

WWE Ending Single Branded House Shows

That's the big news of the day. Apparently the Raw and Smackdown brand names will be phased out of the live events but they'll still be running two tours. This is how it was back in the 80s and that means... That I like this idea. Back in the day you didn't know who was going to be on a show other than the top matches, so having a nice mix of people underneath the main events is a good idea. It gives you an incentive to go because even if you don't like just Raw or just Smackdown, you might see someone from another show that you like. That's a smart move.

Thought of the Day: Cena's Promo On Raw

This is a big news story lately with even ESPN.com mentioning. As for what I think, Yes it was a bad promo, but Cena has been cutting great ones for years now. He missed on this one and it went on way too far and he could have cut about three minutes out of it and gotten the point (Sunday is a big day and he's going to war. Why is that so hard for people to get?) across just the same. What wrestling fans' short attention spans seem to forget is that Cena is one of the best talkers ever. He messed this one up and that's it. Everyone is entitled to a misstep every once in awhile. Even Rock had some really stupid catchphrases ("Why don't you go and have a nice cool glass of SHUT UP JUICE?" or "How are your lips?") every now and then. It's not the end of the world and

it's certainly not the end of Cena. It was a bad promo and at the moment nothing more than that.

On This Day: January 23, 1995 – Monday Night Raw: A 1995 Raw That Doesn't Suck

Monday Night Raw

Date: January 23, 1995

Location: Manatee Civic Center, Palmetto, Florida

Attendance: 2,500

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Shawn Michaels

It's the night after the Rumble and the main story is that Bam Bam Bigelow shoves Lawrence Taylor and nearly got in a fight with him. That would be the main event of Wrestlemania, showing how big a mess things were. Shawn Michaels won the Rumble last night as well, setting up his world title shot against Diesel. This is still just an hour and would be for over two more years. Let's get to it.

We open with Vince apologizing for Bigelow shoving Taylor down yesterday. Apparently Bam Bam has been suspended without pay.

Dig that old school Raw opening! I haven't seen that in a long time.

Shawn is brought out to do commentary, which is kind of strange for the Rumble winner. He does his expected bragging.

Tag Titles: Smoking Gunns vs. 1-2-3 Kid/Bob Holly

The Kid and Holly are defending here, having won the belts last night in a tournament final. Vince: "This should be a tremendous matchup!" Shawn: "I'll let you know if it's tremendous. No one knows more about tremendous matches than me." Only Shawn could say that line and get away with it. Billy and Bob start things off and it's a feeling out process between both faces. Billy with a mullet just doesn't work at all. Then again most stuff Billy did didn't work.

Off to Bart but Bob bails away, interestingly enough from his future partner. The Kid comes in and fires away some kicks but can't hit Bart with any of them. Bart misses a dropkick and it's off to Bob again. We get some token arm work from the champ before both guys miss elbow drops, leading to a standoff. Billy comes in with a bulldog from behind for two as the champions take over. A double gorilla press on Holly looks to set up another double team move but Bob crotches Billy to escape.

The champions hit a double superplex for two as things pick up out of nowhere. We take a break and come back with Billy running into a knee to the ribs to put him back down. A kick to the face puts Billy down again and it's back to the Kid. A spinwheel kick gets two on Billy as does a double dropkick from the champions. Back to Holly who loses a slugout before it's back to the Kid.

In a teachable moment, the Kid hits what we would call the Fameasser on Billy. Apparently the teaching works as Billy hits a Fameasser of his own about thirty seconds later to take the Kid down. Hot tag brings in Bart who gets two off a backdrop of all things. The Gunns hit the Sidewinder (side slam from Bart/legdrop from Billy) for two as Holly makes the save. The Kid gets to play Ricky Morton which is the best possible role for him.

We take another break and come back with Kid in a chinlock. Back to Billy for a legdrop (he REALLY likes that move) for no cover. The Gunns hit a dropkick/suplex combo for two as Shawn is in full criticism mode. Holly finally does something and kicks Bart in the back to let the Kid make the

tag. Bob hits that dropkick of his for two but goes up and jumps into a boot like an idiot. The Gunns hit an over the shoulder powerbomb/top rope elbow combination on Holly to take the titles from the Cinderella team.

