

Backlash 2004: Benoit Vs. Shawn In Canada With Earl Hebner As Referee

Backlash 2004

Date: April 18, 2004

Location: Rexall Place, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

Attendance: 13,000

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

We're back to the PPV series again and this time it's Backlash in Canada. The main event is a rematch of the main event of Wrestlemania XX with Benoit defending his newly won title against Shawn and HHH. The original is said to be the best triple threat match ever and a lot of the time the Backlash rematches are even better due to the lack of pressure from Wrestlemania. We're also in Benoit's hometown so if he was the favorite in MSG, this is going to be about 10x louder. There's also a hardcore match between Cactus Jack and Randy Orton which is awesome. Let's get to it.

We open with a video about Benoit winning the title at Wrestlemania, as if it could be anything else. The tagline of "and so it begins again" is nice as it's a play off of the Wrestlemania tagline of "Where It All Begins Again."

Shelton Benjamin vs. Ric Flair

Flair is still in Evolution and Shelton is the hot young singles star looking to make a name for himself. He beat HHH twice in a row, once by pin and once by countout. Flair is here to avenge The Game. Shelton takes him into the corner but Flair comes back with his chops and punches. The Stinger Splash misses but Shelton lands on the top rope and gets down unharmed. Benjamin speeds things up and dropkicks Flair to the floor.

Nothing happens out there so we head back in for a thumb to the eye. Flair goes up and you know how that ends. Another thumb to the eye lets

Flair take over but Shelton will have none of that and pounds away on Flair's old head in the corner. Flair takes the knee out and the momentum shifts very fast. He doesn't work on it long and it's time for the Figure Four. Shelton blocks it for a bit but the leg goes down and the hold goes on.

Flair uses the rope to cheat so the hold is broken. A chop gets two. Flair goes back to the knee but gets caught by the Dragon Whip kick to put both guys down. Shelton whips him into the corner and Flair crashes over the top and out to the floor. Flair pulls out a weapon of some sort but gets splashed in the corner. A top rope clothesline pins the Nature Boy.

Rating: C+. This was fine for an opener. Shelton was a rising star at this point and a win over Flair wasn't going to hurt anything. He would get the IC Title by the end of the year and he would become the next big star that never became a big star for various reasons. Still though, good stuff here and fine for an opening match which got the crowd going.

Orton says Shelton is overrated and we should talk about Randy's winning streak instead. Why aren't people talking about him holding the IC Title longer than anyone in seven years? He's beaten legend after legend and tonight it's Mick Foley's turn. Mick is like an old dog that has to be put down.

Jonathan Coachman vs. Tajiri

You read that right. Tajiri misted Coach a few weeks ago, then Coach cost Tajiri a match against Christian. Coach armdrags him down to start and Tajiri isn't sure what to make of that. Coach keeps trying to tie him up but Tajiri keeps firing away kicks. They go to the floor and Tajiri kicks the post to change the flow of the match. Back in and Coach cannonballs down onto the leg and Tajiri is in trouble. Coach hooks a leg bar but Tajiri reverses into a kind of half crab which is pretty quickly broken up.

The leg bar goes on again so Tajiri kicks him in the back. Another to the face and the hold is finally broken up. Coach goes up and gets crotched, allowing a baseball slide dropkick to the back of the head to connect.

Handspring elbow sets up another dropkick and it's rapid fire strike time. Coach grabs a cheating rollup for two. Like an idiot, Coach charges at Tajiri in the corner and is put in the Tarantula for his efforts. Garrison Cage comes out and distracts Tajiri for no apparent reason and Coach rolls him up for the pin.

Rating: D+. You know, this wasn't half bad. There's no reason for it to be on PPV, but the match wasn't all that bad. Coach kept it simple by going after the legs which is the best thing to do against a martial artist so I can't fault him there. The ending was stupid but this was such a big surprise that it wasn't a big deal.

HHH arrived earlier.

We recap Jericho vs. Christian/Trish which was an awesome storyline. It started with Jericho hitting on Trish which turned out to be a bet between Jericho and Christian about whether or not he could get Trish in bed. Trish found out about it but Jericho said that he really loved Trish, which seemed legit. Christian turned on Jericho in a show of tough love and they had a match at Mania. Trish turned on Jericho to give Christian the win. Tonight it's about revenge.

Christian/Trish Stratus vs. Chris Jericho

Evil Trish was HOT. Jericho slaps Christian down and glares at Trish who runs. The chase is on but Christian's sneak attack is broken up with ease. The evil ones have to tag here so the guys start. Jericho hits a vertical suplex and the posing cover (POP) for two. The crowd keeps chanting SL** at Trish and Christian missees a charge to send him to the floor. The springboard dropkick puts Christian on the floor and Jericho stands tall.

Trish can't sneak in a Chick Kick and the guys head back in for a top rope back elbow by Jericho, getting two. Jericho gets sent into Trish but gets draped over the top forp to give Christian control. He does the same thing over the barricade and it's off to Trish. She slaps Jericho and gives us a great cleavage shot at the same time. Chick Kick gets no cover so it's back to Captain Charisma. A quick Walls attempt is countered but Jericho's head winds up between Christian's legs ala Sting.

Jericho comes back with the sleeper drop for two. Trish slaps Jericho, allowing for an elevated reverse DDT out of the corner by Christian which gets two. Trish tries to come in but gets spanked for her troubles. That's a lucky Jericho. Christian hits the Unprettier out of nowhere but Trish's cover only gets two.

Trish tries to come back in but gets clotheslined down. Christian takes Jericho down and now only the referee is on his feet. Trish rolls to the floor and Jericho hits the running hip attack while Christian is in 619 position. Lionsault gets knees and Christian puts on a Texas Cloverleaf. Jericho escapes and tries the Walls but instead he catapults Christian into Trish. The running enziguri gets the pin on Christian.

Rating: B-. Another good match here and it evens the score in this feud as it was supposed to do. This was a very well constructed feud and it made sense all the way through. This would lead to a cage match on Raw where Christian would be hurt, putting him on the shelf for four months. Again I'd like to reiterate: evil Trish is HOT.

Eugene has a magazine and wanders into the women's locker room where Gail freaks out. Regal gets him out.

We get a video about Chris Benoit Day in Edmonton which I think was on Hard Knocks. Benoit's family is here. This is kind of hard to see now.

Women's Title: Victoria vs. Lita

Victoria is champion and is looking good here. Lita tries to speed things up to start but gets thrown to the mat with a kind of armdrag. They both tumble out to the floor which goes nowhere. A bad looking backslide gets two for Victoria. They do a pinfall reversal sequence which goes nowhere. Victoria slams her down and hits her dancing moonsault for two followed by a chinlock. A floatover snap suplex gets two for the champ.

This has been a really slow paced and dull match so far. A surfboard goes on and Lita is in even more trouble. The spinning side slam is countered and Lita knocks her down with some clotheslines. Lita hooks a hurricanrana and then puts on a sleeper which transitions into a kind of triangle choke. That gets escaped pretty easily and the spinning side

slam gets two. Victoria's moonsault misses (as in Lita rolled too slowly and the arms hit her) but the Twist of Fate is countered and a small package retains the title.

