

Wrestlemania Count-Up – Wrestlemania II: Three Times The Suck

Wrestlemania II

Date: April 7, 1986

Location: Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum, New York City, New York/Rosemont Horizon, Chicago, Illinois/Los Angeles Memorial Sports Arena, Los Angeles, California

Attendance: 16,585 (New York), 9,000 (Chicago), 14,500 (Los Angeles), 40,085 (Total)

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Susan St. James, Gene Okerlund, Gorilla Monsoon, Cathy Lee Crosby, Alfred Hayes, Jesse Ventura, Elvira

This is one of those ideas that they tried once and only once before never thinking about doing it again. After the success of Wrestlemania, the idea was that Wrestlemania 2 had to be bigger, so Vince came up with the idea of splitting it into three cities. This show is widely considered to be one of if not the worst Wrestlemania of all time and with main events such as Piper vs. Mr. T. in a boxing match and Hogan vs. Bundy in a cage it's not hard to see why. Let's get to it.

This is on a Monday for some reason.

This was a tape I watched to death back when I was a kid so the theme music for this brings a smile to my face.

Vince opens things up in New York and introduces Susan St. James, a popular actress of the day, to be his co-commentator.

Ray Charles sings America the Beautiful.

Gene is in Chicago and welcomes us to the city for later on.

Roddy Piper and his trainer for the fight Lou Duva (famous boxing trainer) say Piper is ready. Piper promises to quit wrestling and boxing if he gets knocked out. He'll also quick playing tiddlywinks and dating

girls, but he'll stick with Bob Orton of course. Those two spent WAY too much time together.

Paul Orndorff vs. Don Muraco

This is fallout from the main event of Mania last year as Orndorff turned face due to Piper and Orton leaving him behind. Muraco is an associate of Piper so this is kind of a proxy feud for Paul. Muraco has Fuji with him too. Both guys say they'll win in a voiceover as the match starts. Paul slams Muraco down to start and the crowd is already hot. Orndorff makes a slant eyes face at Fuji which today would get him thrown out of the company. In 1986, he was making \$20,000 a week later in the year. It's funny how times change.

Paul takes him down to the mat with an armbar as Susan St. James clearly has no idea what's going on. She's trying but this isn't something she knows about at all it would seem. Paul cranks on a wristlock before going back down to the armbar. Susan: "He looks like he's using some ancient Chinese techniques". Uh...yeah. Muraco finally escapes and sends Paul into the corner, only to have Orndorff go off on him as they brawl to the floor. In something you won't ever hear again I don't think, the opening match of Wrestlemania goes to a double countout. The fans chant some expletives.

Rating: D. What do you want here? The match is four minutes long and ends in a double countout. It was hot while it lasted, but the problem is that it didn't last long enough at all. This was a pretty big feud and it gets a four minute match? That's all they can spare these guys? Orndorff would have a MEGA heel turn later in the summer which would eventually draw 74,000 people to an outdoor show in Toronto. That's some drawing power.

Mr. T. says he doesn't like to do a lot of talking before a fight before proceeding to talk more in 30 seconds than Goldberg said in his entire career. To show you the production values, he's drowned out by Fink announcing the results of the previous match.

Intercontinental Title: George Steele vs. Randy Savage

This was a pretty big feud that also wound up meaning a lot more the next

year than it does here. The basic idea is that George is in love with Liz and doesn't like how Savage treats her. There's a great angle right there that hasn't been used in a LONG time (Punk/AJ/Bryan isn't the same thing). Savage in an inset interview babbles as only Savage can without saying anything of note.

Steele does a freaky kind of dance and Savage immediately bails to the floor. That works so well that they do it again and make it three times until FINALLY George chases after him. Steele catches Savage going back in and bites his calf before they head back in. Randy hits a running knee to the chest but Steele easily lifts him into the air and chokes him down. George gets caught looking at Liz though and is tied up in the ropes so Savage pounds away.

A top rope cross body gets two for the champ (Savage in case you're really young) and Steele throws him to the floor. Randy slips under the ring and sneaks up on George, only to get bitten on the arm. Savage goes to the floor and finds...a bouquet of flowers? George shoves them into Randy's face before going to eat a turnbuckle (don't ask).

The stuffing goes into Savage's face but Steele AGAIN gets distracted by Liz, allowing Savage to hit the ax handle to the back. Back in and Savage hits the slam and elbow for two. Wait what? This is 1986 and the SAVAGE ELBOW only gets two? Steele grabs Savage by the face and sends him into the corner, only to get tripped up and pinned with the feet on the ropes to retain the title.

Rating: C-. This is one of those matches where your individual taste is going to vary a lot. On one hand, it's a comedy match but not an incredibly funny one, while on the other hand it's terrible from a wrestling perspective. On the other hand, you have three hands and should see a surgeon immediately. The point is this wasn't much of a match and never would have made it onto a modern Mania card. Of course it wouldn't; the Intercontinental Title doesn't exist around Wrestlemania time. Also, of all the people in the WWF, GEORGE STEELE gets to kick out of the elbow? REALLY? This was fun for the goofiness if nothing else.

Savage and Liz immediately bail so Steele eats another buckle.

Bill Fralic (a football player) and Big John Studd are both in a battle royal later today and they talk some trash, once again being drowned out by Fink.

Vince asks Susan if she likes snakes. Make your own jokes.

Jake Roberts vs. George Wells

Wells is a former football player who never did another thing of note in wrestling other than be in this match. Jake is brand new at this point and is promptly run over and backdropped down in the first ten seconds. A flying shoulder takes Jake down and there's a headbutt for good measure. Wells hits a decent flying headscissors followed by a slam for no cover. A knee lift has Jake draped in the ropes and a powerslam gets two. Roberts comes back with a poke to the eyes and a knee lift followed by the DDT for the fast pin. This was pretty much domination until the last ten seconds.

Jake wraps George up in the snake post match and makes Wells foam at the mouth.

We recap Piper vs. T which is allegedly based on a boxing match that happened in Phoenix, as apparently we're ignoring ALL of the stuff from last year that set up the first Wrestlemania.

Hogan predicts T to win and says his ribs will be fine in the cage tonight.

We introduce the "celebrities." First up is Joan Rivers as guest ring announcer, Darryl Dawkins, Cab Calloway and G. Gordon Liddy as guest judges and Herb from Burger King commercials (you won't remember him) is guest timekeeper.

Roddy Piper vs. Mr. T.

