

Invasion of the Bodyslammers: My Poor Childhood



IMG Credit: WWE

Invasion of the Bodyslammers

Hosts: Lord Alfred Hayes, Slick

Commentators: Bobby Heenan, Jim Ross, Randy Savage

Oh how I love the WWE Network. Back in the day, I had this on tape and watched it so many times that I can probably tell you the commentary from memory. I've always wanted to review it but it's kind of hard to find. Well either that or I'm too lazy to actually look it up. This is from early 1993 so don't expect the best action in the world. Let's get to it.

Hayes and Slick are in a bowling alley where Slick is teaching Kamala how to bowl (As part of teaching Kamala how to be a man. I never said these things were the most interesting in the world.). First up: Slick has bowling shoes for him but Kamala is scared to put them on so let's go to a match.

From January 25, 1993 in San Jose, California. Note that Jim Ross is doing commentary on all matches, despite most of them taking place before he debuted at Wrestlemania IX.

Yokozuna vs. Earthquake

Yokozuna goes to the sumo pose and we get some Thigh Master jokes.

There's no contact until over a minute and a half in, which is probably the best idea given the cardio issues here. Earthquake gets in some jumping kicks to the ribs but a shoulder exchange goes nowhere. Some clotheslines put Yokozuna down to a knee but he elbows Earthquake down just as easily. The big fat leg crushes Earthquake again and a running splash in the corner sets up the Banzai Drop for the pin at 3:45.

Rating: D. They were right to keep this short and when you take out the staring at each other early on, there's not much else to do. Yokozuna won the Royal Rumble the day before this was taped so he was well on his way to the top of the company. A win over a former top heel like Earthquake, especially one this big, was the right way to go. The length helped and while they didn't do much, they did it right.

From December 14, 1992 in Green Bay, Wisconsin.

Nasty Boys vs. Beverly Brothers

Egads what was wrong with me as a kid? Sags shoves Beau into the corner to start and gets punched in the face. The announcers talk about how this is going to be a fight, just after talking about how the Beverlies are such great wrestlers. JR: "Now Brain which one is Beau and which one is Blake?" Brain: "Well now the guy with the long hair and the tooth missing, that's one of the Nasties so forget him. Now the one with the long pants and the bowtie is the referee. This guy coming into the ring right now with blond hair is another one of the Nasties. The one in the blue is one of the Beverlies."

Beau, the one with the mustache for you non-Beverly Brothers experts, gets beaten up by both Nasties for a bit until Knobbs misses a charge in the corner. The World's Greatest Tag Team jump over your partner onto the opponent's back (first popularized by the Beverlies) keeps Knobbs in trouble but Beau misses a middle rope headbutt. That's not enough for the tag though as Blake comes in for a low blow with the announcers wondering how that could be allowed. I'm guessing it's not the finish to the match. An elbow to the face allows the hot tag to Sags and everything breaks down for the double DQ at 6:48.

Rating: D. Heenan's commentary helped this one along but it was only

going to get so far. The Nasties didn't fit as faces but they were going to get cheered at this point so it was the only choice the company had. The Beverlies were perfectly fine for a low level heel tag team and they put on some good performances when they were given the chance. Just a bad ending to a bad match here though.

Kamala doesn't have shoes on yet but Hayes has got him a bowling ball with the same paintings that are on Kamala's stomach. This works a bit better, but Kamala is still a little scared. Let's go to a match instead.

From November 24, 1992 in Dayton, Ohio.

Razor Ramon vs. Undertaker

JR makes bowling references and Heenan loses it when he says they bowl in Oklahoma every Saturday night. If that's not enough, Heenan tells a story about trying to get an Undertaker autograph but signing it himself and selling it to a kid. Ramon bails to the floor to start and the slow chase/walk is on. Back in and Razor hammers away but Undertaker just stares at him. The uppercuts set up New School (with JR selling the heck out of how awesome that is) so Razor clotheslines him to the floor.

That means a Stunner over the rope, which Undertaker has done far longer than I thought he had. Heenan: "What do you call him: an athlete or a monster?" Savage: "An athletic monster." Heenan: "Thank you very much!" Back in and a side slam drops Undertaker, followed by five elbow drops. That's not enough though as Razor steals the Urn and knocks Undertaker out. That's only good for two and Undertaker makes the comeback, including a chokeslam to send Razor bailing for the countout at 5:03.

