

Monday Night Raw – February 6, 1995: Big, Bad and...Well More Bad

Monday Night Raw

Date: February 6, 1995

Location: Manatee Civic Center, Palmetto, Florida

Attendance: 2,500

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Shawn Michaels

We're fresh off the Royal Rumble and that means it's time to build towards Shawn vs. Diesel in about two months. Shawn being on commentary for these shows is a good idea as he's certainly entertaining and one of the few heels who doesn't wear out his welcome when he's out there all night. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of last week's Royal Rumble Challenge between King Kong Bundy and Mabel with Bundy getting some help to win, because MABEL requires assistance. Tonight it's a six man tag.

Opening sequence.

Lex Luger/Men on a Mission vs. IRS/Tatanka/King Kong Bundy

IRS has the massive Undertaker Urn with him after "repossessing" it at the Rumble but there's no Ted DiBiase in sight. Bundy and Mabel start things off with the heavy forearms to the chest, because that's about all they're capable of doing. Oh and splashes of course but we'll save that for when it gets serious.

Mabel hits something like an enziguri for two and it's off to the worthless Mo, who can't slam Bundy. IRS comes in for some elbows but Mo hits one of the worst dropkicks I've seen in recent memory to come back. Thankfully that goes nowhere and it's off to Tatanka for some chops to the head as we go to a break. Back with Tatanka bailing from Mabel, likely repelled by the magical powers of purple and gold. Mabel drops the

big fat elbow and it's off to Luger for the showdown with his former friend.

Naturally Tatanka hands it off to IRS instead, showing that he's learning the heel arts. For some reason Luger thinks it's a good idea to bring Mo back in. Must be the steroids getting to his head. The slow beating continues with a variety of whips and chops, likely because Mo can't be trusted to take anything more complicated.

Mo gets sent into the corner where a far too sweaty IRS grabs an abdominal stretch. Even a sunset flip looks horrible until Mabel knocks IRS down from the apron for two. Bundy finally misses a charge in the corner and the hot tag brings in Luger to a lukewarm reaction at best. Everything breaks down and Luger slams Bundy but Tatanka gets in a DDT to give Bundy the pin.

Rating: F. This was FIFTEEN MINUTES LONG and Luger took the pin? They really thought this was the best idea for the opening of Monday Night Raw? I knew 1995 was terrible but dang I didn't realize it was this bad. The ending is the worst part though and I have no idea what the heck they were thinking.

Man Mountain Rock compares playing guitar to winning the WWF World Title.

Lawrence Taylor's agent reads a statement basically saying he's sorry and if Bam Bam Bigelow keeps calling him out, Lawrence will sue.

Bam Bam Bigelow Slim Jim ad. These really didn't last long as it turned out that Randy Savage might have had just a bit more charisma. Slim Jim knew this too and took the campaign to WCW instead. You know, because they're smart.

Man Mountain Rock vs. Charlie Hunter

Rock plays some guitar before the match. Hunter slides between the legs to start but a hiptoss fails as badly as you would expect it to. Some big elbows have Hunter in trouble and Rock drops a splash for good measure. A nerve hold of all things kills even more time as this is already feeling long. Rock finishes him with a gordbuster. Too short to rate but this

didn't quite, ahem, rock. For you trivia people: Rock's theme song would later be used by Droz and Prince Albert.

We look at Shawn Michaels coming out to stare Diesel down over the weekend.

Diesel sits down with Vince to talk about facing both Hart Brothers recently. His knees are banged up but he'll be ready for Shawn. We talk about all of Diesel's celebrity appearances and...my goodness Diesel just does not look right in this role. He'll be ready to face Jeff Jarrett in two weeks though.

Shawn will debut his new bodyguard soon.

Mantaur vs. Leroy Howard

Howard has a good look (Think Ice Train if you remember him. If not...yeah I've got nothing for you.). Mantaur misses a charge in the corner to start but is still able to catch Howard's (who has some size) high crossbody. We hit the standard big man offense until Howard hits a clothesline and a dropkick, only to get caught in a World's Strongest Slam. Jim Cornette screams at Mantaur to stay on him and you can imagine him wanting to kill someone for being stuck managing a character like this. A belly to belly ends Howard.

Rating: D. Howard wasn't half bad but there's only so much you can do when you're stuck against Mantaur. I'm not sure what else anyone was expecting here, but what was anyone expecting when they came up with Mantaur? It's really one of the worst gimmicks ever and there's no way around that.

Razor Ramon vs. Frank Lancaster

They trade arm work to start as Shawn catches himself complimenting Razor, which doesn't sit well with him. Shawn: "Give me a second. I'll cut him down in just a minute." Razor shrugs off some chops and beats up Lancaster in the corner without much effort. An abdominal stretch goes nowhere so let's talk about the current events for some reason. The belly to back superplex sets up the Razor's Ramon to put Frank away.

Rating: D+. Eh Razor is at least better than Mantaur. An understatement I know but there's only so much you can say about a match like this. Believe it or not, Razor would be in the Intercontinental Title picture around this point and recently lost the title at the Royal Rumble. Just a squash here.

Henry Godwinn vs. Bill Weaver

Weaver misses an early dropkick and Henry hits him with a wheelbarrow slam. This match's time filler: wrestlers' favorite cartoon characters. Henry hits a big clothesline and elbow drop, followed by the Slop Drop for the quick pin. Much better squash here.

Vince tells us that there's no show next week but Shawn has worse news: he won't be doing commentary anymore because it makes him too big of a target. They better have a good replacement because he's one of the only good things about these shows.

Overall Rating: D-. This was the show of big slow squashes and that's not a good thing. They're in the slow build to a bad Wrestlemania and that's a really boring stretch. There's only so much you can do when you have heel Henry Godwinn and Mantaur as featured acts, plus Luger losing to Bundy when Mo is available to take the fall. Really bad show here, but that's what you have to expect at this point.

Remember: no February 13 show so the next one is February 20.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up the Updated History of the Intercontinental Title in E-Book or Paperback. Check out the information here:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2017/10/02/new-paperback-kbs-history-of-the-intercontinental-title-updated-version/>

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

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

Survivor Series Count-Up – 1995: They’ve Still Got It

Survivor Series 1995

Date: November 19, 1995

Location: USAir Arena, Landover, Maryland

Attendance: 14,500

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Mr. Perfect, Jim Ross

Aside from the main event, there really isn’t much else to talk about. The rest of the show is dedicated to the midcard, save for the return of the Undertaker. He’ll be captaining the Dark Side to face the Royals, led by King Mabel, who helped crush Undertaker’s face a few months prior. Let’s get to it.

We start with Razor Ramon, talking about being in the first Wild Card match. The idea here was to take faces and heels and mix them up. It was an interesting concept but like most Survivor Series matches, it didn’t mean anything and wasn’t done again.

Mr. Perfect is introduced as a surprise commentator.

We actually get an opening video which is about Bret going A-Diesel hunting. The idea is old vs. new. It’s no countout and No DQ tonight, basically meaning a street fight.

BodyDonnas vs. Underdogs

BodyDonnas: Skip, Rad Radford, Tom Prichard, 1-2-3 Kid

Underdogs: Barry Horowitz, Hakushi, Marty Jannetty, Bob Holly

The idea here is people that care about their looks vs. jobbers. Horowitz scored one of the biggest upsets ever over Skip (Chris Candido, a fitness guru. He would later be joined by Prichard under the name Zip. Their

manager was the famous one though: Sunny). Jannetty needs no introduction as a jobber.

The Kid is a mystery partner who is freshly heel here. By freshly I mean this is his first match as a heel. Razor comes out to go after the Kid who screwed him over on Raw on Monday. Raw is finally a big deal at this point too. Razor is Intercontinental Champion of course. Radford is Louis Spicolli in a grunge gimmick. Holly is a racecar driver and Hakushi is a Japanese wrestler with tattoos all over his torso.

Prichard and Jannetty start things off and Marty has to fight out of the heel corner. The Kid holds him there but Prichard hits Kid with a knee by mistake. The BodyDonnas huddle on the floor until it's off to Radford vs. Marty. Radford is called a BodyDonna in training because he's pretty fat. Here's Holly to face Rad and he takes Radford over with a hurricanrana. Radford tries the same thing but gets powerbombed down.

Off to Hakushi who is pretty freshly face. He gets behind Radford but walks into a spinebuster. Off to the Kid who hits a top rope splash on Hakushi for two and it's time for Captain Skip. Hakushi escapes a belly to back superplex and it's back to Holly who speeds things up. Prichard comes in as the fans want Barry. A powerbomb counters a hurricanrana from Holly but Tom misses a moonsault. Holly hits a top rope cross body for the elimination. Skip immediately comes in and rolls up Holly to tie it back up.

Hakushi comes in again and trips up Skip before elbowing him in the face. A Vader Bomb hits knees though and Skip gets control back. A shot to the chest takes Skip down so here's the Kid again. The fans want Barry but it's Hakushi taking over with a Muta Elbow in the corner. A top rope shoulder takes Kid down for two but Hakushi misses a springboard splash. Razor is watching in the back. Kid kicks Hakushi in the back of the head and Radford gets the easy pin.

Barry comes in and gets pounded down and the fans almost explode. Naturally this match would be the end of his push because that's how it works in the WWF, though I don't think Horowitz had a long shelf life. Radford and the Kid double team Horowitz but he comes back with a

jawbreaker to Rad. Skip tells Rad not to pin Barry yet because he wants to get the pin himself.

Radford hits a Hennig neck snap as Hennig is stunned at the reaction to Horowitz. Rad stops to exercise and gets cradled by Barry for the pin. It's Skip/The Kid vs. Barry/Marty. Horowitz gets distracted by a double team and the Kid dropkicks him in the back, setting up a legdrop for the elimination. So it's Marty down two on one but he avoids a charging Skip in the corner.

A sunset flip out of nowhere gets two for Marty and the Rocker Dropper (a fancy Fameasser) puts Skip down and Marty goes up. Sunny crotches him but Skip gets countered into a Superbomb (powerbomb off the top, which would be Skip's finisher in ECW) for the elimination. It's one on one now and a missile dropkick gets two for the Kid. A moonsault misses Marty though and they're both down. Jannetty dropkicks him down for two and here comes Sid (Kid's partner). A Rocker Dropper takes the Kid down for two but Sid guillotines Marty on the ropes and Kid steals the pin.

Rating: B. This was a good match to open things up with, especially since I don't think anyone would have been able to buy Barry Horowitz captaining anything but an opening match team. Other than that though, the action here was good and it set the Kid up as a somewhat big time heel which is what he needed so soon after a turn. Good opener.

Razor threw a fit in the back after the loss, throwing a monitor against the wall in the process.

Three members of I guess you would say the heel Wild Card team (Dean Douglas, Owen and Yokozuna) say that Razor needs to channel his energy into their match later, since he's their partner.

Team Bertha Faye vs. Team Alundra Blayze

Bertha Faye, Aja Kong, Tomoko Watanabe, Lioness Asuka

Alundra Blayze, Kyoko Inoue, Sakie Hasegawa, Chaparita Asari

Bertha is an overweight and not incredibly attractive woman and is Blayze's main rival for Blayze's Women's Title. She tells the fans to

shut up in an attempt to get people interested in this match. The rest are Japanese wrestlers who didn't spend a lot of time in the WWF. Asari and Asuka start things off with Asuka taking her head off with a spinwheel kick. At least I think that's what happened because we're getting a wide shot of the arena for the opening bell. Asari, a member of the face team, stands about 4'9 and is a tiny thing whereas Asuka looks like a monster.