This is a boxing match with ten three minute rounds. T has Joe Frazier as his trainer and the Haiti Kid to counter Orton. Piper is the aggressor to start as Vince calls T's defensive stance a peek-a-boo style. Roddy grabs on the ropes and T fires away some body shots. These rounds might only be two minutes rounds. Piper takes him into the corner but T bobs and weaves

before popping Roddy in the face a few times. It turns into another brawl on the ropes for the last thirty seconds or so of the round.

Everyone comes in to break up the brawl and we take a break between rounds. T gets in a few shots to the face to open round 2 but Piper apparently has a bunch of goo on his face. There's an Orton/Piper joke in there somewhere. After the face gets cleaned off Piper starts pounding away and T is in trouble. I'll change the numbers again because the rounds are indeed three minutes long. Piper gets him into the corner and pounds away, dropping him with a pair of shots to the head after about seven shots that missed BADLY. That gets an eight count and round 2 ends with T going down just after the bell.

Piper gets in a few cheap shots after the bell because that's the kind of guy he is. We start round 3 with T firing away but they're clearly getting tired. Piper goes down in his corner but pulls himself up before the count. T pounds him right back down in the corner and this time gets a seven count. This turns into move of a shoving match until T gets in a right hand to knock Piper out of the ring and out to the floor. Round 3 ends with nothing of note going on.

T talks trash in between rounds so Piper throws his stool across the ring as round 4 begins. They slug it out with T finally taking over. Piper DRILLS him with a right hand that knocks T's mouthpiece out. T comes back with the same kind of a punch...and then Piper shoves the referee down and slams T for the DQ.

Rating: D. This was one of those things that everyone knew was going to be a disaster and the best chance they had was to make it goofy. Thankfully we're talking about Roddy Piper in the 80s so you know he can bring the goofy. There were some decent punches in here but like all other wrestling boxing matches, you knew it would end with some sort of a DQ. This was pretty much it for Mr. T in the WWF other than a few cameos later on.

Off to Chicago!

Gene and Gorilla bring in Kathy Lee Crosby to do commentary.

Women's Title: Fabulous Moolah vs. Velvet McIntyre

Moolah is defending of course and hits about five hair mares in a row to start things off. Velvet comes back with some one footed dropkicks before going up and missing a splash for Moolah to get the pin. This barely lasted 90 seconds which may have been due to McIntyre's outfit breaking when she came off the ropes.

Corporal Kirchner vs. Nikolai Volkoff

This is a flag match which means a regular match where the winner gets to wave their flag. For some reason the ring is VERY loud all of a sudden. Kirchner is a guy you likely won't have heard of but he's famous for being VERY stiff which is why he wasn't around long. Blassie is with Nikolai here and his man hits a spinning kick to start.

We head to the floor where Volkoff rams him into the post and cuts the Corporal open with a piece of razor that he immediately puts back down into his trunks. Blassie yells at Kirchner a bit before they head back inside. It's a slugout but Blassie throws in his cane which goes upside Nikolai's head for the pin. This was another very short match.

Gene takes over the ring announcing for the NFL/WWF battle royal. There are six football players and fourteen wrestlers. Dick Butkus is a guest referee.

Battle Royal

NFL: Jimbo Covert, Harvey Martin, Ernie Holmes, Bill Fralic, Russ Francis, William Perry

WWF: Pedro Morales, Tony Atlas, Ted Arcidi, Dan Spivey, Hillbilly Jim, King Tonga, Iron Sheik, B. Brian Blair, Jim Brunzell, Big John Studd, Bruno Sammartino, Jim Neidhart, Bret Hart

Perry is the hometown boy but once they said Andre's name there was little doubt as to who was winning. Ernie Ladd jumps in on commentary as a former wrestler and football player. Andre chills in the corner and beats up anyone that comes near him. Perry gets ganged up on a few times in the corner but fights them off as Covert and Tonga go out. Francis

goes after Andre like a crazy man and Holmes is gone.

The two giants go at it for a bit and Brunzell is gone. There's never much to talk about in battle royals as most of it is just a bunch of brawls and the occasional elimination like Atlas going out here. Studd beats up Perry in the corner as Martin and Morales put each other out. Arcidi loads up Blair but Bruno makes the save for some reason. Not that it matters though as Arcidi is put out just a few seconds later. Spivey is gone as are Blair and Hillbilly. We're down to about eight or so.

Fralic is dumped out by a bunch of people and Bruno backdrops Sheik out. Studd dumps Bruno and we're down to Andre, Studd, Francis, Perry and the Harts. Perry shrugs off both Harts and sends them to the apron for the biggest pop of the night. He starts firing off tackles at Studd before running into an elbow for the elimination. Perry offers a handshake but pulls Studd out to the floor to another big pop. The Harts get Andre tied in the ropes and easily dump Francis. They pound away on Andre a bit but the big man is like dude please. He grabs Neidhart by the beard and kicks him out before tossing Bret on Anvil to win.

Rating: D. This was another pretty lame match with the football players not being able to do much due to not being wrestlers. Perry was incredibly popular and got a great reaction from the crowd, but other than him the NFL guys didn't add anything at all here. Andre winning was the only logical choice and there's not much else to say here.

Vince and Susan talk to Piper in New York and of course he says he's awesome and didn't lose at all.

Back in Chicago Jimbo Covert says he got cheated by Fralic. Iron Sheik says he's proven wrestlers are better than football players.

We look at the end of the battle royal again.

Tag Titles: Dream Team vs. British Bulldogs

The Dream Team is Brutus Beefcake and Greg Valentine and they're defending. For absolutely no apparent reason, the Bulldogs have Ozzy freaking Osbourne in their corner. Smith and Valentine start things off

with Davey pounding away in the corner. Off to a wristlock before Dynamite comes in to send Valentine into the buckle for two. There's the snap suplex for no cover and it's back to Davey for the delayed vertical.

Greg gets in a few shots in the corner including a forearm to the back to take over and finally bring in Brutus. He cranks on the arm and is immediately gorilla pressed down by Smith. Dynamite comes in again and gets two off a small package. Beefcake makes a blind tag though and Valentine comes in off the top via another forearm to the back and the champions take over. Kid comes right back and pounds away before bringing Smith back in.

