

Monday Night Raw – January 4, 1999 – My Favorite Moment Ever

Monday Night Raw

Date: January 4, 1999

Location: DCU Center, Worcester, Massachusetts

Attendance: 10,668

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler

This is the second half of our double feature I guess you'd call it. I just got done posting the Fingerpoke of Doom show. This is the Raw from the same night which of course features Mankind winning his first world title. The rest of the show is more or less forgotten and since this is my favorite moment in the history of wrestling I just wanted to do this show. Let's get to it.

A video about the career of HBK opens the show. He had recently been fired as Commissioner by Vince so this is kind of a goodbye thing. Vince yells to cut the video, so we cut to the arena to see the Corporation coming to the ring. There is a lot of talent in there to put it mildly. Oh and Test is there too. Vince talks about how Shawn humiliated his son and if anyone does that again, they have to deal with Vince.

A live shot of Shawn coming to the arena is shown on the screen, and there's the music. Not sure what the point of the video was since he was there seconds later. He has the cavalry with him, and it's DX. And by that, I mean the REAL DX: HHH, X-Pac, Chyna and the Outlaws. This team with Shawn is a weird visual but cool at the same time.

According to Shawn he's still the Commissioner because the contract is iron clad and Vince said the Commissioner answered to no one, including Vince. Shawn says the only way he leaves

is if he resigns, which more or less set up the Vince makes Shawn's life a living nightmare angle. We see a clip of Vince drawing his number for the Rumble and he wanted #2. Shawn therefore grants his wish, setting up one of the worst Rumbles of all time. He also promises Vince a surprise for later in the night, which will drive him Stone Cold Crazy.

By the way, Cole is somehow more of an annoying douche here than he is now.

Ken Shamrock vs. Steve Blackman

Shamrock is the IC and a tag champion here but this is nontitle. Ken was in the ring for the opening segment but had a regular entrance for no apparent reason. It's a striking contest to start with Blackman taking over. We hear about Billy Gunn feuding with Shamrock, more or less giving away the ending.

Dan Severn, in a neck brace, comes down. He used to be both UFC Champion and NWA Champion at the same time. It's so weird hearing about UFC on WWF TV. His mustache on his own could probably win the IC Title. It's that awesome. Dan and Shamrock were big rivals in UFC so there's the reason. Shamrock hits his belly to belly which is more of a throw than anything else. Severn pops up on the apron and Billy Gunn runs down for a Fameasser to Shamrock, giving Blackman the pin. Predictable but fine.

Rating: N/A. Not about the match or anything as this was just for the angle. That's perfectly fine and is a common practice in wrestling today still. Blackman was just boring to put it mildly, but he was trying at least. The Attitude Era was known for having a point to everything, and this had about three angles going at once, which is average for the time.

Gunn and Shamrock are fighting in the back.

Here comes Mankind for no apparent reason. He doesn't have his

far more famous music yet either. Foley beat up Shane last week apparently. Foley: "I swear that was the first time I've ever grabbed another man's testicles." He's just awesome at this point with his promos as he's a clueless putz that seems to find himself in the top feuds in the company but everyone loves him and he can back it up. It was just out there all the time, but it worked like a charm.

He wants a shot at the Rock and the Title at the Rumble. We get an I Love Lucy reference as he says that's what the fans want. He corrects the fans by saying he's not God but he's good. Foley beat Rock at Rock Bottom but Vince changed the decision. Vince comes out and blames Foley for blaming the fans. He says Foley hasn't paid his dues and no more title shots for him.

Vince makes HHH vs. Foley tonight with the winner getting a spot in the Rumble. We see a clip of Foley beating up Shane, and Shane is announced as the guest referee. I knew that before it was said. There was a hardon for guest refs around this time so it was pretty clear that was coming.

Chyna and her friend Sammy are here.

Mark Henry vs. Goldust

Henry is sexual chocolate here and wants Chyna. How weird is it that these two are still employed? Goldie is still a bit insane here unlike now when there is nothing special about his character in the slightest. Goldust goes to the legs because that's what you do against every big man you ever fight. Just as always, it doesn't work.

Henry more or less dominates, hitting a big elbow drop. A press slam drop ends Goldie's comeback and here are Chyna and Sammy on the stage. This allows Goldust to hit Shattered Dreams, which is of course a DQ.

Rating: D. This was just a waste of time and did nothing but

set up the angle that's about to happen. Goldust didn't really mean much at all and Henry was in this whole thing with Chyna. You got a lot more pointless matches like these at this time, but it was a far more angle heavy period of time.