Off to Blayze who is more Asuka's size for a slam on the Lioness. Back to Asari who debuts the Sky Twister Press (a corkscrew moonsault) in America. Asuka doesn't sell it but you can't ask everything of her. Vince has no idea what to call it but JR is there to clean up for him. Blayze comes back in and hits a German suplex to eliminate Asuka. It makes the names easier to keep track of if nothing else.

Watanabe comes in but misses a dive. Blayze sends her to the floor and does hit her dive to take over. Hasegawa comes in and hits five rolling double underhook suplexes on Watanabe as Perfect makes sexist remarks. Watanabe hits a seated senton off the top for two as this selling thing is still an issue. Aja Kong, a total monster, comes in with no tag and is immediately kicked in the face and suplexed by Hasegawa. Another Rock Bottom suplex puts her down but Hasegawa jumps into a kick to the chest. Something like a belly to back suplex eliminates Hasegawa to make it 3-3.

Asari comes in and is quickly dispatched by a middle rope splash. If you can't see the ending of this match coming, you fail your exam. Blayze comes in but tags out almost immediately to Inoue. Inoue looks like a cross between a Rocker and the Ultimate Warrior. By the time I finish typing that, a seated senton eliminates her. Kong put out three girls in about 90 seconds.

So it's Blayze vs. Faye, Kong and Watanabe. All three get in the ring at once but Watanabe stays in. A snap suplex gets two for the champion and a slow motion piledriver gets the pin to make it 2-1. Faye comes in and after some basic shots in the corner, gets caught in a German suplex to make it one on one. Kong hits a superplex for two and she crushes Blayze in the corner for a bit. Alundra hits a bad hurricanrana for two and a standing moonsault for the same. Blayze goes up but gets headbutted down

and the spinning backfist gets the pin for Kong.

Rating: C+. The match was fun stuff considering it only had ten minutes to get through seven eliminations. Kong would have been a great challenger for Blayze, if the division had stayed around. Blayze would show up on Nitro in about a month and throw the WWF Women's Title (and her career for the most part) in the trash. Fun match but too rushed to mean anything.

A Bill Clinton impersonator is here. He says he's been watching Bam Bam Bigelow since Bigelow was a kid and playing with Pebbles.

Bam Bam Bigelow vs. Goldust

Goldust has been around about a month at this point. This is when Goldust was just a movie fanatic at this point and not, you know, trying to screw everyone on the roster. Bigelow is obsessed with fire here, which makes sense given his looks and attire. After about a four minute entrance, we're ready to go. Then we get some stalling to go with the long entrance.

Goldust tries to get in Bigelow's mind but gets knocked to the floor for his efforts. Back in and Bigelow slugs him down but charges into a boot in the corner. Goldust gets rammed into the post on the floor but he comes back with a clothesline to send Bigelow back to the floor. Back in and it's a front facelock as this match keeps dragging along. Bam Bam is thrown to the floor but comes back with a clothesline. A headbutt misses and Goldust rides Bigelow on the mat. Bam Bam comes back with an electric chair but gets taken down by a lariat. Bigelow makes a comeback, misses a charge, and gets bulldogged down for the pin.

Rating: F. This was an eight minute match. Look at the length of what I wrote and tell me how this match ran eight minutes. Goldust was all mystique and no substance for a year or so until he figured out how to wrestle a match as Goldust instead of as Dustin Rhodes in a funny outfit. This was Bigelow's last match in the company ever.

Clinton wastes more of our time but now with Bob Backlund, who isn't a big fan.

We recap Mabel vs. Undertaker. Mabel was fat and won the King of the Ring. Then he dropped some big fat legs on Undertaker, crushing his face. Tonight it's about revenge.

Royals vs. Dark Side

Royals: King Mabel, Jerry Lawler, Hunter Hearst Helmsley, Isaac Yankem

Dark Side: Undertaker, Fatu, Henry Godwin, Savio Vega

Mabel is on a throne carried by about five guys, all of whom look like they're about to have hernias. The idea here is you have King Mabel, King Lawler, the blue blood Helmsley, and the Royal Dentist Isaac Yankem. About two years later, Isaac would put on a mask and remember that he's Undertaker's brother Kane. What exactly is dark about Undertaker's partners isn't really clear. Fatu is MAKING A DIFFERENCE and is supposed to be some kind of hero for kids in the projects. Godwin is a hog farmer and Vega is a street fighter from Puerto Rico.

Undertaker's entrance is as huge as you would expect it to be. He has this skull looking mask on now which would eventually be purple and look very stupid. Fatu and Hunter start things off. The Dark Side even has matching t-shirts that say Rest In Peace. Fatu throws Helmsley around to start but we almost get a Pedigree, which is only broken up by a glare from Undertaker. Off to Godwin, who was feuding with Hunter at this point in the standard culture clash feud.

Off to Lawler who immediately tags in Yankem. A big hop toss puts Isaac down but he sends Henry into the corner to escape. Back to Helmsley, which I'm getting tired of typing. If only there was a shorter version of his name. Perfect: "You know Helmsley likes to be called Triple H." Thank you Mr. Perfect. Anyway, Godwin gorilla presses HHH, holding him up for a LONG time.

Lawler comes in and gets Savio, which is a clash of styles if I've ever heard of one. Vega pounds away on Jerry and Fatu does the same. Yankem gets in a knee to Fatu's back and the evil King takes over. The smaller evil king that is. Isaac comes in to slam Fatu and a legdrop follows. Mabel comes in but misses a splash in the corner. Vega pounds on Mabel in

a rematch of the KOTR final. A side slam kills Vega but there's no cover.

Vega gets beaten on in the corner to fill in more time. Yankem is listed as 6'8 or 6'9 here, which means he would have grown about three or four inches by the time he became the Big Red Machine. A HHH knee drop gets two on Vega as the crowd is silent because none of this means anything. This is all just filler until we get to the Undertaker tag when the place is going to erupt.

Lawler's piledriver on Vega gets two. Well it's not Memphis so it's understandable. Lawler knocks Vega into the corner....and here's Undertaker. Jerry gets thrown around by the throat and no one will tag him. Tombstone and pin on Lawler, tombstone and pin on Yankem, chokeslam and pin on Helmsley, and there's just Mabel left. He immediately belly to belly suplexes Undertaker down and drops the face crushing legdrop before dancing a bit. There's the situp and Mabel runs for the countout. The four eliminations took two minutes and two seconds.

Rating: D+. This whole match ran just under fifteen minutes and about two of those meant anything. Everything was waiting for Undertaker to come in and dominate, which he did quite well, but getting there was pretty dull stuff. This match is more fun for looking at what these people would become rather than what they are now. Undertaker would lose the mask soon enough thank goodness.

Bret is ready for Diesel and isn't looking forward to the defense he'd have at the next In Your House against British Bulldog. He talks about Wayne Gretzky and wonders if he himself is still the best ever. Today he'll find out.

Diesel isn't worried about Bulldog and he's going to take care of Bret tonight.

DiBiase and Cornette have a small argument before the next match. Shawn comes in and says chill.

Team Shawn Michaels vs. Team Yokozuna

Shawn Michaels, Ahmed Johnson, British Bulldog, Sycho Sid

Yokozuna, Owen Hart, Razor Ramon, Dean Douglas

This is the Wild Card match with all of the mixed up partners. It's also Ahmed's (a very large, muscular intimidating man) PPV debut. Sid is Shawn's other former bodyguard but they split after Wrestlemania XI, turning Shawn face in the process. Douglas is the original Damien Sandow, which is a ripoff of the Genius. We get going with Owen vs. Shawn which is of course very fast paced stuff. Shawn sends him to the floor and after ducking a tennis racket shot from Cornette, taps Cornette's pants with said racket. Back inside and it's Douglas pounding away on Shawn and suplexing him down.

Shawn comes back with a forearm followed by a double ax off the top rope for two. Douglas misses a Vader Bomb so Shawn comes back with a moonsault press for two. It's off to Ahmed who gets to destroy everything in sight but he can't slam Yokozuna. After a big group beatdown, Dean is able to get a chinlock on Ahmed to take over. Razor gets in some cheap shots which is rather heelish of him.

Back to who walks into a powerslam but it's off to Shawn, who Ahmed launches into Dean for two. In a more normal act for Razor, he pops Dean in the face to give Shawn a rollup win. Off to Bulldog vs. Owen which should be a good pairing. Owen hits a sweet spinwheel kick for two and Bulldog is so mad that he tags out to Shawn.

Hart tags out to Razor and it's time for a rematch from Summerslam 95. JR: "I don't think they can wrestle each other without a ladder." They're tentative to start things off but Shawn throws Razor to the floor, followed by Razor taking Shawn's head off with a clothesline. They collide in mid-air but Shawn nips up. Razor is like forget that chico and hits the Razor's Edge out of nowhere. Ahmed makes the save and the fans aren't sure if they like that.

They collide again....and then they do it for a third time. Shawn tags in Sid who had his back to the ring for some reason. This is a rematch from a recent Raw and part of an ongoing feud. Razor can barely get up, allowing Sid to pound away at will. Yokozuna tries to get in a cheap shot on Sid but Sid kicks him away. Razor comes back with some right hands and

they clothesline each other down. That's the fourth time something Razor has done something like that in five minutes.

For some reason, Sid goes up (well he is Sycho) and gets slammed back down for two. A one handed chokeslam (looked awesome) puts Razor down but Sid tags in Shawn instead of powerbombing him. Shawn accidentally superkicks Sid but Bulldog breaks up the pin. Not that it matters as Razor covers again a second later and gets the pin. Sid powerbombs Michaels, his own partner, before leaving. Bulldog and Razor are legal at the moment with Bulldog pounding away....or not as Bulldog was just having fun.

Razor and Shawn are both down but Ramon can only get two. Owen gets the tag to beat on Michaels and drops him with a backdrop. Off to Yokozuna for the first time and he destroys Shawn in the corner. Shawn gets whipped upside down in the corner and it's off to the nerve hold by Yokozuna. It's not like Yokozuna is flexing or anything but it does look like a nice shoulder to lean on I guess.

Shawn gets up and is promptly elbowed back down. Off to Owen for a double headbutt to put Shawn down again. Owen misses a swan dive and Shawn makes the tag to Ahmed, who cleans house. The yet to be named Pearl River Plunge (Tiger Bomb) pins Owen and it's off to Razor vs. Ahmed, which would have been a very interesting feud. Razor bulldogs Johnson down and things break down again with Razor beating up all of his opponents.

Ahmed goes to the corner to pose, and he just happens to put himself in Razor's Edge position. With Ahmed down, Bulldog comes in sans tag. Here come Sid and the 1-2-3 Kid with DiBiase as Razor hits the fall away slam on Bulldog for two. Razor drills the Kid but walks into the powerslam for the elimination. It's Shawn/Bulldog/Johnson vs. Yokozuna now.

Shawn gets the fat man first but the right hands don't do much to Yokozuna, who slugs Shawn down with ease. Yokozuna hits the fat man legdrop but opts for the Banzai instead of covering. Shawn, fearing death, avoids the drop and makes the tag to Ahmed. There's the slam (for the second time) but Bulldog breaks up the pin by his own teammate. Bulldog gets dropped and Shawn superkicks Yokozuna down. A splash from

Ahmed (with a SQUEAL) gets the pin and the victory.

Rating: C+. For a match with almost no point behind it and some wacky teams, this was pretty good stuff. The Shawn vs. Razor stuff was interesting as you knew they had chemistry but it was fun to see them without a gimmick. Ahmed looked good but not great here, which would be the right description of him for his entire run in the WWF. Fun match that was never tried again, which I can understand.

More Clinton stuff with Sunny sitting on his lap. Lucky guy.

Bret talks about his previous matches with Diesel, both of which rocked.

Diesel says he's Jackknifed Bret twice but he's not sure if he can beat him. Diesel won the first one by DQ and the second was a draw. They were both good matches so this should be good too.