The Bulldogs hit a double headbutt for two for Kid but Brutus comes in sans tag to switch momentum right back. Valentine gets two off a kneeling piledriver but falls victim to the Arn Anderson self-crotching mistake. He continues the Horsemen theme by going up top and getting slammed down ala Flair as everything breaks down. Dynamite gets sent to the floor so Smith comes in with the powerslam (not yet the finisher) for two on Valentine.

Davey misses a charges into the post though and his shoulder is hurt in a hurry. Brutus comes in to work over the arm and hits a kind of hammerlock slam. Valentine hits a shoulderbreaker but pulls up before covering. In a VERY sudden ending, Dynamite gets on the top rope while still illegal and Davey rams Valentine's head into that of Dynamite for the pin and the title.

Rating: B. It's not a great or even a very good match but after nearly two hours of lame wrestling with nothing matches, this was a great breath of fresh air. The Bulldogs would be champions for the better part of a year while the Dream Team would survive for another year before splitting at the next Wrestlemania. Good stuff here though.

Both sets of announcers talk about the title change. I'll give the female celebrities this: they sound like they're enjoying themselves and they're trying at least.

Off to Los Angeles.

Ricky Steamboat vs. Hercules Hernandez

Lee Marshall of non-fame in WCW is the announcer. This was supposed to be Steamboat vs. Hart but WWF saw more star power in Hernandez. This wasn't their best time from a thinking standpoint. Hercules pounds on him to start but Steamboat goes to the arm as is his custom. A kick to the ribs puts Hernandez down and it's off to an armbar. Back up and Steamboat does some leapfrogs before elbowing Herc down.

We head to the armbar again until Hernandez rams him into the buckle and hits a clothesline to take Steamboat down. A hot shot has Steamboat in trouble again but he comes back with a failed slam attempt that gives Hercules two. A pair of elbows get two more due to a very lazy cover. Hercules hits a tilt-a-whirl slam for two and there's a gorilla press slam to go with it. Make it a pair of gorilla presses but Hernandez's splash hits knees, allowing Ricky to hit the top rope cross body for the pin.

Rating: C-. Very basic match here with power vs. speed, although most of the speed guy's offense involved an armbar. That's something you have to get used to in Steamboat matches though so it's not a disappointment or anything. The match itself was pretty dull stuff but Steamboat in the 80s is never a bad thing.

Adrian Adonis vs. Uncle Elmer

We hit the stereotypes now the gay character vs. the hillbilly character. Elmer, weighing roughly 450lbs, runs off Adonis and Jimmy Hart before the match and we get a good shot of Adrian's pink dress. We finally get inside and Elmer starts pounding away before sending Adonis into the corner for a Flair Flip. Adrian gets sent into the corner two more times in a row with the second time landing him on the floor. Back in and there goes the dress as Adrian gets tied up in the ropes. A single punch to the chest puts Elmer down but he comes back with a corner splash, only to miss the big leg drop. A top rope headbutt gives Adrian a pin.

Rating: D-. What are you expecting here? We've got REALLY basic gimmicks (although Adonis wasn't bad in his day) in a three minute match involving a man wearing a dress. This is what you call filler, albeit terrible

filler. Elmer wouldn't ever really do much in the WWF but he was a pretty big deal in the indies.

Adonis puts a flower on Elmer's back post match.

We get Hogan's second promo of the show with him saying he's ready for Bundy and he begs Heenan to get involved.

Funk Brothers vs. Junkyard Dog vs. Junkyard Dog/Tito Santana

It's Terry and Hoss here, with the latter being more famous as Dory Jr. Hoss and Dog start things off with JYD sending one Funk into another and slamming them both down before the Funks head to the floor for a breather. Off to Tito vs. Terry for a bit now and it's a short bit as Terry gets clotheslined to the floor. Hoss takes a dropkick to send him out to be with his brother and the heels huddle on the floor again. Oh and they have Jimmy Hart too.

Back to the Dog vs.. Terry and they slug it out with Dog taking over. JYD rams Terry into the buckle so many times that the pad starts to come off. Terry gets thrown to the unpadded floor yet again and it's back to Hoss. Tito comes in as well and Hoss fires off the famous Funk forearms. Speaking of forearms, the flying variety takes Hoss down and the Funks head to the floor again.

Hoss gets back in for a crisscross with Terry hitting Tito in the back with a knee to take over. Tito gets knocked to the floor and JYD has to chase Jimmy off a few times before throwing Santana back in. Terry gets two off a suplex and argues with the referee a bit before getting suplexed himself. They hit the ropes and collide but Terry falls into his own corner to bring in Hoss. The Funks hit a double clothesline which gets two for Terry who is getting frustrated.

Santana finally slides between Terry's legs and makes the hot tag to JYD. We prove we're in the 80s with a double noggin knocker to both of the Funks and a punch sends Hoss to the outside. Terry has a rope from somewhere as everything breaks down. JYD throws Terry to the floor and slams him on a table for good measure. Terry's knee is hurt and he can't stand up but he gets back inside anyway as Jimmy gets decked. Everything

breaks down again and Tito puts Hoss in the Figure Four but Terry blasts Dog in the head with the megaphone for the pin.

Rating: B-. I've said before that the 1980s were the best era ever for tag wrestling and this show proves it again. Most of the show hasn't been all that great but the tag matches have been by far the best matches on the card. This was a fun and WILD match but not to the point where you couldn't keep track of what was going on. Good stuff here and after two boring matches in the LA section this was a good match to pick things up.

We set up the cage, which is the big blue kind for the first time ever.

Hogan is lifting weights with bad ribs and we recap Hogan vs. Bundy. On SNME, Hogan defended the title against Don Muraco and after the match, Bundy ran in and destroyed Hogan with a bunch of splashes to injure the ribs. The doctor says Hogan shouldn't be doing this, so Hulk does chinups with a 100lb weight around his neck.

Heenan and Bundy say they're going to take the title from Hogan.

Elvira sends it to New York for comments from Susan and Vince.

WWF World Title: Hulk Hogan vs. King Kong Bundy

Escape only here, as it should be. Tommy Lasorda of the LA Dodgers is guest ring announcer. Ricky Schroder, a child actor, is guest timekeeper and Robert Conrad, an adult actor, is guest referee. Hogan starts firing off right hands to start and knocks Bundy into the cage before choking Bundy with his own singlet. The following clothesline in the corner has Bundy in even more trouble and a forearm to the head staggers him even more. All Hogan so far.

