

Monday Night Raw – June 3, 2002: I Can See Why Austin Left Because Of This Show

Monday Night Raw

Date: June 3, 2002

Location: American Airlines Center, Dallas, Texas

Attendance: 7,800

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

This is a request for a reason that I can't remember at all. I also got a request to do the following week's show so I'll be doing both in a row. This is right around the time when Austin bailed on the company and I don't think he would be there next week for Raw. Actually I would be at a house show they were having the Saturday after this so this show has a bit of personal history for me. Let's get to it.

Flair is in the back with Guerrero, Benoit and Anderson. Ric says they're ready for Austin and everyone but Anderson goes to the ring, along with about 15 security guards.

Theme song hits.

Kevin Nash has a major announcement to make later tonight.

Here's Flair along with Benoit and Eddie to open things up. Benoit is from Smackdown but he's here anyway. Flair says he loves when a plan comes together and we get a clip from last week with Benoit turning heel and helping Eddie beat up Austin. Benoit says last week was a special appearance to see Austin. He says he can't wrestle tonight because of Austin injuring him at King of the Ring. Austin took away Benoit's dream of being WWE Champion last year. He's run out of patience so the punishment begins tonight.

Eddie says last week he had his IC Title stolen from him by Rob Van Dam. It's made him feel like less of a man and he thinks he's losing his Latinoism. The Frog Splash to Austin made him feel a lot better and more hot blooded. Flair says Eddie is cool, which kind of defeats the point of what he just said doesn't it? Ric says Austin won't be wrestling tonight because he's been benched. If Austin doesn't like that, he can talk to Arn Anderson.

Anderson pops up on screen with Austin shaking his arms and talking for him like a puppet. Austin says he just beat up the Enforcer and he doesn't like being benched. Tonight it's him vs. Benoit or Guerrero or else. Flair says Austin doesn't call the shots. Since Eddie is already in a match and Benoit isn't medically cleared tonight, Austin gets no match. Austin asks for Flair instead, and if Austin wins he's off the bench.

Flair says it's on, but it's going to be a WRESTLING match, just like in the old days. If Austin loses, he's on the bench forever. Austin wants to know why Flair is called the Nature Boy. Does he like nature? Does he like boys? Austin stomps on Anderson instead of waiting for an answer before relieving himself on Anderson, which looks like mustard.

Hardcore Title: Steven Richards vs. Bradshaw

Steven is defending and this is joined in progress for some reason. Bradshaw quickly takes him down and hits him with a cowbell. Jackie is defending for whatever annoying reason she probably shouted about. Richards gets pumphandle slammed and tied up. Bradshaw finds a saddle and bullhorns under the ring but Steven hits him with a trashcan lid. The fallaway slam puts Richards down and Spike Dudley runs in. That goes nowhere as the Clothesline gives Bradshaw the title. This was nothing.

Justin Credible comes in post match and gets beaten up just as quickly. Crash comes out and gets the same treatment.

The NWO (Nash, Pac, Big Show and Booker) are arguing but Nash won't say

what the announcement is. Goldust comes in and imitates Coach, asking about the announcement. He thinks that he might be joining the team soon and Booker thinks it's a good idea. He suggests that if Goldust can beat Pac tonight he gets Pac's spot. Nash says ok.

King of the Ring Qualifying Match: Goldust vs. X-Pac

On top of getting into the tournament, the winner gets to be in the NWO. Goldust hits an atomic drop and a lariat for two followed by guillotining Pac on the top rope. Pac comes back with the spinwheel kick for two. Goldust gets his fake beard ripped off for some reason and Pac kicks him in the corner. The Bronco Buster misses and Goldie pounds away in the corner. Goldust hits a Bronco Buster of his own but an attempt at a second hits a boot and the X-Factor keeps Pac on the team.

Rating: D. This was nothing at all here with an angle being thrown together five minutes ago, because getting into a tournament on PPV isn't important enough right? Goldust was a hilarious character around this point and they needed to get him with Booker soon enough so that the comedy duo could hit as well as it did. The match was nothing at all though.