Rating: C-. I can go for two bigger guys hitting each other hard, even if the ending was lame. Undertaker was rapidly becoming a featured player at this point with the unstoppable monster thing working very well for him. Razor was still a newcomer here so it made sense to not have him lose the match clean here. I liked this more than I should have and that's all you can ask for here.

From January 5, 1993 in San Antonio, Texas.

Bam Bam Bigelow vs. Typhoon

Just...why? JR is still on about the bowling thing and even Heenan has given up on the jokes. Typhoon powers out of a waistlock and a shoulder goes badly for Bigelow. For a change of pace, Bigelow tries a crossbody and gets planted with a World's Strongest Slam to the shock of the announcers. Fair enough actually. Back in and Typhoon gets sent chest first into the buckle and they're both down.

We hit the front facelock and some ax handles to the back put Typhoon down again. Bigelow scores with a suplex to even things out from earlier and it's off to a chinlock. A headbutt gives Bigelow two but he can't hold Typhoon up for a slam. Typhoon loads up the splash but picks him up for no apparent reason instead of even hitting said splash. Now the top rope headbutt is enough to put Typhoon away at 7:28.

Rating: D. The slams were impressive but Typhoon got less and less useful every single day. He's a big fat guy who can't do anything other than big fat guy offense, which doesn't help him much when he pulls Bigelow up instead of even trying his finisher. Bigelow wasn't much around this time either but at least he had some charisma and could do something a little more interesting.

Slick demonstrates a strike but Kamala is fascinated by his new ball. Therefore, let's go to the Repo Cam.

We start with Repo Man harassing a family who has bought a new camper but is late on the payment for his camera.

Instead, Repo Man allows him to film the day's activities to let him keep the camera. First up: a guy behind on the payments for his Cadillac. Repo Man sneaks up on him (in broad daylight and outside the Selland Arena in Fresno, with a WWF production truck in the parking lot) and takes the car, revealing the driver to be Bill Alfonso (not named but that voice is easy to recognize). Thankfully Repo Man is smart enough to remember his cameraman.

Next up: Repo Man steals a kid's bike for because his dad is late picking him up from school. It's quite a sight to see Smash riding down the

street on a child's bike, shouting over his shoulder that the kid's dad owes him big money and for the cameraman to hurry up.

It's time to move on to something bigger now as Repo Man goes into a video store (full of Coliseum Videos of course) and promises to take it soon. The cashier says she can get out of trouble if she plays the Repo Man's Greatest Hits.

So now we're on a tape in a segment, this time with Repo Man kicking a car window in and stealing it too.

Repo Man steals another car. We get the idea!

Back in the video store, he takes the guy's camera to wrap things up. It went on too long but Repo Man talking to the camera was funny.

From April 29, 1992 in Syracuse, New York.

Intercontinental Title: Bret Hart vs. Shawn Michaels

Bret is defending. Feeling out process to start with Shawn's armdrag annoying Bret a bit. Savage: "Michaels can wrestle." Just not against Savage on the big stage after a long rivalry. Shawn takes him down by the hair into an armbar but Bret sends him outside, frustrating Shawn to no end. Back in and Bret tries his own armbar as these two have a long history of mirroring each other.

In what might not be the brightest move in the world, Bret tries to run the ropes and gets cut off by a knee to the ribs, as Shawn is just better when things speed up. Sherri even gets in a forearm from the floor, as is her custom. An elbow sets up the chinlock on Bret as you can hear the fans getting behind Bret.

It works for a few seconds but Bret charges into the superkick (not yet the finisher) for no cover and only a reaction from Savage. A clothesline out of the corner gets Bret out of trouble again and the middle rope elbow gets two. Shawn bails to the floor in a smart move and they slug it out but Shawn knocks him off the apron into the barricade for the countout at 8:52.

Rating: C+. This was a slow motion version of what these two are capable of doing and while it might not be the brightest idea in the world to have Bret defending a title that he hadn't held in a good eight months by the time this came out, at least they got these two big names in there. These two might get together again a few times in the future.

Post match Shawn takes the title from the referee and shoves him down, only to get hit by the belt from a returning Bret.

Slick bowls another strike but Kamala doesn't stop looking at the ball. The solution is to give him another ball but it's easier said than done.

From February 16, 1993 in Dayton, Ohio.