Both guys block shots into the cage but King goes to the ribs to stop Hogan cold. There's a slam to mess with the ribs even more and Bundy goes for the door. You know it's not ending that fast though so Bundy comes back to choke with the tape a bit. Another attempt to escape goes about as well and Hulk comes back with an elbow in the corner. Bundy gets rammed into the cage to bust him open and Hogan rakes his back a bit. More cage ramming occurs and Hulk climbs to the top to choke away on the

ropes.

Hogan goes for the slam but Bundy falls down onto him as you would expect him to. Bundy goes to the door but Hulk grabs him for some choking with the rib tape. The Avalanche splash hits in the corner and a regular one hits as well so Hogan can shake like a fish. Hogan dives to stop Bundy from getting out but takes another Avalanche...with no effect whatsoever. The champion busts out a powerslam of all things and easily climbs out to retain.

Rating: D. It's Hogan vs. a monster in 1986 so what in the world were you expecting to see here? At the end of the day this was the safe move but with all of the other heels on the roster, this is the best they could come up with? I mean, you have Savage, Piper or even Roberts to be in there, but you pick Bundy? It's not like this was some huge feud as the SNME that set this up was five weeks before this show. I've heard that Vince was trying desperately to get Nikita Koloff to jump and be in the main event but when they fell through, they picked a monster instead. Eh when all else fails, go with the safe pick.

Hogan beats up Heenan to close the show.

Overall Rating: D. This is a tough one to grade for the same reason that I don't consider it the worst Mania ever: it was the second one and they had NO idea what they were doing here. The main thing that helps this show is that while most of the matches are worthless, they're FAST. Of all the non-tag matches, only the cage match and the boxing match break ten minutes and the cage match does so by about 15 seconds. It's certainly not a good show and if this happened today Vince would be jumping off a building, but for its time this wasn't completely terrible.

Ratings Comparison

Paul Orndorff vs. Don Muraco

Original: D+

Redo: D

Randy Savage vs. George Steele

Original: C-

Redo: C-

Jake Roberts vs. George Wells

Original: F

Redo: D+

Mr. T. vs. Roddy Piper

Original: F

Redo: D

Fabulous Moolah vs. Velvet McIntyre

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

Corporal Kirschner vs. Nikolai Volkoff

Original: D-

Redo: N/A

Battle Royal

Original: B

Redo: D

British Bulldog vs. Dream Team

Original: B-

Redo: B

Rick Steamboat vs. Hercules Hernandez

Original: C-

Redo: C-

Adrian Adonis vs. Uncle Elmer

Original: N/A

Redo: D-

Terry Funk/Hoss Funk vs. Tito Santana/Junkyard Dog

Original: B-

Redo: B-

Hulk Hogan vs. King Kong Bundy

Original: B-

Redo: D

Overall Rating

Original: D+

Redo: D

Dang those must have been the strong rose colored glasses back then.

Here's the original review if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/03/09/history-of-wrestlemania-with-kb-wrestlemania-2-what-the-hell-were-they-thinking/>

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Wrestlemania Count-Up – #2: The Inbred Cousin Of Wrestlemania

Wrestlemania 2

Date: April 7, 1986

Location: Nassau Coliseum-New York, Rosemont Horizon-Chicago, Illinois, Sports Arena-Los Angeles, California

Attendance: 40,085 combined for all three venues

Commentators: New York – Vince McMahon, Susan St. James. Chicago – Gorilla Monsoon, Gene Okerlund, Cathy Lee Crosby, Ernie Ladd. Los Angeles – Jesse Ventura, Alfred Hayes, Elvira America The Beautiful: Ray Charles

This show is the classic what the heck were thinking moment from the WWF. They had made Wrestlemania the year before and they hit it so far out of the park that by the time it was Wrestlemania 2 the ball hadn't come down yet. This was a problem though. Since the inaugural show had been such a success, Vince felt they had to do something to top it. This was his idea: what if we did Wrestlemania from 3 different places??? Think about that for a minute. How weird would that be?

Not to mention, Vince had another idea: let's put it on a Monday! Again, just awkward sounding. The format used was three locations, each with an undercard and then a featured match, which were a boxing match, a battle royal, and the true main event, Hulk Hogan against King Kong Bundy in a steel cage.

The idea was odd on paper and worse in reality as it felt like watching three shows instead of one. There's no rhythm and because it was in three locations, announcers were a rare commodity. Due to this, Vince's last idea was to put a real

commentator together with celebrities to do the commentary. What followed might be the biggest mess in company history.

Paul Orndorff vs. Don Muraco

We begin the show in New York City with Paul Orndorff against Don Muraco. Why are they fighting? I don't have a freaking clue but they are so here we go. As they begin we hear comments from both and neither have anything to say of meaning.

Orndorff is easily the face here so if he never accomplished anything else in his career, the face turn between Manias one and two was effective. As was predicted, the celebrity commentator is atrocious, with such gems like "I think he's winning!" Orndorff controls the early part of the match but Muraco breaks it up with some power. They roll outside and we get a double count out as the crowd clearly can be heard chanting bull.

Rating: D+. Fine for what it was, but the fans got it right with their chants. This is the opening match to Wrestlemania? Seriously? That's the best they could come up with? This feud more or less never went anywhere at all as Orndorff was about to get the biggest push of his career by far, resulting in him making about \$20,000 a week for awhile. This was just an odd choice for an opening match but then again this was an odd choice for a show so I guess it fits.

Intercontinental Title: George Steele vs. Randy Savage

Next up the intercontinental title is on the line as Randy Savage defends against George Steele. This is a match that I can't find a standalone version of so I can't put this one in here. However, this was another chapter in the over year long feud between these two. Savage had been allegedly mistreating Liz and Steele had developed a crush on her. That led to, what else, Savage being jealous and a 15 month feud began.

Mega stall from Savage to start as he seems afraid of Steele. Savage runs again and finally on the third time Steele goes after him. They finally lock up and Steele beats Savage up for a while with power moves and biting but Steele keeps going to talk to Liz. This was a weird period for Savage as they knew they had a gem with him but they didn't know what to do with him. Yeah he was the IC champion, but where did they go with him from there?

This was all they had until the next year when he and Steamboat stole the show and Savage was launched into the main event. For some reason Savage has a bouquet of flowers that he and Steele try to beat each other up with. After ripping apart a turnbuckle and eating the stuffing (not making that up) Steele gets slammed and elbowed, but he kicks out?

Yes, George Steele is the first man to kick out of the elbow, and he pops up, beats on Savage some more and then gets rolled up and Savage uses the ropes to pin him. Steele eats more stuffing.