Perfect picks Bret, JR picks Diesel.

WWF World Title: Bret Hart vs. Diesel

Diesel is defending and this is No DQ and no countout. Diesel immediately takes a buckle pad off, so Bret takes another one off to match him. Bret charges him into the corner and goes after the leg but Diesel pounds him over the back to take over. The champ knocks Hart to the floor and Bret is limping. Diesel follows him out and hits a HARD ax handle to put Bret down again. It's a slow start so far but they have a lot of time.

Hart gets sent into the barricade and goes back in but he bails to the floor immediately. Back in and Diesel wins a slugout, knocking Bret to the floor with a big right hand. Diesel whips him into the steps and keeps the pace slow. A theme of the promos had been wearing Bret tiring Diesel out so there's some good psychology going on here. Diesel puts Bret down with a hard chair shot to the back and Hart is reeling.

Back in and Diesel loads up the Jackknife but Bret keeps grabbing the leg to block it. Now he bites the champ's hands to escape. The fans are starting to get into this too. Bret goes for the knee and the champ is in trouble. They do the same opening sequence as Bret goes for the knee again but Diesel hits him in the back. This time though, Bret gets him

down and cranks on the knee. See, THAT is storytelling.

Perfect says the line that always gets on my nerves: "They're all the same size on the mat." JR properly says "the size and power advantage are negated on the mat." What JR says is true: Diesel is still bigger than Bret on the mat or standing up. Anyway, Bret cannonballs down onto the knee and there's the Figure Four. Diesel makes the rope but Bret stays on the bad leg.

Hart tries the Sharpshooter but Diesel thumbs him in the eyes before kicking him into the exposed buckle. Bret picks the leg again and wraps it around the post before tying a cord of some kind around the post. He ties the other end of the cord to Diesel's leg, making the champion a sitting duck. Bret gets a chair but Diesel uses the free leg for a big boot. Diesel crawls for the chair but Bret gets to it first and wears out the knee with chair shots.

With the leg still attached, Bret pulls off the backbreaker. Bret takes the chair to the top but Diesel punches him down to crotch Bret. Hart gets slammed to the mat, giving Diesel the chance to untie his ankle. Diesel chokes Bret with the cord and hits the side slam for two. Diesel sends Bret chest first into the exposed corner and puts him in 619 position for the running crotch attack, but he can't run because of the bad leg. Instead he jumps into the air and crashes down on Bret, which looks more painful than the running version.

Diesel can barely hit Snake Eyes onto a covered buckle and Bret is in trouble. He tries another one but Bret escapes and rams Diesel into the exposed buckle. A Hart Attack clothesline gets two on the champ and Bret starts his comeback. That would be his second comeback if you're keeping track. A middle rope clothesline gets two as does a Russian legsweep. Bret clotheslines Diesel to the floor and tries a plancha but Diesel just steps to the side and lets Bret crash.

Bret starts getting back to the apron but Diesel knocks him off, and for the first time ever, through the Spanish Announce Table. They head back inside and Diesel calls for the Jackknife but Bret falls onto his face from exhaustion. Diesel picks him up to try again but BRET IS

GOLDBRICKING and rolls Diesel up for the title out of nowhere in a big surprise.

Rating: A. Outstanding match here with both guys looking awesome. It takes the right kind of opponent to get a great match out of Diesel, but when you put a smaller guy like Bret or Shawn in there, the results are almost a guarantee. These two had some classics against each other and this was one of the best ones. I had a blast with this and it worked really well with Bret getting more and more violent and sadistic before faking Diesel out and using a wrestling move to win the title. That's psychology people, and it's great.

Diesel snaps post match and lays out Bret and some officials. Bret takes two Jackknives and Diesel says I'M BACK to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. This was a pleasant surprise as with 1995 you often think of something disappointing but instead this was good almost throughout. The Goldust match was terrible but other than that and arguably the Undertaker match, the rest of this is all solid to quite good stuff. Throw in a new World Champion and there's not much you can call bad here. Very good show.

Ratings Comparison

BodyDonnas vs. Underdogs

Original: A-

Redo: B

Team Bertha Faye vs. Team Alundra Blayze

Original: D

Redo: C+

Goldust vs. Bam Bam Bigelow

Original: C

Redo: F

Dark Side vs. Royals

Original: B-

Redo: D+

Team Shawn Michaels vs. Team Yokozuna

Original: C+

Redo: C+

Bret Hart vs. Diesel

Original: C+

Redo: A

Overall Rating

Original: B-

Redo: B

As close as the previous show was to being the same, this one is almost entirely different, yet it leads to a very similar overall rating. That's a very interesting thing and one of my favorite things to see in doing this.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/11/14/history-of-survivor-series-count-up-1995-bret-slays-the-giant/>

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book, KB's Complete 2014 Raw and Smackdown Reviews Part I at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01LY6766K#nav-subnav>

And check out my Amazon author page with cheap wrestling books

at:

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

Monday Night Raw – July 29, 1996: And Then There Was Summerslam

Monday Night Raw

Date: July 29, 1996

Location: Key Arena, Seattle, Washington

Attendance: 6,755

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Jerry Lawler

It's time to wrap up the month and that can't come soon enough, despite the marginally better show last week. Summerslam is still a few weeks away and above all else we've got a big time main event with Vader vs. Shawn, which has the potential to be something special. I'm sure we'll get something to go with it soon enough though and that's where things get better. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Faarooq debuting to end last week's show, putting Ahmed on the shelf with a kidney injury.

Opening sequence.

Sycho Sid vs. Justin Hawk Bradshaw

Sid gets an awesome face reaction. They slug it out to start and a chokeslam plants Bradshaw so fast that they're already plugging the other matches instead of paying attention. Bradshaw hits him with the cowbell and we're done in about a minute.

Sid fights off a post match beating and powerbombs Bradshaw. So why in the world did they do the DQ if Bradshaw is going to be left laying anyway? It's not like he's doing anything so just do the pin and give the crowd the pop they want.

Sunny officially introduces Faarooq Asad (first time the name is officially used), who thinks Ahmed is disrespectful to women. Faarooq talks about the streets and wants a shot at the Intercontinental Title at Summerslam. Simple and effective, as I often like it.

Vader vs. Marc Mero

Vader isn't quite the Goon or T.L. Hopper but I'll take it. Sable is looking great tonight too. Cornette sits in on commentary as an extra bonus. Vader powers him into the corner to start and spits in Mero's eyes. Some clotheslines actually stagger Vader and something like a running Cannonball puts him down. A crucifix doesn't quite work on someone Vader's size but Mero gets two anyway. Vader comes right back with a wheelbarrow slam and wins a slugout, which is something of an upset when you remember Mero's Golden Gloves success.

Things slow down a bit with Vader headbutting him down and then just punching Mero in the face over and over. Mero gets right back up and hits a cross body before knocking Vader to the floor for a flip dive. A top rope sunset flip doesn't work as Mero WAY overshoots him and Vader has to walk backwards. Thankfully he tries to sit down, only to crash onto the mat. Mero heads up top again but dives into a powerslam for the pin.

Rating: B-. This was a heck of a match with Mero being game against the unstoppable monster. People forget how great Vader was at selling as this straight out of the great Dustin Rhodes vs. Vader match at Clash of the Champions XXIX with the non-monster doing everything he could and Vader making him look like a million bucks. It's a formula that always works and this was no exception. Really fun match.

More from the Crush (not yet named or identified) litigation from last week.

Shawn's mentor Jose Lothario comes out for a face to face showdown with

Cornette. After asking Jose to not pull out his switchblade, Cornette goes into a bit of history with a story of Shawn looking up to Jose and seeing him as a father figure. We see Shawn watching in the back, basically guaranteeing that this gets physical.

The ranting (as only Cornette can do) continues with Cornette going on about Lothario sitting on a back porch in San Antonio until Shawn wanted his help at Wrestlemania XII. After Vader gets done with Shawn, Jose will be right back on that porch. Jose punches Cornette out and we see Shawn in Mankind's Mandible Claw. That's quite the random attack.

We recap Aldo Montoya (Justin Credible as a Portuguese wrestler) beating Jerry Lawler on Superstars in a big upset, which is a bigger deal since Aldo is suddenly Jake Roberts' protege. Montoya (with that thick Portuguese/Connecticut accent) accepts a rematch for next week.

British Bulldog vs. Henry Godwinn

Owen Hart is on commentary and doesn't want his Slammy anywhere near the bucket of slop. The guys in the ring trade power shots as we get a crawl across the bottom of the screen advertising Sunny in an AOL chat. A wheelbarrow slam (popular move tonight) plants Bulldog and Henry hammers away with some big forearms to the back. Bulldog sends him outside as Owen snaps after Vince asks him about Bret one too many times.

We hit the chinlock as Owen keeps going, likely due to all that time around Cornette. As for Owen's broken wrist, he's still a few months away from being healthy. Vince doesn't buy it but Lawler and Owen will have none of his naysaying. Henry muscles Bulldog up into a suplex and we take a break. Back with Owen suggesting that Austin vs. Bret would be a great match. The Slop Drop looks to finish Bulldog but Owen turns over the slop bucket (he dropped the slop you might say) for a distraction to set up the powerslam to put Henry away.

Rating: C. I'm a sucker for two power guys beating the heck out of each other and that's what we had here, plus Owen cracking me up with his angry rants on commentary. Henry was just a big old strong guy who could hit you really hard and there's always going to be a place for that. Bulldog was the same way but with a bit more finesse and that's why he

was a much bigger star. Well that and he wasn't a hog farmer.

Some guy named Mark Henry is really strong.

We get a quick interview from In Your House IX with Mankind in the boiler room with Goldust and Marlena. Mankind rants about an incident when he was a kid and says destruction can be beautiful. Vince mentions the Boiler Room Brawl at Summerslam and my goodness that would change a lot of things.

Undertaker vs. Steve Austin

Two years from here, this would be the biggest Summerslam main event of all time. Wrestling is funny that way. Speaking of weird, it's still odd seeing Austin with anything on his trunks. Austin breaks out of a chokeslam attempt and wrenches the wrist, only to annoy Undertaker in the process. A right hand sends Austin into the corner so he tries one of his own and IMMEDIATELY backs away when Undertaker gives him a death stare.

Old School is broken up and Austin kicks him low, causing Vince to scream about how that should be a DQ. He's right but that's never stopped a referee before. Austin drives some shoulders into the ribs so Undertaker ties him up in the ropes for a running boot to the face. That's a bit better than shoulders to the ribs. Austin slugs him in the jaw and goes back to the shoulders as we take a break.

Back with Austin cranking on a chinlock until Undertaker rakes his eyes. You don't often see that from a face but it still works. Some more right hands stagger Austin even more but he comes back with a quick piledriver, only to get crotched on top. A chokeslam brings him back down but here's Mankind for a distraction, leading to Undertaker get counted out.

Rating: C+. You could see the fire in Austin and all he needed was a big opponent to make him. Say, a Canadian who wore pink and black in Madison Square Garden. Undertaker vs. Mankind on the other hand is already a great feud and by far the best thing Undertaker had done to this point. They just worked well against each other and you can't teach something like that.

Undertaker Tombstones Austin post match and promises to make Mankind rest in peace to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. You could feel the energy here and the star power helped that a lot. Austin vs. Undertaker is always worth seeing and it's cool to see a bunch of matches that actually affect some storylines. Things are, at least for now, starting to look a little bit better though they're far from turning things around. This was better though and that's a really good thing after all these dreadful shows.

