heenan is reaching in his pockets. Both guys head back inside and pound on each other a little bit more with Warrior hitting the ten punches in the corner. Hercules comes out of the corner with an atomic drop and sends Warrior into the corner chest first. He puts on the full nelson but Warrior climbs the corner and falls back ala Bret and Austin at Survivor Series 96 for the fast pin.

Rating: D+. Warrior was rapidly becoming a force but it wouldn't be another six months before he finally hit something special. Hercules would be around for a few more years but would never do anything of note. This was just a filler match to bridge the gap between the first and second rounds of the tournament.

We recap Hogan vs. Andre, which I'm sure you know the story of, at least up to Mania III. After that, Andre disappeared for the summer until leading his team to victory over Hogan's team at the first Survivor Series (Hogan was counted out). So anyway DiBiase debuted and wanted to buy the world title but Hogan of course said no. DiBiase instead bought Andre from Heenan and said go get me the belt.

This led us to Indianapolis and the first Main Event, which completely destroyed every ratings record ever for wrestling, drawing a mind blowing 15 rating and 33 million viewers live on NBC on a Friday night. Today, 5 million people watching Raw is reasons for a celebration for Raw. Anyway, there was a screwjob finish with Dave Hebner's twin brother Earl debuting as an imposter and counting a pin while Hogan's shoulder was clearly up. Andre gave the title to DiBiase which didn't fly with President Jack Tunney, so the title was held up and we got the tournament to settle things.

WWF World Title Tournament Quarterfinals: Andre the Giant vs. Hulk Hogan

Hulk charges into the ring but gets stomped down. DiBiase and Virgil are here in Andre's corner. Hogan gets rammed into the corner and punched down by the giant but Hogan comes back with some forearms. He has to stop to beat up DiBiase and ram Ted and Andre's heads together. Hogan chops Andre into the ropes and gets him tied up. DiBiase frees the arms but

Hogan punches Andre down and drops some elbows, but the giant grabs him by the throat from the mat and takes over again.

Some standing choking ensues and Hogan goes down to his knees. That gets shifted into a nerve hold but Hogan fights up and fires away on Andre even more but can't drop him. Hogan goes for a slam but DiBiase hits him in the back as Virgil distracts the referee. Hulk gets the chair away and hits Andre with the chair. Andre gets the chair away and hits Hulk with it, somehow drawing a double DQ despite Hogan clearly hitting Andre first.

Rating: C-. The match wasn't much from a quality standpoint but they were at a far faster pace than they were last year. That's probably the right idea given how messed up Andre's body was at this point though. Anyway, this is all part of the Master Plan which we'll hear more about later on. Not a terrible match but it's really just there to say it happened.

Hogan chases Virgil and DiBiase down with the former getting suplexed in the aisle. Hulk goes back in and slams Andre before posing for a few minutes despite not winning the match. It's still going. He didn't pose this much at last year's show.

Savage and Liz (now in pink) say that Hogan was cheated and that he's never been defeated. Oh and Macho is going to win.

WWF World Title Tournament Quarterfinals: Don Muraco vs. Ted DiBiase

The winner goes to the finals because of the double DQ. Ted comes out alone here for the first time tonight. Muraco pulls him into the ring by the hair and we're ready to go. A quick powerslam gets two and Ted is reeling. There's a clothesline for another two and Ted tries to bail. DiBiase finally gets to the floor and Billy Graham (Muraco's manager) tries to hit him with his cane. Back in and Don tries to pull him out of the corner but gets pulled into the corner himself instead. DiBiase finally has some control but misses a falling reverse elbow off the middle rope. Muraco makes a quick comeback but walks into a hotshot for the pin.

Rating: C. Not bad here but yet again the time hurts them a lot. There's

only so much you can do in about five minutes, although it was good to show that DiBiase could get a win on his own which he did here. Muraco would be gone pretty soon if I remember correctly. Not much of a match here but it wasn't bad.

Demolition talks about hitting people over the head with ball bats and say they'll win the titles.

One Man Gang's bye is announced.

WWF World Title Tournament Quarterfinals: Randy Savage vs. Greg Valentine

Savage takes over quickly with a slam and a knee drop for two but Valentine comes back with a pair of forearms, the second from the top rope. A shoulderbreaker gets two for Valentine and it's time for some more elbows. Greg throws him to the floor and rams Randy into the barricade a few times. More elbows to the head and chest follow as Savage is in a lot of trouble.

Back in and Valentine starts in on the leg but Savage quickly grabs a rope. A suplex gets two for Valentine and Randy is in trouble. All of a sudden Savage goes NUTS (he's fine then) and pounds away on Hammer with the top rope ax handle. He loads up another one but they kind of collide instead. Savage misses a charge at the ropes and Valentine tries the Figure Four again, only to get rolled up for the pin to advance Savage.

Rating: B-. It's the best match of the tournament so far but that's not saying much. Also it's one of the longer matches of the tournament at just over six minutes so that probably has something to do with it. Savage took a beating in this but managed to sneak out with a win which is always cool to see. The fans continue to pop huge for him too which is a great sign.

Vanna White has no idea who Bob Uecker is. We look at the updated brackets:

Ted DiBiase

BYE

Randy Savage

One Man Gang

Intercontinental Title: Honky Tonk Man vs. Brutus Beefcake

Sherry Martel is with Honky as Peggy Sue here which is a pretty amazing character change for her. This is during Honky's insanely long run that drew a ton of money and is pretty awesome all around. Brutus hits a quick atomic drop and messes with Honky's hair to play with his mind a bit. Honky bails to the floor as Jesse and Gorilla debate crooked referees. Back in and Beefcake rams Honky's head into the buckle a few times as this is one sided so far.

A high knee sends the champion back to the floor but once back in, Beefcake gets caught by a shot to the stomach. Honky takes over and stomps away which is about the extent of his offense. He loads up the Shake Rattle and Roll but drops it and goes back to stomping. Honky tries it again but Brutus grabs the rope to block it. Beefcake pounds away a bit and grabs his sleeper but Jimmy knocks out the referee. Honky gets knocked but but there's no referee so Brutus celebrates like an idiot. Brutus cuts Jimmy Hart's hair for fun and Honky walks out. It's a DQ I think.

Rating: D+. Nothing to see here as this show is just going WAY too long at this point. We're only about two and a half hours into it and we've got four matches left. Brutus was just another guy in there to not get the title off Honky, which adds him to a list of about 10 guys who couldn't do it. Honky would get his soon enough though.

In a semi-famous bit, Andre talks about DiBiase paying him to eliminate Hogan (not really a surprise) and then chokes Bob Uecker.

Islanders/Bobby Heenan vs. British Bulldogs/Koko B. Ware

There's actually a story here. Heenan comes to the ring in a dog handlers' outfit (remember the package from earlier?) because Matilda, the dog mascot of the Bulldogs, is back from being dognapped, presumably by the Islanders. Koko is there because when you need a filler, you call

Koko B. Ware. We start with Dynamite vs. Tama but it's quickly off to Haku vs. Davey Boy for a nice power match.

Davey slams him down a few times and it's off to a quickly broken chinlock. Back to Tama who is gorilla pressed up and down and it's back to Haku. Jesse: "Heenan seems to be saving himself." Gorilla: "Yeah for the senior prom." Did Gorilla just make a sex joke? I can feel my childhood crumbling as I type this. Koko comes in for some quick shots but it's back to Dynamite for the clothesline that Benoit copied from him.

The Kid charges into a kick in the corner and here's Heenan for the first time. He stomps on Dynamite, gets hit once in his padded suit, and runs away. That's about what I expected. Tama tries a Vader Bomb but hits knees, allowing for another tag to Koko. He pounds on both Islanders but Haku takes him right back down. Tama comes in with a top rope chop and Heenan gets his second tag. Heenan chokes a bit but misses a charge into the post. Everything breaks down and the Islanders drop Heenan onto Koko for the pin.

Rating: C. I told you Koko was worthless in this. The stuff with the tag teams was pretty solid but the rest of it was as dull as you would expect. These six man tags with the Bulldogs in there don't go that well for them but this was their last try at it. This was basically a comedy match and it was only kind of funny.

Jesse Ventura is introduced to the crowd for some posing.

Ted DiBiase's bye is announced.

WWF World Title Tournament Semifinals: One Man Gang vs. Randy Savage

Savage and Liz are in black for this one. Randy tries to lock up with him to start which isn't his best play here. Gang shoves him into the corner and pounds him down then does it again for a few more minutes. A pair of splashes miss and an elbow sends Gang into the ropes and out to the floor. Savage tries a slam but gets choked down instead. Liz gets on the apron for no apparent reason as Slick throws in the cane, but Gang gets caught swinging it for the DQ.

Rating: D. Nothing to see here and Savage on defense can't save most of a match. This is the second win over a Slick client of the night and he would spend the summer feuding with more of them. Gang was a decent big man but at the end of the day he was just another monster for a hero to vanquish. Not that there's anything wrong with that as people can make a great living like that, especially in the 80s.

