

Monday Night Raw – November 1, 1993: Bobby Heenan Deserves Better

Monday Night Raw

Date: November 1, 1993

Location: Mid-Hudson Civic Center, Poughkeepsie, New York

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Bobby Heenan

It's another fresh month as we're getting closer to the Survivor Series. Unfortunately it's late 1993 and that means we're in for some very hit and miss shows but we're also in for a confusing few weeks as the main event is sorted out. It's a dark time for the creative direction of the company so let's get this over with. Let's get to it.

Bobby Heenan finds Bastion Booger eating a bunch of food. Heenan: "None of this food is...." Booger: "IT'S RAW!"

Opening sequence.

Bastion Booger vs. Razor Ramon

Non-title. Booger is just embarrassingly fat here. The toothpick throw gets us going and Razor easily puts him up against the ropes for a soft slap to the chest. We take an early break and come back with Booger getting two off a splash and Heenan admitting that it's his birthday. For some reason this stuns Vince as Razor ties Booger in the ropes for a.....belly rub?

They head outside with Booger actually hitting the splash against the post. A bearhug goes nowhere so Booger starts slowly hammering away. Booger gets two off a World's Strongest Slam as Heenan suggests Bastion could use the title as a tray at his birthday party. Another bearhug just seems to annoy Razor so he gets out and slams the big man. The Razor's Edge is laughable at best so Booger sits on Razor's chest and gets sunset flipped to give Ramon the pin.

Rating: D. Yeah this was horrible but what else were you expecting from someone as worthless as Booger? He was huge, he wasn't anything worth seeing in the ring and his gimmick was that he was fat and gross. Razor is an incredible talent but he can't do anything with someone like that.

Here's a Survivor Series report, including a preview of a boxing match between Riddick Bowe and Evander Holyfield II. After that cross promotion, we hear the current main event lineup: the All Americans (Lex Luger/Tatanka/Steiner Brothers) vs. the Foreign Fanatics (Yokozuna/Quebecers/Ludvig Borga) but this weekend, the Fanatics beat Tatanka down and cost him his first ever pinfall loss in about two years. Luger tried to make the save (and to high five fans while jogging down to help his partner) but was stopped by one of the Quebecers.

Back in the arena, the Foreign Fanatics are in the ring for a chat. Cornette keeps laughing about how "Tatanto" is out of the Survivor Series where it's all about surviving. Jim goes on a rant about all the possibilities the Survivor Series could see before Quebecers' manager Johnny Polo talks about a team of anthropologists coming up from Bora Bora to see this kind of stupidity in person.

Borga says Scott Steiner's American dream will never come true next week when he takes Scott out personally. Cornette wraps it up by saying that just like in Ten Little Indians, there will be none at the end of Survivor Series. Heenan: "And they're all coming to my birthday party!"

Mr. Perfect vs. The Executioner

Executioner is your standard masked man. Some chops have Executioner in trouble but he whips Perfect into the corner. That's about it for the jobber offense though as Perfect avoids a corner charge and kicks him in the ribs. We hit a leg lock on Executioner, followed by a spinning toehold to slow things down even more. This goes on WAY too long with Perfect pulling on the leg as Heenan suggests that his birthday be made a national holiday. The PerfectPlex gives him the pin to finally wrap this up.

Rating: D. WAY too long here despite it not even being four minutes long. This was a bunch of waiting around while Perfect worked on the leg which

went nowhere, only to have the PerfectPlex end it a few seconds later. I'm not sure what was up with Perfect here but it got really old in a hurry.

Jeff Jarrett is in Nashville and complains about the politics in country music holding him back. He's sick of seeing Billy Ray Cyrus with his buggy whip arms getting so much exposure. Jeff is ready to face people like Razor Ramon, Men on a Mission and the 1-2-3 Kid. This gimmick was dead on sight and I think everyone knew it.

Well Dunn vs. Smoking Gunns

Well and Dunn have purple thongs over their black singlets. Normally I would say that would tell you everything you need to know about them, but their names are Well and Dunn. Billy jumps over Dunn to start and punches him to the face as Heenan says Harvey Wippleman will be at his birthday party.

Some armdrags put Well down and we hit the armbar as this dead show keeps going. A suplex/high cross body combo gets two but Well snaps Bart's throat across the top rope to take over. We hit the chinlock on Bart to kill even more time before Well tags out to Dunn for another chinlock. Back up and the hot tag brings in Billy for a running clothesline. Harvey trips him up though....and they actually end this on a DQ after over seven minutes.