Rating: C-. This was a comedy match I think with wrestling mixed in. Savage is the highlight here as he sells like crazy for Steele and it helps a lot. These two had this freaky chemistry that no one has ever been able to really figure out. They would feud on and off for the next year before FINALLY ending it with the return of Ricky Steamboat for that whole greatest match of all time thing he and Savage would have next year.

Jake Roberts vs. George Wells

We follow up that strange match with another somewhat strange match as Jake Roberts, still a rookie here, takes on some guy named George Wells. This match is little more than a glorified squash. Wells dominates early but doesn't go for a pin when he has the chance. Jake recovers and DDTs him to win the match. Afterwards he unleashes Damien who causes Wells to look like

he's foaming at the mouth.

Rating: D+. Talk about a weird choice to have on Wrestlemania. Jake was brand new at this point so they needed someone to make him look good and they pick...George Wells? There was a squash on Mania for the first two years and both times they were the least interesting match on the card. I don't get the selection here for the most part and it's pretty bad all things considered.

Boxing Match: Mr. T vs. Roddy Piper

We now move onto the main event of the New York portion of the show: a boxing match with Roddy Piper and Mr. T. This was built up on SNME about 2 months before hand with Mr. T. beating Piper's friend Bob Orton in a boxing match before being beaten down by both of them. That came on from what started over a year ago in the main event of the first Wrestlemania, so this truly was a showdown that had been built up for ages.

Factor in that T had been the World Boxing Champion in Rocky 3 just a few years ago and was on a top rated TV show where he was a tough guy. Both men have famous trainers in their corners to make it look more legit. For no apparent reason Joan Rivers does the ring announcing. This is ten three minute rounds. She introduces Orton as the Ace Comedy Bob Orvin. Nice job of handling the reading thing honey.

They actually got Smoking Joe Frazier to be in T's corner. One of the biggest stars in Hollywood has in his corner a former world heavyweight champion who had three of the best boxing matches in history with Muhammad Ali. He also has a midget. Well of course he does. They treat this like a real boxing match. Oh dear.

T goes for the ribs which doesn't work all that well for him. Piper hits him on the break which is illegal of course. There has been no mention of judges or anything like that so I guess

this is destined to not go the distance. The referee has broken them up about four times now. I think these are three minute rounds. For the most part these punches aren't landing at all but they sell them anyway of course.

It's not so much boxing but rather glorified grappling with the occasional punch thrown. The fans are more or less dead if you didn't guess that. After the first round nothing has really happened. Piper has a bunch of grease on his face for the second round which is keeping the punches from T from being effective.

This is painfully boring if I didn't make that clear so far. Piper knocks the heck out of T with some big roundhouses and finally drops him to huge cheers because something HAPPENED for a change. The knockdown gets a count of 8. Piper keeps pounding on him as round two ends. They brawl a bit during the break and Orton throws water at T.

Piper does the Ali Shuffle to start the third round. T gets him into the corner and pounds away with more or less open hand shots to the head and Piper is in trouble. That gets a count of 7. T gets a huge punch that I think hit so of course Piper is knocked to the floor. He gets up at 9 and then holds onto T for the last 25 seconds of the fight.

They just trade big bombs to start the fourth round. And then he punches the referee and slams T for the DQ about a minute into the fourth round. It's a bit brawl and T of course gets the win. Was there a reason for both that ending and also having Piper dominate a round like that? This was awful.

Rating: F. On WRESTLEmania they had a long boxing match. This was just boring beyond belief and the boxing looked awful. They tried to make this seem legit and it failed on more than all levels. T was never seen again and Piper turned face relatively soon after taking time off for knee surgery. Boring match and awful beyond belief.

Chicago

Women's Title: Fabulous Moolah vs. Velvet McIntyre

We start with the Women's Title on the line as Moolah defends against Velvet McIntyre. This match is just weird. Moolah dominates, Velvet comes back and then misses a splash allowing Moolah to pin her. It screams botched finish to me as even the announcers seem surprised.

Rating: N/A. Just was nothing at all and might have gone a minute. Little to rate here so I won't even try to.

Nikolai Volkoff vs. Corporal Kirschner

Now we have a flag match with Nikolai Volkoff against the forgotten Corporal Kirschner. Yeah I don't remember him either. The winner gets to have their flag waved. Other than that it's a standard one on one match. As usual, Nikolai sings the Russian National Anthem before the match starts. Nikolai dominates early on, ramming Kirschner into the post twice and busting him open. I kid you not, Kirschner lands 7 right hands, catches Freddy Blassie's cane and hits Nikolai with it to win the match.

Rating: D-. This was supposed to be a brawl but it was a bad match. 7 punches and a cane shot? Give me a break. Kirschner is apparently one of the most legit tough guys in the history of the business and got thrown out of most major companies for being too rough. Based on this and his match at the Wrestling Classic I'd assume it's due to a high level of suck but that's just me. This was just barely long enough to warrant a rating and it wasn't any good at all.

Battle Royal

Now we get the most famous match from this show: a 20 man battle royal with ten pro football players and 10 wrestlers. This is going to go GREAT. Since most of you won't know half

the people in this I'm not going to list them all until the end. The big names are a still rookie Bret Hart, Andre the Giant, Big John Studd and Bruno Sammartino. For the most part this is a run of the mill battle royal.

It's little more than a bunch of punching and kicking against the ropes as we get down to the big names. Oddly enough the celebrity commentator is the only one that gets anything right. Gorilla says stuff like Studd has this guy in the corner when they're almost in the middle of the ring, or Ernie Ladd who was a wrestler saying no one wants Andre when he's beating someone up. Amazing.

The only really famous thing in this match is a football player named William the Refrigerator Perry getting eliminated by Studd but then offering a handshake and eliminating him. The Iron Sheik eliminates Hillbilly Jim just as he would in the gimmick battle royal 15 years later at WM 17. The final four are the Hart Foundation, a football player and Andre. Do I need to really give the details on this? Andre beats up the Harts to win the match after launching Bret out in a press slam.

Rating: B. It's a bunch of football players and 80s wrestlers with a few great workers. Nothing special, but considering what they had to work with this is just fine. The football stuff didn't lead anywhere which is kind of surprising as they set up a Fridge vs. Studd thing that never happened at all that I know of. This was just ok and at least the right guy won it. Andre would of course be in the biggest match of all time the next year.

