

Halftime Heat: The Stupidest Camera Angle Of All Time

Halftime Heat

Date: January 31, 1999

Location: Tucson Convention Center, Tucson, Arizona

Attendance: 0

Commentators: Kevin Kelly, Shane McMahon, Vince McMahon

This is another special request and that's fitting because it's a special show. This was a one time thing that WWF tried. They aired a special show during halftime of the Super Bowl. It got the highest rating in the history of Sunday Night Heat, drawing a 6.6. Not bad on Super Bowl Sunday eh? This is literally a one match show but it's a heck of a match. This was good from what I remember. Let's get to it.

WWF Title: The Rock vs. Mankind

The catch here? This is an empty arena match. Literally there are thousands of empty seats and zero fans in attendance. I don't think there's a reason for this but there were a total of five shows taped that night (Raw, Super Astros (A Spanish WWF show), regular Sunday Night Heat, Shotgun and this) so it's not like they didn't get their money's worth.

They do the full intros including Fink doing the introductions and the theme music with Titantron videos. You can never say Vince underdid anything. He's accompanying Rock here. There's nothing but the match here and the whole thing is less than twenty minutes long. It's WEIRD hearing them being able to talk smack. Vince joins us on commentary.

Basic stuff to start and before I forget this is falls count anywhere. Foley gets the sock as no one but Vince can get a word in. Baseball slide sends Rock to the floor and gets two. Rock's head is rammed into the bell. Foley talks smack as he

beats up Rock. Ok no wonder only Vince can get a word in: the other two have left. Well ok then.

Rock takes over and throws Mankind through the barricade wall and takes over. Foley gets thrown into some chairs as this is just weird to see. This is the rematch from the Rumble when Mankind had the title stolen from him. He took \$100,000 of Rock's money to force him into this I guess. We get a clock saying the second half of the game begins in 15:00.

In one of my favorite of his bits, Rock jumps on headset to talk some trash but Mankind pops up and grabs the Claw as we head back into the stands. 14 minutes left. I'm assuming the match ends when halftime is over? They fight up the steps with Foley slamming his face into the metal.

13 minutes to go as Vince talks about what you're watching. He says it's action adventure, it's soap opera, it's Hollywood and Broadway and all point in between. Vince is an amazing salesman as he makes it sound far more awesome than it really is but he gets you interested in it. He clearly loves what he does and what he's created which I think has a lot to do with why it's still around.

Rock gets a solid shot in with a trash can and Mankind falls back down the stairs. He's in control now and now Kelly and Shane are watching in a full arena. Methinks there are some camera tricks afoot here. We go back to "live" action and we're in the kitchen. Foley is thrown into a cotton candy stand and let the comedy begin.

He steals the sock and throws it in an oven then burns Foley in one. Foley goes into the pots and pans and is in big trouble. He hits Foley in the head with a package of hamburger buns for two. 9 minutes left. Rock stops to get some Jack Daniels but gets knocked back into some plates. BAG OF POPCORN TO THE HEAD!

Vince calling this seriously is rather funny. They go through

a door and are near catering now. 8 minutes. Rock stops and eats some popcorn but spits it out due to too much salt. Trash can to Mankind who has apparently lost a shoe. Catering is doing destroyed and Foley has been burned by some barbecue sauce to the eye. Rock is ticked that it's mild.

Piledriver on the floor is blocked and Foley goes into some wings. It's been all Rock for about 6 minutes now but he hits a low blow for two. I love hearing Vince saying ALMOST a count of three! We head through another door into the office areas. Foley is knocked into a chair as we have five minutes left.

Hey we have a phone call! Rock answers, saying it's the Smackdown Hotel. I wonder if that was legit. We have another call. "Hello, Smackdown Hotel, corner of Know Your Role Boulevard and Jabroni Drive!" And now Rock stops to hit on some secretary then calls her a big fat piece of trash. Foley gets an opening and takes over again though and we fight back into the hallway.

Back to "the arena" where Heat is being shown I guess. We're at a loading dock now and it's dark. Foley gets the Claw on and knocks Rock out underneath a forklift. He commandeers the forklift and lowers the load it's carrying onto Rock and in the DUMBEST thing I can remember in WWF history, THERE IS A CAMERA LOOKING DOWN FROM THE FORKLIFT. Foley asks the referee if his shoulders are down and puts his foot on the stuff it's carrying to win the title.

Overall Rating: B+. Might as well just go with that for the match rating too since it's literally one thing for the whole show. To put it mildly this was entertaining. These two had great chemistry together and everything clicked very well out there for them. The aspect was very different and this was a great way to grab people's attention if they didn't want to watch Gloria Estefan sing at halftime.

The timing was great too as this ended about 90 seconds before

kickoff so it's not like you missed any of the game. Very fun match and definitely a very unique thing to see. Well worth checking out as it's less than 20 minutes from Rock's entrance to the pinfall. Very good idea here and it worked, drawing a huge number.

Monday Night Raw – September 5, 1998: WE GET IT ALREADY!