Rating: B-. This was a LONG match for its day. They probably had about twenty minutes out there and got a pretty good match out of it. I fail to see the point in taking the Gunns out of the tournament if they were just going to get the belts here. Still though, this was a nice treat given how much time it got. Neither team was heel here but they both had evil flashes in there.

The former champions ask for a rematch which I believe happened next week.

Shawn promises to find a new bodyguard. That would wind up being Sid.

IRS vs. Buck Quartermain

IRS and the Million Dollar Corporation stole Undertaker's urn last night, setting of an eight month or so long feud. You might remember Buck from the old school TNA days. Roddy Piper is on the phone for this for no apparent reason and praises the New Generation. The match is nothing of note and IRS wins with a flying clothesline in about two and a half minutes. The whole match was about Roddy.

Here's the King's Court (Lawler's interview show) with Jeff Jarrett and the Roadie. Jarrett brags about winning the IC Title last night and wants a shot at Diesel. Vince FREAKS about Jarrett wanting a shot at the world title. Well to be fair, why would a midcard champion ever get near the world title? Right Vince?

British Bulldog vs. Black Phantom

The Phantom is portrayed by David Heath, more famous as Gangrel. Davey

talks trash to Shawn before the match and gets jumped by the Phantom. A jumping DDT gets two on Smith but he comes back with the delayed vertical suplex for no cover. Vince goes into a bizarre rant about how Shawn didn't deserve to win the Rumble because only one foot hit. What Shawn did was perfectly legal, so why doesn't he deserve the win? Smith hooks a chinlock for a bit before Phantom makes a comeback and misses a middle rope splash. The powerslam gets the easy pin for Smith.

Rating: D. Nothing to see here but the commentary exchange was pretty fun stuff. Smith was a solid upper midcard guy around this time but would get stuck in a tag team with Luger soon after this that would bring him right back down. Nothing of note to the match here but that's par for the course in squashes.

Bam Bam Bigelow is supposed to apologize but there's no audio. Post break and Bigelow still can't hear us. Oh wait yes we can. It's almost like this company has no idea what it's doing. Wait we DON'T have Bigelow. Egads man this is pathetic.

A quick preview of next week's show ends the show.

Overall Rating: C+. For a 1995 Raw, this was pretty entertaining stuff. A twenty minute match that wasn't half bad is an incredibly rare thing today so back then it would have been a once a year thing. Other than that we didn't have much, but for a one hour show that's pretty good stuff. 1995 just wasn't interesting for the most part though, and that's what this falls under the category of: decent but not interesting.

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Monday Night Raw – September 8, 2003: When The Highlight Of The Show Is Molly's Hair, You're In Trouble

Monday Night Raw

Date: September 8, 2003

Location: Von Braun Center, Huntsville, Alabama

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

This is another request whose reasoning I'm not sure of. Maybe people just like to make me cry. Anyway we're coming up on Unforgiven in a few weeks which has a main event of Goldberg vs. HHH. In keeping with WWE tradition, the main event tonight is Goldberg/Orton vs. HHH/Flair, because Orton is in Evolution and therefore will make problems for Goldberg. Dig that high quality matchmaking! Let's get to it.

Kane vs. Rob Van Dam

Kane was recently unmasked and therefore turned heel (granted it's Kane so who knows why he turned) on his tag partner RVD, setting up this cage match. Instead of THIS taking place on PPV though, we got Shane McMahon vs. Kane because Kane electrocuted Shane's testicles with jumper cables last week. Kane jumps Rob as soon as he gets in and immediately starts pounding away.

Van Dam gets sent into the cage but comes back with a kick and a flip attack out of the corner. Kane rams him right back into the cage again and crushes Van Dam's head against the cage with a boot. A side slam puts Rob down for no cover so Kane rams him into the cage again. Van Dam tries a comeback but his stepover kick is countered into a powerslam for no cover again.