Rating: F+. This was one of the worst matches I can remember with the girls in a long time. It was REALLY slow paced and the botches were noticeably bad. The division was in big need of something fresh, which is why we got Lita vs. Trish again, as both of them were just awesome at what they did. Horrible match.

Gail and Molly beat down the other girls post match.

We recap Orton vs. Foley. The idea here is that Orton is young and awesome and Foley is old and not so awesome. Orton was the Legend Killer and Orton wanted to take him out to prove that it was his time now. Foley didn't want to fight and walked away for months, before returning at the Rumble to destroy Orton. Evolution helped Orton out so Foley brought in The Rock to even things up a bit. Evolution won at Wrestlemania so now Foley wants a rematch on his terms: hardcore. Foley says that hardcore is about doing it for the fans, but there's a tiny part of him that enjoys this. He's going to love what he does to Orton tonight.

Intercontinental Title: Cactus Jack vs. Randy Orton

Hardcore of course. Foley comes out as Mick Foley and has the Mankind music, but screw that. He's in Cactus Jack attire and this is a hardcore match. He has the barbed wire ball bat called Barbie with him. Orton holds up a trashcan to defend himself but Foley knocks it out of his hands with the bat. They go to the floor and there goes a cameraman. Orton drop toeholds him into the steps and gets the bat but they fight over it.

Orton gets kicked away but he finds a trashcan from somewhere and cleans Mick's clock with it. Mick shrugs that off and BLASTS Orton with it. Back in the ring and Foley hits the running knee lift followed by a legdrop for two. Back to the floor again and Jack hits a swinging neckbreaker but Orton moves before the middle rope elbow can be used. Randy, who is still in his t-shirt, tries to walk away but Foley chases after him. A belly to back suplex by the champion gets two on the ramp, as does a backslide.

Randy slams Jack's head into the ramp with a THUD for two. Back in the ring (I've been saying variations of that a lot tonight) and Orton tries to drive Barbie into Jack's face, but Cactus counters with a low blow. Here's Socko but Foley isn't sure whether to use that or Barbie. He takes the sock off and Barbie connects with Orton's head. Blood is literally flowing down Orton's face. Another shot hits Orton's head and Foley is in complete control.

Mick pounds Orton down in the corner and hits the running knee to the face. Back to Barbie as Mick has that look in his eyes. Now he just drives the bat into Orton's face and there goes the t-shirt. Foley puts the bat between Orton's legs and drops a leg on it which is just painful in a lot of ways. Mick goes to the floor and pulls out....oh geez he pulls out a gas can and a lighter.

He covers Barbie in gas but here's Bischoff to say do that and the show ends here. Foley throws it down and for the life of me I have never gotten what the point of that sequence was unless it was somehow legit. Either way, Foley throws it down and finds a whole board covered in barbed wire. He knocks Orton near it but Orton comes back with a slam onto the board, drawing a LOUD holy chant from the fans.

The board gets placed in the corner and after some nice reversals on the Irish whip, Foley goes into it face first. With Jack down in the ropes, Orton shoves the board down onto him in a simple but good move. Orton finds a bag full of thumbtacks. The RKO onto them is countered and the look on Orton's face when his back hits the tacks is PERFECT. A rollup gets two for Foley as Orton goes to look for medical attention. Jack will have none of that and they go up the ramp.

They head backstage but come back before we can get a camera back there. Foley throws him off the stage and through a bunch of tables. Since it's Cactus Jack, you know he's gonna drop the elbow onto Orton on top of that. After the referees seem ready to stop it, Foley drills them both and there's the elbow. Mick is a bit too dead to cover though so after the delay, Orton SOMEHOW kicks out.

Back to the ring and Orton looks completely out of it. Double Arm DDT

gets two and Foley isn't sure what else he can do to pull this off. Orton goes to the floor while Foley puts the barbed wire board up in the corner. While he's doing that though Orton gets Barbie from somewhere and lays in a few shots on Cactus. Foley finds Socko and grabs the Claw to stop a big shot to the head with Barbie. A low blow gets Orton out of the hold and the RKO puts Foley down but it only gets two. Another RKO onto Barbie FINALLY gets the pin.

Rating: A. It's not quite as good as the match with Edge but DANG this was great. Orton is now a made man as he somehow not only survived this but he won it. Up to this point he was a pretty boy, much like HHH vs. Jack in 2000 at the Rumble. That seems to be what they were going for here and for the most part I'd certainly say it worked. Foley would go away for awhile while Orton feuded with Edge and then won the title in the fall. Great match here and Orton looked great during the whole thing.

HHH says that Orton has become a legend rather than a legend killer. Also Benoit won't get lucky again tonight and HHH will get his title back.

La Resistance vs. Hurricane/Rosey

This is what we call a filler match to bring the crowd back down. It isn't even for a title. Conway and Hurricane start and the crowd goes almost completely silent. A headscissors takes Conway down and it's off to Rosey. That's really only so he can throw at Conway and it's back to the storm guy.

Conway hits a swinging neckbreaker and powerslam before tagging in Grenier. Grenier puts on a powerslam and here's Eugene. Hurricane tags Rosey as Eugene plays with the flags. Rosey misses a corner splash but Hurricane dives on both French dudes on the floor. Eugene runs the ropes but does nothing else. Eye of the Hurricane gets the pin on Grenier.

Rating: D+. The match could have and probably should have been on Raw, but dang I always feel sorry for the people in this match. They know no one is really interested in seeing them out there but they have to go out and work a match anyway, which no one wants to see and that no one is going to talk about, but they do it anyway. This was fine and Eugene didn't add or subtract anything.

We recap Edge vs. Kane. Edge is back from neck surgery and needs an opponent, so he gets Kane, end of recap.

Edge vs. Kane

Edge has a broken wrist or arm or something too. Edge fires off a right hand (the good hand) for no effect. He gets Kane into the corner as JR is talking about football for some reason. Middle rope clothesline looks to set up the spear but Kane heads to the outside. Kane finally wakes up and rams the bad arm and hand into the steps to take over.

Back in and he hammers on the hand some more as the fans chant that Hebner screwed Bret for the millionth time in this match alone. Lawler amuses himself by singing the Mountie's song Sidewalk slam sets up a missed elbow and Edge comes back with a spinwheel kick. He takes Kane down again but Kane sits up. The referee is sent to the floor so a cast shot to the head and a spear get the pin.

Rating: D-. What a horribly uninteresting match. Edge didn't get out of the funk that he was in for the better part of a year and Kane had to marry Lita to get anything going. I didn't like this at all and I don't think many other people did either. Let's go with this: Tajiri vs. Coach was a much more entertaining match. Let that sink in for a minute.

We recap the main event, which is just a rematch from Wrestlemania but here in Benoit's hometown. It should be entertaining at least and there isn't much else to say.

Raw World Title: HHH vs. Shawn Michaels vs. Chris Benoit

Benoit's pop is INSANE. He puts the title in both of their faces during his entrance which is a nice touch. The champ goes after HHH to start and doesn't want Shawn to get any of the Game for some reason. HHH is sent to the floor so Shawn and Benoit can chop it out. The Game comes back in and hits the flying knee to Shawn. Benoit is thrown to the floor and it's the DX explosion. After a quick fight they knock Benoit back to the floor, drawing a ton of boeing.