Savage gets hit with the cane anyway but he still comes back and sends Gang into Slick.

The finals are DiBiase vs. Savage.

Bob Uecker can't catch up with Vanna.

Tag Titles: Demolition vs. Strike Force

Strike Force is one of my favorite teams ever and is comprised of Rick Martel and Tito Santana. They had been champions for something like five months and are still considered transitional champions. Smash and Martel start things off and the former lives up to his namesake by beating Rick down. Everything breaks down quickly for a bit and the result is the champions in control. Tito comes in to work over the arm of Ax before it's off to Smash for more arm cranking.

Demolition comes back with a standing Hart Attack before it's back to Ax for a powerslam. Smash suplexes Tito down for two but an elbow drop misses. Ax comes back in and gets caught out of nowhere by the flying forearm (Jesse: "He learned that in the Mexican Football League."). There's the hot tag to Martel and it's dropkicks a go-go. The Boston Crab goes on Smash but Tito goes after Ax. The forearm takes him down but Fuji slides in the cane. Rick gets blasted in the back of the head, giving Demolition their first titles. They would hold those belts for over a year and a half.

Rating: C+. Power vs. speed is always a good combination and that's what you got here. Demolition was a pair of guys who beat the tar out of everyone they fought and that's what they did here. It took a pair of Horsemen to get the belts off of them if that tells you anything about how awesome they were.

Robin Leech brings out the WWF Title belt.

Bob Uecker is guest ring announcer. Vanna White is guest timekeeper and she gives Bob a kiss.

WWF World Title: Randy Savage vs. Ted DiBiase

Savage and Liz are now in white and Andre is with DiBiase. Macho blocks some punches in the corner but Andre trips him up like a jerk. Andre does it again and Savage is catching on that he's got a problem. They trade some cranking on the arm and DiBiase's sunset flip doesn't work. A clothesline gets two for Randy and he sends DiBiase to the floor where Andre says go ahead and jump.

Realizing he's in trouble, Savage sends Liz to the back the obvious reason (hint: the fans are chanting HOGAN). DiBiase hooks a chinlock and heeeeeeeeeeeere's Hulk. The look on Hogan's face and his jaws going all over the place make him look high as a kite. Ted pounds away in the corner and Andre pulls Savage to the outside. Hogan jumps the giant but Savage is in big trouble.

A gutwrench suplex gets two for Ted but he goes up top for reasons of general stupidity, earning that slam off the top by Savage. Randy tries a quick elbow but only hits the mat. DiBiase puts on the Million Dollar Dream but Hogan, ever the hero, comes in and whacks DiBiase in the back with a chair. Savage runs to the top and the big elbow gives him his first world title.

Rating: B-. This was a decent match and the place went NUTS for the win, but they were both really tired and it slowed them down a lot. The Hogan cheating wasn't really necessary and it made Savage look a bit weak, but at the end of the day it didn't make that big of a difference. Still though, huge moment here.

Hogan insists on being in the ring for the celebration which really takes something away from it. The three celebrate to end the show.

Overall Rating: D. The moment at the end is huge, but the time it took getting there isn't worth it. The problem with this show is that it's WAY

too long and there aren't that many good matches on it. Sixteen matches are WAY too many to have on a single show and the fans were really burned out by the end. This should have been an eight man tournament with some slightly longer matches. Also this show is almost four hours long and the talent pool just wasn't deep enough to support that back then. Nostalgia is really all that helps this show for most modern fans, but that's not a terrible thing.

Ratings Comparison

Battle Royal

Original: C

Redo: D+

Ted DiBiase vs. Jim Duggan

Original: C-

Redo: C-

Don Muraco vs. Dino Bravo

Original: D+

Redo: D+

Greg Valentine vs. Ricky Steamboat

Original: C

Redo: C+

Randy Savage vs. Butch Reed

Original: D

Redo: C-

One Man Gang vs. Bam Bam Bigelow

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

Rick Rude vs. Jake Roberts

Original: D

Redo: D-

Ultimate Warrior vs. Hercules

Original: D

Redo: D+

Hulk Hogan vs. Andre the Giant

Original: C

Redo: C-

Ted DiBiase vs. Don Muraco

Original: C+

Redo: C

Randy Savage vs. Greg Valentine

Original: C+

Redo: B-

Brutus Beefcake vs. Honky Tonk Man

Original: D+

Redo: D+

Islanders/Bobby Heenan vs. British Bulldogs/Koko B. Ware

Original: D+

Redo: C

Randy Savage vs. One Man Gang

Original: D

Redo: D

Demolition vs. Strike Force

Original: C-

Redo: C+

Randy Savage vs. Ted DiBiase

Original: B

Redo: B-

Overall Rating

Original: D+

Redo: D

About the same more or less.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/03/11/history-of-wrestlemania-with-kb-wrestlemania-4-one-big-tournament-and-thats-it/>

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book on the History of Saturday Night's Main Event at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00SATPVKW>

And check out my Amazon author page with wrestling books for under \$4 at:

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

Wrestlemania Count-Up – Wrestlemania II: The Ugly Stepchild Of Wrestlemania

Wrestlemania II

Date: April 7, 1986

Location: Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum, New York City, New York/Rosemont Horizon, Chicago, Illinois/Los Angeles Memorial Sports Arena, Los Angeles, California

Attendance: 16,585 (New York), 9,000 (Chicago), 14,500 (Los Angeles), 40,085 (Total)

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Susan St. James, Gene Okerlund, Gorilla Monsoon, Cathy Lee Crosby, Alfred Hayes, Jesse Ventura, Elvira

This is one of those ideas that they tried once and only once before never thinking about doing it again. After the success of Wrestlemania, the idea was that Wrestlemania 2 had to be bigger, so Vince came up with the idea of splitting it into three cities. This show is widely considered to be one of if not the worst Wrestlemania of all time and with main events such as Piper vs. Mr. T. in a boxing match and Hogan vs. Bundy in a cage it's not hard to see why. Let's get to it.

This is on a Monday for some reason.

This was a tape I watched to death back when I was a kid so the theme music for this brings a smile to my face.

Vince opens things up in New York and introduces Susan St. James, a popular actress of the day, to be his co-commentator.

Ray Charles sings America the Beautiful.

Gene is in Chicago and welcomes us to the city for later on.

Roddy Piper and his trainer for the fight Lou Duva (famous boxing trainer) say Piper is ready. Piper promises to quit wrestling and boxing if he gets knocked out. He'll also quick playing tiddlywinks and dating girls, but he'll stick with Bob Orton of course. Those two spent WAY too much time together.

Paul Orndorff vs. Don Muraco

This is fallout from the main event of Mania last year as Orndorff turned face due to Piper and Orton leaving him behind. Muraco is an associate of Piper so this is kind of a proxy feud for Paul. Muraco has Fuji with him too. Both guys say they'll win in a voiceover as the match starts. Paul slams Muraco down to start and the crowd is already hot. Orndorff makes a slant eyes face at Fuji which today would get him thrown out of the company. In 1986, he was making \$20,000 a week later in the year. It's funny how times change.

Paul takes him down to the mat with an armbar as Susan St. James clearly has no idea what's going on. She's trying but this isn't something she knows about at all it would seem. Paul cranks on a wristlock before going back down to the armbar. Susan: "He looks like he's using some ancient Chinese techniques". Uh...yeah. Muraco finally escapes and sends Paul into the corner, only to have Orndorff go off on him as they brawl to the floor. In something you won't ever hear again I don't think, the opening match of Wrestlemania goes to a double countout. The fans chant some expletives.

Rating: D. What do you want here? The match is four minutes long and ends in a double countout. It was hot while it lasted, but the problem is that it didn't last long enough at all. This was a pretty big feud and it gets a four minute match? That's all they can spare these guys? Orndorff would have a MEGA heel turn later in the summer which would eventually draw 74,000 people to an outdoor show in Toronto. That's some drawing power.

Mr. T. says he doesn't like to do a lot of talking before a fight before proceeding to talk more in 30 seconds than Goldberg said in his entire career. To show you the production values, he's drowned out by Fink announcing the results of the previous match.

Intercontinental Title: George Steele vs. Randy Savage

This was a pretty big feud that also wound up meaning a lot more the next year than it does here. The basic idea is that George is in love with Liz and doesn't like how Savage treats her. There's a great angle right there that hasn't been used in a LONG time (Punk/AJ/Bryan isn't the same thing). Savage in an inset interview babbles as only Savage can without saying anything of note.

Steele does a freaky kind of dance and Savage immediately bails to the floor. That works so well that they do it again and make it three times until FINALLY George chases after him. Steele catches Savage going back in and bites his calf before they head back in. Randy hits a running knee to the chest but Steele easily lifts him into the air and chokes him down. George gets caught looking at Liz though and is tied up in the ropes so Savage pounds away.