Kane loads up a powerbomb but Van Dam punches out of it. Not that it matters much though as Kane clotheslines him down and goes back up top. That goes badly for him as well though as Rob crotches him and crushes him against the cage with a cross body. Somewhere along the way Rob got cut over his eye. The jumping kick from the top rope puts Kane down again and Rolling Thunder hits for no cover. Rob tries to leave but has to kick Kane off the ropes.

Since Van Dam isn't that bright at times, he tries the Five Star but only hits the mat. Kane loads him up in a powerbomb position but drops Van Dam face first into the cage. Van Dam gets thrown into the cage a few times and after pointing at himself, Kane loads him up for a third ram. Rob gets tossed...and the cage breaks, allowing him to fall to the floor for the win. Well that was unexpected.

Actually it's so unexpected that before I can rate it, Bischoff comes out and says you have to go over the cage and not out of it to win, so we need to keep going. After a break Kane continues to pound away while talking trash. Apparently during the break Kane slammed the cage on Van Dam's head to put him in this much trouble. Rob tries to climb and Kane just lets him so RVD kicks him in the face. Van Dam tries to climb up but Kane climbs onto the top rope with him and a kind of chokeslam off said top rope is enough for the pin.

Rating: C-. The match was ok but at the end of the day, unless you're a wrestling encyclopedia, you're not likely going to have an idea why this match is happening. JR and King mentioned Kane's rage, but I don't think they mentioned the two of them even being partners until a few weeks ago. Also the match itself was pretty one sided for the most part and I'm not sure why it was in a cage in the first place.

Bischoff makes Shane vs. Kane and King/JR vs. Snow/Coach for the commentary position (just go with it) for Unforgiven. For tonight, HHH and Goldberg face each other in a tag match with mystery partners. Hooray!

Lance Storm is worried about being called boring so Goldust tells him to go beat up Rico in front of the Stormtroopers. Storm tries to do the Goldust breath and it's rather disturbing.

Lance Storm vs. Rico

If nothing else we get to look at Jackie Gayda in a barely there outfit. The idea here is that Storm is boring and trying to find a personality. Rico starts the boring chant before the match so Lance punches him down. Goldust in turn starts a Rico Sucks chant and we're ready to go. A quick suplex gets two for Lance but Rico comes back with a kick to the face and a clothesline before ripping at Storm's face. Off to a chinlock for a bit until Storm fights up and starts firing off clotheslines. Jackie tries to get involved and gets kissed by Storm who quickly finishes Rico with a springboard missile dropkick. Short and not terrible here.

Storm and Goldie dance post match.

HHH wants to know who the mystery partners are but Eric won't say.

Trish Stratus/Jacqueline vs. Molly Holly/Gail Kim

Trish's team are the faces here and Molly is champion here. She's in blue tonight and has that short brown hair going on which looks GREAT. Also Gail is looking especially good here in white. Molly and Jackie start things off with the champion getting armdragged a lot. Off to Jackie who gets whipped around as well before an elbow drop gets two. JR gets Jackie and Molly confused because that's easy to do right?

Molly and Gail hit a double DDT on Jackie for two before Kim takes Jackie's hand and slaps it against Trish for a tag. Stratus comes in and beats on everyone in sight before hitting a headlock/headscissors combo to Gail and Molly respectively. The heels backdrop Trish to the floor before throwing the carcass back in for the pin.

Rating: D+. The match here was nothing special but I'm really impressed by how good the heels looked. In case you're missing the point, I'm talking about their looks and not their in ring abilities. It's WAY better than what we have going on with the modern Divas, but man alive they made few secrets about it being all about sex appeal at this point.

Here's Austin for the State of Raw Address. How about we state that at this address, Raw will have more wrestling tonight? There's a podium for him to speak from but Austin throws it to the floor and destroys it because it's not his style. It takes forever to get to his first announcement, which is that if HHH gets counted out or disqualified, he loses the title. As for Kane, Austin thinks he should be able to beat him up for what Kane did to Shane. However since Austin is Co-GM, he's not allowed to do that. Austin and his cabinet (his liquor cabinet of course) met and determined this sucks.