Benoit comes back in and hits Germans on both guys. Jerry says it's hard

to see who is doing what to who. No not really King, not really. Shawn gets flipped in the corner and out to the floor to get it back down to two. HHH jumps into the Crossface but Benoit lets it go to stop Shawn. Shawn's back is rammed into the barricade twice to keep him down on the outside. Benoit goes up but HHH punches him in the jaw to slow him down.

HHH loads up a superplex but Shawn makes the save. Benoit literally falls off the top rope all the way to the floor. That's a much scarier sight given what we know now. Shawn drops HHH in an electric chair for two. HHH comes back with a facebuster and Benoit's Swan Dive gets two on HBK. The Game goes to the floor and Shawn's forearm takes out the referee. Shawn goes to the floor now so we get both a Pedigree and Sharpshooter counter. The second attempt at the Sharpshooter works on HHH but Shawn makes the save. His save is countered into the Crossface but there's no referee, so we better let go of the hold right?

Now Shawn puts the Sharpshooter on Benoit and Earl Hebner comes out to be the second referee. Ha Ha Ha it's like Montreal yes WE GET IT ALREADY! Shawn swings at Benoit but gets caught in the Crossface again, only to have it broken up by HHH. A HHH DDT gets two on the champion. Benoit throws him over the corner and it's back to HBK vs. Benoit. Chris gets thrown to the floor, landing on top of HHH.

Shawn tries to dive on the both of them but crashes through the table in a good explosion. Back in the ring Benoit's shoulder goes hard into the post and then it does it a second time. Instead of going after the arm, the Cerebral Assassin puts on a camel clutch. The fans FINALLY drop the Bret stuff and chant for Benoit. HHH pounds away in the corner but gets caught in snake eyes to put him down.

It's basically a one on one match at the moment. Benoit ducks a right hand and puts on Rolling Germans. The Swan Dive misses and there's a Pedigree but HHH's cover takes awhile, allowing Shawn to come back from the dead for the save. With Benoit down, Shawn hits the forearm to put HHH down. The top rope elbow hits but again Shawn can't cover. Shawn loads up the superkick but instead kicks Benoit off the apron to make him PURE EVIL in Canada.

HHH hits a low blow for two on Shawn and everyone is down. Pedigree is countered by a backdrop to the floor but the fans won't cheer Shawn period. HHH comes back in with the sledgehammer, drilling it right into Shawn's back. HHH sets for another hammer shot to Shawn but Benoit makes the save, only to get sent into the steps. The Game sets for a Pedigree onto the steps but Benoit counters with a slingshot to send that nose into the post. Back in, Chin Music is countered into the Sharpshooter and after a LONG time, it's finally over with Benoit retaining by submission.

Rating: B+. I really couldn't get into this one as much as the other one. There was a lot more laying around this time, but this was a different kind of match. This was all about having a Benoit showcase instead of having a masterpiece. Considering the situations here, it's hard to argue with them going that route. It worked well enough here though and it was a great match.

Overall Rating: B. With two very good to great matches here, the rest of the stuff can be overlooked. This was a very Canadian heavy show which is the right idea as, you know, it was in Canada. Unfortunately Benoit would fall through the floor after this because HHH and Shawn decided to completely dominate the show for the summer, having a 55 minute match at Bad Blood. You know, because that's what people are begging for here clearly. This was a show with great parts, rather than a great show if that makes sense, but it's still good.

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Smackdown – January 13, 2000: The Opening Segment Is

Legendary For A Reason

Smackdown

Date: January 13, 2000

Location: Allstate Arena, Chicago, Illinois

Attendance: 13,253

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler

This is another request that I don't remember the reason behind. This is right around the Rumble so I'd bet on there being a lot of hype for the show. We're in a good time for the company as 2000 is probably the best year the company has ever had, which is saying a lot as they had some solid years around this point. I have no idea what to expect here so let's get to it.

The opening video is from Raw with Rock demanding that HHH and Stephanie reinstate Mick Foley before the entire roster walks out. Rock also demanded an eight man tag with DX vs. the Acolytes and Rock N Sock Connection. DX walked out on HHH for some reason and Foley got Pedigreed through the table and in the ring for the pin. Mankind came back and beat HHH up anyway.

Cue HHH and Stephanie to open the show. Stephanie says she wants to clear something up: no Superstars are leaving this company because the two of them have righted the wrongs. Why would anyone ever want to leave? Their doors are always open and they're always fair. Stephanie says she's the ONLY McMahon running things in this company.

HHH says that he needs to get something off his chest. He needs to apologize, but it's not to the fans or to the guys that were going to walk out on Monday. HHH is their world champion and it's for the fans. He will however apologize to DX. HHH talks about trying to show DX tough love and getting tough love in exchange when they walked out on him.

He wants to right the wrongs tonight, so it's the Outlaws vs. Bradshaw in a No DQ handicap match. If Farroq interferes, the Acolytes lose their title shot at the Rumble. The Outlaws get to have the same match with Farroq too. As for X-Pac, tonight he's teaming up with HHH to face Big

Show and The Rock. As for Mick Foley, on Monday he was left in a puddle of blood. That's just a taste of what's coming at the Rumble in New York City. HHH has nothing to do right now, so get out here Foley.

Here's Foley but it's a fake. The fake one kneels before HHH and begs for mercy until the real Mankind comes out. He talks about how HHH has tried to take away his job and his dignity, but then on Monday he took away the best night of his career. HHH bloodied him and ruined his shirt. On Monday as the cool water of the shower hit him, he realized that Mankind may be entertaining and a good author, he's not ready to face HHH in a street fight at the Royal Rumble.

However, the fans deserve a replacement, and that replacement is here tonight. Foley takes off the mask and rips open his shirt, revealing the Cactus Jack WANTED DEAD shirt. Cactus says that his first official act as a part of the WWF is kicking HHH's teeth all over Chicago. He pounds HHH down in the corner (in what I believe Foley called the best punches he ever threw) and shrugs off a chair shot from the Fake Foley. HHH bails as the other one gets beaten up. Cactus says he'll bleed at the Rumble but he's going to beat HHH all over New York City and take the WWF Title from him. AWESOME segment here.

New Age Outlaws vs. Bradshaw

Road Dogg runs down the fans for not getting the catchphrase right. Bradshaw throws powder at the Outlaws who amazingly don't snort it. Billy gets thrown into the steps and Billy is clotheslined to the floor. Bradshaw puts the steps in the ring and sets up a piledriver to Billy on said steps but Road Dogg saves with a chair shot. The double beating goes on until Bradshaw fights back in vain. Bradshaw kicks the chair into Roadie's face but as he goes to slam Billy, Road Dogg chairs him in the head with Billy falling on top for the pin.

Here's Rock in the back who welcomes this new guy named Jonathan Coachman to the WWF. Coach says he's called Coach which Rock doesn't like. Rock says it doesn't matter if he's teaming with Big Show or Big Bird, he'll win. It doesn't matter how Coach got the name Coach and that's about it.