Rating: D-. Well Dunn vs. the Smoking Gunns just went to a DQ in nearly eight minutes. This was one of the worst matches I've seen in a very long time and I have no idea who thought this was something that needed to air on national TV. Horrible stuff here that just kept going and made an awful show even worse.

Randy Savage calls in to say he'll be back to take care of Crush. Heenan makes fun of Savage's voice because he's a bit insane.

Adam Bomb vs. Virgil

Your main event people. They stare at each other to start until Virgil gets two off a cross body (though it looked like Bomb was supposed to

catch him). That means it's time for Adam to have a meeting on the floor with Wippleman, who Virgil chases around for fun. Back in and Virgil dives over the top but somehow winds up under Bomb. They head inside again with Adam hitting him in the head and slowly working Virgil over, only to miss a charge in the corner. Virgil scores with a dropkick but his cross body bounces off Bomb in what looks like another botch. The Adam Smasher (powerbomb) puts Virgil away.

Rating: D+. Who would have guessed that Virgil vs. Adam Bomb would somehow be the match of the night? Virgil actually tried in this one and got in some good offense, but when your opponent can't figure out how to take a cross body, there's only so much you can do. Bomb would get MUCH better after turning face but this was a hard one to sit through.

Heenan starts singing Happy Birthday to end the show.

Overall Rating: F. Holy sweet lederhosen this was a horrid show. The stuff for Survivor Series wasn't bad but with this being the last episode of a TV taping, they basically threw whatever last talent they had out there to fill in some time. Just a dreadful show here, which really is the theme of this era.

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Monday Night Raw – December 19, 1994: Even Santa Has Given Up

Monday Night Raw

Date: December 19, 1994

Location: Liberty High School, Liberty, New York

Attendance: 1,400

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Shawn Michaels

It's a double main event tonight with Lex Luger vs. IRS and Well Dunn vs. Bushwhackers II! Now how in the world could this not be the best show of the year so far? We're also starting to get kind of close to the Royal Rumble but the only thing mentioned so far has been the Tag Team Title match with participants to be announced. Maybe we can get a Christmas miracle or something. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

IRS vs. Lex Luger

Luger has what looks like the most bored kid in history carry the American flag to the ring. Lex shoves him down to start as Shawn calls him the Total Package. Vince is trying to figure out who the Druids are and thinks it could be either King Kong Bundy or Tatanka. That's so stupid I'm not even sure how to make fun of it. A hiptoss and slam put IRS down and there's an AMERICAN (though not a Real American because that's been taken) clothesline to give Luger a near fall.

IRS sends Lex outside though and the Druid (who apparently weighs somewhere between 240 and 450lbs) posts him to give his boss (I guess?) control. We see some rings on the Druid's hand, which Vince says look familiar. He doesn't say where he's seen them of course but they do look familiar.

We take a break and come back with IRS dropping some elbows for two more.

It's off to the chinlock before DiBiase offers some advice. Apparently he said "drop a leg and cover", only to have Luger come back with right hands (Shawn: "Luger punches like a girl."). The Druid trips Luger up and slaps him though, triggering a brawl which leads to a countout win for IRS.

Rating: D. Another lame match but at least it was shorter this time around. The Million Dollar Team is still one of the worst stables I've ever seen though as the thing just keeps going with nothing interesting going on in the slightest. I mean, IRS as the main wrestler just isn't going to work no matter what you do with him. He's fine as a midcard guy but they're actually making him the focus. That's almost frightening.

The Druid is Tatanka.

We recap the first round of the Tag Team Title tournament.

The Bushwhackers are getting the Fink ready by rubbing sardines in his face.

Jeff Jarrett runs into comedian Rip Taylor at Bally's in Las Vegas. This continues to be bad.

Smoking Gunns vs. Roy Raymond/Chris Avery

Billy and Raymond get things going as we hear about the Gunns entering rodeo competitions. Well that's better than entering toughman competitions on live television. Bart suplexes Roy as the announcers break down the upcoming Bushwhackers vs. Well Dunn match. Avery comes in and has about the same success until he pulls some hair to take over....for all of two seconds. Bart hiptosses him again as Shawn just lays into Vince for his obsession with cowboys. A powerbomb/top rope legdrop combo finally puts Chris away.

Rating: D. The Smoking Gunns are one of the most successful teams from one of the worst eras in tag team history. Until we FINALLY got to Owen/Bulldog as champions in 1996, the titles died more and more every single week. Teams like the Godwinns didn't help things and it's no wonder that the Gunns stayed on top so long.

Speaking of which, Henry Godwinn debuts next week.