Tag Titles: British Bulldogs vs. The Dream Team

Now we have what is likely the best match of the whole show. It's a classic 80s tag match with the British Bulldogs, and Ozzy Osbourne in their corner for God alone knows why to face the tag team champions of the Dream Team Brutus Beefcake and

Greg Valentine. You can tell they're serious here as this has a sixty minute time limit.

The ring looks small here for some reason. Gorilla asks why Ozzy is there too which means he's confused like I am. There are two referees here which I doubt will mean anything for the most part. Smith vs. Valentine to get up. The ring is all loud here still.

The Bulldogs were so fast with those tags and this is no exception at all. Valentine won't tag out for no apparent reason. He counters a backdrop though and here's Beefcake. Small package by Dynamite get two. Fisherman's suplex by Davey gets two. I guess he's not perfect. After Davey gets beaten on for a bit Dynamite comes in and slugs it out with Valentine.

The champions cheat a bit and they still can't take over. I never got the appeal of the Dream Team but to be fair it might be that Brutus was just awful at this point. Valentine gets a Piledriver on Dynamite but falls forward so it kind of looks like a tombstone but with Dynamite's stomach facing out. That was kind of cool looking.

Bulldogs clear the ring as things speed up a bit. Davey gets the powerslam for two as it wasn't a finisher but just a signature move at the time. The champions work over Davey as momentum changes hands a lot here tonight. They work over the arm, including with a shoulderbreaker from Valentine.

However he shows his idiocy by pulling Davey up at two. Nice job you lunkhead. And there's the idiocy coming through as for no apparent reason Dynamite gets on the middle rope and Davey rams Valentine's head into Kid's for the knockout shot and falls on Valentine for the pin and the titles. That ending came from NOWHERE and Dynamite is out cold from the shot which is kind of amusing for some reason. That's Albano's 16th title win as a manager. Hokey smoke.

Rating: B-. Fun stuff but the ending was just so freaking random. I don't get the ending as it was like they looked at the clock and realized they had no time left and were like oh crap we need to finish this. The Bulldogs were a good team and were a huge step up from the Dream Team. They would lose them to the Harts in about 8-9 months so the tag division was starting to roll at this point.

Los Angeles

Ricky Steamboat vs. Hercules Hernandez

We move to the final and by far the worst of the three locations as we're now in LA, beginning with Ricky Steamboat against Hercules Hernandez. This was supposed to be Bret vs. Ricky in the big showdown match for Mania. I'm not sure what the showdown would be for since for all intents and purposes they had no feud that I know of but a little face on face action never hurt anyone, even though Bret wasn't a face at the time so scratch that line.

They start off kind of fast but not fast enough for anything to mean much. This was a different era so matches like these were really commonplace. There's no feud or anything here and Hercules is just a big power guy that had been given a fairly decent push so he's getting to fight one of the best guys in the company at one of the biggest shows of the year.

There is almost nothing to say here though as I've been watching for a few minutes and nothing has happened at all. Well at least nothing worth talking about that is. Hercules goes for the backbreaker as this is before the Full Nelson made him the original Chris Masters. Relatively standard Steamboat match which means it's at least passable. Herc is the big powerhouse that beats the tar out of Ricky, makes one mistake and the Dragon makes his comeback. The flying body press ends things as always.

Rating: C-. And that's almost all for Steamboat. I liked

Hercules for some reason but for the life of me I don't get the point in having him be considered a better prospect than Bret was. This was the epitome of a throwaway match with nothing special at all going on in it and nothing of note to talk about really. I sat there for minutes at a time with nothing of note so I apologize for the most history based match here.

Adrian Adonis vs. Uncle Elmer

Now for the odd match of the night, we have Adrian Adonis, playing a controversial gay gimmick at the time, against Uncle Elmer, a fat hillbilly character. The crowd chants a certain homosexual slur at Adonis to start the match which he prances around the ring to.

This match is slow and mostly painful as the smaller man in the match weighs about 350lbs. When he's your agile guy, you know this isn't going anywhere. Elmer punches him and literally falls off his feet from it. Quite sad actually. Adonis has his dress, yes dress ripped off and it's just hideous. Elmer beats on him some more but misses a leg drop. Adonis hits a top rope headbutt and gets the pin.

Rating: N/A. I never got the appeal of either of these characters and thankfully Elmer wasn't around much longer. Naturally he got a tape mainly about him and his family because that's the way the 80s went.

Junkyard Dog/Tito Santana vs. The Funks

In the next to last match of the night, we have the Funks against JYD and Tito Santana. This is another filler match that had no point at all other than two faces against a heel team. This is a much slower paced match as they do more old school stuff in there. Terry vs. Tito starts us off so we're certainly getting things started off on the right foot here.

You have three guys that belong in the Hall of Fame and JYD

who is in there because he was popular in the 80s making him a LEGEND. I still don't like him but he's more bearable than some people I can't stand. This is definitely a different style than most are used to. I'd like a bit more explanation as to why they're fighting but I think It's 1986 is about as close as we're going to get. Tito dominates for the most part here, hammering away on both Funks. He was completely awesome at this point if you didn't get that.

Off to the Dog now and we get some boxing. A Texas man lost a fight to a dog. Don't bother going back to Amarillo I guess Terry. Someone please explain the appeal to me of the Dog as I just don't get it at all and never have. Dory plays Ricky Morton which just sounds wrong and gets beaten on in the corner for a bit. The forearm gets two as I guess Tito didn't have it perfected yet.

Control shifts over to the crazy men and they beat down Tito for awhile as he's really playing Ricky Morton. That still sounds wrong. After a few minutes of basic offense from the Funks JYD comes back in and everything goes nuts. Terry is thrown to the floor where there are no mats. He might have legitimately hurt his knee or ankle there and I'm not surprised at all. With the referee not looking, Terry clocks the Dog with the Megaphone (Jimmy was managing them which I forgot to mention) and the heels steal one.

Rating: B-. Pretty fun match here with the Funks being all evil and the thrown together face team doing whatever they could to get the win. Granted that didn't happen but at least they tried. This was a better match than I remember it being and while it's still mainly formula stuff it worked rather well. I liked it and granted three of the guys being all time greats helps a bit.

WWF World Title: Hulk Hogan vs. King Kong Bundy

This is a cage match and the only one in Mania history if you

don't count the Cell match at Mania 15 which most people don't. The story behind this is Bundy jumped Hogan at a SNME and hurt his ribs, which hadn't healed yet. Hogan wrestled against doctor's orders with tape all over his ribs. Simple but effective but kind of too simple as this was more or less thrown together about a month ago.

