

Best of the WWF Volume 7 – Put Hogan vs. Savage on Last and This is a Classic

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Host: Gene Okerlund

Commentators: Gorilla Monsoon, Jesse Ventura, Vince McMahon

We're back to this again and this is the second time I've had to do the first half because I screwed something up and I'm an idiot. Anyway this is from mid 86 which isn't a good time for the WWF other than this new guy named Savage who is kind of awesome. Other than that there isn't much to it. Let's get to it.

Dig that Coliseum Video opening! And yes I know I say that every time but it's still awesome.

Gene welcomes us to the tape and runs down the card.

Pedro Morales vs. Terry Funk

We're in Boston here in I'd guess early 86. Gene tells us about Morales holding what we would now call the Triple Crown. Morales is at the end of his career here but he was still big enough of a draw to be brought into the big New England crowds. Morales hammers away and Funk is all messed up early on. Then again he might just be Terry Funk. Funk comes back in and throws Pedro onto the announce table.

Morales may have injured a hamstring on the fall. Funk hammers him in the head and does a little Ali Shuffle. He keeps peppering Morales and they go out onto the table again. Funk actually pulls the headset off of Gorilla who implies a showdown later on. That could actually be worth seeing. Or maybe that was Jimmy Hart. Pedro goes shoulder first into the

post and this has been totally one sided so far.

Funk pulls some tape out of his tights and chokes away. Morales gets it though and here comes the firey Latin temper that he was famous for. He knocks Terry around as Jimmy is freaking out on the floor. Funk gets knocked to the floor and the steps get turned over. He goes head first into them and hides under them like a true cowardly heel. Pedro teases jumping off the top but settles for drilling Funk upside the head. Funk does a perfect Flair Flop off the apron to the floor.

I don't think I've seen anything other than punches in this match so far and that's made it awesome. Funk is all over the place, looking either drunk or old. In other words, he's perfectly fine. Back to the floor again and Terry finds a wooden chair under the ring but it doesn't get used. Instead Pedro punches him some more and kicks him in the back. Funk gets his trunks pulled down and that's an image I really didn't need to see twice in one night. Jimmy slips Funk the Megaphone and a shot to the head ends this.

Rating: B-. This was a great old school brawl from two great old school brawlers. Funny how something like that works isn't it? Pedro was more or less done after this and it's not like Funk ever did much in his run in the WWF. At least after this he went back to the NWA where he was much more successful.

WWF World Title: Hulk Hogan vs. Randy Savage

This was the hottest feud on the planet back then and Savage jumps him as soon as Hogan hits the ring. He destroys Hogan for about three minutes with the robe and shades still on. And that is why Randy Savage is better than you: he can make a robe, sunglasses and purple underwear look awesome. A bunch of belt shots, including one off the top are all cool with the referee.

Liz gets on the apron for dramatic convenience and Hogan takes

over with his big rights. Now he has the shades on and he chokes away with the headband. We head to the floor and Savage goes into the post, busting him open badly. Hulk peppers him with some shots to the open cut. What a strategic American hero.

We get our first non-punch move of the match: a choke by Hogan. The fans are WAY into this as Liz gets up on the apron again. Savage gets a shot in and sends Hogan to the floor. There's the double axe to the outside and another one on the inside for two. Savage goes up and there's the big elbow, but Hogan does the superhero kickout at one. It's Hulk Up time and I think you know where this is going.

Hogan goes off on him and there is blood everywhere. There's the big boot and Savage keeps trying to run. Back to the floor and Hogan sets to ram him into the post but Liz stops him. Savage gets down and rams Hogan into the post. We have a bell for some reason and I guess we're done? There are spots of blood on Hogan's trunks.

Rating: B. This is one of those matches where there wasn't any kind of a story to it and it was just a big brawl from bell to bell. Due to that, the fans LOVED this and never stopped freaking out the entire time. These two did this same match almost every night on the house shows and it never stopped working. Once they teamed up in 88 they were almost unstoppable and it's why the matches they had after they Exploded were so awesome.