This brings out Christian who makes fun of the fact that Austin can't beat anyone up. He's tired of being Intercontinental Champion and not getting any respect and after debating the topic for a bit, we get down to the point: Christian wants his own talk show to replace the Highlight Reel. This brings out Jericho to lay out Christian to much praise from Austin. Jericho goes off on Austin for patronizing him and says he wakes up every day and prays that Austin has been fired. Austin says he likes the Highlight Reel and that Jericho can either keep whining or have a beer.

Jericho says that Austin wants to give him a Stunner but he can't do it. Jericho: "If you want Steve Austin to give me a Stunner, give me a doo-wa-diddy-diddy-dum-diddy-do." Austin: "That was the stupidest catchphrase I've ever heard in the history of Monday Night Raw." Steve throws Jericho a beer but the Canadian drops it. Austin gives him a very easy throw on the second try in a funny bit but Jericho slaps Austin on the back. That counts as physical provocation so there's the Stunner. Somehow this took over eighteen minutes. What exactly was said in that amount of time?

La Resistance/Rob Conway/Rodney Mack/Mark Henry vs. Dudley
Boys/Hurricane/Rosey

Oh I'm SURE this isn't going to get all messy. The good guys clean house and Spike is launched onto La Resistance (the tag champions at this point). Hurricane throws in a dive of his own and it's table time less than a minute into this shindig. They're only set up on the floor though as we finally start with Rosey and Dupree. The fat man (Rosey) misses a charge but clotheslines Conway and Dupree down with ease because he's fat.

Off to Spike for his double stomp on Conway but since Spike is the anti-Rosey, Conway gets the tag off to Henry. Picture any match of Henry crushing someone smaller than him for about a minute and you have what you're getting here. Mark misses a charge and Spike picks...Hurricane for the hot tag? You're Spike Dudley and you pick the freaking HURRICANE to fight Mark Henry? Conway is brought in as Henry is down on the floor, likely out for months with an injury. Everything breaks down and Conway walks into the 3D for two via a save from Mack as Henry comes back in and powerslams Bubba for the pin.

Rating: D. Yep it was a mess. It amazes me that they're so strapped for time that they have an 18 minute talking segment and then they have to put ten guys in one match to get them all on TV for that week. There's nothing here to see other than another quick match tonight with way too many people in one match.

Post match La Resistance picks up Spike and throw him over the top rope and at the table. I say at the table because they don't throw him far enough and Spike's head smacks into the table, probably breaking his neck in the process.

Eric makes a 3-2 handicap tables match for the titles at Unforgiven. For those of you not remembering, Eric LOVED tables matches. It was like his version of tag matches for Teddy Long.

HHH talks about Goldberg and plugs a sponsor at the same time.

We run down the Unforgiven card.

Shane is at The World but before he can get anywhere, Bischoff pops up and makes his match with Kane a last man standing match. That means the PPV now has a handicap tables match, a last man standing match, a match for control of Raw's announcer booth, and a career threatening match. Why would we care about wrestling, right? Oh and another gimmick match would be added later.

Molly and Gail still look hot but now they have an evil idea, whatever that is.

Scott Steiner vs. Steven Richards

Somehow Steiner has a job at this point. He also has Stacy who is his girlfriend/head freak at this point, which would change very soon. This is angle advancement for Steiner vs. Test, the latter of which is at ringside here. Richards tries to jump Steiner to start and gets pounded down in the corner as a result. There's a clothesline for Richards and it's push-up time. Richards gets a boot up in the corner but walks into a Downward Spiral for the pin. Nothing match here.

Post match here's Bischoff AGAIN to make Test vs. Steiner for the PPV with Stacy on the line.