Video package on RVD vs. Eddie in a ladder match last week where Van Dam got the IC Title back.

Van Dam says he'd do everything again to get the title back. Heyman and Brock come up to make fun of him. They're in a tag match later. Heyman says that since he dumped Rob, he's gotten Brock to replace him.

Jeff is playing guitar in the back when Matt comes up to see him. Jeff wants to know what else there is to life. He doesn't think the Hardys are extreme or live for the moment anymore. He hands Matt the guitar and leaves.

Flair wants more stipulations in the main event tonight. If Flair wins, Austin is Flair's new personal assistant. Also if Austin throws a single punch, it's over. Austin comes in and signs the contract without reading it.

Women's Title: Trish Stratus vs. Terri

They're both in lingerie. Trish is Women's Champion due to reasons of common sense. Why would Terri get a title match anyway? Terri attacks to start and hits a top rope cross body for two. Trish charges into a boot and has her powerbomb countered. This is all for the sex spots of course. A bulldog (not springboard variety yet) FINALLY ends this. It was barely two minutes long but it felt like two hours.

Molly runs out post match and punches the belt by mistake, only to get laid out by a belt shot. Trish takes off her panties to reveal a thong.

Arn Anderson (thankfully in a fresh shirt) goes on a rant to Benoit. Flair will win tonight and Austin is going to be cleaning toilets.

Brock Lesnar/Eddie Guerrero vs. Bubba Ray Dudley/Rob Van Dam

These were both singles matches last week so there's your backstory. Eddie and Van Dam start things off which is probably the best possible combination. Scratch that as it's Brock before any contact. Make that Bubba vs. Brock for the first contact. Eddie runs in for a double beating which is allowed because RVD is being put out in the corner. Eddie stomps Bubba down in the corner but walks into the big side slam for two.

Back to Brock who throws Bubba around like a monster throwing around a fat boy. Bubba grabs a DDT for two and it's back to Rob. Van Dam fires off a kick but gets caught in a backbreaker and powerslam for two. Eddie comes in and things speed way up in a hurry. A spinwheel kick puts Guerrero down and there's the tag back to Bubba. He pounds away with left

hands and the elbow.

Brock tries to come in but gets suplexed out of his shoes by Bubba. Now there's something I didn't think I'd see. Bubba gets a table but Eddie dropkicks it into Ray's face. It's back to Eddie vs. Bubba in the ring but Guerrero can't suplex him. Ok maybe he can and it's followed by a slingshot hilo into a neckbreaker because Bubba sat up instead of laying down. Back to Lesnar who slugs Bubba down but walks into a Bubba Bomb.

Hot tag brings in RVD who hits his usual hot tag stuff on Eddie. Rolling Thunder gets two and everything breaks down. Brock comes in and runs over everything but Van Dam kicks him down. Heyman breaks up the Five Star and the F5 takes Van Dam down so that the Frog Splash can pin Rob.

Rating: C. Not bad here for the main event style tag match with the midcard talent (and NO commercials either) as everyone had at least a small chance to show off, which is a good thing. Brock would get a lot better, which is why it's a good idea to put someone like Eddie in there to help him get through a match. This was pretty easily the best part of the show so far.

Regal doesn't like what Trish did to Molly. He says he should be King of the Ring because he's British, so Booker comes in to talk about the Revolutionary War. We need Rock to make Thomas Jefferson jokes.

We recap the Tough Enough 2 finale, which was a big surprise because it was never mentioned that the one male/one female winner rule was eliminated for this season.

King of the Ring Qualifying Match: Booker T vs. William Regal

Regal is European Champion and Booker is NWO despite being very popular. Regal takes it to the mat as you would expect him to. Booker pops back up and elbows him to the floor which goes nowhere. Back in the ring Regal

hits a knee to the head but gets kicked back down. Booker hits the ax kick but Regal goes to the floor and grabs the belt and a chair. The referee puts the chair out which allows Booker to hit him with the belt for the pin.