Doink the Clown vs. Kamala

This is still evil Doink with a gift box. Hang on a second as Doink wants to give Kamala the present, which Heenan thinks is a bowling ball. Heenan doesn't think that's necessary though: "What you could do is just shave Kamala's beard, cut off his head, stick a finger in each ear and roll him down the alley. Same thing!" Kamala gets distracted by the box and gets taken down by a double leg. Another takedown has Kamala in trouble as Heenan sings Doink's praises. A superkick and some chops have Doink out on the floor but he offers Kamala the present. That's enough for a countout to end Kamala at 3:20.

Rating: D. I suddenly feel like I'm watching a bad episode of Raw. The box thing was an idea where you could probably guess what was coming as soon as Doink brought it to the ring but what else were they supposed to do here? There's not much you're going to get out of a three minute match with these two, but it does make me realize how awesome heel Doink could have been with some more time.

And of course there's nothing in the box. Kamala beats him down to blow off some steam.

From December 14, 1992 in Green Bay, Wisconsin.

Undertaker vs. Papa Shango

They stare each other down (which Savage LOVES) and Shango grabs him by the throat for a drive into the corner. An uppercut sets up Old School and a slam but since a slam isn't exactly devastating, Shango knocks him to the floor with a clothesline. For some reason Paul Bearer distracts the referee and Shango uses his voodoo stick to spray sparks in Undertaker's face. Savage: "We may be about to see the Undertaker's first defeat!" Savage does remember that Undertaker is a former WWF World Champion right? A chair to the back keeps Undertaker in trouble but three straight slams mean three straight situps. With Shango running out of ideas, he copies Ramon from earlier in the tape with a series of elbows and that's just not right. Undertaker pops up and hits the chokeslam for a fast pin at 6:30.

Rating: D. Other than the blast of sparks, there wasn't much else to talk about here. Then again, this isn't the kind of a tape where you're supposed to get some big match with big storyline advancement or a major showdown. At the same time, Undertaker vs. Shango is the kind of match that writes itself. I know Undertaker would go on to have a fine career but he was in there with a Hall of Famer. You would expect a slightly better performance, no?

Slick has finally explained the concept of the game to Kamala and even gotten him another ball. Kamala then runs down the alley to knock the pins down, meaning we need another explanation. How bad is it that these are kind of amusing?

From February 1, 1993 in New York City New York.

Battle Royal

Owen Hart, Koko B. Ware, Kamala, Kim Chee, Shawn Michaels, Iron Mike Sharpe, Bob Backlund, Typhoon, Razor Ramon, Damien Demento, Berzerker, Terry Taylor, Skinner, Tito Santana, Tatanka,

From a Raw taping in the Manhattan Center. It's the usual fighting to start as I'm trying to figure out who the final entrant is. Sharpe is out in short order with Kim Chee running around on the floor. Shawn gets rid of Koko with a heck of a backdrop and it's back to the brawling as the announcers discuss pillow fluffing. Various people are bent around the

corners and Typhoon gets rid of Skinner.

Savage picks Typhoon and JR goes with Kamala while Heenan picks Razor and a few others. Demento is gone with Owen following him a few seconds later. Shawn snaps off some left hands on Santana in the corner and Berzerker is out as well, earning a loud HUSS chant in the process. In a rather dumb move, Chee gets rid of Kamala (his former boss/whatever else you would call Kamala to Kim Chee), who gets back in and beats the heck out of Chee, eliminating him in the process.

Chee runs away into the crowd and the chase is on, eventually heading into the balcony after some more brawling in the ring. Taylor and Backlund were eliminated off camera and Shawn backdrops Typhoon over the corner to get us down to Santana, Michaels, Ramon and Tatanka. Shawn and Tatanka trade lefts and rights in the corner as Santana and Ramon can't eliminate each other.

The pairs switch off until Michaels gets double teamed to keep him in trouble. A double kick to the ribs gets rid of Michaels so we're down to three (four if you remember how to count to sixteen) and here's the Giant Gonzalez, who seems to be the sixteenth entrant. Razor goes underneath the bottom rope and Tatanka and Santana are tossed by the monster. Gonzalez leaves over the top so Ramon can crawl back in to win at 13:18. Heenan: "I WIN AGAIN! I WIN AGAIN!" Savage: "You gotta be ribbin!"