Post match Hogan goes nuts, throwing on a bear hug. It takes a bunch of the roster to break it up. It's cool to see that from Hogan (who is getting cheered harder than almost anyone else I've ever heard in the Garden) who rarely shows much anger. It's a countout win for Savage if you're interested, which was Hogan's second straight loss to Savage in MSG. There's huge heat on Savage being announced as the winner.

Lou Albano vs. Arnold Skaaland

This is a battle of the managers from 77, which I believe was a HUGE feud if I remember right. They're both old but the fans are all over this. Skaaland drills him after the bell and Albano almost immediately runs. I think I've seen this before. I mean before I erased the review earlier tonight. Albano goes old school on the heel style with a foreign object that isn't really there. Do that about four or five times and you're going to need a police escort out of the place, at least back in the day.

The beating goes on for awhile and it's more or less all Albano just popping him in the head with the object. Seriously that's all the match is but if I know my MSG crowds, the pop for the comeback is going to be oh yeah there it is. Skaaland gets the object and drills Albano with it a few times to blow the roof off the place. Albano bails and it's a countout win for Arnold.

Rating: B-. I know that's way too high for four and a half minutes of nothing but punches, but dang the fans ate this up. They're two old managers but that's all this needed to be: a beating by Albano and then a big comeback win for Skaaland, which is all the fans wanted to see. This is a walking definition of less being more.

Tag Titles: Toru Tanaka/Mr. Fuji vs. Haystacks Calhoun/Tony Garea

The non-Japanese guys are champions here. This is a rematch from when the country boy and Garea, the guy from New Zealand won the titles earlier in the year. It's also 2/3 falls. Calhoun is about 600lbs and was the biggest guy in the company's history until some French giant arrived. Tanaka throws the salt that is always thrown by Japanese guys for some reason and some little old ladies keep sweeping it up. Ok then.

We're almost immediately clipped to Garea and Tanaka starting us off. Garea hooks a headlock and is really bland looking while doing so. Calhoun is really happy and jolly. He's a hillbilly character the size of Yokozuna if that gives you a visual. He comes in too celebrate because his partner hooks a chinlock. See what I'm dealing with here? The heels cheat to take over and it's off to Fuji. It's so weird to see him in shape.

Garea fights back, hitting what Tito Santana used called a head knocker. Clipped again to Garea backdropping Tanaka and it's off to the fat man. He does a few comedy spots but also some simple ones like sitting on Tanaka's chest instead of dropping onto him. The second time he does it, Garea stands on Haystacks' back. Calhoun takes some salt to the eye but he gets out easily. A few shoulders get two on Tanaka. And there's a spin kick to the stomach for the first fall for Tanaka.

Clipped to the start of the second fall with Tony pounding away on Tanaka some more. He hooks a front facelock which is ruled a choke in a rare thing to see for a face's move. We get the most obvious clipping I've ever seen as all of a sudden Fuji is in the hold instead of Tanaka. I know they're sneaky but come on now. Everything breaks down and the heels double team Calhoun enough for a DQ to tie things up.

Third fall begins with Calhoun all messed up but that's normal for him as he was always kind of played up as a simpleton. Garea starts of course and Tanaka wants a handshake. They do some lame brawling and Garea hammers away even more. Off to the country boy again and the big splash keeps the titles on Calhoun and Garea.

Rating: D+. This was really pretty boring. I've seen some old school matches that are good but this was nothing to see at all. Calhoun was a big old school draw but he didn't do much for me. The match was nothing to see and was mainly Garea

doing the whole thing and boring me to death the entire time. The Japanese team would get the titles back later in the year.

Calhoun splashes Tanaka again because he can.

This next one is from Showdown at Shea so it's pasting time. Monsoon does commentary on the tape but I'm not watching this again.