Back from a break and Coach and Snow are in the ring. THIS is what gets the next to last spot on Raw people. Let that sink in for a minute. Coach talks about jobs JR can have after he loses his job soon and we get WWE Humor with faces superimposed over FUNNY pictures. He goads JR to the ring and Coach gets laid out. Lawler shoves Snow to the floor and that's that. This is happening because Coach and Snow are the Heat commentators and want a promotion. Seriously, THIS is the second big feud on Raw right

now. Yet somehow people defend 2003 to me. I don't get it.

Goldberg/??? vs. HHH/???

Bischoff comes out and talks tough to HHH before bringing out Flair to be HHH's partner. Goldie's partner: Randy Orton. Goldberg starts fighting the opponents before Orton gets there before beating up his own partner. We're not going to get a match here are we? Orton gets in a shot on Goldberg's knee as HHH says lower the cage again. Bill keeps trying to fight and has all three guys down for a bit, only to walk into a chair shot to the head from HHH. The big beatdown ensues as Goldbeg is bleeding. HHH is legit injured at this point so the Pedigree is basically Goldberg falling and HHH kneeling. A second try closes the show.

Overall Rating: D-. Yet people still defend this nonsense. Let's look at what we had tonight: a cage match that wasn't important enough to give a story to, JR/King/Snow/Coach as the second big feud for the PPV, a beatdown to end the show, a 20 minute talking segment that went nowhere, and no good matches in two hours. When the best part of a show might be Molly Holly's hair, you've got major problems.

I've already done the September 15, 2003 Raw if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2012/11/03/monday-night-raw-september-15-2003-whoever-requested-this-start-running-now/>

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Monday Night Raw – January 21, 2013: Why I Love Rumble Season and They Got Rock!!!

Monday Night Raw

Date: January 21, 2013

Location: HP Pavilion, San Jose, California

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler

It's the go home show for the Rumble and most of the card is set. My guess is that the Rock will be in the building tonight to further the feud with Punk. Other than that you can expect to see the big deal at the end of the show where everyone is thrown to the floor with one person left standing. Other than that there isn't likely to be anything new tonight. Let's get to it.

The Martin Luther King Day video opens things up. Vince never misses this one.

Here are Heyman and Vickie to open the show. Vickie says that it's her job to make sure everyone has the best time they can at her show. That means she has to do things that are unpopular at times, which includes when it involves The Rock. Heyman says last week Rock insulted him as well as Vickie, who he sucks up to.

We get a clip from the Rock Concert last week with Rock making fun of both of them and Vickie says that if Rock tries to get in here tonight, he'll be arrested. We're told that Rock is being stopped from getting in by cops so we cut to the back where Rock cuts a promo on the three cops.

Rock says that instead of arresting him, one should arrest Punk for impersonating a champion, because unlike Manti Te'o who had an imaginary girlfriend, Punk has an imaginary nutsack. Heyman should be arrested for going out without a bra and Vickie should be asked what her insides look like, because her own head is buried inside of her. Rock tries to talk his way into the arena but Vickie says he's not getting in, if you smell

what the Vick is cooking.

Tonight there's a Beat the Clock Challenge and whoever wins gets to pick their number in the Rumble. The idea is that there will be three matches: whoever wins his fastest gets to pick their Rumble spot.

Beat The Clock Challenge: Randy Orton vs. Antonio Cesaro

Both guys try quick rollups with Cesaro grabbing a headlock to take it to the mat instead. Antonio has the American flag trunks on now as he continues to embrace America. Orton comes back with a Thesz Press but shifts to another cover instead of using the cover that the Press is by definition. Orton punches him down for two and we take a break. Back with Cesaro putting Randy on the top turnbuckle but Orton blocks a superplex and knocks Antonio to the outside.

Orton gets pulled down as well as the clock continues to tick. The gutwrench suplex gets a pair of two's and we hit a chinlock in a match that is designed to be won as quickly as possible. A slam gets two more for Cesaro as does a double stomp as we hit nine minutes. Back to the chinlock for a bit until Orton fights up and does all of his usual stuff. Cesaro counters the Elevated DDT into a jackknife cover for two and the European uppercut gets the same. Orton is sent shoulder first into the post and falls to the floor as we're past eleven minutes now. Cesaro comes back in and walks into the RK0 for the pin at 11:36.