Too Cool/Rikishi vs. Hardcore Holly/Crash Holly/Al Snow

This was during Snow's questionable heel turn phase. Hardcore and Grandmaster start us off and Holly is taken over by a hip toss. Off to Crash who gets the same treatment. Scotty comes in and things speed up. A kind of pumphandle slam puts Crash down and it's Worm time. Snow pulls Scotty to the floor and Hardcore takes over on him. The former racecar dude jumps into a boot and it's hot tag Rikishi. A one man 3D kills Crash but Hardcore dropkicks him down. Snow gets crotched on the post as the Rikishi Driver ends Crash.

Rating: D+. Not much here but the fans popped big for Rikishi and his dancing pals. For the life of me I don't get the point of making him a heel. I mean....why would anyone do that? The match was nothing of note but it filled in about five minutes which is the right idea I guess. Nothing much to see here though.

Snow beats up the Hollies with Head. Too Cool and Rikishi dance.

HHH congratulates the Outlaws but they don't know where X-Pac is.

Clip of Cactus Jack in Japan being all psycho. Good thing they had this ready just in case he transformed isn't it?

Test vs. Gangrel

Test has a broken nose or something like that coming in here. He starts off fast but walks into a belly to belly. Test gets sent to the floor where Luna attacks. Back in and Gangrel gets crushed by the gutwrench powerbomb but Luna distracts referee Teddy Long. There's the full nelson slam but Luna pulls the referee to the floor and decks him. She jumps on Test and gets spanked for her efforts. The match is thrown out and that's probably a good thing.

Test beats up both of them post match.

Jericho and Chyna are in the back and try to make up after losing in a tag match on Monday.

Hardy Boys vs. Big Bossman/Prince Albert

This is before Lita joined the team so it's Terri with them here. Albert

is currently known as Tensai. He and Jeff get us going with Jeff having to evade a lot. Off to Matt for some successful double teaming on the current Japanese enthusiast. Albert gets Matt up for a spinning rack neckbreaker and it's off to Bossman. He beats Matt down even more and kidnaps Terri which goes nowhere. Everything breaks down and Jeff avoids a charging Albert, sending him into Bossman. Albert and Bossman had been arguing a lot lately so while they fight some more, Jeff dropkicks Bossman into Alberto and rolls him up for the pin.

Rating: D+. Nothing to see here really but it was all about splitting up Albert and Bossman for good, which needed to be done. Bossman would do nothing of note while Albert would join T&A which gave us some very hot shots of Trish Stratus. The match was nothing of note though and was just there as a means to an end.

Big Show wants to face HHH but says he doesn't like being called a jabroni by Rock. Maybe he'll win the Rumble instead of Rock.

Chyna goes up to Tori (not Wilson) and has bad news for her. I guess we'll get more on that later.

Kurt Angle/Steve Blackman vs. Edge/Christian

Angle is VERY new here, having about three months under his belt at this point. Edge and Blackman get us going with Edge dominating through a lot of dropkicks. Off to Christian vs. Angle with the Olympian getting run over. Christian misses a charge and runs into the post to give the cannon fodder control. It's so weird to see Angle as a rookie like this and the lowest level guy as far as accomplishments go. Angle hooks a quick chinlock but the Angle Slam is countered into a DDT by Christian. Blackman fires off some kicks to Edge...and here's Val Venis. He plays with Blackman's kendo stick so Edge can hit a German for the pin.

Rating: D. I have no idea what the point of this was as I don't remember Blackman vs. Val at all and I have no idea why this would have been a feud at all. Angle would become the first big star out of this with Edge close behind him and again it's weird to see something like this with both of them being lower midcard guys. The match was nothing.

Chyna is talking to Tori in the back still and says that Jericho is crossing a line. He's been looking at Tori apparently and maybe Kane, Tori's boyfriend, should kill Jericho as long as it's not for the co-owned IC Title that Jericho and Chyna share. Tori freaks out and agrees.

Clip of Cactus diving into a dumpster and getting shoved off the stage.

New Age Outlaws vs. Farrooq

Farrooq jumps them both to start but the numbers catch up with him quickly. Billy hits a Jackhammer and the shaky knee gets the pin with Billy helping out. This wasn't even 90 seconds.

Bradshaw runs out with a pipe for the save.

DX is still looking for X-Pac.

D'Lo Brown/Godfather vs. Headbangers

What is with all the tag matches tonight? An orange logo pops up on screen with a 13 in the middle and says the mood is about to change. That would wind up being Taz. Godfather asks if the Headbangers are gay but Mosh says Godfather's problem is that they look better than his ladies. Mosh and Brown get us going but both quickly tag. Godfather runs Thrasher over and hits the spinning legdrop. Brown comes back in for a double suplex The Bangers double team D'Lo but since they don't recognize, it's quickly back to Godfather for the Ho Train. Low Down gets the quick pin. This was basically a squash.

Big Show and Rock are in the back and Big Show doesn't want Rock in his way tonight. Rock says Big Show is a worthy opponent but he'll never be People's Champion. HHH can have the back of his hand while X-Pac has the front during the beatdown tonight. Rock is just CRAZY over here.

More Classic Cactus shows him winning a random hardcore match over Mideon and Viscera.

Chris Jericho vs. Kane

Pre-match Jericho runs his mouth of course, saying that he doesn't find

Tori attractive and you'd have to be stupid to do so. The beating begins as Chyna is watching in the back with a big smile on her face. Kane grabs him to start but Jericho comes back with the forearm...which does nothing at all. A powerbomb puts the Canadian down and a shoulder sends Jericho to the floor.

Kane mixes it up and tries a clothesline off the steps but Jericho ducks. They go to the apron with Jericho dropkicking Kane to the floor. Jericho finally gets a breather by hitting a drop toehold onto the steps. Back in the missile dropkick looks to set up the Walls but the Kat (Chyna's implied lesbian worship slave) comes out to steal the IC belt. The distraction lets the chokeslam and tombstone get the pin.

Rating: C-. Nothing here but these two had some chemistry together at times. The co-champions angle didn't really work but it was certainly a unique idea. Kane would move on to feud with X-Pac over Tori while Jericho would have crazy good matches with Angle and Benoit for like ever.

X-Pac is here, making the whole "where is he" stuff from earlier mean nothing. Pac isn't worried about tonight but doesn't like having to get beaten up every week. HHH says trust him.

X-Pac/HHH vs. Big Show/The Rock

HHH tries to drive a wedge between his opponents by saying Rock has to come out last to get the big pop because of his ego. Big Show looks mad before starting with HHH. Show pounds him down and hits a headbutt before stomping away in the corner. He refuses to tag Rock so when he calls for the chokeslam, Rock tags himself in. Off to Pac and Rock destroys him, throwing him to the outside. Spinebuster to HHH looks to set up the Elbow but Pac hits him in the back with a chair.

Pac comes in but the Bronco Buster is killed by a clothesline. Rock takes a spinwheel kick for two and it's back to HHH. DX tags off a few times until HHH walks into a DDT. Rock crawls over to Big Show but the big man walks out on him, officially turning heel. A low blow and Pedigree get the pin on Rock.