A top rope cross body gets two for the champ (Savage in case you're really young) and Steele throws him to the floor. Randy slips under the ring and sneaks up on George, only to get bitten on the arm. Savage goes to the floor and finds...a bouquet of flowers? George shoves them into Randy's face before going to eat a turnbuckle (don't ask).

The stuffing goes into Savage's face but Steele AGAIN gets distracted by Liz, allowing Savage to hit the ax handle to the back. Back in and Savage hits the slam and elbow for two. Wait what? This is 1986 and the SAVAGE ELBOW only gets two? Steele grabs Savage by the face and sends him into the corner, only to get tripped up and pinned with the feet on the ropes to retain the title.

Rating: C-. This is one of those matches where your individual taste is going to vary a lot. On one hand, it's a comedy match but not an incredibly funny one, while on the other hand it's terrible from a wrestling perspective. On the other hand, you have three hands and should see a surgeon immediately. The point is this wasn't much of a match and never would have made it onto a modern Mania card. Of course it wouldn't; the Intercontinental Title doesn't exist around Wrestlemania time. Also, of all the people in the WWF, GEORGE STEELE gets to kick out of the

elbow? REALLY? This was fun for the goofiness if nothing else.

Savage and Liz immediately bail so Steele eats another buckle.

Bill Fralic (a football player) and Big John Studd are both in a battle royal later today and they talk some trash, once again being drowned out by Fink.

Vince asks Susan if she likes snakes. Make your own jokes.

Jake Roberts vs. George Wells

Wells is a former football player who never did another thing of note in wrestling other than be in this match. Jake is brand new at this point and is promptly run over and backdropped down in the first ten seconds. A flying shoulder takes Jake down and there's a headbutt for good measure. Wells hits a decent flying headscissors followed by a slam for no cover. A knee lift has Jake draped in the ropes and a powerslam gets two. Roberts comes back with a poke to the eyes and a knee lift followed by the DDT for the fast pin. This was pretty much domination until the last ten seconds.

Jake wraps George up in the snake post match and makes Wells foam at the mouth.

We recap Piper vs. T which is allegedly based on a boxing match that happened in Phoenix, as apparently we're ignoring ALL of the stuff from last year that set up the first Wrestlemania.

Hogan predicts T to win and says his ribs will be fine in the cage tonight.

We introduce the "celebrities." First up is Joan Rivers as guest ring announcer, Darryl Dawkins, Cab Calloway and G. Gordon Liddy as guest judges and Herb from Burger King commercials (you won't remember him) is guest timekeeper.

Roddy Piper vs. Mr. T.

This is a boxing match with ten three minute rounds. T has Joe Frazier as

his trainer and the Haiti Kid to counter Orton. Piper is the aggressor to start as Vince calls T's defensive stance a peek-a-boo style. Roddy grabs on the ropes and T fires away some body shots. These rounds might only be two minutes rounds. Piper takes him into the corner but T bobs and weaves before popping Roddy in the face a few times. It turns into another brawl on the ropes for the last thirty seconds or so of the round.

Everyone comes in to break up the brawl and we take a break between rounds. T gets in a few shots to the face to open round 2 but Piper apparently has a bunch of goo on his face. There's an Orton/Piper joke in there somewhere. After the face gets cleaned off Piper starts pounding away and T is in trouble. I'll change the numbers again because the rounds are indeed three minutes long. Piper gets him into the corner and pounds away, dropping him with a pair of shots to the head after about seven shots that missed BADLY. That gets an eight count and round 2 ends with T going down just after the bell.

Piper gets in a few cheap shots after the bell because that's the kind of guy he is. We start round 3 with T firing away but they're clearly getting tired. Piper goes down in his corner but pulls himself up before the count. T pounds him right back down in the corner and this time gets a seven count. This turns into move of a shoving match until T gets in a right hand to knock Piper out of the ring and out to the floor. Round 3 ends with nothing of note going on.

T talks trash in between rounds so Piper throws his stool across the ring as round 4 begins. They slug it out with T finally taking over. Piper DRILLS him with a right hand that knocks T's mouthpiece out. T comes back with the same kind of a punch...and then Piper shoves the referee down and slams T for the DQ.

Rating: D. This was one of those things that everyone knew was going to be a disaster and the best chance they had was to make it goofy. Thankfully we're talking about Roddy Piper in the 80s so you know he can bring the goofy. There were some decent punches in here but like all other wrestling boxing matches, you knew it would end with some sort of a DQ. This was pretty much it for Mr. T in the WWF other than a few cameos later on.

Off to Chicago!

Gene and Gorilla bring in Kathy Lee Crosby to do commentary.

Women's Title: Fabulous Moolah vs. Velvet McIntyre

Moolah is defending of course and hits about five hair mares in a row to start things off. Velvet comes back with some one footed dropkicks before going up and missing a splash for Moolah to get the pin. This barely lasted 90 seconds which may have been due to McIntyre's outfit breaking when she came off the ropes.

Corporal Kirchner vs. Nikolai Volkoff

This is a flag match which means a regular match where the winner gets to wave their flag. For some reason the ring is VERY loud all of a sudden. Kirchner is a guy you likely won't have heard of but he's famous for being VERY stiff which is why he wasn't around long. Blassie is with Nikolai here and his man hits a spinning kick to start.

We head to the floor where Volkoff rams him into the post and cuts the Corporal open with a piece of razor that he immediately puts back down into his trunks. Blassie yells at Kirchner a bit before they head back inside. It's a slugout but Blassie throws in his cane which goes upside Nikolai's head for the pin. This was another very short match.

Gene takes over the ring announcing for the NFL/WWF battle royal. There are six football players and fourteen wrestlers. Dick Butkus is a guest referee.

Battle Royal

NFL: Jimbo Covert, Harvey Martin, Ernie Holmes, Bill Fralic, Russ Francis, William Perry

WWF: Pedro Morales, Tony Atlas, Ted Arcidi, Dan Spivey, Hillbilly Jim, King Tonga, Iron Sheik, B. Brian Blair, Jim Brunzell, Big John Studd, Bruno Sammartino, Jim Neidhart, Bret Hart

Perry is the hometown boy but once they said Andre's name there was

little doubt as to who was winning. Ernie Ladd jumps in on commentary as a former wrestler and football player. Andre chills in the corner and beats up anyone that comes near him. Perry gets ganged up on a few times in the corner but fights them off as Covert and Tonga go out. Francis goes after Andre like a crazy man and Holmes is gone.

The two giants go at it for a bit and Brunzell is gone. There's never much to talk about in battle royals as most of it is just a bunch of brawls and the occasional elimination like Atlas going out here. Studd beats up Perry in the corner as Martin and Morales put each other out. Arcidi loads up Blair but Bruno makes the save for some reason. Not that it matters though as Arcidi is put out just a few seconds later. Spivey is gone as are Blair and Hillbilly. We're down to about eight or so.

Fralic is dumped out by a bunch of people and Bruno backdrops Sheik out. Studd dumps Bruno and we're down to Andre, Studd, Francis, Perry and the Harts. Perry shrugs off both Harts and sends them to the apron for the biggest pop of the night. He starts firing off tackles at Studd before running into an elbow for the elimination. Perry offers a handshake but pulls Studd out to the floor to another big pop. The Harts get Andre tied in the ropes and easily dump Francis. They pound away on Andre a bit but the big man is like dude please. He grabs Neidhart by the beard and kicks him out before tossing Bret on Anvil to win.

Rating: D. This was another pretty lame match with the football players not being able to do much due to not being wrestlers. Perry was incredibly popular and got a great reaction from the crowd, but other than him the NFL guys didn't add anything at all here. Andre winning was the only logical choice and there's not much else to say here.

Vince and Susan talk to Piper in New York and of course he says he's awesome and didn't lose at all.

Back in Chicago Jimbo Covert says he got cheated by Fralic. Iron Sheik says he's proven wrestlers are better than football players.

We look at the end of the battle royal again.

Tag Titles: Dream Team vs. British Bulldogs

The Dream Team is Brutus Beefcake and Greg Valentine and they're defending. For absolutely no apparent reason, the Bulldogs have Ozzy freaking Osbourne in their corner. Smith and Valentine start things off with Davey pounding away in the corner. Off to a wristlock before Dynamite comes in to send Valentine into the buckle for two. There's the snap suplex for no cover and it's back to Davey for the delayed vertical.

Greg gets in a few shots in the corner including a forearm to the back to take over and finally bring in Brutus. He cranks on the arm and is immediately gorilla pressed down by Smith. Dynamite comes in again and gets two off a small package. Beefcake makes a blind tag though and Valentine comes in off the top via another forearm to the back and the champions take over. Kid comes right back and pounds away before bringing Smith back in.