Rating: D+. This is the night of the million meh's so far as this was another uninteresting match with a stupid ending. When the longest match of the night so far has gotten about nine minutes, it means that we either have a long main event or a long segment left in the show. This was nothing though.

Booker does a Spinarooni post match.

Dreamer watches a clip from Smackdown where Undertaker beat up HHH and vomits as a result. See why no one talks about this period from the show's history?

Undertaker vs. Tommy Dreamer

Taker is world champion and Dreamer eats his own vomit. This is disgusting and embarrassing to me as a wrestling fan. Dreamer jumps him and knocks him to the floor but Taker powerslams him off the apron. Guess what comes out of Dreamer's mouth on the landing. Chokeslam and dragon sleeper end this. Good freaking grief.

Taker "slops" Dreamer post match until Jeff Hardy dropkicks Taker into the puddle. Yes, this is how they set up the feud.

Taker beats up Matt in the back since he can't find Jeff.

Here's Nash for the big announcement. He keeps it short and says that Shawn Michaels is the newest member of the NWO. They pose together but nothing is said. I guess the main event is long then.

Austin is getting ready with Debra. She finds out that the contract says if Austin wins, Flair is his personal assistant as well. This intrigues the Rattlesnake.

Ric Flair vs. Steve Austin

This was (depending on who you believe) supposed to be the main event of Starrcade 1994 but Hogan decided that Hogan vs. Beefcake was the real best option and that there was no use for Austin in black trunks. You remember Austin back in WCW. He was the guy that was starting to swear a lot and show a complete lack of respect for the veterans and old stars. Hulk Hogan: brilliance.

The loser is the winner's personal assistant and if Austin throws a punch he's disqualified. There's something hilarious about them having to hype up the main event as a wrestling match like it's a brand new innovative concept. They go to the mat to start and Austin pulls his fist back but the referee stops him. Flair says WOO so Austin flips him off. Austin takes him down and hooks a half crab.

After that's broken they head into the corner where Austin pulls back his hand but chops Flair instead. Austin hits the Thesz Press but chokes instead. A clothesline gets two for Austin. Here comes Benoit just as Austin gets the Stunner but there's no one to count. Eddie comes in from behind and hits Austin low, followed by a Frog Splash which gets no cover because Flair is still down.

We take a break and come back with Flair poking Austin in the eye to take over again. Out to the floor with Flair chopping away and getting chopped right back for his troubles. Austin backdrops him on the floor and we head back inside. Flair begs off so Austin chops his chest off. Austin goes for a punch but the referee stops him, allowing Flair to use an illegal punch, which sends Austin flying for some reason.

They chop it out as Flair seems almost hesitant to go after the knee.

Naturally just as I say that the Figure Four goes on. Austin reverses it but Flair makes a quick rope. They chop it out and then collide to put both guys down. Flair goes up and you know how that ends with him. Austin stomps a mudhole but Flair grabs a small package for two. They chop it out some more and there's a Stunner out of nowhere for the pin. It's as random as it sounds.

Rating: B. See, sometimes it's ok to not throw a single punch. The stipulations after the match are really stupid but the match to get there was quite good. This would be Austin's last hurrah for about eight months though, as he would bail on the company about six days after this, due to the show being as stupid as it was, which is pretty true for the most part.

Austin beats up Flair a bit more to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. This was a pretty terrible show save for the main event and a decent tag match. The rest of this though was TERRIBLE, with some flat out disgusting moments that went nowhere at all. Austin bailed sometime between Saturday and Monday and honestly...can you blame him? Earlier today we saw him urinate on Arn Anderson and we saw Tommy Dreamer, Undertaker and Jeff Hardy involved with a bucket of vomit. Also, who is the second biggest face on Raw? RVD? I guess so and that's ok for the most part, but does that make the third biggest Bubba Ray Dudley?

The show was in such a total mess around this point and that wouldn't be corrected for the better part of two years until we got to Benoit and Guerrero as champions and even they were basically a six month stop gap until Cena and Batista (more Batista at first) really came along to help them get things back to normal. Austin leaving didn't send them into a tailspin. It just took away the only safety mechanism they had left, and that's ok by me.

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