

Superstars of Wrestling – October 18, 1986: Drinking Soap And Wrestling Dogs

Superstars of Wrestling

Date: October 18, 1986

Location: Onadonga War Memorial, Syracuse, New York

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Jesse Ventura, Bruno Sammartino

TNA shows take awhile to find so here's something else to fill in the time with. We're still in late 86 here and it's still Piper vs. Adonis and Hogan vs. Orndorff, which will go on for a few more months. After that we upgrade to the biggest one on one storyline of all time. Still though, this is a very fun time in the company's history. Let's get to it.

Theme song and the usual Vince preview of the show.

SD Jones vs. Hercules Hernandez

Herc jumps him to start and Danny Davis is all cool with that. The fans already think this is boring. It's a total squash so far with Hernandez running over Jones with a variety of clotheslines and chokes. Slick says Hogan is next. Jones comes back with a headbutt and some punches but that's about it. A Torture Rack ends SD quick.

Rating: D. Just a squash here for Hercules who was supposed to be a big deal but it never really happened. I'll go with this as proof of that: at Wrestlemania II, the original plan was Bret vs. Steamboat in the show stealer, but Hercules got the match with the Dragon instead because Herc was seen as the better prospect. See, he's strong.

UPDATE!

This gives us a strange sequence of Orton and Muraco watching

Superstars reruns at Muraco's house. They see themselves beating up Piper and hurting his leg.

Luscious Johnny V has a new man in Dino Bravo, who has dark hair here.

Tony Parks vs. Dino Bravo

Apparently the announcers have seen Bravo before. He throws Parks around and atomic drops him to the floor. Parks makes a quick comeback but gets his head clotheslined off. Bravo throws him to the floor, brings him back in for a dropkick and a belly to back suplex ends the massacre.

House show ad. Piper says he doesn't need a referee when he's beating up Muraco.

Brutus talks about taking care of himself outside of the ring and we get a clip of Greg Valentine getting a massage on Tuesday Night Titans.

Bob Bradley/Tiger Chung Lee vs. Killer Bees

The Bees are in their masks still here but they take them off before the match starts. Lee and Blair get us started and it's off to Brunzell very quickly. Lee hits some kind of shot to the throat to take over but Bradley doesn't have such good luck. Blair hits a powerslam and it's back to Blair. Bradley tries a splash but it gets knees. Brunzell's dropkick gets the pin. More squashification but the Bees would hook up with the Harts soon and things would get a lot better.

Another ad for the same Boston house show. Savage is ready for Steamboat, who is a great athlete. He's just not great enough to take the title.

Butch Reed vs. Rick Hunter

Hunter actually gets a quick headscissors to take Reed down which is more offense than I was expecting from him. Reed

grabs one of his own and punishes Hunter with it a little bit. Off to a chinlock but Hunter breaks out of it. Not that it matters as a jumping knee takes him down. Top rope clothesline ends this quick.

Time for Piper's Pit with the guest Jimmy Hart. Hart has presents in an attempt to buy his own safety. Everyone chipped in and got him a crutch. Muraco got him a Hawaiian lei, Fuji got him a pair of women's underwear and Orton got him a cowboy hat and a noose to hang himself with. Piper forces him into a chair and says he has a surprise for him.

Jimmy has to close his eyes so Piper can tie Jimmy to the chair with the rope. Oh wait that's not the present. He has a bottle of I think soap to wash Jimmy's mouth out. Piper: "You can give this lei back to Muraco because it's the only lay you're ever going to get." He puts the soap in Jimmy's mouth and makes him spit it into the cowboy hat. As for the bad leg, Piper hops off on one leg. Good segment.

We get a clip from Hillbilly Jim's house with Granny. Jim plays the guitar and sings a song for her. Then he heats up a wooden stove and shows us his workout routine. Then he wrestles a dog but Granny comes in to yell at him. This whole thing ate up several minutes.

Paul Orndorff looks into three mirrors while Heenan praises him.