The Bulldogs hit a double headbutt for two for Kid but Brutus comes in sans tag to switch momentum right back. Valentine gets two off a kneeling piledriver but falls victim to the Arn Anderson self-crotching mistake. He continues the Horsemen theme by going up top and getting slammed down ala Flair as everything breaks down. Dynamite gets sent to the floor so Smith comes in with the powerslam (not yet the finisher) for two on Valentine.

Davey misses a charges into the post though and his shoulder is hurt in a hurry. Brutus comes in to work over the arm and hits a kind of hammerlock slam. Valentine hits a shoulderbreaker but pulls up before covering. In a VERY sudden ending, Dynamite gets on the top rope while still illegal and Davey rams Valentine's head into that of Dynamite for the pin and the title.

Rating: B. It's not a great or even a very good match but after nearly two hours of lame wrestling with nothing matches, this was a great breath of fresh air. The Bulldogs would be champions for the better part of a year while the Dream Team would survive for another year before splitting at the next Wrestlemania. Good stuff here though.

Both sets of announcers talk about the title change. I'll give the female celebrities this: they sound like they're enjoying themselves and they're

trying at least.

Off to Los Angeles.

Ricky Steamboat vs. Hercules Hernandez

Lee Marshall of non-fame in WCW is the announcer. This was supposed to be Steamboat vs. Hart but WWF saw more star power in Hernandez. This wasn't their best time from a thinking standpoint. Hercules pounds on him to start but Steamboat goes to the arm as is his custom. A kick to the ribs puts Hernandez down and it's off to an armbar. Back up and Steamboat does some leapfrogs before elbowing Herc down.

We head to the armbar again until Hernandez rams him into the buckle and hits a clothesline to take Steamboat down. A hot shot has Steamboat in trouble again but he comes back with a failed slam attempt that gives Hercules two. A pair of elbows get two more due to a very lazy cover. Hercules hits a tilt-a-whirl slam for two and there's a gorilla press slam to go with it. Make it a pair of gorilla presses but Hernandez's splash hits knees, allowing Ricky to hit the top rope cross body for the pin.

Rating: C-. Very basic match here with power vs. speed, although most of the speed guy's offense involved an armbar. That's something you have to get used to in Steamboat matches though so it's not a disappointment or anything. The match itself was pretty dull stuff but Steamboat in the 80s is never a bad thing.

Adrian Adonis vs. Uncle Elmer

We hit the stereotypes now the gay character vs. the hillbilly character. Elmer, weighing roughly 450lbs, runs off Adonis and Jimmy Hart before the match and we get a good shot of Adrian's pink dress. We finally get inside and Elmer starts pounding away before sending Adonis into the corner for a Flair Flip. Adrian gets sent into the corner two more times in a row with the second time landing him on the floor. Back in and there goes the dress as Adrian gets tied up in the ropes. A single punch to the chest puts Elmer down but he comes back with a corner splash, only to miss the big leg drop. A top rope headbutt gives Adrian a pin.

Rating: D-. What are you expecting here? We've got REALLY basic gimmicks (although Adonis wasn't bad in his day) in a three minute match involving a man wearing a dress. This is what you call filler, albeit terrible filler. Elmer wouldn't ever really do much in the WWF but he was a pretty big deal in the indies.

Adonis puts a flower on Elmer's back post match.

We get Hogan's second promo of the show with him saying he's ready for Bundy and he begs Heenan to get involved.

Funk Brothers vs. Junkyard Dog vs. Junkyard Dog/Tito Santana

It's Terry and Hoss here, with the latter being more famous as Dory Jr. Hoss and Dog start things off with JYD sending one Funk into another and slamming them both down before the Funks head to the floor for a breather. Off to Tito vs. Terry for a bit now and it's a short bit as Terry gets clotheslined to the floor. Hoss takes a dropkick to send him out to be with his brother and the heels huddle on the floor again. Oh and they have Jimmy Hart too.

Back to the Dog vs.. Terry and they slug it out with Dog taking over. JYD rams Terry into the buckle so many times that the pad starts to come off. Terry gets thrown to the unpadded floor yet again and it's back to Hoss. Tito comes in as well and Hoss fires off the famous Funk forearms. Speaking of forearms, the flying variety takes Hoss down and the Funks head to the floor again.

Hoss gets back in for a crisscross with Terry hitting Tito in the back with a knee to take over. Tito gets knocked to the floor and JYD has to chase Jimmy off a few times before throwing Santana back in. Terry gets two off a suplex and argues with the referee a bit before getting suplexed himself. They hit the ropes and collide but Terry falls into his own corner to bring in Hoss. The Funks hit a double clothesline which gets two for Terry who is getting frustrated.

Santana finally slides between Terry's legs and makes the hot tag to JYD. We prove we're in the 80s with a double noggin knocker to both of the Funks and a punch sends Hoss to the outside. Terry has a rope from

somewhere as everything breaks down. JYD throws Terry to the floor and slams him on a table for good measure. Terry's knee is hurt and he can't stand up but he gets back inside anyway as Jimmy gets decked. Everything breaks down again and Tito puts Hoss in the Figure Four but Terry blasts Dog in the head with the megaphone for the pin.

Rating: B-. I've said before that the 1980s were the best era ever for tag wrestling and this show proves it again. Most of the show hasn't been all that great but the tag matches have been by far the best matches on the card. This was a fun and WILD match but not to the point where you couldn't keep track of what was going on. Good stuff here and after two boring matches in the LA section this was a good match to pick things up.

We set up the cage, which is the big blue kind for the first time ever.

Hogan is lifting weights with bad ribs and we recap Hogan vs. Bundy. On SNME, Hogan defended the title against Don Muraco and after the match, Bundy ran in and destroyed Hogan with a bunch of splashes to injure the ribs. The doctor says Hogan shouldn't be doing this, so Hulk does chinups with a 100lb weight around his neck.

Heenan and Bundy say they're going to take the title from Hogan.

Elvira sends it to New York for comments from Susan and Vince.

WWF World Title: Hulk Hogan vs. King Kong Bundy

Escape only here, as it should be. Tommy Lasorda of the LA Dodgers is guest ring announcer. Ricky Schroder, a child actor, is guest timekeeper and Robert Conrad, an adult actor, is guest referee. Hogan starts firing off right hands to start and knocks Bundy into the cage before choking Bundy with his own singlet. The following clothesline in the corner has Bundy in even more trouble and a forearm to the head staggers him even more. All Hogan so far.

Both guys block shots into the cage but King goes to the ribs to stop Hogan cold. There's a slam to mess with the ribs even more and Bundy goes for the door. You know it's not ending that fast though so Bundy comes back to choke with the tape a bit. Another attempt to escape goes about

as well and Hulk comes back with an elbow in the corner. Bundy gets rammed into the cage to bust him open and Hogan rakes his back a bit. More cage ramming occurs and Hulk climbs to the top to choke away on the ropes.

Hogan goes for the slam but Bundy falls down onto him as you would expect him to. Bundy goes to the door but Hulk grabs him for some choking with the rib tape. The Avalanche splash hits in the corner and a regular one hits as well so Hogan can shake like a fish. Hogan dives to stop Bundy from getting out but takes another Avalanche...with no effect whatsoever. The champion busts out a powerslam of all things and easily climbs out to retain.

Rating: D. It's Hogan vs. a monster in 1986 so what in the world were you expecting to see here? At the end of the day this was the safe move but with all of the other heels on the roster, this is the best they could come up with? I mean, you have Savage, Piper or even Roberts to be in there, but you pick Bundy? It's not like this was some huge feud as the SNME that set this up was five weeks before this show. I've heard that Vince was trying desperately to get Nikita Koloff to jump and be in the main event but when they fell through, they picked a monster instead. Eh when all else fails, go with the safe pick.

Hogan beats up Heenan to close the show.

Overall Rating: D. This is a tough one to grade for the same reason that I don't consider it the worst Mania ever: it was the second one and they had NO idea what they were doing here. The main thing that helps this show is that while most of the matches are worthless, they're FAST. Of all the non-tag matches, only the cage match and the boxing match break ten minutes and the cage match does so by about 15 seconds. It's certainly not a good show and if this happened today Vince would be jumping off a building, but for its time this wasn't completely terrible.