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

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

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

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

In Your House IX: International Incident (2013 Redo): The Most Worthless Show Ever

In Your House #9: International Incident

Date: July 21, 1996

Location: General Motors Place, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

Attendance: 14,804

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Jerry Lawler, Jim Ross

The People's Posse originally had the Ultimate Warrior teaming up with Johnson and Michaels, but Warrior bailed on the company again for asking for too much time off. Warrior claimed he was leaving due to not getting money he was owed and Vince McMahon claiming that he didn't buy Warrior's excuse of grieving over his father's death. Either way, we get Sid tonight which might actually be the better option. Let's get to it.

Earlier tonight on the Free For All, Cornette swung the tennis racket at Jose Lothario but got punched in the face for his efforts. Vader and Shawn came in to prevent any further violence. The main catch for the

Smoking Gunns vs. Bodydonnas

The Gunns are champions and have Sunny with them but this is non-title. The Bodydonnas have turned face with a new manager named Cloudy (a man in woman's clothing), but no one cares about them at all either way. Sunny, who looks great as a cowgirl, won't let Vince hold the tag titles. The Gunns are sent to the floor to start before we get down to Bart vs. Zip. They trade chops with neither guy seeming all that interested in selling for the other. Zip takes him down with an armdrag into an armbar before bringing in Skip to crank on it as well.

Bart gets tired of having his arm pulled apart so he throws Skip down and brings in Billy to fire off some right hands. A nice headscissors puts Billy down and Skip spins out of a few hiptosses, only to be punched down for his efforts. Skip grabs another armbar as the match slows down all over again. Out of nowhere Sunny collapses but as Skip goes to check on her she slaps him in the face, allowing the Gunns to clothesline him down.

Back in and the Gunns take over with Bart whipping Skip HARD into the corner to take him down. Skip comes back with a quick clothesline and goes up top, only to dive into a sweet powerslam for two. With Skip draped throat first over the top and Bart holding his legs up, Billy tries to jump over his partner's back to land on Skip's back but can't get up and over Bart. If you can't do the spot, don't try it.

Skip and Bart mistime something out of the corner and awkwardly stop in the middle of the ring. Bart goes up top but jumps into an atomic drop, allowing for the hot tag off to Zip. Billy trips Zip down but can't get in place for the Sidewinder (side slam/guillotine legdrop combo), allowing Skip to hit a missile dropkick on Bart to give Zip the pin.

Rating: D. This was a horrible choice for an opening match with WAY too much time and the botches dragging the match down. On top of that, why in the world would you make this a non-title match? To set up a future rematch? Why in the world wouldn't you do this on Raw and then have the title match here? Very dull match here.

Camp Cornette rants about the fight with Cornette and Lothario while guaranteeing a win later.

Mankind vs. Henry Godwinn

Mankind is one of the most bizarre characters in wrestling history. He debuted the night after Wrestlemania and immediately targeted the Undertaker, easily beating him down like no one else ever had before. Mankind lives in a boiler room, often sits on the mat and rocks back and forth and is known to pull out his hair. He also wears a leather mask that covers half of his face and is missing part of an ear. Henry is substituting for Jake Roberts who didn't show up for the show.

Mankind jumps Godwinn from behind to start but Henry is more than comfortable in a slugout. He punches Mankind in the face a few times and powerslams him down for two. Mankind pounds him down with shots to the back as Lawler makes jokes about Roberts' substance abuse issues. Henry sweeps Mankind's legs out and hits some HARD shots to the face, only to have Mankind choke him for a breather.

A running knee to Henry's face has him in even more trouble so Mankind goes to the floor and pulls back the mats. Henry gets taken down by a swinging neckbreaker onto the concrete. Back in and Mankind misses a charge into the corner but he easily sends Henry out to the floor. Godwinn comes right back by slamming Mankind from the apron to the concrete but the Slop Drop is countered with into Mankind's Mandible Claw for the win.

Rating: D+. Nothing great here but it was a nice brawl while it lasted. Henry was stuck in a stupid gimmick but he could throw some great right hands and brawl with the best of them. There's nothing wrong with having a guy like that around as you're going to get an entertaining match more often than not. Still though, nothing great here.

Mankind sprints up the aisle but stops at the entrance because he's a bit strange.

Marc Mero vs. Steve Austin

This is a rematch from the King of the Ring tournament. Austin jumps him right after the bell but Mero comes back with a quick armbar. That gets him nowhere so Steve grabs a headlock and takes him down to the mat. Back up and they slug it out with Mero, a former New York Golden Gloves Champion, easily taking control. Austin is knocked to the floor and goes after Sable, only to be jumped from behind.

Back inside and Steve gets rolled up for two but manages to send Mero out to the floor to take over. A catapult sends Mero face first into the post and another shot knocks him off the apron and into the barricade. Back in and a middle rope elbow gets two for Austin and we hit a reverse chinlock. Austin slaps Mero in the back of the head but misses a charge and lands on the middle rope to give Marc a breather.

Steve goes up but gets crotched down, allowing Mero to pull him down and hook a hurricanrana to send both guys to the floor. A moonsault press off the apron takes Austin down again and a slingshot moonsault gets two back inside. Mero pounds away with right hands in the corner but Austin shoves him to the side, crotching Mero on the top rope. Marc blocks Austin's Stunner finisher and gets two off a slingshot legdrop. For some reason Marlena comes out to watch the ending. Not that it matters though Austin comes back with a quick chop block and the Stunner connects for the pin.

Rating: C. Good stuff here for the most part but the match felt off for some reason. It's very interesting to see Austin evolve the Stunner over the years as there's no kick to the ribs yet and he just snaps it off. Mero wasn't bad in the ring at all but he never quite fit in the WWF.

Former WWF Champion Bob Backlund is running for President of the United States and looks for registered voters in the crowd.

Highlight video on the Undertaker's feuds with Mankind and Goldust, which is set up like a music video for some reason.

Goldust vs. Undertaker

Goldust, who has since lost the Intercontinental Title to Ahmed Johnson, bails to the floor to start and does so again after Undertaker moves towards him. He gets in again and hides behind the referee for a few moments before doing his trademark deep breath. It only earns him an uppercut to the jaw, sending Goldust right back to the floor for more stalling. Lawler makes movie references as Goldust teases walking out and VERY slowly gets back in the ring.

Undertaker finally goes out after him and chokeslams Goldust down onto the steps in an awkward looking sequence. Undertaker picks up the steps but won't crush Marlena along with Goldust. Apparently he's a zombie with a heart. Back in and Goldust gets clotheslined down before a legdrop gets two for Undertaker. This has been one sided so far. Goldust finally comes back with some knees in the corner to take over but Undertaker grabs him by the throat and throws him into the corner to hand out a beating.

The fans chant Rest in Peace (Undertaker catchphrase) as he connects with Old School and some uppercuts. Goldust clotheslines Undertaker over the top rope but Undertaker lands on his feet and keeps firing off uppercuts. Something resembling a Stunner across the top rope snaps Goldust's neck back but he uses the distraction to pull the turnbuckle pad away. Undertaker is sent back first into the exposed steel to finally give Goldust control.

They head outside again so Goldust can drop the steps on Undertaker's back to further his advantage. Back in and Goldust puts on a reverse chinlock to keep the pace of the match very slow. The fans chant for Undertaker so Goldust breaks the hold like any idiot heel would do. Undertaker comes back with a big boot to the face and a small package of all things for two. The flying clothesline takes Goldust down and there's the Tombstone, drawing Mankind up through a hole in the ring for the DQ.

Rating: D-. Way too long here and horribly boring due to all of the stalling. Goldust and Undertaker had some of the least interesting matches I can ever remember for two guys with as much talent as they have. It was clearly just a backdrop for Undertaker vs. Mankind, which isn't something you spend three months on.

Mankind pulls Undertaker through the hole with the Mandible Claw before crawling back out on his own. The lights flicker and Undertaker's music plays but he comes out of another hole to sneak up on Mankind. They brawl to the back to one of the only good reactions of the night.

The announcers talk about the main event while the ring is repaired.

We go to the back to see the brawl between Undertaker and Mankind continue.

Goldust and Marlena are in the boiler room where Mankind and Undertaker were fighting earlier. Goldust quotes Kramer vs. Kramer when Mankind pops up and calls Goldust mommy. Mankind rams his head into a cabinet while screaming about what mommy wants, mommy gets.

The announcers ignore what we just saw and talk about the main event a bit more.

We recap the main event six man tag which started at King of the Ring. Shawn pinned British Bulldog in the rematch but Vader and Owen Hart came in for a post match attack. Ultimate Warrior and Ahmed Johnson came in for the save, setting up the six man. Ultimate Warrior was suspended a few weeks after for reasons already mentioned, so Shawn and Ahmed brought in Sid to take his place. It's not clear if Sid can be trusted though.

The People's Posse says they can trust Sid and they'll win tonight.

People's Posse vs. Camp Cornette

If Camp Cornette loses, Cornette has to pay back all of the fans, which would cost him millions. Also Owen has a broken arm coming in. Vader and Ahmed start things off but Vader wants the world champion instead. Shawn is happy to oblige and is easily shoved away by the monster. Vader lifts Shawn into the air in a choke but Shawn punches his way to freedom. Shawn

speeds things up and actually hits a running hurricanrana to take Vader down. A cross body sends Vader to the floor and Michaels follows with a nice plancha to take the monster down.

Shawn tries another hurricanrana but gets hit a bit low to give Vader control. Vader pounds away in the corner and Shawn is in quick trouble. Michaels manages to escapes a belly to back suplex and makes the hot tag off to Sid for a battle of the giants. Sid cleans house and sends all of Camp Cornette out to the floor, drawing a HUGE reaction from the crowd. Owen tries to sneak in from behind but is easily taken down by another clothesline. Off to Johnson who actually rolls German suplexes on Owen.

Johnson misses an elbow drop and it's off to the Bulldog to pound away for a bit until he gets caught in a spinebuster. Ahmed hits his Pearl River Plunge tiger bomb but it's Owen making the save. Off to Vader for some power but Ahmed pounds him down in the corner to keep the fans into things the entire way through. Vader easily reverses a whip into the corner and hits a hard splash followed by even more fists to the head and body. Another splash attempt is caught in a slam which looked WAY easier than it should have for Ahmed.

Owen comes in and takes Johnson down with a spinwheel kick but Johnson pops up at two. Johnson keeps coming back with a gorilla press slam and it's back to Sid for a big boot to the face before firing off some very fast right hands in the corner. Sid whips Owen into the Cornette corner and it's time for the Bulldog vs. Sid power match. Smith actually lifts him up in the delayed vertical suplex and a Vader elbow is good for two. Vader runs Sid over again and brings Smith back in for some headbutts.

Sid is able to get in a shot to the face and makes the tag off to Shawn, but Bulldog quickly avoids a charge to send Shawn shoulder first into the post. Shawn sends Bulldog into Vader to knock the big man off the apron and get a pair of two counts on Smith. Back to Owen to trade some VERY fast rollups with Shawn for two each before Shawn gets two more off a cross body. A victory roll gets the same for Michaels and they head to the mat before bridging into Ric Flair's trademark pinfall reversal sequence. Outstanding sequence there.

Back to Bulldog for a legdrop but Michaels avoids an elbow drop to get a breather. Owen finally uses the cast on the bad arm to put Shawn down and it's back to Vader to pound away on the world champion. Shawn is whipped across the ring and goes over the corner and out to the floor in a big crash. After Owen and Bulldog get in some cheap shots on the floor it's back in for a half standing chinlock/half bearhug on Shawn with Vader's arms wrapped around his neck and under his arms. Not a bad looking hold actually.

The hold stays on for awhile as a fan tries to interfere and is easily run off by Bulldog and the referee. After several minutes of the hold, Vader throws Shawn down and splashes him but Ahmed comes in to break up a cover. Bulldog comes in and puts on an over the shoulder backbreaker followed by a fallaway slam for two. Smith misses a charge into the corner but it's Hart breaking up the hot tag attempt yet again.

