

WWE Vault Dark Match Collection: Eh

Dark Matches

Commentators: Tazz, Joey Styles

So this is exactly what it is described as from the WWE Vault: a 35 minute collection of dark matches from over the years. To the best of my knowledge, there is no commentary or anything other than the action itself, which means I'm going to be VERY limited in what I can do with some of this stuff. Still though, it's exactly the kind of fun content that you do not get elsewhere so let's get to it.

Note that most of the dates and locations are from what I can find elsewhere and putting some pieces together so they might not be entirely perfect.

From Montreal, Quebec, Canada, July 7, 2003 before Monday Night Raw.

Pierre Carl Oulette vs. El Tornado

Oulette powers him down to start and hits an early backdrop with Tornado (who was still wrestling in 2024 but pretty much never left Canada) bailing to the floor. A neck snap across the top rope staggers Oulette but he comes out of the corner with a heck of a clothesline.

The big running flip dive to the floor misses (OUCH) and Tornado takes him back inside for a quickly broken chinlock. Oulette hits a chokeslam and sitout pumphandle slam but a bulldog out of the corner is broken up. Tornado rolls him up for two but gets caught on top, with Oulette hitting a t-bone superplex (you don't see that very often). The Cannonball (Swanton) finishes Tornado at 4:46.

Rating: C+. This was likely either a tryout match for Oulette or just an appeal to the local fans and I've seen far worse. Oulette is a guy with some size who can do some crazy stuff in the ring and he had it on display here. Good stuff with Tornado being serviceable enough, but this was pretty much all about Oulette, as it should have been.

From New York City, New York, August 7, 2000 before Monday Night Raw.

Mean Street Posse vs. Low Ki/Vince Goodnight

Goodnight is an east coast guy who mostly retired in 2001 but keeps coming back every six or seven years for a few matches. The Posse jumps them to start and get sent outside, where Low Ki is right there for a huge twisting flip dive. Back in and Goodnight gets whipped into Ki to knock him off the apron, where Gas gives him a World's Strongest Slam on the floor.

Back in and Rodney hammers away in the corner, followed by Gas hitting a spinning slam to drop him again. A Hennig necksnap keeps Ki in trouble and the Posse gets to stomp away. Gas chokes in the corner as Ki gets beaten up even more. Ki finally avoids a charge and hits a superkick, allowing the tag off to Goodnight. Everything breaks down and Ki just unloads with about twelve straight kicks to Rodney's face. Gas hits the Gas Mask (a reverse full nelson sitout powerbomb, actually not a bad move) to pin Goodnight at 4:45 (while Rodney hits a pretty random Blockbuster on Ki).

Rating: D+. To call this a total mess would be an understatement, as you had Ki with his martial arts and flipping style being about ten years ahead of its time and Goodnight just being a guy with long hair. At the same time though, the Posse was just not good enough to be at this level and it was showing more and more every time they were in the ring. It was fun to have them as Shane McMahon's bodyguards and lackeys, but having them try to do actual matches was just

bad. Ki stood out the most of course, but that shouldn't be anything close to a surprise.

From New York City, New York, August 1, 2006 before ECW On Sci Fi

FBI vs. Paul London/Brian Kendrick

London and Kendrick's Smackdown Tag Team Titles aren't on the line. This is from the Hammerstein Ballroom and for some reason Joey Styles and Tazz are doing commentary (I wonder if this was meant to be a DVD extra or something). Guido (whose trunks say Nunzio), who is very taped up, shakes hands with Kendrick to start things off before getting armdragged down a few times.

They go to the mat to no avail and that's a standoff. Mamaluke comes in and London stomps on his arm, with Kendrick adding an elbow to said arm. London and Kendrick take turns on the arm as we settle down to a pretty basic style. Guido comes back in and gets dropped by a springboard high crossbody, followed by double dropkicks. We get what seems to be some miscommunication as everything breaks down and London slugs it out with Mamaluke on the floor.

Guido chinlocks Kendrick back inside, which seems like a way to get things back under control (as you're supposed to do). Mamaluke grabs a short arm scissors on Kendrick before Guido knees him in the head for two. Kendrick finally rolls away from a charge and hands it back to London to pick up the pace. The dropsault hits Guido and Mamaluke has to make the save.

Mamaluke seems to screw something up by kicking Kendrick in the face, setting up a flip dive from the apron. London's big running flip dive COMPLETELY misses and he lands hard on the floor (Kendrick DIVES on him to make sure he's ok) and we're clipped to London being back inside and Kendrick hitting Sliced Bread #2, setting up a step up shooting star press to give London the pin on Guido at 9:56 shown.

Rating: C. This was a weird match with the commentary pausing at random moments and a bit less of an over the top style from Styles. That being said, it wasn't a bad match as you had two teams who can work a pretty fast paced style. That crash landing from London was terrible and there were some other botched, but it was a match that got some time and could have been better with a few less mistakes.

From Memphis, Tennessee, September 18, 2001 before Monday Night Raw.

Kid Kash vs. Justin Credible

It's rare to see two names against each other, even in an ECW reunion. Feeling out process to start until Kash snaps off a headscissors to send Credible outside. A twisting dive takes Credible down again and it's weird to be stuck on the hard cam shot rather than going down to see them on the floor. Back in and Credible hits his running spinning DDT, allowing him to do his signature thing of yelling at the crowd.

Credible stomps and chokes away before grabbing the chinlock as fans are filing in and trying to find their seats. That's broken up and Kash knocks him down before being kicked into the corner, only to come down head first with a low blow (Sting approves). Kash is back up with his own spinning DDT for two, followed by a rather crazy spinning hurricanrana from the top. Credible sidesteps a moonsault though and hits a superkick (not bad either) for the pin at 5:55.

Rating: C. I've never gotten the appeal of Credible and that was on full display here. There is nothing about him that makes him stand out and having him yell at the crowd over and over isn't the best way to go. Kash was doing his usual flippy stuff and it worked well enough, but getting over Credible is a heck of a task to pull off.

From Richmond, Virginia, April 28, 1998 before Monday Night Raw.

Steve Williams vs. Scorpio

This could be interesting. Williams shoves him down without much trouble to start (shocking I know) and then wrestles him down, with Scorpio bailing over to the ropes. Back up and Williams slowly hammers away but does stop to block a hiptoss attempt. Scorpio gets caught in a gorilla press (and looks terrified) and sent outside as this is domination so far. Back in and Scorpio gets in a few shots but Williams calmly punches him out of the air in a so simple it's awesome counter.

The seated crossarm choke goes on for a good while but Scorpio finally gets out and chops away. A knee lift sends Williams into the corner and he misses a charge, allowing Scorpio to get a belly to back suplex. Scorpio hits a top rope forearm to the head for two and a running spinning kick gets the same. A handspring clothesline in the corner drops Williams but he's back up to pull a moonsault out of the air. Williams' powerslam gets two but Scorpio flips onto him for two of his own. Williams hits a spinebuster and some three point shoulders, followed by a belly to back suplex for the pin at 9:17.

Rating: C-. This was ok but it went on far too long. Eventually Williams looked like he was running out of things to do. It didn't help that Scorpio was mostly beaten up for such a long stretch as it turned into waiting for the match to end already. Nothing much to see here, which is a shame as the talent involved could have made it good.

Overall Rating: C. Maybe it was due to having fun with the squash match collection, but this was pretty disappointing. Not only was there nothing overly notable, but none of the matches were anything worth seeing. There are some good dark matches out there, but this was just a bunch of random stuff and it was only so interesting. I'm not sure what they were going for here but it didn't quite hit.

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