Ratings Comparison

Paul Orndorff vs. Don Muraco

Original: D+

Redo: D

Randy Savage vs. George Steele

Original: C-

Redo: C-

Jake Roberts vs. George Wells

Original: F

Redo: D+

Mr. T. vs. Roddy Piper

Original: F

Redo: D

Fabulous Moolah vs. Velvet McIntyre

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

Corporal Kirschner vs. Nikolai Volkoff

Original: D-

Redo: N/A

Battle Royal

Original: B

Redo: D

British Bulldog vs. Dream Team

Original: B-

Redo: B

Rick Steamboat vs. Hercules Hernandez

Original: C-

Redo: C-

Adrian Adonis vs. Uncle Elmer

Original: N/A

Redo: D-

Terry Funk/Hoss Funk vs. Tito Santana/Junkyard Dog

Original: B-

Redo: B-

Hulk Hogan vs. King Kong Bundy

Original: B-

Redo: D

Overall Rating

Original: D+

Redo: D

Dang those must have been the strong rose colored glasses back then.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/03/09/history-of-wrestlemania-with-kb-wrestlemania-2-what-the-hell-were-they-thinking/>

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book on the History of Saturday Night's Main Event at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00SATPVKw>

And check out my Amazon author page with wrestling books for under \$4 at:

Wrestlemania Count-Up – Wrestlemania I: The Night That Changed Everything

I had to get here eventually and it feels great to be back. These shows are the first reviews I ever did as I thought it would be fun to look back at every show leading up to Wrestlemania 25. Little did I know that I would spend four years doing them and wind up going on to do every major PPV of all time. That's appropriate as this is the birth of the modern PPV (yes Starrcade came first and no, it wasn't the same kind of show. Well not at first at least) and the biggest event in wrestling.

Wrestlemania started off as little more than a house show with mainstream press. Fueled by the Rock N Wrestling Connection which saw wrestlers appearing in pop and rock music videos (thanks to the rise of MTV), the show was the follow up to a pair of shows called the Brawl to End it All and the War to Settle the Score.

The show, featuring Hulk Hogan and Mr. T. teaming up in the main event, was a smash hit and has since spawned an unthinkable 28 followup editions. Wrestlemania paved the way for the modern day pay per view and is by far the biggest show of the year for the WWE. We're going to examine these shows one at a time and one per day until we reach Wrestlemania 31 this year in San Francisco. Let's get to it.

Wrestlemania I

Date: March 31, 1985

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

Attendance: 19,121

Commentators: Gorilla Monsoon, Jesse Ventura

We begin here at a show that certainly won't be like the rest of these. This show is far more about the spectacle than the major matches which is shown in the main event. Our big match tonight is Hulk Hogan and Mr. T. teaming up to face Paul Orndorff and Roddy Piper in a grudge match. Yeah the first show doesn't even have the world title on the line. Today, there are at least two world title matches per show. Anyway, this is where it all began so let's get to it.

The opening video is a bunch of shots of New York City with the WWF logo and some pictures of the wrestlers coming in later. The celebrities for tonight's show (headlined by Muhammad Ali) are also shown.

Here's Mean Gene to sing the Star Spangled Banner.

Tito Santana says he's ready for the undefeated Executioner and he's going to teach the newcomer a thing or two about the big leagues.

The Executioner says he's going after Santana's injured leg. So much for secrecy.

Tito Santana vs. Executioner

Executioner is Buddy Rose (of Blow Away fame) under a mask. Tito is WAY over here in MSG so he was a good choice to open things up. We start with a crisscross before Tito dropkicks Executioner out to the floor. Back in and Santana hooks a headlock to take Executioner to the mat as we're still waiting on that promised leg work. Tito charges into a boot in the corner and Executioner takes him down with a knee to the ribs. A spinning toe hold is easily escaped so Executioner goes after the other leg. So which one is injured in the first place?

Tito shrugs him off and the masked guy hides in the corner. Since it's a corner that Tito is looking straight at, the hiding doesn't go all that well and Tito slugs him down. Executioner comes back with a slam and goes up, only to be slammed right back down. A Santana splash hits knees though and we get to the knee work. That work consists of one cannonball down onto it before Tito kicks him to the floor. Back in and the forearm sets up the Figure Four to make Santana the first winner in the history of Wrestlemania.

Rating: C-. This wasn't too bad and the crowd reacted well to Santana, but Executioner was just a guy there to be evil. For an opening match this was a pretty good idea but for a match in general it was pretty lame stuff. Then again they have no idea what they're doing at this point so it's understandable.

S.D. Jones says he's ready for King Kong Bundy. I see why I've never heard him talk other than this show. He's going to get down for Bundy.

Bundy says Jones needs to be ready for the Avalanche and the five count.

S. D. Jones vs. King Kong Bundy

Here's an infamous one. Jones is a guy from the old days who is here to make the fans feel good I guess. The match lasts 23 seconds with Bundy shoving Jones into the corner, splashing him three times and getting the pin. According to the WWF the time was 9 seconds, which doesn't even make bad sense for them.

Matt Borne, the future Doink the Clown, says he's ready to beat a worldwide star in Ricky Steamboat. Steamboat's problem is that he's too nice of a guy. That's likely true.

Steamboat says this is the biggest card ever and he's here to develop his meanness. You don't hear this often, but Steamboat failed miserably in that regard.

Matt Borne vs. Ricky Steamboat

Borne is the Maniac so I have another name to use. Steamboat is looking chiseled here. I've never seen him so ripped up and it's a strange look on him. Also he isn't called the Dragon yet which is even odder to hear. Ricky speeds things up to start and chops Borne down before hitting a chinlock only about 40 seconds in.

Off to a headlock instead with Steamboat backflipping over Borne twice with the second time resulting in an atomic drop. Back to the headlock which is shifted into a front facelock but Borne comes back with a snap suplex for two. Ricky is like dude I'm Ricky Steamboat and suplexes Borne down, followed by a swinging neckbreaker. A shoulder block puts Borne

down and the cross body ends this near squash clean.

Rating: D+. Eh it's Steamboat in the 80s so how bad can this be? Ricky wasn't a huge star yet but he was rapidly becoming known as something special. It would be another year or so before he started tearing the house down on a regular basis and started having his masterpieces. Borne would be a lot better when he had a gimmick to go with his skills.

The Sammartinos are ready for Johnny V and Brutus Beefcake. Bruno threatens Johnny V is he tries to get involved.

David Sammartino vs. Brutus Beefcake

Sammartino was the son of a legend and had a good way into the business as a result. He had a good look on top of that, but he had one thing holding him back: he had no talent. His "career" was really just a way to keep Bruno around for a few more years to draw in some extra crowds and that's the only reason this match is happening. Beefcake is new at this point and is nowhere near what he would become so this is going to be pretty bad.

David's height doesn't help him either as he's about 5'8 or so. They head to the mat to start and Brutus has to bail to the floor for a breather. Back in and Sammartino takes it right back to the mat with a front facelock. A legdrop to the arm has Beefcake in trouble and it's time to talk to the managers a bit. Beefcake comes back with a headlock takeover but David grabs the legs to work them over a bit.

Off to a leg lock as we keep things very basic so far. Brutus fights up with his leg seeming fine all of a sudden. He drops some forearms to David's back and there's a hard whip into the corner by Beefcake. David comes back with a backdrop and they slug it out a bit. Sammartino strikes like his daddy. A suplex gets two for David but Brutus sends him to the floor. The managers get into a fight and both guys run in for a double DQ.

Rating: D+. This is a hard one to grade as it's a competitive match and not completely terrible, but the problem is how low level of quality this was. Neither guy was terrible but you could tell they were trying which

makes a big difference. This could have been WAY worse but it just wasn't that good in the first place.

I forgot to mention how the interviews are being done. Alfred Hayes is standing in the entrance with the ring behind him as the guys come by him for their matches. The interviews are recorded earlier in the day though so it's kind of odd.

Anyway Valentine says he's tough and leaner than usual.

JYD says he's going to take a bite out of Valentine. So he's promising to cheat? Good to know.

Intercontinental Title: Junkyard Dog vs. Greg Valentine

Dog cranks on the arm to start and punches him in the shoulder ala Marciano. A punch to the face takes Valentine down and a headbutt sends the champion (Greg in case you're not familiar with this era) to the floor. Valentine tries his luck at the arm now and pounds away with some forearms to the back of the head. I'm not sure if that should hurt the Dog or not.

The champion goes after the leg now with what looks to be the start of a half crab but he never turns Dog over. A kind of DDT on the leg has the Dog in trouble again and there's a headbutt between the legs. Dog breaks up the Figure Four and hits a headbutt to stagger the champ some more. Jimmy Hart tries to interfere but Dog causes Valentine to blast him in the head instead. Valentine grabs a fast rollup and puts his feet on the ropes for the pin.

Rating: D+. I'm getting tired of using that rating but this is what the matches keep coming out as: not terrible but nothing good at all.

Valentine would get back to his current feud with Tito Santana very soon with the title changing hands pretty soon if I remember properly. Dog was there as more of a fun character than a serious threat so this was fine.

Speaking of Santana, here he is to tell the referee what happened. The referee restarts the match but Valentine walks out for the countout without ever getting back in. That's just building Santana vs. Valentine

for later.

Iron Sheik and Nikolai Volkoff say their countries are better than America. Where's my pitchfork when I need to run freaks like these off?

The US Express say they're ready.

Tag Titles: US Express vs. Nikolai Volkoff/Iron Sheik

The Express is Barry Windham and Mike Rotundo and they're defending tonight. A little trivia for you: the song Real American was originally used for the two of them but Hogan wound up using it instead. The heels do their whole Russian national anthem and Iran/Russia #1 deal before the match. Rotundo and Sheik start things off with the Iranian hooking a headlock. A dropkick puts Sheik down and Mike grabs a headlock.