This is a very not surprising match with Bundy going for the ribs and Hogan having to fight through the pain. It's solid because it's Hogan doing what he does best but the total and complete lack of drama or anyone really caring for the most part is hurting it. Also having Jesse as lead announcer is a very odd choice.

Bundy rips the tape off of Hogan's ribs like a good heel and Hogan messes up as always by trying to pick Bundy up and of course he can't do it. There's nothing special going on here at all but it's working for the most part. Ah there's the Hulk Up. Very surprisingly we get a power slam here and not the traditional slam. Maybe his ribs really were hurt. He ties up Bundy and goes over the top to retain and end the show.

Rating: B-. It's Hogan against a monster heel not named Andre. What are you expecting here? This was his bread and butter and the fans popped for the end (only) so I guess you can call this a success. I'm a sucker for Hogan matches in the 80s so I'd say there's probably some bias in the rating but who cares? Fairly solid match but nothing unique about it at all other than the cage aspect.

Overall rating: D+. While certainly better in the ring than the first Mania and including some storylines this time, the three venues thing is just a mess. There's really only two or three very good matches here and I'd call maybe the tag title match Mania worthy. Other than that there's a lot of filler and it's more or less 1-2 big matches per location with the rest being all filler.

This show suffers from trying to do something that had never been done before, and while they did indeed do that the overlooked one major point: the new thing they did wasn't a good idea. It's really not that good of a show overall. Watch the highlights if you want to, but don't waste three hours watching it from start to end.

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History of Wrestlemania with KB: Wrestlemania 2 – What the Heck Were They Thinking?

Wrestlemania 2

Date: April 7, 1986

Location: Nassau Coliseum-New York, Rosemont Horizon-Chicago, Illinois, Sports Arena-Los Angeles, California

Attendance: 40,085 combined for all three venues

Commentators: New York – Vince McMahon, Susan St. James. Chicago – Gorilla Monsoon, Gene Okerlund, Cathy Lee Crosby, Ernie Ladd. Los Angeles – Jesse Ventura, Alfred Hayes, Elvira America The Beautiful: Ray Charles

This show is the classic what the heck were thinking moment from the WWF. They had made Wrestlemania the year before and they hit it so far out of the park that by the time it was Wrestlemania 2 the ball hadn't come down yet. This was a problem though. Since the inaugural show had been such a success, Vince felt they had to do something to top it. This

was his idea: what if we did Wrestlemania from 3 different places??? Think about that for a minute. How weird would that be?

Not to mention, Vince had another idea: let's put it on a Monday! Again, just awkward sounding. The format used was three locations, each with an undercard and then a featured match, which were a boxing match, a battle royal, and the true main event, Hulk Hogan against King Kong Bundy in a steel cage.

The idea was odd on paper and worse in reality as it felt like watching three shows instead of one. There's no rhythm and because it was in three locations, announcers were a rare commodity. Due to this, Vince's last idea was to put a real commentator together with celebrities to do the commentary. What followed might be the biggest mess in company history.

Paul Orndorff vs. Don Muraco

We begin the show in New York City with Paul Orndorff against Don Muraco. Why are they fighting? I don't have a freaking clue but they are so here we go. As they begin we hear comments from both and neither have anything to say of meaning.

Orndorff is easily the face here so if he never accomplished anything else in his career, the face turn between Manias one and two was effective. As was predicted, the celebrity commentator is atrocious, with such gems like "I think he's winning!" Orndorff controls the early part of the match but Muraco breaks it up with some power. They roll outside and we get a double count out as the crowd clearly can be heard chanting bull.

Rating: D+. Fine for what it was, but the fans got it right with their chants. This is the opening match to Wrestlemania? Seriously? That's the best they could come up with? This feud

more or less never went anywhere at all as Orndorff was about to get the biggest push of his career by far, resulting in him making about \$20,000 a week for awhile. This was just an odd choice for an opening match but then again this was an odd choice for a show so I guess it fits.

Intercontinental Title: George Steele vs. Randy Savage

Next up the intercontinental title is on the line as Randy Savage defends against George Steele. This is a match that I can't find a standalone version of so I can't put this one in here. However, this was another chapter in the over year long feud between these two. Savage had been allegedly mistreating Liz and Steele had developed a crush on her. That led to, what else, Savage being jealous and a 15 month feud began.

Mega stall from Savage to start as he seems afraid of Steele. Savage runs again and finally on the third time Steele goes after him. They finally lock up and Steele beats Savage up for a while with power moves and biting but Steele keeps going to talk to Liz. This was a weird period for Savage as they knew they had a gem with him but they didn't know what to do with him. Yeah he was the IC champion, but where did they go with him from there?

This was all they had until the next year when he and Steamboat stole the show and Savage was launched into the main event. For some reason Savage has a bouquet of flowers that he and Steele try to beat each other up with. After ripping apart a turnbuckle and eating the stuffing (not making that up) Steele gets slammed and elbowed, but he kicks out?

Yes, George Steele is the first man to kick out of the elbow, and he pops up, beats on Savage some more and then gets rolled up and Savage uses the ropes to pin him. Steele eats more stuffing.

Rating: C-. This was a comedy match I think with wrestling mixed in. Savage is the highlight here as he sells like crazy

for Steele and it helps a lot. These two had this freaky chemistry that no one has ever been able to really figure out. They would feud on and off for the next year before FINALLY ending it with the return of Ricky Steamboat for that whole greatest match of all time thing he and Savage would have next year.

Jake Roberts vs. George Wells

We follow up that strange match with another somewhat strange match as Jake Roberts, still a rookie here, takes on some guy named George Wells. This match is little more than a glorified squash. Wells dominates early but doesn't go for a pin when he has the chance. Jake recovers and DDTs him to win the match. Afterwards he unleashes Damien who causes Wells to look like he's foaming at the mouth.

Rating: D+. Talk about a weird choice to have on Wrestlemania. Jake was brand new at this point so they needed someone to make him look good and they pick...George Wells? There was a squash on Mania for the first two years and both times they were the least interesting match on the card. I don't get the selection here for the most part and it's pretty bad all things considered.