Monday Night Raw

Date: September 5, 1998

Location: New Haven Coliseum, New Haven, Connecticut

Attendance: 7,607

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

This is the first Raw after Summerslam and it's on a Saturday. The Raw after this will be as well before we get back to the regular show on Monday the 14th, giving the fans in 98 two Raws in three days. Summerslam is over and Austin kept his title while HHH ended the DX vs. Nation war with a win in one of my all time favorite matches. We enter the build to the next few PPVs which culminates at Survivor Series. Let's get to it.

Here's Vince to open the show with a big smile on his face. He talks about how in a few weeks there's going to be a breakdown and it's going to be Steve Austin's breakdown. And hey, the next PPV just happens to be called Breakdown. See how easy it is to do something like that? Vince says after Breakdown, Austin will no longer be champion. As for Undertaker, he got an insurance policy in Kane, then told Kane to go to the back. "Undertaker is a fool."

Vince doesn't like Kane and says the brothers should dominate this company. However the other Superstars are now snickering at the sight of Undertaker and Kane. He insults them a bit more and here come the monsters. Vince runs through the crowd but the two of them chase him down.

Ken Shamrock/Steve Blackman vs. Disciples of Apocalypse

There's a Salvatore Bellomo 4 Life sign in the crowd. I've watched this stuff for a long time and I didn't ever expect to see that one. Let's say Skull starts with Shamrock but it's off to Blackman quickly. Blackman kicks away (no seriously, he kicks a lot) and even adds in a shoulder block but here come Undertaker and Kane who clear the ring about a minute in.

Undertaker puts Blackman in a leg lock and then the monsters chase off DOA.

We recap the Vince speech that ticked off the monsters again. Lawler says it was to motivate Undertaker/Kane.

Clip of the Outlaws winning the titles back from Mankind in a handicap match, followed by Kane popping up and hitting Foley in the dumpster and wheeling him out in the dumpster.

Vader vs. Val Venis

Val's speech is that he's like a dog because he comes when he's called. Dustin Runnels is in the crowd with signs saying "he is coming back." Val pounds on Vader, Vader pounds on Val, Val pounds on Vader some more. Now for a change of pace, Vader pounds on Val some more. The entire first minute was nothing but punching and a cross body from Val. Belly to belly gets two for Vader. A middle rope splash gets the same. Bradshaw comes in for some reason to yell at Vader (doesn't hit him) but here are Undertaker/Kane again for another match being thrown out. I sense a theme. Too short to rate but it was bad.

Rock and Henry say they'll win the titles tonight. By that I

mean Rock talks about beating DX and Henry says nothing.

Tag Titles: The Rock/Mark Henry vs. New Age Outlaws

Rock and Gunn trade headlocks to start and Billy hiplocks him down. The Outlaws work on Rock's arm and it's off to Road Dogg for an armbar and then a headlock. JR says Henry's legs literally look like tree trunks. Actually they look like the legs of a muscular black man but then again I'm no professional. Leg drop gets two for Mark. Back to Rock who punches Dogg down in the corner.

People's Elbow gets two as Billy has to save. The Nation double teams for a low blow on Roadie. Henry comes back in for a bearhug but his splash misses. Off to Billy for a lot of crotch chops and everything breaks down. Rock and Gunn go to the floor and Gunn goes into the post. And here's Chyna for ANOTHER DQ.

Rating: C-. Nothing to see here as the whole thing was based around punching until the Chyna run-in. This feud needed to end quickly as there was nothing left after Summerslam. The Nation would be split up soon, and I think Henry would become Sexual Chocolate soon enough, which I think tied into the Chyna deal.

Here are Tiger Ali Singh and Babu for the usual "Americans will do anything for money" schtick. This time it's French kissing Babu who has bad breath. The chick looks good at least. Undertaker and Kane FINALLY come out to break this up.

Southern Justice vs. Headbangers

Canterbury puts Thrasher on the floor and Mosh puts Knight out there too. Power vs. speed here as things start to calm down. Canterbury slams Thrasher down for two and the heels take over. Elbow drop gets two. Off to Knight who drops his head between Thrasher's legs to keep him down. Sunset flip gets two. Thrasher finally avoids a charge in the corner after more

beating, and it's off to Mosh. House is cleaned but he goes after one too many Godwinns so that the Slop Drop (Problem Solver) from Knight gets the pin.

Rating: D. Of all the matches we've had tonight, this one gets the clean finish? These teams weren't interesting to anyone by this point but at least the Headbangers could have some potential. Southern Justice was big, lumbering and completely uninteresting. I don't know why this match got a clean ending but it was a nice change of pace.

Taker and Kane, who have been looking for Vince all night, go up to the big door marked MR. MCMAHON and knock it open with a sledgehammer. No Vince inside though.

European Title: X-Pac vs. D'Lo Brown

We get a clip of Jeff Jarrett being forcibly shaved at Summerslam in the back. They trade control of the arm to start and Pac speeds things up. Brown shoulders him down and drops an elbow for two. Clothesline is ducked and Pac hits a spinwheel kick to take Brown's head off. There's the Bronco Buster but the second attempt hits boot. X-Factor out of nowhere hits and here's Jarrett for our fourth DQ in five matches tonight. This is the debut of Jeff's short hair.