Rating: D+. Nothing much to see here as this was much more about the angle than the match. Rock vs. HHH would obviously be a bigger deal later on in the year and would go on to produce one of the best feuds of all time. Big Show would turn face again just after Wrestlemania. That guy must hold a record for most turns.

Post match Big Show chokeslams Rock to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. This wasn't the worst show ever but it had an excellent opener to start things off. The Rumble would wind up being awesome and almost everything here touched on matches there other than Hardys vs. Dudleys but I can live with that. The opening segment is legendary and it is for a reason, as it worked perfectly. Not a good show for the most part but it had its moments.

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WCW Power Hour – January 5, 1990 – Pillman vs. Jack

WCW Power Hour

Date: January 5, 1990

Location: Peoria Civic Center, Peoria, Illinois

Commentator: Jim Ross

This is yet another show that I have. It's Power Hour, which I believe was the Sunday night NWA/WCW show. This wasn't one of the bigger ones but for awhile it had Jim Cornette on commentary, meaning by definition it can't be horrible. I really don't know what to expect here, other than Sting and Flair being friends at this point, which will end soon. Let's get to it.

Corny intros us.

After the intro, Cornette says he's not going to do the commentary because he hates Peoria.

Galaxian #2 vs. Z-Man

Apparently this is on a Friday, making this January 5, so maybe my video is labeled wrong or maybe it aired somewhere else in a different city/country? Galaxian is a masked guy in a red suit. Z-Man is pretty awesome at this point and hits a spinning cross body off the middle rope for two. Sid Vicious is hurt so we'll have new Skyscrapers debuting tonight. Z-Man throws Galaxian around and stands tall. I mean that literally as Galaxian is about 5'7.

Z-Man reluctantly shakes his hand and the match gets going again. This match is going pretty slowly for the most part. They shake hands again but Galaxian pulls Zenk into a headlock. There are rumors of Zenk starting a team with Flyin Brian. Galaxian sends Z-Man into the corner and out to the floor.

Galaxian takes over as JR tells us to eat a lot of soup because it's cold and flu season. Who else is going to give you health advice while calling a match? Chop gets two for Z-Man. Now Z-Man wants to work on the leg. JR says the masked man had a quickness advantage. Against the Z-Man? A middle rope dropkick ends this with Zenk winning.

Rating: D. This is one of those matches that could have been cut down to about 1/3 of what it was and you would get the same thing out of it. This match ran eleven minutes with about seven of that being standing around and doing absolutely nothing of note. I hope this isn't the running theme of these matches.

We go to the Wrestling News Network with Gordon Solie, which is basically a control center. He thinks the world title and

tag titles will change at least once this year. Bold pick man.

Cornette says his American Express has been revoked, which was his way out of Peoria. He also thinks he might want to look into managing Cactus Jack.

Brian Pillman vs. Cactus Jack

This is from Worldwide and Terry Funk is on commentary with someone I can't place. It might be Chris Cruise. Jack is still known as Manson sometimes. Pillman hits a dropkick but they go to the floor. Jack sends him into the barricade but Pillman comes back with a cross body. After a quick armbars Jack comes back with the Cactus Clothesline and Pillman is in trouble.

Neckbreaker gets two for Cactus. Jack is still pretty young here but he's got the vicious aspect of his style down. Russian legsweep gets two. Out to the floor again and Brian hits a belly to back suplex, dropping Cactus on his head. Back in Pillman hits a jumping back elbow and takes over. This is in Raleigh if you care about things like that. Out of nowhere Pillman grabs a crucifix for the pin.

Rating: B-. As is the norm, two talented people have a good match. Pillman was on fire at this point and Jack was still new but was learning fast. Not a great match but for a six minute TV match, there's not much more you can ask for. This will probably be the shortest match of the night as well.

Off to Funk's Grill, which is Terry's talk show segment. Norman is doing a painting when Woman comes in as the guest. Terry remembers that Woman likes cowboys so he suggests dressing Norman up as a cowboy but she doesn't think she'd like it. The idea is that Norman (the lovable semi-mentally handicapped character) likes Woman a lot and is trying to impress her. She asks if she can see the painting and he says if she'll give him a kiss. Woman freaks and says Norman's mama called him fat. Funk asks Woman if she'd like to be the first girl he's ever hit. Norman says don't even think about it so

Terry throws her out instead.

Anderson Brothers vs. New Zealand Militia

It's Rip Morgan and Jack Victory and they're managed by a midget named Lord Littlebrook. Victory and Ole start things off. Off to Arn and say it with me, the Horsemen work on the arm. Morgan comes in and has a little bit better luck. Anderson goes right after his arm too. See Arn doesn't care if you really are from New Zealand or if you're from Texas like Victory is.

Ole back in and Morgan does a little better against him. JR makes short people jokes about Littlebrook. Arn now works on the arm of Victory until Victory stomps him down. That's been the story of this match for the first few minutes. Morgan works over Arn but Arn gets in some punches to the ribs to break the momentum. Anderson comes back with a sunset flip for two.

Back to Ole who runs to the outside for a bit. Arn comes in and takes a thumb to the eye. This is a really slow paced match but not exactly in a good way. Ole comes in again and the New Zealand guys pound him down even more. Morgan misses a seated senton off the middle rope. Arn comes in (man they're tagging fast) and hammers everyone down. JR: "Watch that hand. It's like a hand at the end of that arm." Littlebrook throws in his cane but Arn intercepts it and blasts Victory with it for the pin.

Rating: D+. Technically it was fine I guess but that doesn't mean it was an interesting match to watch. Ole was a shell of his former self at this point and it was very clear that he wasn't going to be around much longer. I forgot that Arn and Ole were the faces in this match which can't be a good sign.

Z-Man is named wrestler of the week.

Cornette runs down Peoria and that's about it.

Overall Rating: D+. The Pillman/Jack match was good but for the most part this show wasn't interesting. I don't think I'll be watching that many more of them unless the others are a lot better. I'll watch the next one but if it's not a lot better, I'll be dropping it from my list. Not horrible but it felt like a preview show for others, which isn't really worth watching.

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Smackdown – February 24, 2000 – One Of Foley's Best Promos Ever

Smackdown

Date: February 24, 2000

Location: Nashville Arena, Nashville, Tennessee

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler

This was a request for reasons that I don't remember. It's the go home show for No Way Out where HHH faced Cactus in the Cell. The Radicals have been around for all of five minutes now and are quickly getting entrenched into the show. The main event here is what else, a tag match. Did you expect something different on Smackdown? Anyway let's get to it.

We open with a clip from Raw of Rock making fun of HHH's promos. There was a six man later that night where Cactus broke the window of their bus.

Hardcore Title: Crash vs. Test

Test is champion. He immediately kicks Crash in the face to start and they head to the outside. They go into the crowd and Test puts a trashcan over Crash's head. Cole says this is what the Cell match is going to be like. Not really Cole, not really. Back to ringside and Test takes a fire extinguisher blast to the face.

Crash finds a kendo stick to whack Test as Hardcore Holly is out to watch. Crash uses the steps but jumps into a wicked chair shot. He avoids a powerbomb through two tables but walks into a big boot. Crash hits him low to escape the pumphandle and they go to the floor. Hardcore hits Test with a chair to allow Crash to win. I think he was swinging for Crash but he celebrates with him anyway.