Shawn punches Owen down but can't follow up, allowing for another tag back to Davey, whose cover is quickly broken up by a Sid legdrop. Vader gets the tag and Shawn crawls over to make one as well, but the referee doesn't see Ahmed get the tag. Johnson protests but Shawn gets triple teamed, giving Bulldog another two count. Owen tries a missile dropkick but hits Bulldog by mistake, allowing Shawn to FINALLY make the tag off to Sid.

The big man cleans house and chokeslams every member of Camp Cornette before launching Shawn off the top onto Vader for two. Everything breaks down and Cornette throws in the tennis racket but Shawn intercepts it to clock Vader in the head. Somehow that's only good for two so Shawn tunes up the band, only to have Cornette trip him up. Vader runs Michaels over and hits the Vader Bomb for the pin to suck the life out of the crowd.

Rating: A-. REALLY good match here with everyone working hard and having a match that had the fans going nuts. Sid's popularity is nearly astounding as the guy was just crazy over on about three moves. The ending was obvious, but on rare occasions that's not a bad thing with this being a good example of that.

Post match Sid and Ahmed clean house with powerbombs to Owen and Bulldog

but Vader is pulled to safety. Shawn dives over the top and takes out Vader, sending Camp Cornette running off. A lot of posing ends the show.

Overall Rating: D. The only thing that is holding up this show is the main event. Let's look at this entire card: what in the world would you want to pay for on this show? There are five matches, zero titles on the line, and the one match that might draw some interest had a telegraphed ending. This was a terribly uninteresting show which set a record for the lowest buyrate in company history as not many people cared about seeing this show. It also doesn't help that two weeks prior to this, Hulk Hogan turned heel in WCW, lighting the fire that would burn the WWF as close to a crisp as you can be for the next year and a half.

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

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

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

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

Monday Night Raw – November 13, 1995: One Of Those Stupid Calls

Monday Night Raw

Date: November 13, 1995

Location: Keystone Arena, Brandon, Manitoba, Canada

Attendance: 2,000

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Jerry Lawler

This is the go home show for Survivor Series and the card really isn't the most interesting in the world. Bret vs. Diesel should be fun as always but the Survivor Series matches aren't looking great. It's just such a bad time for the company and there really isn't much of a way around that. Let's get to it.

We open with a look at the 1-2-3 Kid and Razor Ramon getting into a bunch of fights over the weekend. Therefore, Kid will still be guest referee for Razor vs. Sid later tonight but it will now be a non-title match.

Opening sequence.

Hunter Hearst Helmsley vs. Henry O. Godwinn

Henry is sent outside so Helmsley can spray his perfume. Godwinn grabs his slop bucket and slops himself, which sends Helmsley running away to end the "match".

We go to Dok Hendrix for Slam Jam (meaning the Control Center) with a talk about the Wild Card match where no one trusts each other.

Video on Shawn Michaels, who has been having head issues but he's not quite done yet.

Ahmed Johnson vs. Jake Steele

This is Ahmed's Raw debut. Steele has a good look but makes the mistake of punching Johnson in the face. We get a quick statement from Shawn Michaels about being happy to team with Ahmed at Survivor Series. A spinebuster sets up the Pearl River Plunge for the quick pin.

Post match Ahmed says something about snapping off a piece of a G on Sunday and you can see Vince wondering how he screwed this one up.

We get a sitdown interview between Diesel and Bret Hart to hype up Sunday. Diesel thinks he's the best right now while Bret thinks he never

should have lost the title in the first place. When they had their match at the Royal Rumble it ended in a DQ and Bret never had a rematch. Bret thinks he was the best challenger Diesel ever had though Diesel seems to think it was Shawn.

For some reason Bret thinks technical wrestlers aren't getting enough title shots but Diesel points out that he's defended against Shawn and the Hart brothers. Both guys talk about their strengths as this is clearly just being dragged out to fill time. Bret thinks Diesel is walking around with his title and this FINALLY ends after nearly ten minutes.

And now, Vince McMahon and Jerry Lawler have a Karate Fighters match with Lawler cheating to win.

King Mabel vs. Roy Raymond

The bell rings and we go to comments from Undertaker, who is in shadows to hide whatever his crushed face looks like. Mabel stomps away in the corner and throws Roy around with a suplex. Raymond's dropkick has almost no effect and the squash is capped off with a belly to belly to give Mabel the pin.

We look back at the 1-2-3 Kid and Razor having issues over the weekend.

Razor Ramon vs. Sid

Non-title but ignore the belt being held in the air before the bell rings. 1-2-3 Kid is guest referee and the fans still love him because this was taped before the heel turn. Sid has Ted DiBiase in his corner as part of the Million Dollar Corporation. A slugout goes to Razor but he eats a big boot to the jaw. We hit a headscissors of all things but Sid nips up (!) and grabs a chokeslam.

That means it's time for a bunch of stomps instead of a cover, followed by some forearms to the back with Sid yelling at his own forearms. Razor comes back with a failed Razor's Edge attempt as he's backdropped to the floor, as is the case way too often. Now it's Dean Douglas (Razor's partner in the Wild Card match) coming out and we take a break.

Back with Dean stomping on Razor so Sid can drop him face first onto the apron. We hit one of the lamest chinlocks I've ever seen (and I've seen Scott Steiner put on a reverse chinlock) but Razor gets underneath for an electric chair drop. Back up and Sid charges into a boot, setting up the middle rope bulldog for two. Razor gets Sid up for the Razor's Edge but Kid pulls him down to set up the powerbomb with a count so fast I couldn't even look at the video quickly enough.

Rating: D. Oh man Sid was falling apart at this point. They really had too much stuff going on here with Douglas just not needing to be involved. The Kid ending was as forecast as you could have asked it to be, assuming you weren't in the arena. I really don't get the idea of having this be a title change for the live crowd (of course it wouldn't stand) while saying it was non-title in post production.

So yeah, Kid is Corporation now.

Razor tries to kill Dean to end the show.

Overall Rating: F. Total mess and waste of a show here as they were obviously out of content and trying to fill in the time with whatever they could before getting to the pay per view. The show was nothing short of a disaster though with bad wrestling, squashes and basically talking about three of Sunday's six matches. Horrible show here and unfortunately that's far too common in this era.

Here's Survivor Series if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2015/11/03/survivor-series-count-up-1995-wild-card/>

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

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

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

Monday Night Raw – November 6, 1995: Bret vs. Dental Hygiene

Monday Night Raw

Date: November 6, 1995

Location: Keystone Arena, Brandon, Manitoba, Canada

Attendance: 2,000

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Dok Hendrix

We've jumped ahead again and now it's time to get ready for the mostly forgettable Survivor Series 1995. The company is still running on Diesel Power as he's held the title for nearly a year at this point but has a re-energized Bret Hart breathing down his neck and gunning for the belt. Let's get to it.

We open with a clip of Ahmed Johnson slamming the nearly 600lb Yokozuna last week to make him a much bigger deal than he already was.

Opening sequence, featuring most of the roster in a fight on the roof of a very tall building. It's certainly different.

Marty Jannetty vs. British Bulldog

Bulldog has Jim Cornette with him and this is due to Bulldog mocking Marty last week. Jannetty starts fast and smacks Bulldog in the face to set up a wristlock. It's off to an armbar so we go to a chat with Cornette's lawyer, who says Bulldog will get a shot at the winner of Bret vs. Diesel at Survivor Series. Bulldog comes back with the delayed vertical suplex and it's time for the chinlock. Back up and Bulldog turns him inside out with a clothesline to send us to a break.

We come back with Bulldog slapping on another chinlock before sending him outside. Bulldog grabs a fourth chinlock in less than ten minutes to kill even more time. Thankfully it doesn't last long as Marty misses a charge...to set up the fifth chinlock. Marty comes back again with a middle rope flipping cutter of all things (cool move too) and a DDT for two. Not that it matters as Bulldog hits the powerslam for the pin.

Rating: D-. Five chinlocks in a match that only ran about ten minutes. I don't think I even need to go on at this point. Marty was actually the better of the two here as he seemed like he was trying but what are you supposed to do when you have someone who is clearly just there because he has to be?

A fake Bill Clinton will be at Survivor Series.

Bulldog is ready for his title shot.

Barry Horowitz and Hakushi talk strategy.

We look at Bam Bam Bigelow challenging the newcomer Goldust, which would happen at the pay per view.

Henry Godwinn vs. Terry Richards

Henry is finally face though no one cares yet. Richards on the other hand is better known as Rhyno. Some forearm to the back don't have much effect as Henry throws him to the ground and rips at his face. The Slop Drop is good for the easy pin. Just a squash.

Cue HHH to jump Henry from behind and give him a Pedigree on the floor. With some white gloves on, HHH even pours the bucket of slop over Henry's head.

It's off to the Survivor Series control center with Undertaker promising to bury King Mabel and company and Diesel loving the rules of his match with Bret (No DQ/No Countout).

Kama vs. Tony Roy

Kama is part of the Million Dollar Team. Since this is just another

squash, we get a phone call from Shawn Michaels to talk about his upcoming Wild Card Survivor Series match where the teams were "random". Kama throws the jobber around like he's nothing at all before finishing with a big right hand.

Rating: D. Kama was supposed to be this MMA style fighter but that's not exactly what you can expect from the future Godfather. His punching and kicking were fine at the time but when you look back at it with a modern perspective of MMA etc., the whole thing looks more like a joke than anything else.

Jerry Lawler/Isaac Yankem vs. Hakushi/Bret Hart

The good guys have Barry Horowitz in their corner for reasons that aren't important enough to explain. Bret and Yankem get things going with the future Kane pounding away in the corner and grabbing an early bearhug. It's quickly off to Hakushi for the handspring elbow in the corner as I think I'd like to see a full Hakushi vs. Yankem match. Back to Bret to work on the arm as we're waiting on Lawler to come in and take his beating. A sunset flip gets two on Isaac but he clotheslines Hakushi in the back of the head to take over.

Hakushi goes back first into the post and it's finally off to the mulleted Lawler for two piledrivers. There's no cover though as it's off to Isaac for a whip into the corner as we take a break. Back with Isaac grabbing a Boston crab with Bret making the save. Jerry dives into a right hand to the throat and the hot tag brings in Bret. House is quickly cleaned and Bret gets the Sharpshooter on Yankem. Barry steals a chair away from Lawler but gets caught for the DQ despite not touching anyone.

Rating: C. Stupid ending aside, this was actually a nice tag match. Hakushi was one heck of a worker who just needed someone to do the talking for him. The idea of him hammering away on a big man like Isaac and trying to chop down a giant is rather intriguing but he wouldn't be around much longer.

A preview for next week's Raw, a commercial and another preview of next week's Raw end the show.

Overall Rating: D. This was your standard horrible Monday Night Raw of its era as you could see the company really needing to get away from Diesel and get on to something fresh. The wrestling here was just above a disaster with that Bulldog vs. Jannetty match being a huge waste of time. They're very lucky Nitro was starting to catch some steam at this point as they needed something to challenge them.

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

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

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

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

Monday Night Raw – March 20, 1995: Sweet Goodness 1995 Was Bad

Monday Night Raw

Date: March 20, 1995

Location: Memorial Civic Auditorium, Stockton, California

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Jim Cornette

There are less than two weeks to go before Wrestlemania and that means it's time to really crank up the football talk. Ignore the fact that it's not the most exciting story in the world because there are CELEBRITIES involved and that makes up for any lack of interest, talent or care

whatsoever. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Razor Ramon vs. Henry Godwinn

This is still during Henry's heel push which went as far as the evil hog farmer character was going to take him. Razor starts in on the arm as we hear something about his contract issues. A wheelbarrow slam plants Razor and Cornette continues to amaze me by never being able to shut up. He goes from insulting Steve McMichael to talking about Ernie Ladd to hyping up the Tag Team Title match to doing color on this match in the span of two minutes.