Rating: C-. The lack of psychology in this match made my head hurt. In a match based around speed, why in the world would you keep going to the floor or putting on chinlocks? The clock idea can get a bit annoying after while but it'll get even worse later on in the night. The match here wasn't bad but the psychology was plain stupid at times.

Foley Hall of Fame video.

Shield video/promo talking about how they've taken out a lot of people and they're just getting started.

Big Show vs. Zack Ryder

Brad Maddox jumps in on commentary to further annoy us. WMD ends this in

46 seconds.

Show talks about his second Last Man Standing match with Del Rio at the Rumble. He stands on Ryder's chest and counts to ten.

Post break Maddox goes to see Heyman again and Heyman actually agrees to help make him famous. Ok then.

Ryback vs. Heath Slater

Back to basics for Ryback here as he mauls Heath and beats up the cohorts before finishing with Shell Shock at 1:11.

Ryback says his job is fun and on Sunday he's in his first Royal Rumble. He's made for this kind of match and it's going to lead him to the main event of Wrestlemania.

Rock is still trying to talk his way around the cops. He says the cops are here to serve the people, not to protect Vickie Guerrero. Rock talks about what an experience it is to see Rock's entrance and the fans start chanting his name. One of the cop says he had tickets for tonight and his wife and kid are in the crowd. Rock sees an opening and Vickie comes in to say arrest him.

The cops say Rock isn't breaking any laws but apparently Vickie has the power to have them suspended from the police force. Punk is up next so Vickie offers Rock a chance to get in if he'll apologize and make it good. Rock says he's getting in but on his terms, not hers. The other problem is that Vickie still looks horrible tonight. Vickie shoves the cops away and leaves. Rock tells the cops he has an idea.

Here are Punk and Heyman for their weekly talk session. Punk says that he's been champion 428 days and he's going to be champion this time next week. He's looked into the eyes of the Rock and knows that Rock isn't a champion inside his heart. A long time ago Punk chose honest arrogance while Rock picked all of the people. Rock may be the Brahma Bull and the Great One but he can't call himself champion. Punk is the man and in six days, Rock is on a collision course with him.

Beat The Clock Challenge: The Miz vs. Dolph Ziggler

AJ is looking GREAT tonight. The clock is set at 11:36 so Miz tries for two fast pins but can only get two. They trade pinfall reversals until Ziggler hits a decent dropkick for two. A neckbreaker gets another two on Miz and it's chinlock time. Miz takes Ziggler down and pounds away as we're under nine minutes. A kick/knee to the face takes Ziggler down and there's a chop block to set up the Figure Four. That gets countered because Miz isn't Flair and Miz is sent to the floor. Langston sends him into the apron which gets two for Ziggler back inside.

We take a break and come back with four minutes left on the clock and Ziggler holding a chinlock. Miz fights up and hits a sunset flip and big boot for two each. Miz goes off on Ziggler in the corner and pounds away before hitting the running clothesline and the top rope ax handle for two. 2:30 left. The Finale is countered into a rollup by Ziggler which is countered into a rollup with trunks for two for Miz.

Ziggler hits the jumping DDT for two and we're under 2:00. Miz picks the leg and COMPLETELY screws up the Figure Four but an AJ distraction lets Langston pull them to the ropes. Under a minute left and Miz has to avoid a Langston distraction, allowing Ziggler to hit the Zig Zag for the pin at 10:56.

Rating: D+. PLEASE let this be the end of the Figure Four idea for Miz. It doesn't fit him whatsoever and this whole face push continues to be a disaster for him. Channeling Flair, as in a guy who is a jerk just like Miz, isn't going to do him any favors either. This didn't work that well at all and a lot of that is due to Miz. Let him be himself, not Flair.

It's time for HELL NO's anger management graduation. Dr. Shelby is running things and apparently his first name is Marion. Apparently they're his first graduates. This comes complete with caps and gowns, Pomp and Circumstance, and diplomas. Bryan has his hair slicked back and they put their hats on in the ring. They officially graduate and as a final exercise, they have to pick who is valedictorian. Kane says Bryan and Bryan says NO.