Rating: C-. This wasn't exactly what I had in mind for an opening match. The Hardcore Title was used mainly for comic relief and to give the fans a breather from the important stuff later in the show, but here it's opening things up without anything happening beforehand. That's very different but it wasn't bad.

The DX Express (their bus) is here. HHH makes some midcard matches. Only HHH can go after Cactus.

Here's Big Show who wants to know why the people don't like him anymore. He doesn't think he's changed that much in the last two months. Being called a jabroni hurt his feelings. He never got a rematch with HHH after losing the title and he won the Rumble (kind of). Show has footage of the Rumble which show Rocky's feet hitting the mat. He shows it to us three times and doesn't get how this is right.

Cue Angle who says he's glad to have found someone else with integrity. He shakes Show's hand and tells us a story about integrity. Before he can get into it though, here's Jericho. Jericho is IC Champion and has Chyna with him. He rips on both

of them and says Angle makes even Show look entertaining. Jericho has an I of his own: "I wish that you would shut up!" Angel wants to have the match tonight but says let's make it a tag match. Jericho needs a partner so here's Rock.

Rock says he isn't a tag wrestler but he'll do it tonight if he can get his hands on Big Show. He doesn't care about Angle but if it means getting to Big Show, he'll fight Kurt too. Rock has heard all of Show's talk and Show is absolutely right. His feet did hit the ground first and he did call Show a jabroni. The people boo him and they should. Rock has a video of his own. It's of Rock imitating Show's chokeslam signal. We see it again from a different angle and again in slow motion. The people boo Show because he whines and complains. Rock ends it with his usual catchphrases.

Video on the Cell.

Chris Benoit vs. Kane

All of the Radicalz come out for this, including Eddie in a sling. Kane fights them all off but Benoit takes him down. The other three get thrown out before the match officially starts. Benoit tries to suplex Kane in but Kane picks him up and drops him into the ring. Benoit takes him down and hits the Swan Dive but Kane sits up. Something that was supposed to be a tilt-a-whirl slam puts Chris down.

Kane uses his big shots to knock Benoit around and then hits the top rope clothesline. He calls for the chokeslam but instead clotheslines Benoit out to the floor. They brawl to the outside and here's Kane's ex-girlfriend Tori. This is being written on Valentine's Day so it's kind of appropriate. She and Bearer get into it but the match is a double countout.

Rating: C-. This was exactly what you would expect from a Benoit vs. Kane match. At this point Kane was a much bigger star than Benoit so the result was probably a good thing for Chris. Kane would feud with Pac for awhile and then do nothing

of note for the next few months. Benoit would get the IC Title at Mania.

Kane stalks her up the ramp but X-Pac comes out and FIRES A FLAMETHROWER AT KANE. Sweet cheese and crackers that's a bit much isn't it?

Hardy Boys/Edge/Christian vs. Al Snow/Steve Blackman/Dean Malenko/Perry Saturn

Head Cheese lives!!! Christian vs. Blackman starts us off with Blackman running him over a few times. A kick to the face takes the Canadian down and the fans chant Head Cheese. Off to Snow and then Malenko quickly. Saturn comes in to keep up the beating on Christian. Christian manages a rollup for two and a double clothesline puts both he and Saturn down.

Hot tag brings in Jeff with a Whisper in the Wind. Everything breaks down quickly and Jeff avoids a double flapjack by the Radicalz. Jeff dives onto Saturn on the floor as Christian hits a reverse DDT on Dean. Matt is shoved off the top onto Edge as Dean dropkicks Jeff into a suplex by Saturn for the pin.

Rating: D+. It was good while it lasted but when you have to run through things like this, there's only so much you can do. Points to them for getting all of the heel team in there in such a short match, but Matt and Edge never even got into the match. Not a bad match or anything, but too many people with too little time.

The Hardys and Edge/Christian fight post match.

Rikishi/Too Cool vs. HHH/X-Pac/Road Dogg

Roadie and Grandmaster start things off. Dogg is knocked down by a middle rope dropkick which gets two. The Radicalz are watching. Off to HHH and Grandmaster takes him down with a middle rope clothesline. Scotty sets up the Worm but Pac kicks

his head off. HHH doesn't fight low level guys so he brings Road Dogg back in. A jumping back elbow by Scotty is enough to bring Rikishi in and he cleans house.

Rikishi has a bad ankle so as he loads up the Rikishi Driver, HHH chop blocks him to break it up. DX works over the ankle and Rikishi is in a lot of pain. Pac fires off kicks to the chest but Rikishi gets all ticked off. He slams Pac to the mat but Rikishi is down too. Here's Grandmaster who knocks everyone down. A powerslam puts X-Pac down and Scotty hits the Worm. Everything breaks down and as Rikishi loads up the Banzai Drop, HHH pops him with a chair. Too Cool hits a double elbow on Grandmaster as HHH hits Rikishi in the ankle with the chair. X-Factor pins Sexay.

Rating: C-. Standard main event style six man here. The Radicalz face Too Cool/Rikishi on Sunday which is why this match happened. That was their first feud and it would end on Sunday with the Radicalz winning of course. They would kind of split after that while HHH would move on to feud with Rock over the summer. This was fine.

HHH gets in another chair shot to the ankle post match because he's evil.

Big Bossman/Prince Albert vs. D'Lo Brown/Godfather

Albert and Bossman beat up Tazz on Monday. No idea what that has to do with this but we see a clip of it anyway. Brown vs. Boss to start and Brown hits a middle rope dropkick for the early advantage. Albert comes in to take over. They always seemed to want to push Albert hard but it never quite happened. A moonsault by Brown misses (no idea where he was aiming) and Albert takes him down with a DDT. Godfather comes in and cleans house. Tazz comes in and hits Albert, allowing the Pimp Drop (Death Valley Driver) to pin Albert. This was short.

Here's Cactus Jack to talk about his career in case it ends.

He's an 8 time tag team champion which is often forgotten. He talks about remembering the Thrilla In Manilla and how amazing it sounded. Then he got to see the fight later on and it ended with Frazier sitting on a stool. Foley says he's not going to be remembered for sitting on a stool. He fought HHH at the Rumble and they tore the house down.

So then he thought he'd challenge HHH to a match in the Cell. Do you remember what happened in the last Cell match he was in? He almost died and had more injuries than he thought were possible. It was the greatest day in his career because he finished the match on his own feet. He's seen a lot of guys prostituting themselves for one last payday and he will not do that. If he can't beat HHH, he'll end his career. For a month that is.

He thanks all of the fans for the times when they supported him like when he won his first world title and when they bought his book. He can't guarantee that he'll win on Sunday but he can guarantee he won't end his career sitting on a stool. He'll go down swinging or he won't go down at all. Also, win, lose or draw, he'll dive off the cage and land on HHH. For the Mankind fans, Have a Nice Day, and for the Cactus Jack fans, BANG BANG! AWESOME promo here and I want to see the Cell match now.