Rating: D-. Aside from Kamala running around the balcony for a funny visual, there's only so much you can get out of a match like this, especially with such a screwy finish. Ramon was still a relative newcomer at this point so it was a good idea to let him win a match like this. If nothing else, the announcers were hilarious with Heenan changing picks and then claiming the win like only he could do.

From October 26, 1992 in Springfield, Illinois.

Tatanka vs. Repo Man

They start fast with some rope running with Tatanka taking over, even sending him out to the floor. Back in and a top wristlock puts Repo Man down as Heenan explains why it's a big deal to give Tatanka his first

loss. That's the kind of simple thing that is completely lost on most commentary today and I'd love to see it come back.

Repo Man screams HE'S BREAKING IT during an armbar, with Heenan again explaining that Repo Man might be trying to just get a breather if the referee yells at Tatanka. A legdrop on the arm keeps Repo Man in trouble but he ducks a middle rope crossbody. So he's repossessing control. Tatanka fights out of a weaker armbar and goes on the war path with the chops. A top rope chop sets up the Papoose To Go for the pin at 7:42.

Rating: D+. Nothing match of course but Heenan's commentary was actually interesting. Maybe he got bored with the jokes and went with some actual analysis for a change. That stuff was worth listening to and that's more than you get on most shows. Tatanka was going to become a bigger deal in the upcoming months so this wasn't really in doubt, but Repo Man's rantings were amusing.

Back in the alley, Kamala is standing in front of the lane and rocking the ball back and forth...but the ball goes backwards. We'll go on to the main event for the sake of sanity.

From January 4, 1993 in Beaumont, Texas.

Mr. Perfect vs. Ric Flair

You know Heenan is going to go nuts over this one. They're a bit slower to start and hopefully they have the time to do something here. Perfect busts out a strut of his own and slaps Flair in the face and there are far too many empty seats in the better seats. A drop toehold sets up another slap and Heenan is losing it. Flair is back up with a ram into the buckle for one of those great Perfect twisting bumps. He's fine enough to clothesline Flair to the floor as Heenan is trying to convince himself that it's still early.

Back in and a poke to the eye cuts Perfect off as Savage and Heenan debate Flair vs. Savage from Wrestlemania VIII. As expected though, Flair takes too long to go up top and gets slammed down for two (the classics never die). A shinbreaker sets up the Figure Four (the classics still never die) and Flair grabs the ropes as you would expect him to. The hold

is turned over and a rope is grabbed so it's time for Perfect to slug away on one leg. Right hands in the corner set up the Flair Flip and Flair bails to the floor. Back in and Flair ducks his head for some reason, setting up the PerfectPlex for the pin at 10:50.

Rating: B-. At least the last match on the show is the best, making it a good way to go out. These two always had great chemistry together and their Loser Leaves the WWF match a few days later would be even better. Flair was on his way out of the company at this point but he was still having good matches, which is a lot better than the people who just put it in neutral in their last few matches.

Slick is disappointed by failing with Kamala's lack of bowling skills, only to have Kamala bowl a strike behind his back. Celebrating wraps us up.

Overall Rating: D+. So yeah nostalgia ruled the day with this one as it's really not that good. Now at the same time, it's really not that bad with mainly a bunch of matches that could have served as dark matches most of the time. Some of them were perfectly fine though and the bowling things were so goofy that they were fun. There are far worse Coliseum Videos out there so I'll take what I can get in something like this.

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WWF Wrestling Challenge – January 17, 1988: The Rumble Royal? Since When?

WWF Wrestling Challenge

Date: January 17, 1988

Location: Municipal Auditorium, Nashville, Tennessee

Commentators: Gorilla Monsoon, Bobby Heenan

Back to the early 1988 B shows from the boys up north. We're still getting close to the Rumble which probably won't be mentioned more than in passing. Expect some more talk about the upcoming Hogan vs. Andre II match, assuming that's been advertised already. This is going to be very similar to the Superstars shows that I've already done so I'll know a lot of it before I watch it. Let's get to it.

We get a message from Bill Boner, the mayor of Nashville, welcoming us to the city.

Gorilla and Bobby are hosts. Gorilla: "Gorilla Monsoon here with this miserable individual." He's coming out swinging this week.

They run down the card and Duggan is called a policeman. I haven't heard that one before.