Intercontinental Title: Ken Patera vs. Tony Atlas

This is pre-jail for Patera so he's blonde and still kind of awesome. Atlas is Mr. USA and a generic strongman. Surprisingly good reaction for Atlas. This sums up Patera very well: before Mark Henry, there was Ken Patera. Just with a lower level of suck that is. Atlas is RIPPED with a body that makes John Cena look like Yokozuna. He throws Patera through the ropes on a kickout. Keep in mind Patera weighs about 270.

Foley goes into this insane story about how he remembers the Atlas/Johnson title win and how a strange set of circumstances that night led to him being world champion. Cole is ON IT tonight, talking about how the guys are doing everything in much more dramatic fashion because there's no video or anything like that so the view you have from the stands is all you have. That's something I wouldn't have thought of but it's very true.

We then get something I'd bet you will hear on a maximum of three other WWE produced shows ever: Foley says a lot of the matches aren't that good. How many times can you remember someone that flat out saying a show has been bad for the most part? Vince would call the worst matches ever "extraordinary" or something like that while Foley is sitting here saying this show hasn't been very good. He's absolutely right which is very nice to hear for a change, especially from someone that knows what it's like to be out there.

Full nelson goes on but Atlas gets the ropes. The announcers

don't talk about the matches at all and are just telling stories about how their memories of these guys which is really fun to hear. It's nice to hear guys that love this stuff just sit around and talk about wrestling rather than put things over. We get an interesting issue as the fans chant USA for Mr. USA Tony Atlas. Keep in mind Patera was a legitimate Olympian.

Cross body gets two for Atlas as Cole runs down the history of Shea Stadium. We hit the floor for some brawling and Patera is in trouble. This is a big brawl for the most part and we get a bell as Patera stays outside too long. Foley calls the finish unsatisfying. Atlas gets on the mic and wants more but the champion runs.

Rating: C-. Not very good but fun. Power vs. power is easy to do and this worked fine. Both guys oversold everything which is the idea here and it worked rather well. Not great or anything but fun which is what the idea is supposed to be here. Atlas was pretty decent actually.

Now we get to one of the theme parts of the tape: The Slammies! This was for the original broadcast, which is so far beyond campy it reaches the city again. Gene goes up to some fans and annoys them. All he does is ask who is winning tonight, without asking about categories or nominees. This goes on way too long and he doesn't seem to stop asking decent looking women. One guy wisely walks away from him. I really hope these guys are plants. This is in Baltimore. The only interesting thing here: Gene says the words jabrino and kayfabe. This goes on WAY too long.

Jesse talks to Piper while Piper is in the bathroom.

Now we get to the main part of the awards. Vince and Gorilla are hosting and Gorilla has to zip up. The first award is for Most Ignominious and it was voted up by the WWF Academy of Arts and Sciences. The winner (and only nominee) is Nikolai

Volkoff. Sheik and Volkoff (in wrestling gear and a cheap suit respectively) come out to accept the award but Sheik falls on his face. Volkoff thinks it's a singing award. He doesn't know what ignominious means and when he finds out he isn't pleased. Nikolai says he shouldn't be the Most Ignominious. He should be the SECOND Most Ignominious.

Roddy Piper wins the award for best performance in the Land of 1000 Dances video. He has what appears to be a broom with him for some reason. The trophy breaks as soon as he picks it up. He says that's typical of MTV: Music to Vomit by. Oh that Roddy. He's so crazy. Like MTV has anything to do with music.

Hart Foundation vs. British Bulldogs

If this isn't awesome, they're having an off night. Bret and Dynamite start us off and things are in high gear already. Bret bails and we're clipped. YOU AIR TEN MINUTES OF GENE ASKING STUPID QUESTIONS AND YOU CLIP THIS??? Bret gets sent outside again and it's off to Davey. It's power vs. power now as Anvil comes in. They trade slams and Davey does it with just one arm. Show-off.

Davey makes Anvil look stupid (a far stretch to be sure) and it's off to Bret. The Harts take over on Davey and work him over in their corner. This is Foundation 101 and to be fair it's 80s tagging 101. They're in the black and blue which I always like a little better than the pink. Smith gets the tag to Dynamite but Bret pops him in the back as he's hitting the ropes. Now the REAL beating begins. Anvil sends him to the floor where Bret slams him on the concrete.