This week's King's Court has Bob Backlund as a guest. They're milking the heck out of this guy. Lawler isn't pleased with Jack Tunney ripping Backlund off in something he doesn't explain well enough. Backlund knows what he is and knows where the plebeians stand. The fans chant EIGHT SECONDS (the amount of time it took for Diesel to beat Backlund) as Bob uses a bunch of big words.

Enough of that though as Backlund talks about hurting Bret Hart at Survivor Series. It was like he was putting the chickenwing on all the people at once. Bob is happy to face Bret at any time, whenever he comes back. Finally, Bob wants to talk about Diesel, who stole the title from him. Backlund: "Kevin Nash, you're like a neanderthal." Shawn: "Did you hear that Vince? KEVIN NASH!" The hatred in Vince's voice is great. Bob calls Nash the tyrannosaurus rex of the WWF, meaning he'll be extinct soon due to a chickenwing.

Bob Holly vs. Chris Canyon

Yes that Canyon (well Kanyon), who is in a weird purple half singlet and gold trunks. Holly armdrags him into an armbar to start, only to get caught in a belly to back suplex for two. It's off to a chinlock from Bob (not something you often see from a face) as Shawn brags about himself to kill time. Holly slams him down and drops a top rope elbow for the pin.

Rating: D-. A lot of that is due to the bizarre color combination on Canyon. Seriously it was that distracting. Holly continues to be one of those guys who was watchable in the ring but never had a chance because of the ridiculous gimmick he was stuck with. Canyon would do better later on of course.

Here's a Royal Rumble control center with Bret vs. Diesel being announced for the first time on Raw. Diesel says Bret has jumped right on this title match idea by naming the time and place. He isn't sure how Bret has gotten away with wearing pink for so long because a real man wears black with a little gold. At the Rumble, they'll both be black and blue.

We also get the first ten entrants for the Rumble itself. This just makes

me sad.

Well Dunn vs. Bushwhackers

The managers are the big draw here. Again, this just makes me sad. The Bushwhackers clean house again to start with both villains being knocked to the floor. Even the Fink gets to do some whacking. We settle down to Dunn taking over on Butch, only to have Luke dragged inside to send Dunn into Well. Luke gets kicked in the ribs from the apron and Well comes in with a top rope elbow to the jaw. Dunn dives into a raised boot and it's off to Butch for more clotheslines. Harvey tries to interfere but Fink pulls him down by the pants, allowing Butch to roll Well up for the pin.

Rating: D. Somehow, this might have been a big step up over their first match. Well Dunn was clearly never going anywhere and somehow this was more about the fighting managers than anything else. At least we got the comedy spot at the end because this would have been a waste of time otherwise.

Santa Claus sits on Mabel's lap for whatever reason. Comedy I believe.

Jim Neidhart vs. Nick Barberri

Neidhart yells at the Spanish announcers for some reason. Forearms put Nick down and a backdrop sends him over the top. Back in and a bad camel clutch makes Nick give up. This was it for Neidhart for a few years for whatever reason.

One more Rumble preview and a look at next week's card wraps things up.

Overall Rating: D. Dang 1995 is looking better every week. I can't get over the fact that they thought Well Dunn vs. Bushwhackers II was going to be an interesting draw. You really can tell that they're taking some time off at this point and it's getting more and more pitiful every single week.

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Monday Night Raw – December 5, 1994: I Had To Start Somewhere

Monday Night Raw

Date: December 5, 1994

Location: Mid-Hudson Civic Center, Poughkeepsie, New York

Attendance: 2,500

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Shawn Michaels

This was on a list of requested shows so I might as well knock some of them out. That and I've never actually done an episode from 1994 and if I'm going to (eventually) do all of the episodes in history, I need to start somewhere. I have no idea why this was requested as it's a pretty dead time in the promotion's history. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence. I miss that old song, though Vince has to talk over it with an advertisement.

Shawn Michaels is brought out for commentary.

Jeff Jarrett vs. British Bulldog

Of note here: a cable puller "screws up", giving us the debut of the Roadie, later to be known as Road Dogg. An early armdrag takes Bulldog

down and it's already time for some strutting. Jarrett takes him down again and walks over Bulldog's back (Vince: "Shades of Shawn Michaels!") for some more posing. A hiptoss doesn't work as well though as Bulldog sends Jeff out to the floor before doing Jeff's strut in a funny bit.

Back in and Jeff, with tinsel between his legs, gets run over again because he's not bright enough to realize that the power isn't working. Smith keeps countering a headscissors but the cable puller claps Jeff back to his feet. There's the delayed vertical (with Jeff doing a great terrified face) but Bulldog gets crotched on top for a superplex. We're off to a weak chinlock for a good bit before going to a break.