Sammy and Chyna get in and Chyna has something to say. The other night with him was incredible, but she's not enough woman for him. She introduces him to her friend Sammy. Chyna makes the inevitable offer, and Henry faints. I'm not sure if this ends tonight, but the payoff for this is BAD. Apparently it doesn't but Sammy is a transvestite. Gotta love Russo!

Jesse Ventura is governor of Minnesota. That's still insane. His line at the inauguration: "We shocked the world." Amen. Also for you REALLY old school fans, Terry, Tyrell and Jade are here, more commonly known as his wife, son and daughter. Just in case you never got those references.

Dennis Knight (soon to be Mideon) is in a dungeon, chained to the ceiling with various metal objects hanging around and laying on the floor. Sure why not?

Godfather vs. Test

Test is in the Corporation, which would change later. He had just debuted recently before this as a hired gun. Ho Train hits and Test is in trouble. Val Venis comes out as Test hits a big boot. Godfather and Test fight on the floor and the referee just throws it out for no apparent reason. Val runs down and brawls with Test. This whole thing took like 2 minutes.

DX is talking.

Mankind vs. HHH

Winner goes to the Rumble. Shane is guest referee. HHH works on the arm as Cole is REALLY annoying already. This is going to be short. Foley hits a baseball slide to put HHH down. HHH

gets a sunset flip but Foley grabs the ropes. Shane kicks his arm and makes a fast count to end it. Like I said it was short, as in like 2 minutes.

HHH apologizes but says business is business and a win is a win. To avoid thoughts of a heel turn he gives Shane a Pedigree before saying to Foley that Shane is all his. Mankind says this is something my high school coach taught me. He more or less puts Shane in an abdominal stretch while sitting down. Foley says he'll break Shane's shoulder if Vince and the Stooges, who have just come out (ok not in Patterson's case but 2/3 isn't bad), come any closer. He wants a title shot TONIGHT and makes Shane screams. Vince agrees but Foley wants No Disqualifications. It's on, and Rock comes out to complain at Vince.

Slam of the Week is X-Pac getting kicked in the head by Bossman.

We recap what just happened.

Edge vs. D'Lo Brown

Edge has only been around about 6 months at this point and still comes through the crowd. I LOVED this guy back in the day and did for a long time. Brown and Henry have been having issues with PMS, so expect a run in here. No bell here as we just get going. Big plancha to the floor by Edge which has no effect for some reason.

Liger Bomb to Edge doesn't get a cover as D'Lo has to play to the crowd. Very nice top rope cross body from Edge gets two. Here's PMS as has been a theme tonight. Terri is pregnant but won't say who the father is. D'lo accidentally knocks her to the floor and she holds her stomach. This would result in Brown being their slave more or less. I hated this stable, as did most people. The match just ends.

Rating: C+. This was a fun match as Brown was always solid in

the ring and Edge was AWESOME when he debuted. This was a great pairing and I'd love to see them go at it again. And then we have to do a lost baby angle which was one of Russo's favorites. It turned out that Terri was never pregnant of course.

Kane comes out with Shane, Bearer and the Stooges. He's in the Corporation as well but doesn't seem happy about it. Kane has a sign on his back for the Brisco Brothers' Body Shop. Shane says this is a handicap match against the Stooges. Wait what?

Gerald Brisco/Pat Patterson vs. Kane

Vince comes out again and says this is because the Stooges were partially responsible for Shane getting hurt last week. Patterson tries to bribe Kane with what he has in his pocket: a cigarette and a condom. Would anyone else like to just watch Patterson go about his daily life? Chokeslam for Brisco. Patterson gets a chair but Kane sees him. Shane is in the ring with a mic and egging Kane on which is funny stuff. Kane PUNTS the chair off the mat and over the top. That was rather impressive looking actually. Kane grabs Shane by the throat but Vince says Kane will go back, meaning to an insane asylum. Not even a match.

Dennis Knight is still in the dungeon. The Acolytes come in and say "he's ready for you." Knight is more scared by this. The he is Undertaker and Knight would become Mideon in a FREAKY ceremony the next week.

Hardcore Title: Al Snow vs. Road Dogg

Snow is the challenger and wearing a shirt covered in "blood" from a bloodbath from the Brood. Snow hides behind the curtain and we fight on the stage. The Hardcore Title was actually a coveted title at this point and not a joke. It's very violent very early as Snow is dominating. He hits a moonsault off the barricade but Road Dogg moves, sending Snow through a table.