Off to Barry who avoids double teaming and causes the challengers to collide. Back to Rotundo to work over Nikolai with an elbow drop getting two. Windham comes in off the top with a shot to the arm and Rotundo does the same thing. Sheik suplexes Mike down for two as the foreigners take over. Nikolai drops him throat first across the throat and the USA chant starts up.

A sunset flip gets a quick two for Mike but it's back to Sheik for an abdominal stretch. That doesn't last long though as Mike hiptosses out of it and it's off to Barry via the hot tag. The bulldog (Barry's finisher at the time) takes Volkoff out as everything breaks down. In the melee, Sheik hits Windham in the back with the cane for the pin and the titles.

Rating: C. This was a better match than we've seen so far with the fans getting way into the whole USA vs. foreigners thing. The title change was there only so something historic could happen and the Express got the belts back about two and a half months later. They would split soon after that with both guys heading to the NWA.

Sheik and Volkoff said they've proven their superiority now.

Intermission which is edited out of the home video releases.

Big John Studd says he'll slam Andre and keep the money.

Big John Studd vs. Andre the Giant

This is a bodyslam challenge with some special stipulations: if Andre wins, he gets \$15,000 but if Studd wins, Andre has to retire. Studd charges in to start but is immediately chopped back and he bails to the floor. Back in and Andre punches him in the head and rams him in the corner with all of his weight. Studd goes for a slam and Andre is just like dude please. The fans chant for a slam as Andre puts on a bearhug. That goes on for a good while until Andre shifts over to a facelock. Apparently if this goes to the time limit, Andre has to retire. Andre kicks at the leg for a bit and casually slams Studd for the win. It's as quick as it sounds.

Rating: D. This was pretty terrible but the fans loved Andre and he had to be on here. Also this was part of a big feud as Andre and Studd cut Andre's hair a few weeks before this. The match was pretty weak but then again what are you going to expect from these two guys with Andre's body starting to fail on him.

Andre hands a few bucks out to the fans but Heenan steals the bag and runs off.

Andre says he doesn't care about the money because he's better than Studd and now he's proven it. He isn't retiring anytime soon either.

Cyndi Lauper and Wendi Richter want Wendi's title back. Richter is MAD here and has a nearly man's voice.

Moolah and Lelani Kai are ready to keep the title.

Women's Title: Lelani Kai vs. Wendi Richter

The big deal here is that Cyndi Lauper, pop superstar of her day, is in Richter's corner. Moolah, as in the woman who cost Richter the title a few weeks ago, is in Kai's corner. The camera is on a wide shot for the start of Richter's music (Girls Just Wanna Have Fun) and the whole crowd literally gets up at once. Cool visual. For reasons that continue to elude me, the slow motion shot of Richter and Lauper running through the back and into the arena is a famous clip.

They both pull hair to start and we're clearly in a normal women's match here. By that I mean neither girl is that good in the ring and their moves are really overblown. Richter cranks on the arm for a bit until Kai pulls her hair to take over. Now the champion works on the arm for a bit and Richter is in trouble. More hair pulling ensues until Richter puts on a body scissors.

Kai charges into a boot in the corner and Richter shoves the referee away like a jerk. Moolah chokes away at Wendi in the corner until Lauper comes over to make the save. Richter hits a kind of reverse AA and a splash for two. Lelani hits a backbreaker for two before going up for a cross body, only to have Wendi roll through for the pin and the title.

Rating: D. These two just didn't work that well, but that would be the case for almost any women's match back in the 80s. The girls were out there basically for a spectacle or in this case the pop culture connection that was driving the era. Richter was a HUGE star at this point, occasionally main eventing house shows when Hogan was in another city.

Richter and Lauper dance around the ring in celebration in another semi-famous scene.

Richter and Lauper celebrate in the back as well.

We introduce the celebrities for the main event. The guest ring announcer is Billy Martin, former manager of the Yankees. He introduces Liberace as guest timekeeper, accompanied by four Rockettes. They all get in the ring and do the famous kicks which you'll see in the occasional highlight package. The guest referee is someone you may have heard of: Muhammad Ali. Jose Torres, another boxer, is on the floor as well.

Hulk Hogan/Mr. T. vs. Roddy Piper/Paul Orndorff

Piper comes out with the full New York Pipe and Drums band while Hogan and T come out to Eye of the Tiger. Advantage Hogan/T. Piper and Orndorff have Bob Orton as their second while Hogan/T have Jimmy Snuka. Advantage Hogan/T. This is looking kind of one sided isn't it? Oh and Pat Patterson is the inside referee while Ali is the outside referee. The heels all hug

and we're ready to go.

Orndorff and Hogan get things going but Piper tags in before there's any contact. Therefore T wants to fight Piper and they immediately head to the mat. T and Piper do some amateur stuff and T actually lasts long enough for a standoff. We get some staring until T hooks Piper in an airplane spin. Everything breaks down and Ali gets in to help break it up. Orton and Snuka try to get in as well but Ali glares Orton down.

Things break down again and the heels get rammed together until we get down to Hogan vs. Piper. Hulk rams Piper's head into the mat over and over until it's back to T. Hogan offers his knee as something to ram Piper's head into and it's back to the champion to send Piper to the outside. Orndorff jumps Hogan from behind and knocks him outside where Roddy blasts him with a chair.

Paul chokes away from the apron until T charges in for the save. Pat Patterson has to pull T off and you know he enjoys this in some way. A double atomic drop puts Hogan down and Orndorff hits a vertical suplex. Roddy comes back in to get in his punches and knee shots followed by an Orndorff top rope elbow to the back of Hulk's neck for two. Paul goes up again but misses the knee drop and there's the hot tag to T.

Orndorff and T brawl on the mat for a bit until Mr. gets in trouble via a Piper front facelock. That goes nowhere though as T stands up and makes the tag with no effort to be seen. Hogan pounds away but walks into a belly to back suplex. Orton and Snuka get in the ring for no apparent reason and as the referee calms things down, Orton comes in off the top with the cast but hits Orndorff by mistake to give Hogan the pin.

Rating: B-. Is it great? Not even close, but the point of this match was the crowd reacting to it rather than the match itself. It's easily the best match of the night and while the only question coming into tonight was who was getting the fall. This was exactly what the fans wanted and that's what this was supposed to be about. Nice main event here.

Piper and Orton bail but the good guys let Orndorff leave without beating on him even more.

We recap the ending of the main event.

Hogan, T and Snuka talk about winning.

Credits end the show. That's a sign of the past.

Overall Rating: D+. First and foremost let me make something clear: the overall rating for this show means jack because the whole thing was there for the spectacle and the matches were an afterthought other than the main event. This show was a huge success and kickstarted what is known as the Golden Era, so I don't think you can call it anything but a good show. It's also on the list of shows that every fan has to see at least once, just so they can say they've seen it. Not great quality, but incredible historical significance.

Ratings Comparison

Tito Santana vs. Executioner

Original: C

Redo: C-

King Kong Bundy vs. S.D. Jones

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

Ricky Steamboat vs. Matt Borne

Original: C-

Redo: D+

David Sammartino vs. Brutus Beefcake

Original: D-

Redo: D+

Junkyard Dog vs. Greg Valentine

Original: D+

Redo: D+

Nikolai Volkoff/Iron Shiek vs. U.S. Express

Original: B-

Redo: C

Andre the Giant vs. Big John Studd

Original: D+

Redo: D

Wendi Richter vs. Lelani Kai

Original: B

Redo: D

Hulk Hogan/Mr. T. vs. Roddy Piper/Paul Orndorff

Original: B

Redo: B-

Overall Rating

Original: C-

Redo: D+

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/03/08/history-of-wrestlemania-with-kb-wrestlemania-1-just-a-big-house-show/>

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book on the History of Saturday Night's Main Event at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00SATPVKW>

And check out my Amazon author page with wrestling books for under \$4 at:

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

Content Announced For New Ultimate Warrior DVD

The trend of leaving off matches you can find on the Network continues, and that's a good thing.