The heels do some old school cheating like switching without tagging and other such nefarious means. Dynamite takes the Bret chest first to the buckle bump. The Harts work over the ribs and back for the most part. There's some heel miscommunication as Bret holds Dynamite's arms back but Anvil has a boot up in the corner to ram Dynamite's head into. You

don't often see that from the Harts.

Davey finally freaks out and chases Bret around the ring which just allows choking by Anvil. They continue the tag cheating ways by having Dynamite make the tag but Bret distracts to keep the tag from counting. I love stuff like that. Dynamite tries to spin out of a backbreaker like a tilt-a-whirl but I think they botch it to a degree. Backslide gets two for the Kid.

Dynamite gets tied up in the ropes but escapes just in time to avoid a flying Hitman who crashes into the ropes. Hot tag FINALLY brings in Davey to clean house. There's the press slam to Bret. The numbers catch up with him and he takes a Hart Attack. Bret covers him, only to have Dynamite fly off the top with a swan dive (he was Benoit's idol) and makes the illegal pin.

Rating: B. Oh come on it's the Bulldogs vs. the Harts. This would be good if none of them had any limbs on their bodies. This is probably the best pairing of any WWF teams in this era, and when you consider how totally stacked the division was in this era, I can't really think of any higher praise.

Fabulous Rougeaus vs. Moon Dogs

The lighting is horrible here so I'm assuming this is in a non-American city. I'm right as it's from an unnamed city in Australia. The Rougeaus are brand new here. This incarnation of the Moon Dogs are Rex and Spot, probably the most successful pair. The Rougeaus take turns beating up on Rex, who is returning it seems. The brothers aren't even in matching tights so this must be very early in their run in the company. Further research says this is their first month there.

Spot comes in but the beard doesn't work its usual magic as he's rolled up for two. We're in Sydney if you're particularly interested. According to Hayes this is the Rougeaus' debut.

The newcomers work over Spot but we're clipped to him holding Raymond in a bearhug. Hot tag brings in Jacques who cleans house and hits a cross body for the pin on Rex.

Rating: C-. Pretty much a nothing tag match here but that wasn't the point. This was the team's debut and they needed a win over an established team to get anywhere. Also it's just a house show match for a country that didn't get much mainstream wrestling, so it's not like this was supposed to be anything of note.

Dream Team vs. Iron Sheik vs. Nikolai Volkoff

Both teams here have lost the tag titles at Mania so they have that in common. Also this is the rare heel vs. heel pairing. This might be in Philly but I'm not 100% sure. Oh ok this is before Mania 2 so the Dream Team (Beefcake/Valentine) are the champions. Off to Beefcake who gets caught in the other evil corner. Nikolai hammers away on him and wins a brief power struggle.

I think the champs are the de facto faces here. Valentine has a little bit better luck against the Russian so it's off to Sheik. He hooks an abdominal stretch and Gorilla still finds something to complain about with it. The Sheik goes aerial with a dropkick of all things and gets two. Brutus gets the tag and this match is boring me to death. The not yet Barber misses a middle rope fist to Volkoff and it's time for a bearhug to waste more time. Camel Clutch by Sheik is broken up and Valentine comes in, as does everyone else. And there's the lame double DQ. At least it's over.

Rating: D-. This was one of the lamest matches I've seen in years. Just boring all around and the whole thing didn't work at all. The Dream Team was straight up boring but would be together until Mania 3 because the fans hadn't suffered enough I guess. Just a horrible match and terribly boring.

Overall Rating: B-. The last match really drains this because

aside from that, I really didn't have anything to complain about. Everything works really well and you get an hour and a half of great stuff until the last match on the tape just kills this thing deader than Coliseum Video. If they had put Hogan vs. Savage on last, this goes WAY up in value. Still good stuff though, which is rare in this series.

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