Mike Sharpe vs. Ricky Steamboat

Feeling out process to start but Sharpe gets in a shot with the loaded pad to knock Steamboat to the floor. Steamboat comes back and hits a top rope chop to get back into the ring. Regular chop sets up the cross body for the pin.

Muraco is ready for Piper in Boston. He talks about how they used to be friends but now things have changed. Really good promo here.

Overall Rating: C-. This was a very segment heavy show which is ok but a lot of the segments were pretty random. The Hart/Piper thing was hilarious as Piper was insane as usual. Other than that though there wasn't much here, especially the Hillbilly deal. One thing I will say though: some character development such as stuff like that is better than almost none that we get today.

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I Want To Talk A Little Bit About Pushing Comedy Characters

With Santino being in the Chamber last night I figured this was a good time for another one of these.

When did the idea of being a comedy character become such an evil thing? Most of the people I read stuff from are clamoring for Santino to get a big serious push and maybe even win MITB. In the words of South Park, are you high or just really stupid? The LAST thing Santino needs is a serious push.

Now, for those of you that are going straight to the comments because you're too angry at me already, this is the part I'll be referring you to later. There's nothing wrong with Santino getting more TV time and winning some matches. There's nothing wrong with that at all. However, him beating a top level heel on his own or winning a title or being near a PPV title match one on one is lunacy.

Here's the thing: some people belong as comedy characters. Why? Because comedy characters are a good thing. They bring levity to the show and offer a little breathing room in between the heavy lifting. Think about it like this: the Divas are there to give you a break right? Which would you prefer: a Santino comedy match or a second Divas match? "But KB! The fans are cheering for Santino so he should get pushed harder!" That's the statement you'll often hear and it's stupid. Here's why.

Santino is a funny guy. I can live with that although I don't always agree with it. Let's look at the TNA version of Santino: Eric Young. Young has been a serious character before and look what happened: it bombed. They put him with Hall and Nash and he still couldn't get over as a serious guy. The fans rejected him so he went back to comedy and had his most successful time ever. Santino's best times have come when he's a comedy guy, be it as a face or a heel.

That's because Santino has something unique about him: his comedic abilities. The fans for some reason want him to stop doing this though and get a serious push. I think the idea is that if you push him harder, he can still keep the comedy aspect. The problem is that it won't work that way. If you push a face against serious heels, you're running two risks. If you put the comedy guy over them, the heels look weak which is a rampant problem already in WWE. If you push the comedy guy as a serious guy, he's just another guy and the specialness is gone.

That's the big issue with this: if you push Santino as a serious guy, why would the fans cheer him? They cheer the comedy. If you take that away, the luster is going to wear off Santino quickly. You also really don't want say Wade Barrett losing to a hiptoss, a saluting headbutt and the Cobra, as Barrett could be a top heel on Smackdown if pushed right. This has been tried before, which brings me to this.

Back in 2004, we found out that Eric Bischoff had a special nephew named Eugene. He debuted as a comedy guy, imitating stuff he'd grown up watching on TV. Eugene exploded on the WWE and was probably the most popular guy on Raw for a little while. Then he became involved in the HHH vs. Chris Benoit feud, costing HHH the title and resulting in a match between HHH and Eugene at Summerslam.

What followed was one of the harshest crowd reactions ever, as Eugene did his stuff and was booed out of the building. The fans didn't want to see a character like him facing one of the top heels. They wanted HHH to face a real top face, not a converted comedy guy. That would hold true today as well I think. Eugene was never the same and his push was over. Why risk the same thing happening today?

Finally, I want to get into the idea that being a comedy character for life is such a bad thing. There are a bunch of characters that have never been booked seriously and have had very successful careers. Think of guys like Hillbilly Jim, Road Dogg, or probably the biggest of all: Jim Duggan. Santino probably has had a more successful career than Duggan but Duggan is a legend that still got a solid reaction at the Rumble this year. He was never booked in any really serious way and was more or less a lovable idiot that got over huge and was probably the second biggest face in the company for awhile.