Back with Jeff missing a middle rope fist drop, followed by a double clothesline to put both guys down. Shawn again points out the tinsel on Jarrett's tights, likely because it's rather shiny and Shawn is easily distracted. Somehow this makes Vince refer to Jeff as the Tim Allen of the WWF.

Jeff grabs a sleeper for a long time before a bulldog to the Bulldog (you know these announcers are going to crack jokes about that one) gets two. Back to the chinlock as this is going way too long. Bulldog fights up with an atomic drop and a series of clotheslines to send Jarrett outside. Jeff staggers up the aisle but is quickly caught, only to have the cable puller grab Bulldog's leg, allowing Jeff to beat the count back in.

Rating: D+. This was your usual one long match on Raw back in the day, but that doesn't mean it's good. There was too much chinlockery going on here and they easily could have cut out about three or four minutes. The result was the right choice though as they might have finally found a way to get people to care about Jeff Jarrett. I mean, I wouldn't bet on it but it's always possible.

House show ads. Now there's something you don't see that often anymore.

Some WWF wrestlers were at a dinner for American sportcasters with keynote speaker....Gerald Ford?

1-2-3 Kid vs. Barry Horowitz

Kid starts fast with a dropkick and the rapid fire kicks in the corner. Barry comes back with a quick butterfly suplex as Vince plugs Diesel being in the King's Court tonight, only to get on Shawn's nerves. There's a Hennig necksnap for no cover as Vince begs people to come to the house shows. Not that it matters as the Kid comes back with two spinwheel kicks and an Oklahoma Roll for the pin.

Preview of next week's show with crazy Bob Backlund vs. Doink the Clown. I actually kind of want to see that mess.

Ad for the new WWF Raw game for SNES. That game wasn't bad actually.

Kwang vs. Scott Taylor

Better known as Savio Vega in a mask vs. Scotty 2 Hotty. Kwang drops Taylor with a shot to the face before dropping him with a faceplant. Shawn brags about his contract being better than Michael Jordan's baseball deal and we hit the nerve hold. Harvey Wippleman yells at Howard Finkel to continue their horrible feud that actually existed for reasons I'll never understand. Kwang's running spinwheel kick crushes Taylor in the corner and it's back to the nerve hold. Another spinwheel kick puts Taylor away, thank goodness. Kwang was such a weak character and it's no shock that he didn't last.

Ad for Lex Luger vs. Owen Hart on Action Zone.

It's time for the King's Court (Lawler's interview segment). After some good old audience insulting, here's the surprise guest: Shawn Michaels! So Vince was wrong about Diesel? Lawler calls Diesel stupid for doing things like buying a zebra and calling it Spot. Shawn claims to have plucked Diesel from obscurity (well yeah Vinnie Vegas was pretty obscure) and no one puts him down, including some 7'0 goon. Everything Diesel has ever earned was because of Shawn and he made Diesel on his own. However, Shawn can also disassemble him just as fast. If Diesel wants to find him, just come to the Heartbreak Hotel.

Bob Holly crashed in his latest race. This is making me long for the "This Week in WCW Motorsports" segments.

There will be a special 100th episode celebration of WWF Mania. I remember liking that show.

Hakushi is coming.

Well Dunn vs. Bushwhackers

See, one is named Well and the other is named Dunn. They're managed by Wippleman in case you were still confused about how much potential they had. The Bushwhackers drop both guys with a double clothesline to start but Well drops Luke with an ax handle from the apron. We get some breaking news: there will be a tournament for the vacant Tag Team Titles. So I guess this is like a boring preview? Not that we'll see any of it because the whole thing is taking place on Superstars.

Well dives onto Luke's back as this is actually less interesting than I was expecting. Some rapid fire legdrops keep Luke in trouble and Shawn plugs a movie airing on USA. Even more legdrops don't actually make the match any better so Luke clotheslines him down for a breather. The hot tag brings in Butch o clean maybe a room or two until Harvey trips him up, allowing Dunn to get in a knee to the back for the pin.

Rating: D-. Again, one was named Well and the other was named Dunn. Is there any real surprise that WCW was able to take over so easily? The only interesting part here was hearing Shawn cracking jokes for five minutes as he knew this was a disaster. Nothing to see here and I continue to be amazed that the Bushwhackers still had jobs at this point.

Fink tells the referee what happened but nothing changes.

Bob Backlund wants to exterminate Doink next week on his path to being WWF Champion again.

Overall Rating: D. Well that was bad. They were certainly in the Saturday Night's Main Event format at this point with the one big match going on first and then hoping people fell asleep and couldn't change the channel for the rest of the horrible show. It's no surprise that this era has basically been erased from history after this mess. For some reason though, I'm sure it's only going to get worse.

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