Henry chokes on the ropes a bit and we hit the neck crank as Cornette goes on a mini rant about Jim Ross reporting on everything. We take a break and come back with Razor scoring with some right hands. A bad looking middle rope bulldog (more a cross body to the back) gets two on Henry but here's the Roadie for a distraction. The 1-2-3 Kid comes out to kick Roadie in the face and for some reason Henry is distracted as well, allowing Razor to hit the Edge for the pin.

Rating: D. This was too long with Godwinn not being anything worth watching other than a big strong man and Razor being way off his game for some reason. The interference was a good call but Razor and the Kid were really getting tiresome at this point as they were almost glued together at the hip.

Post match Razor is ticked off at Backlund getting a title shot on some upcoming Sunday night special. Razor wants to know what happens if Backlund wins the title and goes to Wrestlemania to defend against Bret so he basically promises to interfere in the match.

Just in case you have no idea what's going on here, we see Backlund signing the contract last week.

Also on that Sunday night show, Lex Luger will face Tatanka in a cage match.

Jim Cornette leaves commentary to get ready for the Tag Team Title match.

Fan Festival ad.

Lawrence Taylor says he's scared of snakes and alligators but he doesn't see those things in Bigelow.

Yesterday on Action Zone, Bigelow shoulder blocked Doink like a football player.

Steve McMichael replaces Cornette on commentary.

King Kong Bundy vs. Raven Clarke/Adam Croomes

Bundy slams the jobbers together and the camera keeps cutting to the announcers instead. This just keeps going for awhile and an Avalanche ends Croomes.

Post destruction, here's Kama to get in a brawl with McMichael.

Wrestlemania Report with a few nothing interviews that fill in some time.

Tag Team Titles; Smoking Gunns vs. Heavenly Bodies

The Bodies (Jimmy Del Ray and Tom Prichard, basically another attempt to recreate the Midnight Express) are challenging and have Cornette in their corner, leaving Vince alone on commentary. Billy has bad ribs coming in but starts with Tom anyway. Cornette yells at Del Ray for some reason, leaving Tom to get chopped by Bart.

Back to Billy for an armbar before Bart elbows Del Ray in the jaw. We take a break and come back with Tom holding Bart in a front facelock. Billy accidentally distracts the referee to break up a tag as this match just keeps going. A double clothesline drops Bart as the fans are trying to find ANYTHING to care about in this thing. In case the match wasn't boring enough yet, Prichard puts on a reverse chinlock.

Del Ray misses a top rope splash but we need a double clothesline before the hot tag can bring in Billy. A modified Sidewinder looks to finish Tom but Del Ray comes in off the top and puts....no one into a cover for some reason. Billy grabs a backslide for the pin to retain the titles.

Rating: D+. Technically the match was certainly acceptable but there's

just no interest in watching these teams fight. Neither team has a personality between them and it was clearly just a Rock N Roll Express vs. Midnight Express knockoff without anything that made those matches work. Well, save for Cornette of course.

We see clips from a charity auction last night with Undertaker signing autographs. That's always weird to see.

Vince and Cornette preview the Sunday Night Slam (Sunday special) to end the show.

Actually not quite as Tatanka is ready for Luger in a cage next week to really end the show.

Overall Rating: D. Really not much to this one either as we're heading straight for Wrestlemania with every single boring story they can cram in there along the way. The long tag match at the end didn't help things either as it really didn't set up the title defense at Wrestlemania. To be fair though that would imply something is more important than the football match and that's just not true. There was very little sarcasm in that last sentence if that wasn't clear.

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

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

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

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

Monday Night Raw – December 26, 1994: The One With A Howard Finkel Promo

Monday Night Raw

Date: December 26, 1994

Location: Liberty High School, Liberty, New York

Attendance: 1,400

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Shawn Michaels

We'll wrap up this month here with an appearance from the Undertaker, who at least should be able to pick things up a bit. I'm sure we'll get something else on Christmas as we're now past the holiday, meaning we might find out what Shawn got for Christmas. If nothing else, at least he can make it funny. Well funnier than Harvey Wippleman without pants. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Tatanka being revealed as the Druid a few weeks back. This of course sets up Tatanka vs. British Bulldog.

Ted DiBiase promises to take care of Bulldog and then Luger.

British Bulldog vs. Tatanka

Shawn tries to figure out Boxing Day as Tatanka bails from an armbar. A shoulder puts Tatanka down instead and at least the fans are starting to get into this. Bulldog gets two off a crucifix and the delayed vertical suplex sends Tatanka outside. The powerslam doesn't work though and we take a break.

Back with Bulldog getting dropped with a knee to the ribs to set up a chinlock. Tatanka gets punched out of the air though and Bulldog runs him over a few times, only to have DiBiase low bridge him out to the floor. This brings out Luger (who should have been here earlier like a good partner) to go after DiBiase, only to get in the ring and hammer on Tatanka for the DQ as Bam Bam Bigelow comes out almost immediately.

Rating: D+. This could have been worse but the ending didn't help things. In theory this is setting up a tag match later on, though it should be setting up the Tag Team Title match. How Luger and Bulldog weren't in that thing is beyond me, especially when you have a team like Well freaking Dunn in there.

Luger and Bulldog clear the ring and it's a double DQ, which makes no sense given that no one attacked Bulldog until after the bell.

It's another Royal Rumble Report with Todd Pettengill explaining the rules and uttering the three devastating words: sixty second intervals. There was no way the match could work with so little time and they never tried it again. We hear the updated list of participants and I'm hating the show all over again. There might be three names listed here (Luger, Bulldog and Michaels) who have a prayer of winning and that's the problem: it was those three and then nothing but losers filling out the group.

As for the World Title match, Bret Hart is in front of a fireplace in Calgary and talks about how nice it was to be with his family over the holidays. He can't believe his brother cost him the title and wants everyone but Owen to have a Happy New Year.

Undertaker vs. IRS and Razor Ramon vs. Jeff Jarrett for the Intercontinental Title are also announced for the show.

Henry O. Godwinn vs. Mike Khoury

This is Henry's debut and he looks heelish though the silence would suggest he should be unemployed. A quick slam puts Khoury down but Henry goes to look through the ropes for no apparent reason. Henry fishhooks Mike's jaws for a bit as this is already a disaster. A legdrop and the Slop Drop (reverse DDT) finally puts Mike away.

Rating: F. The match sucked and I never want to watch another Henry Godwinn match. What more is there for me to say here? I mean, the match was a disaster and there was almost nothing redeeming here whatsoever. This was horrible and Henry looks like one of the biggest flops in years. Total failure.

Video on Hakushi, who is about to make his debut. Why he has a WWF highlight reel already isn't clear.

House show ads.

Here's the King's Court with special guest Diesel. Lawler offers a handshake and is immediately put down on his knees in pain. After that goes nowhere, Lawler plugs Diesel's house show matches against Backlund which in a word, really didn't draw. Jerry goes on and on about Backlund or Bret hurting Diesel until Lawler gets thrown to the floor. This took FOREVER and allegedly was taped more than once because the fans just did not care.

Another tournament recap, but only of a single first round match. Egads what a slow time.

Rich Myers vs. Kwang

Myers actually gets in a few shots before missing a running flip, allowing Kwang to punch him in the face and blow some mist. The match is so boring that we cut to a HOWARD FINKEL promo where he apologizes for pulling Harvey Wippleman's pants down. A dragon screw leg whip (So he's the American....er Puerto Rican Muta?) and the spinwheel kick finally put Myers away.

We get a promo from boxer Vinny Pazienza about his fight against Roberto Duran. Vinny wants to fight Shawn next. I want to hurt this show.

Video on Kama, who is coming as well.

Ted DiBiase agrees to Luger/Bulldog vs. Bigelow/Tatanka next week.

Undertaker vs. Brooklyn Brawler

This is the big match they've hyped up all night. Undertaker boots him in the face and drops him with a belly to back suplex of all things. Not quite Old School drops Brawler again before Undertaker sends him shoulder first into the post. The Tombstone finally wraps this up.

Rating: D. What do you want me to say here? This was a total squash with

the Undertaker facing the Brooklyn Brawler. Vince said this was the Undertaker's first match on Raw in three months. I'm not sure whether that's sad or a relief that he didn't have to be associated with this mess.

IRS and the Druids come out to stare at Undertaker to end the show.

Overall Rating: D-. This might have been the show of the month. It's such a horrible time for the show and the promotion as a whole as they had no idea what they were doing or where they wanted to go. I mean, Diesel vs. Bob Backlund, which started in an eight second match, is their big house show draw. What do you think is going to happen?

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

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

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

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

Wrestler of the Day – October 27: Henry Godwinn

Today is one of those gimmick characters: Henry Godwinn the hog farmer.

Godwinn started up in the late 80s and his first big break came in 1993 when he debuted with WCW as Shanghai Pearce. We'll start things off at Beach Blast 1993.

Tex Slazenger/Shanghai Pierce vs. Marcus Bagwell/2 Cold Scorpio

The heels are more commonly known as the Godwinns. The faces are another young team that wasn't very good but they were allegedly really good so they got the tag titles at least once. Bagwell was finally shedding the rookie status but he was still just annoying as all goodness. Scorpio was a guy that was always good but always jumped around a lot. The Godwinns are just big and annoying as all goodness.

This is ok stuff but it's really just a way to put the faces over and get them a win on PPV. There's almost nothing of note here as this could be on any television show that you cared to name. Just nothing interesting here as it's standard formula stuff with Bagwell being beaten on until he makes a tag then Scorpio is beaten on before another tag to Bagwell so Scorpio, the illegal man, can hit his top rope stuff for the pin.

Rating: D+. Just boring as heck here with nothing of note going on. This is the biggest problem that most PPVs have: matches that belong on TV being put on PPV where you have to pay for them. I don't want to pay for bad matches like this one, so why should I have to in order to see the rest of the card?

Next up is Fall Brawl 1993.

Shanghai Pierce vs. Ice Train

Pierce has Tex Slazenger with him. They would move to the WWF in about a year and become the Godwins. Ice Train is more or less Big Zeke but with even less talent. I always liked him for some reason. Oh and Pierce is in a mask. They're from Texas but are being booed anyway which is appropriate somehow. Power vs. power here with Train being the stronger of the two.

This is one of the least interesting matches I've seen in a very long time. Basically imagine every power vs. power cliché you can think of and add in some heel lariats and you more or less have the entire match. The heels try to use a bullrope

but he runs right through it and a bad powerslam ends it. This was nothing. No rating as I have nothing to say about it at all. Let that sink in for a bit.

One last WCW match at Starrcade 1993.

Cactus Jack/Maxx Payne vs. Tex Slazenger/Shanghai Pierce

Payne is a grunge rocker while Slazenger and Pierce are big Texans with Pierce wearing a mask. They would wind up in the WWF as the Godwinns if you remember them. Cactus is fresh off a world title feud with Vader and is one of the hottest stars in the company. Payne and Shanghai get things going and collide in the middle of the ring, sending both guys staggering back a bit. Pierce takes him down with a running shoulder block and let's stop to look at each other.

Maxx slams him down, causing Shanghai to bring in Tex. Jack gets the tag as well and they stare at each other a bit more. Cactus takes him into the corner but walks into a right hand to slow him down again. A boot to Tex's head puts him down again and it's back to Payne. Maxx hits a BIG clothesline to take Slazenger down as the match continues plodding along. Tex charges out of the corner and hits a kind of bulldog to take Maxx down. Off to Shanghai who is immediately caught in a belly to back suplex for no cover.