Rating: D+. Not a bad match but I'm sick of these cheap endings. This would be Russo's bad booking style as the whole point of the show is to give a sense of carnage and anarchy but it comes off as more annoying than anything else. We get it: you can end a match by something other than a pin. Now do something else.

Kane and Undertaker come down for the 600th time tonight but Rock comes out to protect D'Lo. Brown runs so Rock gets chokeslammed instead. JR: "He doesn't look like that on the cover of the new Raw Magazine." JR can plug like no other.

Edge vs. Marc Mero

This is the aftermath of Sable winning a match all by herself on Sunday while Edge was there too. Feeling out process to start and we talk about the Tom's River, New Jersey Little League World Series champions. I had a friend who lived in that town when they won. That has no bearing on the match but it's nothing that great. Lawler: "How did they win the World Series?" JR: "They scored more runs than their opponents." Edge sends him to the floor and hits a SWEET dive...and here's Gangrel for DQ #5 tonight.

Edge and Gangrel brawl while Undertaker and Kane come out to beat up Mero.

We get a sitdown interview with Al Snow and get some clips from ECW. Snow talks about being a star there and about how he can be a star here. JR: "You're talking to a mannequin. Seriously." Snow talks about how normal he is and how he does stuff like mowing the lawn and going to the grocery store. JR asks about the voices Snow hears which Snow says sound normal.

Now we get into a discussion about the existence of God. Now we get a quick retrospective of Snow's past incarnations. Snow yelled at JR on Raw once but he says it was NOT a breakdown. He wants to talk to Vince but wouldn't say anything to him. The voices want to talk to Vince. Ok then. Head starts talking but Snow says they'll talk in the car. Part 2 is next week. This was bizarre but I couldn't stop watching.

Undertaker and Kane are still walking around.

Oddities vs. Legion of Doom

This would be a six man tag with Droz in there too. The ICP plays the Oddities to the ring and Hawk comes out to dance with them because he's "out of it." Instead it'll be Animal/Droz vs. all three Oddities The fans chant for the clowns and Hawk wants to dance with them some more. They won't do it so Hawk beats them up. Droz and Golga start us off with Droz elbowing him down before Hawk steals the tag. Hawk drops

the fist to Golga and then tags in Kurrigan. Everything breaks down and Silva powerbombs Hawk to end it. This was nothing.

Hawk dances some more post match.

Video of some legends saying they cheer for the new guys instead of how it used to be.

Undertaker and Kane break more stuff.

Too Much vs. Los Boricuas

I think that's Miguel starting with Scotty. If I remember right this was back when the plan for Too Much was for them to be the Billy and Chuck of the Attitude Era. Miguel is sent to the floor and goes right back into a pumphandle suplex for two. Off to Christopher (not yet a Grandmaster) who plays Bret in a Hart Attack. Off to Jesus who gets beaten on as well. Lawler explains that he didn't have Christopher at age 13 because he was just a prince back then.

JR goes on a small anti-internet rant which Lawler turns into a Bill Clinton sex joke. Taylor hits a low dropkick as JR tries to prove that Lawler is Brian's dad. Are the Boricuas the faces here? It would appear that way as Scotty runs into Christopher and the faces (I think) take over. They hit a double powerbomb on Scotty but Christopher hits the top rope legdrop to the back of Miguel's head and Scotty gets the pin.

Rating: D. Again, THIS is the match that gets a clean finish? Too Much was really boring because they tried using Memphis stuff on a national stage and that just doesn't work. Los Boricuas literally never wrestled on Raw again after this so the match means even less. Too Much wouldn't become Too Cool for almost a year so this was a pretty isolated appearance for them.

Jeff Jarrett vs. Scorpio

Main event time! Scorpio jumps him and the fight is on. Ok

make that the basic wrestling match is on. After a quick excursion to the floor, Scorpio kicks him to the floor and they fight out there. Back in Scorpio tries a standing hurricanrana but gets powerbombed for two. Off to the chinlock which is broken up quickly but Scorpio misses the moonsault. Jeff hits a superplex and freaking X-Pac runs in for the DQ.

Rating: D+. I'm done. This show has ticked me off AGAIN. The match was ok but of course we have a run-in. It's Russo's World and wrestling has no place on a sports entertainment show. Now I remember why I didn't like Raw much back then when Austin wasn't around.

Scorpio gets beaten up by the Brothers and takes a spike tombstone as Vince watches approvingly. They chase him off to end the show.

Overall Rating: F. This show had nine matches and SIX ended in a DQ because of a run-in. It got old really fast and what does it accomplish? Not a thing. Undertaker and Kane are monsters. We got that the first time, the second time, and ALL THE OTHER TIMES. On top of that, the matches that were given endings were boring, or it was the LOD match. This show was total overkill and had one idea running through the whole thing. If you don't like that idea, there's no point in you watching. That's what got WCW in trouble but thankfully it wasn't the case long term for WWF. Total misfire here though.

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