Matches

Boston, MA – October 10, 1988

Intercontinental Championship

Ultimate Warrior vs. Honky Tonk Man

Madison, WI– June 6, 1989

Ultimate Warrior and King Duggan vs. Ravishing Rick Rude and Andre the Giant

Superstars – May 18, 1991

Ultimate Warrior vs. Smash

Monday Night Raw – April 29, 1996

Ultimate Warrior vs. Isaac Yankem

Meadowlands Arena – May 8, 1989

Intercontinental Championship

Ultimate Warrior vs. Ravishing Rick Rude

Maple Leaf Wrestling – October 29, 1989

Intercontinental Championship

Ultimate Warrior vs. Andre the Giant

Wrestling Challenge – April 28, 1991
Ultimate Warrior vs. Rick The Model Martel

Lexington, KY – May 19, 1992
Ultimate Warrior vs. Papa Shango

SummerSlam Spectacular – August 19, 1992
Ultimate Warrior and Macho Man Randy Savage vs. Nasty Boys

Promos/Interviews

Wrestling Challenge – March 13, 1988
I Live For Anger and Frustration

Wrestling Challenge – August 13, 1989
Mean Gene Interviews Ultimate Warrior About SummerSlam

Superstars – May 23, 1992
The Papa Shango Curse

Monday Nitro – September 21 – 1998
Running to Reappear

Wrestling Challenge – June 25, 1988
I Won't Let You Down

Superstars – July 16, 1988
Legends Weren't Built Overnight

All American Wrestling – September 18, 1988
You Can Feel It

Superstars – February 3, 1990
I Speak to You, Hulk Hogan

Superstars – April 14, 1990
The New WWE Champion

Superstars – June 23, 1990
The Brother Love Show Discussing SummerSlam

Superstars – September 19, 1992

The Ultimate Maniacs Are Born

Wrestling Challenge – November 7, 1992

The Ultimate Maniacs Are Out of Control

Monday Nitro – August 24, 1998

One Warrior Nation

Monday Night Raw – April 7, 2014

The Spirit of Ultimate Warrior Will Run Forever

Blu-ray Exclusives

WrestleMania VI – April 1, 1990

Arena Cam

Ultimate Warrior vs. Hulk Hogan

WCCW – August 22, 1986

Dingo Warrior vs. Rick Rude

Ontario, Canada – June 3, 1992

Ultimate Warrior and Undertaker vs. Papa Shango and Berzerker

New Column: The 500lb French Zombie Superman

Looking at a very interesting story that has flown under the radar for over a year.

<http://www.wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-500lb-french-zombie-superman/33833/>

Royal Rumble Count-Up – 1989: Prelude To An Explosion

Royal Rumble 1989

Date: January 15, 1989

Location: The Summit, Houston, Texas

Attendance: 19,000

Commentators: Gorilla Monsoon, Jesse Ventura

This is the first PPV version of the show and things have changed a lot. Tonight, everyone is in the match and they're focusing more on the idea of every man being for himself. The match wouldn't be worth anything for a few more years but things should be a little bit stronger tonight as they have a better idea what they're doing. Let's get to it.

We start off with a listing of presumably everyone in the Rumble tonight. If not then it's at least most of them.

Dino Bravo/Fabulous Rougeaus vs. Jim Duggan/Hart Foundation

2/3 falls here. Anvil vs. Bravo gets things going and they collide a few times with no one going anywhere. Both guys miss elbows and it's off to Duggan for a BIG reaction. Ray Rougeau comes in and is immediately slammed down and hit by a knee drop. Hart comes in to a small but audible reaction and gets two each off a small package and a sunset flip. Jacques comes in and things break down a bit with all three heels being caught in one corner where Anvil drives shoulders into them, crushing Ray against the corner under two other guys.

Ray FINALLY gets something in by low bridging Bret to send him to the floor. At the end of the day, when you need someone to sell something you call on Bret. Dino's side suplex puts Bret down and The Rougeau Bomb gets the first fall. Bret and Ray start things off in the second fall with Hart in big trouble. Jacques comes in and sends Bret into the corner for

the traditional chest first bump in the corner which gives Dino two.

Bravo puts on a bear hug for a bit before it's back to Jacques. A sunset flip gives Bret a quick breather but he's immediately put in a camel clutch. Anvil makes the save but as he's being put back in the corner, Ray comes in and puts the same hold back on. That's good stuff there. The heels take turns working over Bret until Jacques puts on a Boston Crab. Gorilla wants Duggan or Neidhart to come in and break the hold up, because you've got five seconds. I love the hypocrisy you would get from him at times.

Bret breaks the hold and tags in Anvil but the referee didn't see it. That's such a basic spot but you don't see it much anymore. Ray puts on an abdominal stretch before it's off to Jacques for the exact same hold. Bret FINALLY hits an atomic drop to break up the momentum and there's the white hot tag to Duggan. Anvil hits a slingshot shoulder on Ray and a Duggan elbow drop ties the match up at a fall apiece.

Duggan pounds on Ray to start before going to the wrong corner to try to beat up both guys. Bravo hammers away a bit but rams Duggan's head into the buckle for no effect at all. Duggan gets punched over into the corner and there's the tag to Hart. Everything breaks down and Duggan hits Bravo with the board to give Hart the pin.

Rating: C. This was fine but Duggan's reactions are amazing. The guy was probably the third most over guy in the company at this point, which is covering a lot of ground given how over some of the guys were in 1989. This was fine for an opener but the ending was never quite in doubt, which is ok.

We get a clip of some people pulling their numbers earlier. DiBiase isn't thrilled at all and immediately goes to find Slick to work out a deal of some kind. These segments need to come back, if nothing else to try to make us believe the numbers are random. The Bushwhackers are happy with their numbers but they trade anyway. Honky is mad about his number. Bad News says his is good news. Demolition seems annoyed. Jake...you can't tell emotion from him anyway. The Rockers don't seem to hate theirs.

It's time for the Super Posedown, which is exactly that: Ultimate Warrior

and Rick Rude posing against each other to further their feud. Warrior is IC Champion here and man alive if this happened on a PPV today the fans would likely riot. Well not riot but boo heavily at least. Heenan actually sucks up to the fans because it's decided by fan vote. Again, the ending here isn't exactly in doubt. This goes on WAY too long, as it's just posing and people booing/cheering depending on who is posing. Rude finally attacks Warrior with a bar and bails. Warrior chases after him and that's it. This somehow took nearly fifteen minutes.

Womens' Title: Judy Martin vs. Rockin Robin

Robin is defending and is Jake Roberts' real life half sister. Sherri is in the ring and wants the title shot at the winner of this. Martin misses a charge and Sherri sits in on commentary. They pound on each other and it's clear that they're not incredibly skilled in the ring. Martin slams her down and blocks a sunset flip with a punch to the head. Robin puts on a Boston Crab as this is going nowhere.

Martin blocks an O'Connor Roll as Sherri complains about not getting a rematch yet. Gorilla talks about the process you have to go through to get a rematch, which is a nice sounding idea when you think about all the automatic title rematches you get today. Imagine that: EARNING a title match. Something resembling a DDT gets two on Martin but Robin misses an elbow drop. Martin misses one also but a backslide gets two for Judy. Robin kicks her in the face for two and gets the same off a small package. Sherri: "Come on somebody win." Robin goes to the middle rope, fakes Martin out, and cross bodies her to retain.

Rating: D. Nothing to see here but the ending wasn't bad. The Women's Title would be retired about 13 months later and wouldn't be restored until about 1993. At the end of the day, no one cares about womens wrestling other than for how small their outfits are. Robin and Martin aren't exactly eye candy either, so this didn't do much for anyone. At least it was short though.

Slick says the Twin Towers (Boss Man and Akeem) are probably winners of the Rumble but denies knowing anything about shenanigans with DiBiase. Sean Mooney has footage (the original Vickie Guerrer) of Slick and

DiBiase together and suddenly Slick realizes he misunderstood Mooney the first time. He has no comment though.

Rude runs his mouth a bit about beating Warrior. This must be intermission.

Yep, it's intermission as we get promos from a few managers, saying their guys are going to win. Nothing to see here but we hear from Fuji (representing the Powers of Pain), Liz (Mega Powers) and Jimmy Hart (Honky Tonk Man and Greg Valentine). Like I said, nothing to see here.

Jesse is sitting on the throne that will go to either Haku or Race. He thinks he might just run for King because the chair is comfortable.

King Haku vs. Harley Race

Race was King but got hurt and the crown went to Haku. This is his chance to get it back in a one time only return to the ring. Harley shoves over Haku's throne to start and the brawl is on. You know Race is going to be the brawler in this. Back in and Race pounds away before suplexing Haku down for two. Heenan manages both guys here but Race is kind of the face by default.

They head to the floor again with Race being sent into the post and chopped a few times. Haku sends him back to the floor after a few seconds in the ring as we stall for a few moments. More chops have Race in trouble as Jesse talks about Hogan injuring Race, which is only kind of true. Race no sells a headbutt and gets two off a piledriver. They collide again and Race falls to the floor as Heenan plays both sides, saying he's for both guys when the other is out of earshot.

Back in and Race punches some more before getting two off a suplex. Haku gets sent to the floor again as it's pretty clear there's not much to this match. Race tries to piledrive Haku on the floor but gets backdropped as is the usual. A second attempt at a piledriver works but not incredibly well. Back in and a clothesline puts Haku down for two but Haku comes back and misses a top rope headbutt. Race misses a headbutt of his own and charges into the superkick from Haku (looked GREAT) for the pin to keep the crown in Tonga or wherever he's from.