Kane says Bryan has never had a problem with shutting his mouth before and an argument breaks out. Shelby snaps and asks them if a hug would

make them feel better. The Dr. has an idea: what if EVERYONE hugged at the same time? Kane asks about Lawler and Cole and Shelby says yes them too. Lawler finally does it and now Bryan wants the physician and Justin Roberts to hug. Kane wants three fans to hug. They both tell random fans to hug and then everyone has to hug at once. A jumping group hug ends this.

Kaitlyn vs. Alicia Fox

Kaitlyn takes it to the floor quickly and pounds away as Tamina is looking on in the back. They head inside again and Alicia grabs a quick chinlock. That's the extent of her offense as Kaitlyn spears her down for the pin at 2:05.

Heyman has secured a sky box for Punk to watch the next segment from. He calls it a Paul Bomb for the Rock.

Here's Heyman to the ring to act as an interpreter for Punk since most of what he said likely went over the heads of most of the fans. The people seem to think that it's a foregone conclusion that Punk is losing the title on Sunday because Vince is desperate for someone to defeat Punk for the title. Rock is the flavor of the month this time because Rock should be focusing on Punk but instead he's singing songs about Heyman and Vickie. This means that Rock is stupid...and he's also apparently coming to the arena.

He holds up the ticket that presumably the cop had for himself and Heyman bails. Rock thanks the cop for the ticket so Heyman correctly points out that the ticket doesn't allow Rock to get in the ring. "Shut your mouth Twinkie T***." Rock looks up at Punk in the box and says that on Sunday he's winning the title. What it all boils down to is that Rock is going to rip Punk's face off and there's nothing Punk can do about it.

Rock invokes Martin Luther King and says that Rock is going to whip Punk all over the place. Next Monday, everyone from Bangkok to Brazil and all the way back around to San Jose is going to say free at last free at last, thank God almighty we are free at last from CM Punk as WWE Champion. Rock finishes it up and there go the lights. They come back up and SHIELD IS ON THE ROCK! They hit the Triple Bomb and leave Rock

laying. Punk says that Rock may have a dream, but at some point you have to wake up. Rock is bleeding from the mouth.

We get a video on Martin Luther King. Dang they're really proud of him tonight aren't they?

Beat The Clock Challenge: Wade Barrett vs. Sheamus

The time to beat is 10:56. They slug it out to start and Sheamus gets two off a Regal Roll. Ziggler is watching in the back. Barrett rolls to the apron where he guillotines Sheamus to slow him up. Back inside and Barrett clotheslines Sheamus to the floor as we take a break. Back with five minutes left and Barrett kicking Sheamus in the ribs. Off to an armbar on Sheamus before Sheamus comes back with running ax handles and a knee lift.

We're under 4:00 to go and Barrett is dumped to the apron for the ten forearms. A suplex back in gets two on Barrett and we've got 3:00 left. Wade escapes White Noise and sends Sheamus' shoulder into the buckle. A pumphandle slam is escaped but Sheamus misses the Brogue Kick. A kick to the ribs and one to the jaw get a VERY close two. Barrett hits a middle rope elbow for two and we've got two minutes to go.

Sheamus escapes Wasteland and hits White Noise for no cover. He loads up the Brogue Kick but here are AJ/Dolph/Langston for a distraction. Winds of Change gets another near fall on Sheamus but we've only got 18 seconds left. Barrett loads up the forearm but charges into the Brogue Kick. The clock runs out though at 10:56 just as Sheamus covers giving Ziggler the win.

Rating: C. We were pretty much waiting for Ziggler to come out at the end and the question was could Ziggler survive the clock. Ziggler getting to pick his spot is interesting but there's no reason for him to pick anything other than #30, unless he wants to show off. This was your usual match between these two in a pairing we've seen WAY too many times now.