This is what it boils down to: Santino is already over as a comedy guy. Now people want to change that because of reasons I don't get. If you want him to be on TV more often and maybe get some more wins that's fine, but if you do that you're running the risk of breaking something that's already working. It rarely works on other TV shows and it hasn't worked well in the past in the WWE, but what do I know about stuff? I actually think Cena shouldn't turn heel so I have no idea what I'm talking about right?

Best of the WWF Volume 11 – The Survivor Series' Ancestor

Best of the WWF Volume 11

Host: Gene Okerlund

Commentators: Gene Okerlund, Gorilla Monsoon

This is the latest one of the volumes I have left. After this one there are only four to go so we're almost done at least. This is from mid 87 and most of the stuff on it is from November of 1986, which is at the end of Orndorff vs. Hogan and right before the build to Mania 3 begins. Let's get to it.

Can-Am Connection vs. Dream Team

Can-Am is Tom Zenk/Rick Martel while the Dream Team is Valentine/Beefcake. Martel takes over quickly on Valentine, working the arm. Off to Zenk who works on the arm as well. We're in MSG if you're curious. Luscious John jumps on commentary for a second to brag. The team with the Canadian on it keeps up its advantage. Valentine manages to snake eyes him onto the top rope to take over.

Off to Beefcake and the former champs take over. Off to a chinlock and things speed up a bit. Brutus gets caught in a rollup for two. Martel starts fighting back and punches Valentine down. When all else fails, HIT HIM IN THE FACE! And never mind as the American hits an Irish on the Canadian into the corner. Suplex gets two. Figure Four is countered into a small package but Martel still can't escape.

Back to Beefcake who manages to give up the tag. Listen to that pop for a hot tag! When's the last time you heard something like that? Zenk cleans house and dropkicks Valentine

down. Brutus takes him down again though and it's back to the Dream Team in control. There's an abdominal stretch by the Hammer. Gutbuster brings in Beefcake as they work on Zenk's ribs and abdomen.

Zenk keeps bridging out of pin attempts. This match is getting some serious time. Double clothesline puts Zenk and Greg down. Valentine puts on a front facelock and Brutus distracts the referee so the tag doesn't count. Elbow drop misses for Valentine and they do the blind tag thing again. That's a rarity. Everything breaks down and the Dream Team hits a double belly to back suplex. There's the Figure Four but Martel hits a slingshot splash for the totally illegal pin.

Rating: B. Long match here and it worked pretty well I thought. This is something you can't see on TV due to the time but it worked well here. It also plays forward the whole Beefcake is the weak link idea of the team which led to their split. The crowd was way into this too. Good stuff.

George Steele vs. Kamala

Oh...oh...oh my. This is from November 24, 1986. There are seven matches on this tape and four of them are from that show, plus a Piper's Pit. Total comedy match with nothing really going on in the first minute or so. They exchange chops and therefore control with the fans being more into it than they should be. The Wizard (Kamala's manager) gets hit and drops whatever he's holding, allowing Kamala to clock Steele with it. That and a pair of splashes, one from the top rope, ends this. This was just a comedy match and then the ending.

Time for Piper's Pit. This one is live in MSG and the guests are Orndorff and I believe his new manager Bobby Heenan. Piper says he's not used to being cheered and that he's not running for President and he's the same person he's always been. Heenan and Orndorff come out and Piper tells Orndorff to find a tag partner. Heenan gets the mic and says Orndorff's partner

is Harley Race. Heenan tells Piper to get a partner. Piper has a chat with his manager in the corner (no one there) but a planted fan pops up on the apron and suggests Hogan. Orndorff freaks and that's that. Ok then.

Paul Orndorff/Harley Race vs. Hulk Hogan/Roddy Piper

These two teaming up together always feels wrong. Big brawl to start until Hogan and Piper clear the ring. The heels come back in so Hogan picks up Piper and uses his feet as a battering ram. Piper vs. Race officially gets us started. Off to Hulk and the place goes manic. They work on Race's arm and it's back to Piper for another big pop. Ok make it Hogan again. You know they work well together for mortal enemies.