Rating: D+. This wasn't terrible and the ending kick looked awesome, but other than that there wasn't much to see here. Race was clearly old and banged up and he didn't have a lot to work with in the form of Haku. The crown was mostly a minor title that was only somewhat official. Nothing to see here, but no one cares about anything but the Rumble tonight anyway.

Time for more Rumble promos, with Beefcake, Greg Valentine (both of whom say they just need their fists), the Powers of Pain (Fuji does the talking for them), Big John Studd (freshly back in the company), Mr. Perfect (pretty new at this point) and Savage (insane of course).

DiBiase is much happier about his number now.

Heenan says the Family (Brainbusters and Andre) is ready and Andre says he'll throw them out if he has to. Arn whispers to Tully when Andre isn't looking because Arn Anderson is more awesome than you.

Hogan gives his usual promo with the focus on Boss Man and Akeem this time.

Royal Rumble

The entrants are every two minutes, allegedly. #1 is Ax and #2 is Smash, beginning a tradition of having partners fight at the beginning of these matches. They immediately pound on each other and amazingly enough, they actually sell the offense. It's a bunch of clotheslines and punches, but the key to Demolition has always been how HARD they hit each other, which is what you get a lot of here. In at #3 is Andre, which gives us one heck of a handicap match.

Demolition immediately hits a double clothesline on Andre and start demolishing him to a BIG pop. Andre is way past being past his prime here but this is still cool to see. Here's Mr. Perfect at #4 and he strolls down the aisle, which is pretty wise for him. Andre starts fighting Demolition off and for some reason this turns into a tag match. Andre easily throws out Smash, resulting in a 2-1 attack on Andre.

The Giant fights them off and Perfect sells a headbutt as only Mr.

Perfect can. Here's Ronnie Garvin at #5 and they get Andre tied up in the ropes. The Giant breaks free and beats up Ax while Garvin and Hennig fight a bit. Andre shifts over to beat up Perfect, giving us some more awesome overselling. Greg Valentine is in at #6 to make it 4-1 against Andre. AGAIN Andre is all like BRING IT ON and knocks them away, eliminating Garvin in the process.

Andre chokes Valentine in the corner while Ax and Perfect continue their rather uninteresting fight. Andre starts choking Ax and the look on his face is eerie. Jake Roberts is #7 and Andre immediately pounds him down. Nothing of note happens for two minutes so here's Ron Bass at #8 as Jake gets eliminated by Andre. Shawn Michaels is in at #9, giving us Ax, Perfect, Andre, Bass, Valentine and Michaels. As I type that, Perfect knocks out Ax.

Perfect throws Shawn over the top rope but some skinning the cat brings him back in. Shawn dropkicks Perfect to the apron as we get into a sell-off. #10 is Butch who gets a big pop of his own. As Butch gets in, here's Jake Roberts again with the snake to scare Andre out of the match. The fans look at something, presumably Jake and Andre in the aisle, as things settle down a lot. It's Honky Tonk Man at #11 as things are in that annoying slow period of most Rumbles.

Tito Santana is in at #12 to finally balance the heel/face ratio out a bit. There's almost nothing going on here other than the energy burst you get from the new guys coming in. Bass hits a good backdrop on Michaels as Santana barely survives an attack from Valentine. Bad News Brown is #13 and Butch and Santana (there's a pairing for you) dump Honky. Butch gets beaten up and Shawn goes up top to jump on Bad News and Bass. Marty Jannetty is #14 and the Rockers double dropkick Bass out.

Tito kills Valentine with the forearm and world champion Randy Savage is #15. NOW the place wakes up as he hammers away on Bad News. Perfect and Savage go at it in a match that would have the purists drooling. Speaking of making purists drool, Arn Anderson is #16. Savage dumps Valentine as Shawn fights Arn. Savage...saves Anderson and eliminates Shawn? Now there's one I didn't expect. To recap, we've got Marty, Anderson, Butch, Brown, Savage, Santana and Perfect in there at the moment. That's quite

the lineup for the most part.

Tully Blanchard makes the lineup even stronger at #17. Just to be clear, that's two tag teams getting back to back numbers. Gee, what are the odds? The Brainbusters double team Marty as we're just waiting for Hogan at this point. And here he is at #18. There goes Perfect, giving him the new Iron Man record at just under 28:00. Off camera, Savage and the Busters put Santana out as Hulk beats up Brown. Hogan fights off all three heels as Savage beats on Butch. Nice partner, especially after Hogan saved Savage when he got to the ring.

Here's Luke at #19 as things slow down again. Butch gets thrown out after a remarkable 18 minutes. Hogan hot shots Blanchard but has to beat up Luke instead of eliminating Tully. After a brief lull, here's Koko B. Ware at #20. After more of that epic Hulk vs. Luke showdown, Arn goes up top and is immediately slammed down by Hogan. Dude, you're best friends with RIC FLAIR. Why would you think that's smart? Hogan dumps Koko and Luke but gets double teamed by the Busters.

Warlord is #20 and Hogan clotheslines both Busters out at the same time. Warlord poses on the apron, gets in, and is clotheslined out in 2 seconds flat, setting a record that would last 20 years. Hogan also dumps Bad News, but it takes out Savage in the process which adds even more fuel to the Mega Powers Exploding in less than a month. Liz comes in to play peacemaker and the Powers shake hands.

Now we get the big showdown of the match as Big Boss Man is #21 and gets to face Hogan one on one. This is when Boss Man weighed like 400lbs and was just freaking fat. Hulk slams Boss Man down and pounds away in the corner but falls victim to a splash. A piledriver puts Hulk down and Boss Man stands tall. Gorilla says Hogan has been out there for half an hour (it's been about 8 or 9 minutes) and Jesse is hilarious in freaking out.

To give us the third team back to back in this Rumble, #22 is Akeem. Hogan rams them together and slams Akeem but the numbers catch up with Hogan. After a brief comeback, a double splash crushes Hogan and he's easily tossed. Hogan, ever the jerk, pulls Boss Man out and beats on him, which is apparently an elimination. Beefcake is #23, which means we just

missed what could have been a good house show tag match.

Hogan and Boss Man brawl to the back as we get to the pretty dull third act of the Rumble. Red Rooster is #24 and helps double team Akeem a bit. They try to dump Akeem but Barbarian comes in at #25 and breaks it up. Gorilla: "That was kind of stupid." Taylor and Akeem pair off, as do Barbarian and Beefcake and the heels take over. Akeem crushes the Rooster (Terry Taylor in case you're some young kid) and here's Big John Studd at #27.

Nothing of note happens there so here's Hercules at #28. Again nothing happens so Rick Martel is #29. He goes right for Akeem but Studd shoves him away because Akeem is his big piece of chicken tonight. DiBiase is of course #30, giving us DiBiase, Akeem, Hercules, Beefcake, Studd, Barbarian, Rooster and Martel. Jesse and Gorilla have a debate about what a manager is as DiBiase throws out the Rooster to get us down to seven.

DiBiase and Barbarian team up to put out Hercules and Beefcake, leaving us with five. This last part isn't quite death for the match but it's certainly a bad sickness. Martel puts out the Barbarian to give us a final four. Akeem misses a splash on Martel in the corner and Rick fires off some dropkicks to no avail.

A cross body is caught and Akeem dumps Martel to get us down to Studd, Akeem and DiBiase. Akeem pounds on Studd as DiBiase gives instructions. Studd pulls Ted in front of a splash and dumps Akeem to get us down to two. DiBiase offers money but Studd shakes a finger at him. Studd actually fires off some suplexes to the shock of Monsoon. The elimination is academic and Studd wins.

Rating: C-. The last third REALLY hurts this. It's not that it's bad but after Hogan leaves you could almost hear a pin fall. Ha I made a wrestling joke. Also, John Studd? Really? They've got all those guys in there and they pick Studd to win? After Wrestlemania the guy was pretty much gone and I don't think there was ever a clear reason for Studd winning given, other than they thought he was going to be a big deal. It's just an odd pick and one that hindsight doesn't look kindly on. Anyway not a terrible match but the booking hurts it.

Savage reassures himself that he's still great. You can hear the paranoia and see the heel turn coming if you look hard enough.

Jesse and Gorilla wrap things up.

Overall Rating: D+. I can't say this was a bad show because nothing on here is truly terrible, but it's certainly not good either. This is very characteristic of the late 80s as other than Hogan and Savage, the stories were very limited at best. They were trying though and that's something you can't fake. Not a terrible show, but it's nothing more than a moment \for the most part.

Ratings Comparison

Jim Duggan/Hart Foundation vs. Dino Bravo/Fabulous Rougeaus

Original: C+

Redo: C

Rockin' Robin vs. Judy Martin

Original: C-

Redo: D

King Haku vs. Harley Race

Original: C

Redo: D+

Royal Rumble

Original: C+

Redo: C-

Overall Rating

Original: C-

Redo: D+

About the same again. That's interesting compared to what happened with the Survivor Series Redos.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/01/08/royal-rumble-count-up-1989/>

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