Big old cookie sheet (why are those under wrestling rings or in arenas ever?) gets two. They head up the ramp and off to the side towards the back. Dogg goes up a set of steps and does a flying leap to take Snow down with a double axehandle. We're in a supply closet now or something and various stupid things are used as weapons.

They find a cart of potted plants to throw at each other. This is more intense than it sounds. Snow gets a steel pole and does some nice spinning and flipping (there's a proper term for it but I can't think of it. Think of a drill team) with it before driving it into Roadie. They go outside into the snow. Keep in mind this is Massachusetts in early January so it's FREEZING.

Snow gets put in a wheelbarrow or something and shoved into a wall. The referee can't stand up in the snow which is kind of funny. A piledriver on a wooden pallet pins Snow so Road Dogg retains (Cole of course says he won the title because Michael Cole is a freaking idiotic douche).

Rating: B. Keep in mind this was a hardcore match and not a regular match when thinking about that grade. This was actually quite good and worked rather well. Road Dogg was cleaning up his real life a lot around this time and got off of drugs and stopped drinking for the most part and his in ring work went WAY up as a result. The push was kind of a reward for it and he would get the IC Title in two months. This was one of the better Hardcore Title matches I remember actually.

Dennis Knight is thrown through a door.

The Corporation jumps Shawn and beats the living tar out of him, throwing him into the window of a car. That's all in theory that is as the cameraman was knocked down and we heard glass breaking. When we come back Shawn is bloody and in the windshield.

WWF Title: Mankind vs. The Rock

This is No DQ remember. This is the match that Tony Schiavone gave the ending away to on their show, shifting the ratings for the night because of it. DX comes out to back up Foley, because they couldn't go to the hospital with Shawn or help defend him right? Rock of course has the Corporation with him.

Rock jumps him immediately and knocks him to the floor. He won't let the Corporation beat them up because he wants to do it himself. How noble of our heel champion. Foley does his first sick bump of the match as he goes knee first into the steps and flies over them in a painful looking shot. These two always had mad chemistry together, which is something that could be said about most guys with Rock actually.

Rock does commentary during the match, which always cracked me up. He talks a bit too much though so Foley takes over. Foley does a promo of his own and we cut to a shot of Vince and Shane, but we hear a bell ring. Foley is down and Rock has the bell. Subtle. Rock Bottom through a table and Foley is in trouble. This has all taken less than three minutes so I'm not leaving much out at all.

To play up the spontaneous nature here Rock is in street clothes, as in the kind you would work out in. Corporate Elbow (debuted 5 minutes from my house) hits for two as this is ALL Rock. Foley with a spinning neckbreaker out of nowhere to get both guys down. Bossman throws the belt in and a shot to the head (sounded SICK) gets two as well. Double arm DDT onto the belt and Rock is in big trouble.

There's Mr. Socko as the crowd has lost it. Mandible Claw goes on but Shamrock pops Foley with a chair. Billy Gunn takes him down and the brawl begins. Everything goes crazy and CUE GLASS SHATTER! Austin comes out and everyone loses it. He caves Rock's head in with a chair and pulls Mick on top for the pin and the world title as the roof is blown off the arena.

Rating: A+. This was about a shocking moment and excitement and a feel good story and they NAILED it. This is very personal bias heavy, but they're my reviews so who cares?

DX puts Foley on their shoulders as the Corporation carries Rock out. Cole gets in the famous line of "Mick Foley has achieved his dream and the dream of everyone else who has been told you can't do it!" This is one of the best feel good moment in WWF history as Foley was considered one of the best to never be world champion as he worked as hard as anyone else but was never given a serious shot at it.

He got the shot tonight and he won the title. Road Dogg does the big announcement of Mankind being the new champion to a HUGE ovation. Foley dedicates the win to his kids and takes a lap around the ring with the belt to end the show. This is my favorite moment in wrestling history, bar none.

Overall Rating: B-. I hate to use that grade as the show is far from average given the ending but the rest of the show is pretty bad. The last half hour is great stuff though which pushes the rating higher.

There was a very clear and predictable pattern for everything that wasn't the main event and it got annoying after awhile. The ending more than makes up for it though as this was just perfect all around. Great moment and 100% worth seeing. If you even remotely like Foley I defy you to not smile a bit while you watch this.

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