They do look at each other with a bit of disdain and a lack of trust but if they didn't it would be awful. Race headbutts his way out of trouble but still can't bring Paul in. Back to Hulk and the arm work continues. The place is about to come unglued. Race finally gets in a belly to belly and knee drop to take over. Here's Orndorff off the top and Piper is in trouble now.

The heels take turns on Piper and it's off to a chinlock. This place is going to explode when Hogan gets the tag. Suplex keeps Roddy down and it's off to Paul again. Race hammers away on Piper some more and headbutts him. Roddy stands still and looks like he's about to fall down when he dives forward for the tag. That looked great. Race looks scared to death and Hogan pounds away. House is cleaned and he drops the leg but Orndorff saves. Heenan gets drilled and heel miscommunication lets Piper pin Race which counts for some reason.

Rating: C+. This is one of those matches where it's about the atmosphere instead of the match itself. Piper and Hogan teaming together is still a weird sight and I'm not sure how well I like it. Still though, fun little match that blew the roof off MSG (that thing has to be in disrepair given how

often it happens) which is the entire idea.

Piper, still mostly a jerk, bails and lets Hogan fight them all off on his own which he does easily.

Randy Savage/Harley Race/Adrian Adonis vs. Roddy Piper/Junkyard Dog/Ricky Steamboat

This is elimination rules and it was a brand new idea at the time. They were popular enough that a PPV version was made later in the year. For some reason, Slick is on commentary. These are all matches at Wrestlemania and the last appearance in MSG for Piper so gee, I wonder who will win here. Savage runs and hides from Steamboat but they wind up starting.

Savage tries to roll away and it's Race in now with no tag. Off to JYD and it's rolling headbutts time. They look at each other for awhile as Steamboat plays cheerleader. Belly to belly puts JYD down and it's off to Savage again. He loads up the elbow but stops to yell at Steamboat. Piper shoves Randy into the now legal Steamboat. My goodness I'd love to see Savage and Piper have a feud. Not the kind they had in WCW either.

Off to Adonis and he runs from Piper. Everything breaks down and all six are in there. A double suplex puts Roddy down and Adrian hooks the sleeper on him. That doesn't last and Piper hooks a sleeper which is broken up just as quickly. JYD is waiting on an opponent now. I know it sounds like I'm skipping a lot but they're moving in and out of there so fast that it's almost impossible to keep up with.

Adonis works on the Dog but hits him in the head because heels are stupid. Everyone goes to the floor and Roddy hits Adrian with a chair. Back to some form of sanity as Piper hits a belly to back suplex on Race but Savage breaks up the cover. This has been incredibly fast paced. And there's a bell. Uh.....why? Adonis and JYD were both counted out because they were legal. Ok then.

Piper vs. Race now and make that Piper vs. Savage. Piper blocks a suplex as Gorilla and Slick argue. Savage misses a shot into the ropes but Race prevents the tag. And never mind as he makes it just a second later. Steamboat speeds things up on Race as Slick yells about karate. Everyone gets in again and my goodness is there some talent in there. There isn't a bad combination at all out there.

Steamboat rolls up Race but Savage reverses it and somehow it gets the pin, after about 15 seconds of Steamboat being down. I don't think so but whatever. Ok so it's Piper vs. Race/Savage. Piper of course is all cool with going straight for Race and they go to the floor. Savage tries to hit him with a chair but they get back in and somehow Savage is now legal. Top rope double axe gets two. Powerslam gets two for Race. Piper grabs a gutwrench suplex but Savage makes the save.

Savage goes up but the double axe hits Race, allowing Piper to steal a pin and it's 1-1. Now THIS should be awesome. And this is how Piper goes out of MSG? This works I'd think. Race won't leave so Piper throws Savage into him and then bulldogs Randy down. Savage tries to bail but suckers Piper in and gets the first punch in. That weird clothesline Savage does takes Roddy down for two.