Ziggler and company celebrate in front of Vickie and she says Dolph gets to pick a number, but not any number. It's either #1 or #2. Ziggler is stunned.

We recap the Shield stuff again and cut to Heyman and Punk smiling in the back. They run into Vince who accuses them of sending Shield out to jump Rock. Vince says that if Shield gets involved on Sunday, there will be consequences. Heyman and Punk protest and point out how many other people Shield has attacked. Vince doesn't care and says that if Shield interfered, Punk is stripped. Of the title you sick freaks.

Alberto Del Rio vs. Tensai

Tensai takes the champion (non-title here of course) down to start and hits a pair of Vader Bombs before Del Rio comes back with a rana out of the corner and a German suplex. The enziguri in the corner sets up a mostly missed middle rope moonsault for the pin at 1:31.

We get the second inductee into the WWE Hall of Fame: BOB BACKLUND! Awesome choice there and his speech should be interesting to say the least.

Here's Cena to close the show. He talks about Sunday coming up and usually being a day of rest. Cena talks about people enjoying Sundays and talks to a kid in the crowd who probably plays video games on Sundays. He asks the kid to stop blocking him from getting to the next level on Black Ops 2. Cena mentions a goofy sounding user name before moving on to some chick who apparently enjoys a calm Sunday but winds up with a guy's phone number in the pocket. The guy happens to be over in the front row and sex jokes are made.

The point to all this rambling is that everyone does different stuff on Sunday and this particular Sunday is about the Royal Rumble where the winner goes to Wrestlemania. The Rumble is going to be a war and Cena says he'll win the Rumble. His music hits but it's only 10:58 so here's Sheamus to offer a rebuttal. He says he'll repeat what he did last year, but here are the Prime Time Players to say THEY'LL win. Before they can get that far though, Orton makes an appearance and says he's feeling deja vu.

Before he gets into that, Miz comes out to say his catchphrase but HELL NO comes out to say something as well. You know the real money in this company is making microphones. With them arguing, here's Cesaro to say HE

is winning the Rumble. He dedicates his win to the USA but here are 3MB to say their usual stuff. The rest of the locker room comes out for the required huge brawl before the Rumble. Sheamus throws out about five people and the show ends in chaos.

Overall Rating: B-. I liked tonight's show. They hyped up the Rumble as well as talking about other things going on in the show. That's a good go home show and I'm intrigued to see the Rumble on Sunday. Rock vs. Punk will be awesome and while I think I know who is going to win on Sunday (no hints yet as I'm in a predictions contest and I don't want to give away my brilliance), it's always a fun show. Good stuff tonight.

Results

Randy Orton b. Antonio Cesar – RKO

Big Show b. Zack Ryder – WMD

Ryback b. Heath Slater – Shell Shock

Dolph Ziggler b. The Miz – Zig Zag

Kaitlyn b. Alicia Fox – Spear

Wade Barrett vs. Sheamus went to a no contest

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Bob Backlund Officially Announced For WWE Hall of Fame

That's a big name that's been left out for awhile. I don't usually watch the Hall of Fame speeches but his will

definitely be an exception. I don't remember anyone who went from one character to another with such a huge jump like he did in 1994. Good pick here. A little trivia about Backlund for you: he wouldn't sign autographs for fans unless they could name all of the Presidents of the United States in a row. As a political geek, I could get behind this concept.

Dolph Ziggler's Rumble Entry Number Announced

Kind of at least. Ziggler won a Beat the Clock challenge tonight but since he made out with AJ in front of Vickie, he has to pick either #1 or #2. Odds are he'll be in there either about two minutes or close to forty five.

Shield Attacks Rock

People have been wanting this and now they got it. I didn't expect they would actually go there but it's definitely something interesting to see. I still think Rock wins the title on Sunday but they've definitely made it more interesting now.

Raw Roulette Is Back Next Week

As per this video on WWE.'s Youtube channel.

Any predictions/matches/stipulations you want to see?

The Bryan/Kane/Shelby Hug Segment

.....I have no idea what I just witnessed but I couldn't stop looking at it.