Jake Roberts vs. Gino Carabello

Gino can barely make it onto the bottom rope to hold his arms up. Gino gets in a single shot before Jake knees him in the ribs to take over. Jake grabs the arm as the fans chant for the DDT. Short clothesline and a slam set up the DDT for the

quick squash win.

Gino gets the snake treatment.

Dino Bravo is going to attempt to break a world bench press record at the Rumble and he speaks French about that for a bit.

Jimmy Hart's Glamor Girls defend the Women's Tag Titles against the Jumping Bomb Angels. Look those challengers up if you want to see some cool women wrestlers. They get a quick word in Japanese here.

Demolition vs. Omar Atlas/Rex King

Ax and let's say King start us off and it's time to pound on the back. Smash comes in for some slams and throws King to the outside. Ax slams him on the concrete and it's time for more pain. A HARD chop puts King in the ropes and it's off to Omar. He gets smashed (see? The name makes sense) down as Gorilla and Heenan have some funny exchanges about Heenan's standing in the company. Fuji says that's enough and the Decapitator ends Omar.

Rating: D. This wasn't much other than a long squash, but the tag matches were almost always longer. Demolition was straight up awesome and they dominated for so long that there was no one capable of hanging with them. The match was boring but at least the music was cool.

Gene keeps telling us about the Rumble Royal coming up next Sunday in Ontario. Ron Bass likes his chances and explains the rules one more time.

Bad News Brown is coming.

Jim Duggan vs. Joe Mirto

Harley Race says he's the real king. Heenan bails to go take care of something else as Duggan pounds away. Mirto is a big

guy too so this is even more impressive. Three Point Clothesline ends this.

Van Van Horne vs. Rick Rude

Gorilla thinks Rude vs. Warrior would be a classic. Well I wouldn't say classic but it was certainly good so chalk up most of one for Monsoon. Rude offers a free shot at the ribs which does nothing of course so he snap suplexes Van Horne after shrugging it off. Rude keeps beating him down but Heenan won't let him end it. Oh ok now he can so Rude hits a NICE dropkick. I've never seen him do that before but it worked perfectly. Rude Awakening ends this.

More Rumble stuff. The Gang and Reed aren't wanting to go to Canada but they'll go for the money.

Young Stallions vs. Los Conquistadors

Powers starts with let's say #1 and armdrags him down. Off to #2 who gets caught as well. The Stallions double team #2 as Heenan is back with facts about Los Conquistadors. They're from South America and one of them is not named Raoul. One of them, the one we'll presume isn't named Raoul, comes off the top with a shot to the back of Powers and more double teaming commences. #1 misses a dive off the top and it's off to Roma. No one in the crowd seems to care as Powers hits a powerslam on #2 for the pin.

Rating: C-. Not the worst match in the world but the Stallions weren't interesting at all. They were both your run of the mill muscle guys that were nothing different than any other guys with their builds would have been. There's just nothing there and that's why no one cared about them. Even in a less crowded tag team scene they wouldn't have meant anything.

We get our "live" interview segment with Andre and DiBiase. They talk about the Main Event and Andre says he'll win the title for DiBiase.

Ultimate Warrior vs. Brian Costello

Warrior immediately clotheslines him over the top to the floor before suplexing him back in. Someone gives Heenan an envelope. Gorilla press and splash get the pin.

Bolsheviks/Butch Reed/One Man Gang vs. Killer Bees/Lanny Poffo/Rick Hunter

This is the closest thing you'll get to a big match on this show for all intents and purposes. The Bees break up the Soviet anthem and we start with Blair vs. Boris. Off to Brunzell quickly as Heenan shows Gorilla a letter from Tunney reinstating the Islanders. O'Connor Roll gets two on Nikolai, who locks in a bearhug on Brunzell. Reed comes in and runs over Lanny with an elbow and Hunter comes in. Reed runs him over and the Gang hits whatever he called the gordbuster for the pin. Not enough to rate but it was a squash.

Beefcake has his own small bullhorns which he'll give to the fans to counteract the Megaphone. Then it'll be him vs. Valentine, which is what he wants.

Gorilla and Bobby wrap it up.

Overall Rating: D+. Nothing of note here but it wasn't bad. The idea was to talk about the Main Event and it's pretty clear that no one intended the Rumble to be a major event. I'm more curious about what they're doing with the name, as it was Rumble Royal a week before the show but the Royal Rumble when it aired. Anyway, pretty weak show, but things would pick up soon.

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