Back to Cactus who pounds Pierce down before charging into the heel corner. Everything breaks down and the Cactus Clothesline puts Jack and Pierce on the floor again. Slazenger goes over the top to the floor as well, so Payne backdrops the 300lb Jack over the top onto Tex. Back in the ring and Maxx puts on the Payne Killer armbar but Tex makes the save. A double clothesline puts the Texans down and it's back to Cactus. He ducks a Pierce clothesline which winds up hitting Tex, allowing Cactus to hit his double arm DDT on Pierce for the pin.

Rating: D+. This wasn't horrible and it was a step above the other tag match, but man alive this show isn't doing anything well right now. These four guys are all big and mostly slow, which made for a dull and slow match here. Cactus was insanely popular though and kept the crowd interested in the match for the most part.

It's off to the WWF now, starting at In Your House II.

Henry Godwinn vs. Bam Bam Bigelow

Henry is an associate of DiBiase but not a full member of the Million Dollar Team. Bigelow runs him over to start and catches him in a belly to back suplex to take over. Another belly to back sets up a shoulder block to send Henry out to the floor. Back in and a DDT drops Godwinn again but he low bridges Bigelow to the floor. You can easily see the lack of effort or interest from either guy here.

Henry slams Bigelow on the floor before a clothesline gets two for Godwinn back inside. We hit the chinlock for a bit before Henry grabs the slop bucket. That goes nowhere so here's even more choking as the match just keeps going. A slam gets two on Bam Bam but he comes back with some slow motion headbutts. Bigelow misses a top rope headbutt but avoids a middle rope knee drop before quickly pinning Henry. I'm pretty sure that was a legit injury, leading to the fast pin.

Rating: F. If they don't care, why in the world should I either? It was clear that neither guy had any interest in the match and it was very slow and dull as a result. Bigelow would be gone soon and Henry would become a loveable country boy with Hillbilly Jim as his manager which was the best thing that ever happened to him.

Henry would become a bigger deal, even getting onto Undertaker's Survivor Series team in 1995.

Royals vs. Dark Side

King Mabel, Jerry Lawler, Hunter Hearst Helmsley, Isaac Yankem

Undertaker, Fatu, Henry Godwin, Savio Vega

Mabel is on a throne carried by about five guys, all of whom look like they're about to have hernias. The idea here is you have King Mabel, King Lawler, the blue blood and the Royal Dentist Isaac Yankem. About two years later, Isaac would put on a mask and remember that he's Undertaker's brother named Kane. What exactly is dark about Taker's partners isn't really clear. Fatu is MAKING A DIFFERENCE and is supposed

to be some kind of hero for kids in the projects. He was very happy to become the Sultan a year later.

Taker's entrance of course is huge. He has this skull looking mask on now which would eventually be purple and look very stupid. Fatu and Hunter Hearst Helmsley start things off. The Dark Side has matching t-shirts that say Rest In Peace. Fatu throws Helmsley around to start but we almost get a Pedigree, which is only broken up by a glare from Undertaker. Off to Godwin who was feuding with Hunter at this point in the standard culture clash feud.

Off to Lawler who immediately tags in Yankem. A big hop toss puts Isaac down but he sends Henry into the corner to escape. Back to Helmsley, which I'm getting tired of typing. If only there was a shorter version of his name. Perfect: "You know Helmsley likes to be called Triple H." Thank you Mr. Perfect. Anyway, Godwin gorilla presses HHH, holding him up for a LONG time.

Lawler comes in and gets Savio which is a clash of styles if I've ever heard of one. Vega pounds away on Jerry as does Fatu. Yankem gets in a knee to Fatu's back and the evil King takes over. Isaac comes in to slam Fatu and a legdrop follows. Mabel comes in but misses a splash in the corner. Vega pounds on Mabel in a rematch of the KOTR final. A side slam kills Vega but there's no cover.

Vega gets beaten on in the corner to fill in more time. Yankem is listed as 6'8 or 6'9 here, which means he would have grown about three or four inches by the time he became the Big Fried Freak. A HHH knee drop gets two on Vega as the crowd is silent because none of this means anything. This is all just filler until we get to the Taker tag when the place is going to erupt.

Lawler's piledriver on Vega gets two. Well it's not Memphis so it's understandable. Lawler knocks Vega into the corner....and here's Taker. Jerry gets thrown around by the throat and no one will tag him. Tombstone and pin on Lawler, tombstone and pin on Yankem, chokeslam and pin on Helmsley, and there's just Mabel left. He immediately belly to belly suplexes Taker down and drops the face crushing legdrop before dancing a

bit. There's the situp and Mabel runs for the countout.

Rating: D+. This whole match ran just under fifteen minutes and about two of those meant anything. Everything was waiting for Taker to come in and dominate, which he did quite well, but getting there was pretty dull stuff. This match is more fun for looking at what these people would become rather than what they are now. Taker would lose the mask soon enough thank goodness.

If there's one thing WWF liked doing, it's a culture clash feud. Here's the big match of Godwinn's at In Your House V.

Hunter Hearst Helmsley vs. Henry Godwinn

This is a hogpen match, meaning there's an actual hog pen with pigs and mud near the entrance and the winner is the first man to send his opponent into said pin. Why is this match happening you ask? Simply put it's because Godwinn is a hog farmer so he associates with hogs. One note characters like him had a lot to do with the downfall of the WWF at this point, as there's no interest to such characters, meaning there's no reason to stick around and watch them. The guest referee is 1980s crowd favorite Hillbilly Jim.

Godwinn slops the ring announcer before the match starts for no apparent reason. Helmsley jumps Godwinn but is quickly sent to the floor for his efforts. Back in and Henry ties him in the ropes so he can rub more slop in Helmsley's face. After nearly retching, Helmsley takes it back to the floor, only to be bulldogged face first into the steps.

They head up the pen with Henry being whipped into the gate but still managing to block a Pedigree attempt with a backdrop. Helmsley lands on the edge of the pen and kicks Henry down before dropping an elbow to the chest. Lawler makes Jeff Foxworthy style jokes about being from Arkansas as they head back inside where Godwinn hits a big wheelbarrow slam. Helmsley is whipped to two corners and out to the floor for another handful of slop. Henry hits the Slop Drop up by the pen but can't follow up. Instead he charges at Helmsley and gets backdropped into the slop to end things.

Rating: C-. This actually wasn't that bad as it was a regular match until the ending. Again though, why am I supposed to care? It's the lowest level of comedy and storytelling possible, which doesn't mean it's necessarily bad, but we have no reason to care about either of these guys so why should I be interested in the match?

Time for a tag team with Henry's cousin Phineas forming the Godwinns. Here they are at In Your House VII.

Tag Titles: Godwinns vs. Body Donnas

The Body Donnas, the champions, are fitness enthusiasts Skip and Zip and managed by the absolutely gorgeous Sunny. The Godwinns are Henry and his cousin Phineas (Middle initials O and I respectively, meaning their full initials are H.O.G. And P.I.G.) with the latter having a big crush on Phineas. The Body Donnas won the titles in a tournament final at Wrestlemania so this is a rematch.

Henry throws Zip around to start but has to double clothesline both Donnas down. Off to Phineas who bites Zip's arm and cranks on it a bit before tagging Henry back in. Skip, the more talented of the champions, comes in and jumps into something vaguely resembling John Cena's Attitude Adjustment (fireman's carry slam). A nice wheelbarrow suplex sends Skip out to the floor as this is one sided so far. Zip tries to sneak in but the referee catches them since the Body Donnas aren't exactly twins.

Back in and it's Phineas vs. Zip with Phineas getting some kicks to the head and grabbing a headlock. Skip low bridges the hog farmer to the floor and the champions take over for the first time. The Donnas get two off a slingshot suplex as the camera keeps looking at Sunny but I can't say I blame them much this time around. Off to a chinlock from Skip followed by a standing hurricanrana for two.

Phineas gets all riled up (Vince's words) and cleans house as everything breaks down. Sunny runs to the back and comes back with a framed photo of herself to give to Phineas. Why he's fascinated by the photo when the real thing is right in front of him isn't explained but Phineas wasn't all that bright. Henry hits the Slop Drop on Zip but the distraction at ringside allows Skip to sneak in and small package Henry to retain the

titles.

Rating: D. Much like most of the Body Donnas' matches, Sunny was the best thing going on. She was just so good at being evil and the looks didn't hurt anything at all. The tag division was just such a mess at this point though and this didn't do it a lot of favors. The division wouldn't be fixed for years to come either.

Here they are again for the titles at King of the Ring 1996.

Tag Titles; Smoking Guns vs. Godwins

These two are fighting for the tag belts so it must be the mid 90s. The country boys bring animals with them. Geez Hillbilly Jim was an awesome character. We go to the back where the Guns and Sunny are with Doc. We see a clip of the Body Donnas and their new manager who is a guy in drag named Cloudy. Sunny is dressed as a cowgirl and that's all you need to know. The Guns are the champions here.

These were some of the weakest gimmicks of all time. The Guns are going heel here as Ross insists he saw them turn down autographs for some kids earlier at the hotel. Well at least the fans weren't at an airport asking about the NWO. Phineas likes Sunny here too. Billy implies he's slept with Sunny, which he likely did since he was in the WWF in the 90s. We cut to a random interview with Cloudy who can't even fake a girl's voice.

This is Vince's weird idea of humor I think. It lasted all of a month I think. The match is boring as all goodness so it doesn't mean anything. These two fought so many times and while it was ok, it was never really all that great. This match just isn't that entertaining. Henry puts an arm lock on Bart who taps like crazy but that wouldn't mean anything for about two more years. So this goes for about ten minutes and nothing of note happens.

I kept looking for something to talk about but this is just

ten minutes of pure unadulterated average wrestling. It's not that good and it's not that bad but it's not interesting or anything. It would be fine on any TV show or house show but on a PPV, I doubt it. We of course go to a massive brawl that ends with Bart hitting Phineas with something that resembles a cowboy boot but it's not entirely clear for the pin.

Rating: C. That's the epitome of what this match is: average. It's just there. It's not bad, it's not good, it's just a ten minute tag match where the faces acted like faces and the heels acted like heels. There was no appeal to this match at all. These two teams feuded for what seemed like ever and it never went anywhere. The tag division was more or less dead until 99 when the Hardys and Edge and Christian became the answer to the cruiserweights.

Here they are on the first episode of Shotgun Saturday Night in a bizarre feud.

Godwinns vs. Flying Nuns

The Nuns are Sister Angelica and Mother Smucker. They're women in case you couldn't tell. We see a video of them coming out of a cathedral. The ropes are yellow and the mat is black. Also, WHY DOES EVERYTHING HAPPEN ON JANUARY 4TH? That was the Fingerpoke of Doom and Foley winning the title and the debut of this show and Impact moving to Mondays and Shawn and Bret reuniting. Is it like November 5, 1955 in Back to the Future?

The Nuns jump the Godwins and are rather powerful it seems. Apparently men vs. women is fine now? Angelica and Phineas start and we get a HOLY CENSORED chant for no apparent reason. Wow those women are large. Hard punch and I think one Banged her Head on the mat. Sunny thinks these two are from the Nun Wrestling Federation.

Hillbilly Jim isn't sure what's going on. Angelica has facial hair it seems. Smucker takes over and Vince wonders how the WWF sanctioned this. Vince if you can't remember why you did it you may want to lay off the hard stuff. The lights are

really low I'm guessing to make sure the size of the place isn't notable, which is fine. Brother Love of all people comes out and is the manager of the girls I guess.