Foley goes to leave but here's Stephanie because we can't have a great moment without her can we? She says she's passionate too and has dreams of her own. Last Monday her dream turned into a nightmare when he damaged her bus. He cost her a lot of money in damages but Sunday night he'll pay with his career. She has a warrant for his arrest so he'll be in jail. Here are cops to arrest Foley and he goes quietly. They cuff him and HHH comes out to laugh. There was no need to have them come out here but hey, at least Foley doesn't get a big sendoff right?

Back from a break and a very young looking Coach says Kane has

second degree burns on his neck and possible vision issues.

HHH and Stephanie laugh at Foley even more. Foley is in a small cage in the back instead of in jail. Only in wrestling. HHH gets the keys because the cops are stupid.

Steph and HHH taunt Foley post break.

Bubba Ray Dudley vs. Billy Gunn

The Dudleys get a tag title shot on Sunday. D-Von is brought in and thrown into Bubba. Neckbreaker gets two for Billy. Fameasser is countered into a powerbomb but Bubba misses the backsplash. Billy misses a splash but hits a Jackhammer. He loads up the Fameasser but D-Von pulls the top rope down and that's a DQ.

The Dudleys load up a table but Road Dogg comes in for the save and Bubba takes the Fameasser through the table. Cole is very happy that a Dudley went through a table. The Dudleys would get their first tag titles on Sunday.

More taunting by HHH and Stephanie. Then they attach the cage to their bus.

The Rock/Chris Jericho vs. Big Show/Kurt Angle

Angle and Jericho start things off and Jericho gets a backbreaker for two. Rock and Show come in and Rock hits a spinebuster and pounds away. Back to Jericho who is thrown around with ease. Back to Kurt and both partners interfere. Jericho hits the bulldog and it's back to Rock. He sets up the Elbow on Kurt but Show takes his head off. A missile dropkick puts Show down but he pops up and hits a big old chokeslam to Jericho. Chyna comes in and hits Show with a chair for the DQ.

Rating: C+. This was really short (as in like four minutes) but they had a lot of stuff going on in there. This was a very energetic match and more fun than most of the main event tags that you see in modern wrestling. It got both feuds in the

ring at the same time and a lot of the time that's all you can ask for.

The brawls continue with Show and Rock fighting up the ramp. Angle gets put in the Walls back in the ring. Show and Rock head to the back and Rock is thrown through a wall.

HHH and Stephanie drag Cactus away in the cage as it's attached to the bus to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. This was fine. The wrestling wasn't anything to remember but all of the feuds were touched on which is the top priority for a go home show. Rock and Show would have a good match and the two main event feuds would combine into a fourway at Mania which I thought was better than most people do. Good show but not great.

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USWA Wrestling Challenge – August 25, 1989 – Not Foley's Finest Hour

USWA Wrestling Challenge

Date: August 25, 1989

Location: Sportatorium, Dallas Texas

Commentator: Marc Lowrance, Frank Dusek

I'm missing the August 18 episode so don't bother looking for it. From what I can tell though there was a big tag match with

Eric Embry and Chris Adams beating up some bad guys. I liked what I saw last time so maybe this is going to be good as well. If this is what I think it is, it's not Mick Foley's finest hour. Let's get to it.

We open with clips from the tag match I mentioned and like last week we have to wait to find out the winner.

Akbar introduces the newest member of Devastation Inc: Taurus Bulba, who was with them two weeks ago.

Jimmy Jack Funk vs. Scott Braddock

The referee is in a traditional outfit today instead of the blue shirt he was in last week. Funk slams Braddock to start and dropkicks him to the floor. We hear about Chris Adams getting screwed by Tojo Yamamoto or something like that and he has to stay wherever Tojo is. Funk hits a move like an Angle Slam and grabs the arm. Funk keeps control of the arm Eric Embry has won the Texas Heavyweight Title. Short Arm Scissor goes onto Braddock. He tries a rollup with tights but the referee slaps him in the head instead of brawling.

This has been ALL Funk so far. Funk stays on the arm as we talk about Akbar vs. Embry. Basically Akbar is putting all of his guys against Embry in Loser Leaves Town matches with the theory that he has to lose sometime. Braddock kind of hot shots Funk to counter a Thesz Press. Backbreaker gets two. Braddock hammers away and hooks a chinlock. A double clothesline puts both guys down.

They get up at the same time and Funk kicks him in the ribs to take over. There's an atomic drop and Funk pounds away on the head of Braddock. Braddock knocks him to the floor and sets for a superplex to bring Funk back in. Funk manages to slingshot over his back and rolls him up for the surprise pin.

Rating: C+. Not too bad here and it was a lot more energetic than I was expecting it to be. Funk is a guy I've seen some of

and usually he's awful in WWF. Here though he's not bad. He's not a ring general or anything like that, but he's certainly pretty ok with a great example of that right here. This was a nice surprise.

Percy Pringle talks about taking down the World Class banner and having the board behind them now. He calls Akbar a raghead. It was a different time.

We go to a segment from a few days ago. Tojo and P.Y. Chu-Hi (the guy Embry beat in the cage) were mad about Chu-Hi losing a match in 9 seconds to Embry. They went after Chris Adams' wife and abused her. Whatever they did is covered by a graphic that says censored. Adams finally came out for the save. Adams has said not to suspend the Japanese guys because he's going to do something about it himself. His wife's name is Toni Adams in case that name comes up later.

Eric Embry vs. Cactus Jack Manson

This is loser leaves town. Embry wins in 12 seconds with a backslide. Somehow that's not his fastest match this week. Foley would head off to WCW after this.

Devastation Inc leaves Jack alone in the ring.

Gary Young talks about the Devastation Inc trainees. They're with him here but their names aren't important enough to mention.

Jerry Lawler, the Unified World Heavyweight Champion, says that while there are other people that call themselves World Champion, he's the real one. He even mentions the companies by name and says that Flair and Hogan are only company champions because they only fight guys in their own companies. Lawler however is champion in multiple companies so he's the true champion. Ok then.

Video on Embry, mainly of him getting destroyed. Then he got

awesome and won a cage match.

Gary Young/Al Perez vs. Matt Borne/Billy Joe Travis

Borne and Perez are starting and Borne takes him down pretty easily. They switch off as Akbar runs his mouth some more. Travis works on the arm which is a very common move in this company. They trade punches and Perez takes over. Young comes in and has pink hair. More arm work takes him down and Borne comes in. We go to a break with the arm work continuing.

Back with guess what: more arm work. Things speed up and Borne actually does something different in the form of a powerslam. Young tries to tag Travis and we almost lose a cameraman. Borne and Travis cheat but they're popular so it's all ok right? Perez pulls the top rope down to send Travis to the outside.

He gets thrown back in so Perez throws him back outside again. Everything breaks down and Young drops a knee for two on Travis. Back to Perez and it breaks down again. Akbar hits Young with a chair by mistake but since there's no ref there's no count. A brass knucks shot puts Travis down and Young gets the easy pin.

Rating: C-. Pretty dull match with the arm work going on way too long. That seems to be a theme here in tag matches and I'm not wild on it. The brawling was fun and it's kind of refreshing to see a heel win a match, especially a main event. Not a terrible match or anything like that, but it was pretty forgettable.