They start choking away at each other and this is so awesome. Piper actually shows off his strength and holds Savage up in a choke. They collide and Savage is knocked to the floor. Piper gets up but then lays down and plays possum. Savage goes up for the elbow but Piper moves and a small package ends the Macho Man. TOTALLY AWESOME and vintage Piper.

Rating: A. I had a blast with this. The talent levels out there were completely insane and they gave us twenty minutes of a great match. These matches could work so well if they were done right and this one was, especially when they have the time to put it together. The eliminations were a bit off,

but this was probably the first one ever. Great match though and an absolute blast.

From SNME, here's Piper's My Way video set to Frank Sinatra's song. It's basically a highlight video of his career which is pretty awesome stuff. It's set to the closing theme from Coliseum Video here though, probably due to copyright issues. This goes on for about three minutes.

And now let's go from an hour of totally awesome stuff to...this.

Little Tokyo/Lord Littlebrook vs. Pepe Gomez/Karate Kid

Thank goodness this is joined in progress because the full thing is 13 minutes long. Gomez beats up Tokyo with kicks. Wouldn't it be Karate Kid using the kicks? The heels get thrown together and it's the stupid row boat thing. Wait that is Karate Kid? Ok so I was confused earlier. Actually I wasn't paying attention because I don't care about this match. There's a "comedy" spot where Littlebrook is choking with his feet but the good guys make a switch and Littlebrook accidentally choked his partner.

Ok so Gomez is in the body suit. The referee is holding Tokyo for some reason then launches him away. Is there a point to this? I mean....any of this? Littlebrook, looking about 80 years old, staggers around and the match just kind of stops. Karate Kid uses a full nelson and Tokyo accidentally kicks Littlebrook in the face. I'm not really paying attention as I'm rapidly losing all of my intelligence as my brain dies. Littlebrook beats up both guys and it's off to Gomez for some dropkicks. It's a pile up and Tokyo gets pinned.

Rating: N. Just no. No point, no logic, no reason, no need. Give us more Piper greatness please. This tape was reaching classic levels and now it had to get dragged down like this. I get the idea of comedy matches and having fun, but don't do it for like seven minutes in a row when you have awesome stuff

going like that.

Don Muraco vs. Hillbilly Jim

Muraco is dressed like Piper and Fuji is with him in a tux. Remember that. Muraco is wrestling in the kilt. Jim rips it off quickly and the beating begins. Muraco is sent to the floor and Fuji's hat got crushed. Muraco hides in the corner and Jim works on the arm. A headbutt puts Don on the floor. Muraco takes him down and it's off to a nerve hold. Jim comes back and hits a big boot. Bear hug (called a full nelson by Monsoon for some reason) draws in Fuji for the DQ.

Rating: D. Jim was a fun character and this was designed to set up the next match and that's all. Muraco was definitely on the downside of his career at this point but he still had a few more years on the top level to go. Fuji interfering directly sets up the next match on the tape which is always cool to see.

Fuji tears Jim's overalls and hits him in the ribs with the cane a bunch of times. Jim challenges Fuji to a tuxedo match next month.

Hillbilly Jim vs. Mr. Fuji

This is a tuxedo match. It's an evening gown match but for men. Jim rips the hat off immediately. I wouldn't bet on this lasting long. They fight over tearing jackets off and Jim gets his shirt ripped. Jim tears out the pocket of Fuji's jacket as does Fuji to Jim's. Fuji steals the jacket and Jim is mad. Fuji's jacket gets ripped so he kicks Jim low. Jim is topless now and as I type that Fuji is as well. And there go Fuji's pants to end it. I'm not rating it because it's not really much of a match but it was all in good fun.

Overall Rating: B-. This was on the way to being incredible and then it just came falling apart. The six man should have ended this tape but instead we get the comedy matches to end

it, which isn't a horrible idea but it really hurt the flow this had going. The opener is good too and I can easily see why this is my favorite time in wrestling. Good tape, could have been great.

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