We take a break and come back to more of the same. The girls beat up Henry, who is about 6'7 and over 300lbs. Those are some big old girls. LOUD ECW chant as well. We hear about some rookie that Sunny likes named Rocky Maivia. Eh I'm sure he'll never mean anything. Top rope legdrop from Smucker misses and hot tag to Phineas (Mideon). Smucker complains about him trying to slam her as apparently she doesn't like the hand placement. That's kind of funny. Love blasts Phineas with whatever is in his hand for the pin.

Rating: D. This was a long comedy match and the joke got old quick. In case you didn't get the reference, the Nuns are of course men and would soon be VERY repackaged as the Headbangers. This went nowhere at all though and was FAR too long, at nearly 13 minutes counting commercial.

The Godwinns opened Wrestlemania XIII.

Godwinns vs. Doug Furnas/Phillip LaFon vs. Headbangers vs. New Blackjacks

This is under elimination rules and the winner gets a tag title shot tomorrow on Raw. Why not have the title match here and the #1 contenders match earlier is beyond me but the WWF is running scared of WCW at this point so common sense is thrown out the window. The Blackjacks are Barry Windham and Bradshaw. We get some clips of the originals for the sake of old school. The new ones say they're back and they'll beat up all the small people.

Naturally it's a big brawl to start with all eight guys fighting at once. We finally get down to Henry vs. Bradshaw which is a match that has haunted many of my nightmares over the years. A big clothesline puts Bradshaw down and it's quickly off to Thrasher. Bradshaw still has his vest on. He runs over Thrasher though and there goes the vest. In an interesting bit of strategy, Bradshaw tags in Phineas and then punches him in the face.

Phineas pounds on him a bit more but brings in Mosh to face Thrasher. Jerry makes fun of Vince's knowledge of rock music, saying Vince's favorite rock band is Mount Rushmore. After some slam dancing for lack of a better term, it's off to LaFaon who gets caught in a double flapjack for two. That doesn't last long as it's off to Furnas vs. Windham with the former hitting a quick rana for two. Windham hits a kind of powerbomb to take over but Bradshaw comes in and helps his partner beat down LaFon.

With the help of his partner, Bradshaw suplexes Phil out to the floor. The four members of the two teams head to the floor where Bradshaw shoves the referee and LaFon and Furnas are counted out, giving us two eliminations. So we've got the Headbangers vs. the Godwinns now and Thrasher gets to be in trouble first. It's pretty clear that Vince has no idea which of the Headbangers is which.

Thrasher starts to fight back so he and Phineas spit on each other. Vince implies that Phineas is into bestiality which is an image I really didn't need. Off to Mosh vs. Henry but a clothesline by the Godwinn puts both guys out on the floor. Mosh gets back in as Henry is only on the apron, allowing the Headbanger to hit a springboard clothesline to take Henry back down. Lawler keeps up the rock music jokes by saying Vince thinks Fleetwood Mac is a new burger at McDonald's.

Thrasher misses a moonsault and it's off to Mosh vs. Phineas again. Phineas loads up the Slop Drop (reverse DDT) on Thrasher but Mosh makes the save. Everything breaks down and a top rope seated senton by Mosh is enough for the pin on Phineas to send the Headbangers to Raw.

Rating: C-. This shows you where the tag division was at this point. There were indeed several teams fighting over the titles but that doesn't always make for an interesting series of matches in the division. The Headbangers were different but not a great team at all and the Godwinns were WAY past their expiration date at this point. Not much to see here but it was fast paced.

They would turn heel in mid 1997 and become the evil pig farmers which didn't work very well. Here they are at Summerslam 1997.

Godwinns vs. Legion of Doom

The Godwinns are in Deliverance mode at this point and the LOD are done with the war against the Hart Foundation and in need of a good feud. Unfortunately there wasn't a good team for them to feud with so we're stuck with the Godwinns. Henry had his neck broken in a Domsday Device months ago, prompting an attack on the LOD. The LOD has sworn revenge to set this up.

The LOD are actually referred to as Road Warriors here which is rare for the WWF. LOD cleans house to start, sending the Godwinns to the floor with Hawk hitting a clothesline off the apron. We get started with Phineas vs. Animal with the latter missing a charge into the corner, allowing the hog dudes to double team him. Animal comes back with a double clothesline of his own to send the Godwinns to the floor.

Off to Henry vs. Hawk with Henry trying to hurt Hawk's neck as a receipt. Hawk sends him into the steps before dropping some legs for two back inside. Back to Phineas for a hangman's choke on Hawk to no avail. Animal comes back in to work Henry's arm before a Cactus clothesline from Animal puts both guys on the floor. Henry knocks Animal into the barricade as they come back in to shift momentum. Lou Albano is in the front row.

Back in and Phineas puts Animal in a bearhug as the crowd gets hot all over again. As the hold continues, Lawler talks about Blue Ball, Arkansas. I really don't have a joke there but you have to mention that name. Animal breaks free but Henry breaks up the hot tag attempt. Phineas goes up but jumps into a clothesline and now we get the hot tag off to Hawk. House is cleaned as everything breaks down but Phineas breaks up the Domsday Device on Henry. Not that it matters as the LOD hit a spike piledriver on a guy recovering from a broken neck for the pin.

Rating: D+. This was supposed to be about revenge but the match never acted like that at all. The Godwinns were horrible as heels and this was a very dull match as a result. LOD still had a little bit in the tank here but they were going to explode in the next few months but almost no one cared.

That was enough to get them in the title hunt so here's their shot at In Your House XVIII.

Tag Titles: Godwinns vs. Headbangers

The Headbangers are still champions after winning them last month. The Godwinns now have their Uncle Cletus (wrestler Tony Anthony, most famous as the Dirty White Boy) as a manager. It's a brawl to start with the champions sending the hog farmers out to the floor. We start with Mosh vs. Phineas after a quick spitting contest. Phineas gets sent back to the floor very quickly, allowing Thrasher to hit something the camera doesn't find important enough to show us. Apparently it was a springboard clothesline to the apron. Good to know.

Back in and we get some miscommunication, as the Headbangers try a double flapjack but Phineas drops his head down like a backdrop, nearly breaking his neck in the process. Things slow down again until we get Thrasher vs. Henry and a rollup gets two for the champion. Henry bails to the floor as the match stalls even more. Back to Phineas who is taken down, allowing Mosh to suplex Thrasher down onto Phineas for two. A middle rope clothesline from Thrasher puts Phineas down again, but Henry scores with a clothesline of his own to give the Godwinns control.

Thrasher gets crotched on the top rope and clotheslined to the floor again with Phineas coming in for more stomping. Lawler tries some lame redneck jokes to save this boring match but even his corny one liners have no effect. A bunch of knee drops get two for Phineas but Thrasher comes back with a sunset flip, only to have Henry distract the referee.

Phineas hits a wheelbarrow slam for another near fall on Thrasher but a splash in the corner only hits buckle. The hot tag brings in Mosh to clean house, including powerbombing Thrasher onto Phineas for two. Everything breaks down and Mosh's top rope seated senton is caught in a sloppy powerbomb by Phineas for the pin and the titles.

Rating: D-. Not only was this sloppy, but it was really dull stuff. The tag team division is just horrific at this point with nothing interesting and random title changes like this one that don't help anything. Really boring match here with WAY too much stalling and nothing special in the ring at all.

Here's a match that exists for reasons I don't understand. From In Your

House XX.

Godwinns vs. Quebecers

The Quebecers (Jacques and Pierre) were a glorified comedy tag team from 1993 who came back for a few weeks in 1998. No one is really sure why as they were nothing special and a very random team to bring back. It didn't help that they lost their signature Mountie outfits and are now just generic guys. Henry and Jacques get us going with the fans booing both heel teams. After a minute of stalling it's Henry grabbing a headlock but Jacques suplexes him down.

Off to Pierre to trade some wristlocks until Henry grabs an armbar. Back to Jacques who gets clotheslined down and screams a lot during a wristlock. This match is already boring and it doesn't help after the fans haven't been interested in anything tonight. The Godwinns double team Jacques as Lawler implies he wants Bill Clinton shot. Jacques gets a quick two off a sunset flip to Phineas but it's back to Henry to keep control with a chinlock.

Phineas comes in to headbutt Jacques in the ribs but Jacques comes back with an elbow to the jaw. The ice cold tag brings in Pierre as things break down. A bad looking piledriver puts Phineas down and the Cannonball (assisted top rope flip splash from Pierre) gets two with Henry making the save. Not that it matters as Henry clotheslines Pierre from the apron to give Phineas the pin.

Rating: D-. It was long, it was boring, and the fans didn't react to anything in the entire match. I'm not sure why the Quebecers were hired again but it never worked for the most part. The tag division still isn't great from top to bottom but the Outlaws have definitely helped things out a lot.

The Godwinns because Southern Justice and acted as Jeff Jarrett's bodyguards and occasional partners. Here they are in a six man at In Your House XXIV.

Jeff Jarrett/Southern Justice vs. DX

Jarrett has changed his gimmick around, now basically just a jerk with an attitude. He's also cut his hair and dropped Tennessee Lee which is definitely the best thing that's happened to him since he's been back. It's the Outlaws and X-Pac here and the Outlaws(Tag Champions again) sneak up on their opponents for an early advantage. X-Pac officially starts with Jeff and powerbombs him down for two before bringing in Road Dogg. An atomic drop sets up the shaky knee drop on Jarrett but Jeff tags off to Mark Canterbury (Henry Godwinn) to take over.

Canterbury slams Road Dogg down and drops an elbow for two before bringing Jarrett back inside. They hit heads in the corner though and both guys go down to give Dogg a breather. The tag brings in X-Pac for a spinning clothesline but Canterbury gets a blind tag and catches him in a powerslam. Off to Dennis Knight (Phineas Godwinn) for a delayed vertical suplex for two. Jarrett comes back and gets two off a powerslam before avoiding a charge in the corner to put X-Pac down again.

Back to Canterbury as Billy keeps trying to come in but getting held back by the referee. Jeff hooks a chinlock but X-Pac fights back to his feet and suplexes Jarrett down. Billy gets the hot tag and cleans house, allowing X-Pac to hit the Bronco Buster on Jeff. Canterbury takes X-Pac's head off with a clothesline but Billy steals Jeff's guitar. The referee takes it from him but drops it, allowing Jarrett to shatter the guitar over X-Pac's head. Gunn hits a quick Fameasser on Canterbury for the pin.

Rating: D. This was another slow and rather dull match with the finish being less polished than it should have been. X-Pac can take a good beating and it was the right choice to have Gunn clean house. The guy may not have been the best in the world but he could speed things up when he needed to.

We'll wrap it up on Raw, September 28, 1998.

Tag Titles: Southern Justice vs. New Age Outlaws

The Outlaws are just ridiculously over. Jerry says that he's not going to talk about an alleged incident with Jim Carrey on the set of Man on the Moon which of course is kayfabe. Canterbury vs. Gunn to start things off and a flapjack gets two on Billy. Knight comes in to double team but it

doesn't last long. Now he comes in legally but walks into a neckbreaker for two. Off to Roadie for the shaky knee but Canterbury hits a knee to the back and a clothesline to take over. Back to Billy who cleans house and hits the Fameasser but Jarrett comes in with the guitar. Roadie steals it and hits Knight with it for the short DQ.

Henry Godwinn is a good example of a guy who got stuck with a gimmick but made the most of it. At the end of the day, there's only so far you can take a hog farmer from Arkansas but he managed to get four years out of that thing. Eventually though, it ran out of steam and Henry was just a big brawler. Again, that can only take you so far and he reached that long before he was gone. I've seen worse though.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of 1997 WCW Monday Nitro Reviews at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00NPPH0WI>

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

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