The decision is reversed by the matchmaker whose name sounded like Max Andrews.

Overall Rating: C+. This show was much more to the point and you can see the angles that are going to dominate things coming into play pretty clearly here. The next week's show will have Chun-Hi vs. Adams in a grudge match so that should

be interesting. It's also the last show I have before we jump forward to December. Better show this week because it was much more on point.

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USWA Wrestling Challenge – August 11, 1989 – Man Did I Pick The Wrong Episode To Jump In On

USWA Wrestling Challenge

Date: August 11, 1989

Location: Sportatorium, Dallas, Texas

Commentator: Marc Lowrance

This is the first of I think six episodes I have of this. I don't have them all in order and I have no idea where to find them otherwise, so I won't be able to put up the one from August 18. Other than that though this is from the late 80s (obviously) and it's as good as anything else while I find a copy of the Raw I was going to do. Let's get to it.

We open with a clip from a World Class show from last week with Eric Embry facing someone from Japan in a cage. The idea here is that if Embry, a Memphis guy, wins, then the Memphis guys get to stay in WCCW but if he loses then they're all gone. Apparently we'll get the ending later because that's all

we see here.

This is a USWA show from Dallas which is something I've never seen before. I'd assume that means Embry won. Marc Lowrance, the longtime WCCW commentator, is host. Short version: Memphis (CWA) and Dallas (WCCW) merged to form the USWA to try to fight McMahon and Crockett and it lasted all of a year before they split again.

Skandor Akbar talks about how Devastation Inc is tired of not getting acknowledged. They're coming for the Memphis guys.

Lowrance takes us back to the cage match and the fans are all behind Embry. Embry is the booker from Foley's book that liked to book while not wearing any clothes. Eric wins with a fluke rollup.

After a break Embry and Percy Pringle (Paul Bearer) take down the WCCW banner and put up a USWA banner. I'm really not entirely sure what's going on here but it's as basic of the idea as I can get it. From what I can understand, that cage match was the culmination of a LONG story (as in like 6 months to a year) between Embry and Devastation Inc.

WCCW had been taken over by evil (Fritz had legitimately sold to Jerry Jarrett at this point so the Von Erichs got toned WAY down) Japanese people and Eric represented the good guys of the USWA. He won the match to bring in a new era, which was wanted/needed. This is all based off info I can find elsewhere and not from the TV show mind you.

Billy Travis, a WCCW guy, talks very nervously about how he's glad to be here.

Eric and Percy are here to talk about the USWA. I'm not sure if USWA was the name in Memphis or not. They talk about how they're glad the evil ones are gone and they'll try not to let us down.

Jimmy Jack Funk/Kerry Von Erich vs. Al Perez/Taurus Bulba

Perez vs. Kerry gets us going. They fight for position early and then get in each others' faces. Kerry grabs the arm and it's off to Jimmy Jack. The guys on the apron almost get into it out there as (and by that I mean Marc talking to himself) talk about the cage match. Kerry throws the chair at Taurus. Akbar is at ringside too. Lowrance talks about how all of the good things from WCCW will be around in the USWA also. Bulba comes in but misses an elbow to Funk. Back to Von Erich who LOUDLY says put your foot up, which is exactly what Taurus does in the corner. Bulba runs from the Claw and takes Kerry back down.

An elbow drop keeps Kerry down as Akbar talks about how awesome Devastation Inc is. Bulba comes off the top but jumps into the Claw. He makes the rope though and it heads to the floor. The Claw goes on outside and they go towards the crowd. Bulba goes into the post and allegedly we're at 10 minutes. More like 4 but whatever. Tornado Punch sends Bulba into the barricade but Perez hits Kerry with a chair. Everything breaks down and somehow there isn't a DQ.

We have four minutes left in the time limit and Kerry is double teamed in the corner. Perez hooks a sleeper on Kerry and takes him down with three minutes to go. Kerry gets out and punches Perez down. Off to Funk and everything breaks down again. Somehow we're now down to one minute as they're not even trying to hide the clock changes. A lot of pins are broken up but Kerry gets the Claw on Perez with 15 seconds left. And never mind because it's a draw.

Rating: C. This was a pretty high impact brawl and I'd assume it was to advance a Perez vs. Kerry feud, which is fine. Bulba was a Mongolian which is a tried and true indy heel gimmick. Not a great match or anything but the crowd was into it and it wasn't a bad match at all. The clock thing was just laughable though.

A guy who isn't named doesn't like to be in Texas but likes Arkansas. He's part of Devastation Inc though. Oh it's Gary Young.

Tojo Yamamoto and Akbar get equal time and say they'll be here. They're coming for Eric and Pringle. There's a \$100,000 bounty involved somewhere.

USWA Tag Titles: Jeff Jarrett/Matt Borne vs. Cactus Jack Manson/Scott Braddock

Manson is Foley and his team has the titles. Frank Duschek is with the challengers. He was the WCCW boss and was fired by Akbar, who is here of course as well. Braddock is thrown into Akbar on the floor and it's Jarrett vs. Jack to start. Now there's a pairing. Jarrett works the arm to control and has Jack hiding in the corner. There was talk of a break but I don't think we ever went to one.

Braddock comes in and walks into an armdrag of his own. Here's Borne in pink shorts. He's no Bret Hart in them but he has a good clothesline. Back to Jarrett and the arm work continues. Back to Borne who grabs the arm again. Now we take a break and come back to a promo of Jarrett and Borne WITH THE TAG TEAM TITLES. They say they'll deal with anyone that wants a shot.

Back with Jarrett working on the arm of Braddock some more. Off to Manson who rams Jarrett into the buckle then clotheslines him down to block Jarrett's flips. Off to Braddock who slams Jeff for two. Cactus throws him to the floor and hits the elbow off the apron (called The Consequences here, which is a perfect name for it). That gets two back inside as it occurs to me we've never been told who the champions are. It's Jack/Braddock, but we've never been told that.

Jack throws him to the floor and tries another Consequences, but Jeff moves and crawls for the corner. A diving tag brings in the pink shorts wearing Maniac to pound of Manson.

Everything breaks down and Borne snaps off a quick German suplex on Jack for the pin and the titles. It's a huge pop, but man it would have sucked to watch this on TV and have the ending spoiled.

Rating: C. Pretty boring tag match for the most part but the ending was a lot better. That being said, I'd have liked it a lot better if I hadn't seen Jarrett and Braddock with the belts halfway through the thing. These guys would trade the titles for awhile until Jack left to go to I think WCW. Not much of a match but a title change is always worth seeing.

Lowrance wraps up the show and in something you don't often hear on a wrestling show, says have a good weekend and worship at the church of your choice. He retired from wrestling to become a minister but it's still odd to hear. Nothing wrong with it mind you, just not something you often hear.

Overall Rating: C. This was a really bad episode to jump in on. The feuds that were featured here were some VERY hot stories back in the day and it brought Dallas back from a bad slump they had been in, although it was short lived because of backstage politics with the WCCW guys pulling out of the USWA, making that company a Memphis exclusive in about a year or so. Still, fun stuff and a cool look at an interesting time in wrestling history. I don't have the 8/18 show but I do have 8/25 which is up next.

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