Boxing Match: Mr. T vs. Roddy Piper

We now move onto the main event of the New York portion of the show: a boxing match with Roddy Piper and Mr. T. This was built up on SNME about 2 months before hand with Mr. T. beating Piper's friend Bob Orton in a boxing match before being beaten down by both of them. That came on from what started over a year ago in the main event of the first Wrestlemania, so this truly was a showdown that had been built up for ages.

Factor in that T had been the World Boxing Champion in Rocky 3 just a few years ago and was on a top rated TV show where he was a tough guy. Both men have famous trainers in their

corners to make it look more legit. For no apparent reason Joan Rivers does the ring announcing. This is ten three minute rounds. She introduces Orton as the Ace Comedy Bob Orvin. Nice job of handling the reading thing honey.

They actually got Smoking Joe Frazier to be in T's corner. One of the biggest stars in Hollywood has in his corner a former world heavyweight champion who had three of the best boxing matches in history with Muhammad Ali. He also has a midget. Well of course he does. They treat this like a real boxing match. Oh dear.

T goes for the ribs which doesn't work all that well for him. Piper hits him on the break which is illegal of course. There has been no mention of judges or anything like that so I guess this is destined to not go the distance. The referee has broken them up about four times now. I think these are three minute rounds. For the most part these punches aren't landing at all but they sell them anyway of course.

It's not so much boxing but rather glorified grappling with the occasional punch thrown. The fans are more or less dead if you didn't guess that. After the first round nothing has really happened. Piper has a bunch of grease on his face for the second round which is keeping the punches from T from being effective.

This is painfully boring if I didn't make that clear so far. Piper knocks the heck out of T with some big roundhouses and finally drops him to huge cheers because something HAPPENED for a change. The knockdown gets a count of 8. Piper keeps pounding on him as round two ends. They brawl a bit during the break and Orton throws water at T.

Piper does the Ali Shuffle to start the third round. T gets him into the corner and pounds away with more or less open hand shots to the head and Piper is in trouble. That gets a count of 7. T gets a huge punch that I think hit so of course

Piper is knocked to the floor. He gets up at 9 and then holds onto T for the last 25 seconds of the fight.

They just trade big bombs to start the fourth round. And then he punches the referee and slams T for the DQ about a minute into the fourth round. It's a bit brawl and T of course gets the win. Was there a reason for both that ending and also having Piper dominate a round like that? This was awful.

Rating: F. On WRESTLEmania they had a long boxing match. This was just boring beyond belief and the boxing looked awful. They tried to make this seem legit and it failed on more than all levels. T was never seen again and Piper turned face relatively soon after taking time off for knee surgery. Boring match and awful beyond belief.

Chicago

Women's Title: Fabulous Moolah vs. Velvet McIntyre

We start with the Women's Title on the line as Moolah defends against Velvet McIntyre. This match is just weird. Moolah dominates, Velvet comes back and then misses a splash allowing Moolah to pin her. It screams botched finish to me as even the announcers seem surprised.

Rating: N/A. Just was nothing at all and might have gone a minute. Little to rate here so I won't even try to.

Nikolai Volkoff vs. Corporal Kirschner

Now we have a flag match with Nikolai Volkoff against the forgotten Corporal Kirschner. Yeah I don't remember him either. The winner gets to have their flag waved. Other than that it's a standard one on one match. As usual, Nikolai sings the Russian National Anthem before the match starts. Nikolai dominates early on, ramming Kirschner into the post twice and busting him open. I kid you not, Kirschner lands 7 right hands, catches Freddy Blassie's cane and hits Nikolai with it

to win the match.

Rating: D-. This was supposed to be a brawl but it was a bad match. 7 punches and a cane shot? Give me a break. Kirschner is apparently one of the most legit tough guys in the history of the business and got thrown out of most major companies for being too rough. Based on this and his match at the Wrestling Classic I'd assume it's due to a high level of suck but that's just me. This was just barely long enough to warrant a rating and it wasn't any good at all.

Battle Royal

Now we get the most famous match from this show: a 20 man battle royal with ten pro football players and 10 wrestlers. This is going to go GREAT. Since most of you won't know half the people in this I'm not going to list them all until the end. The big names are a still rookie Bret Hart, Andre the Giant, Big John Studd and Bruno Sammartino. For the most part this is a run of the mill battle royal.

It's little more than a bunch of punching and kicking against the ropes as we get down to the big names. Oddly enough the celebrity commentator is the only one that gets anything right. Gorilla says stuff like Studd has this guy in the corner when they're almost in the middle of the ring, or Ernie Ladd who was a wrestler saying no one wants Andre when he's beating someone up. Amazing.

The only really famous thing in this match is a football player named William the Refrigerator Perry getting eliminated by Studd but then offering a handshake and eliminating him. The Iron Sheik eliminates Hillbilly Jim just as he would in the gimmick battle royal 15 years later at WM 17. The final four are the Hart Foundation, a football player and Andre. Do I need to really give the details on this? Andre beats up the Harts to win the match after launching Bret out in a press slam.

Rating: B. It's a bunch of football players and 80s wrestlers with a few great workers. Nothing special, but considering what they had to work with this is just fine. The football stuff didn't lead anywhere which is kind of surprising as they set up a Fridge vs. Studd thing that never happened at all that I know of. This was just ok and at least the right guy won it. Andre would of course be in the biggest match of all time the next year.

Tag Titles: British Bulldogs vs. The Dream Team

Now we have what is likely the best match of the whole show. It's a classic 80s tag match with the British Bulldogs, and Ozzy Osbourne in their corner for God alone knows why to face the tag team champions of the Dream Team Brutus Beefcake and Greg Valentine. You can tell they're serious here as this has a sixty minute time limit.

The ring looks small here for some reason. Gorilla asks why Ozzy is there too which means he's confused like I am. There are two referees here which I doubt will mean anything for the most part. Smith vs. Valentine to get up. The ring is all loud here still.

The Bulldogs were so fast with those tags and this is no exception at all. Valentine won't tag out for no apparent reason. He counters a backdrop though and here's Beefcake. Small package by Dynamite get two. Fisherman's suplex by Davey gets two. I guess he's not perfect. After Davey gets beaten on for a bit Dynamite comes in and slugs it out with Valentine.

The champions cheat a bit and they still can't take over. I never got the appeal of the Dream Team but to be fair it might be that Brutus was just awful at this point. Valentine gets a Piledriver on Dynamite but falls forward so it kind of looks like a tombstone but with Dynamite's stomach facing out. That was kind of cool looking.

Bulldogs clear the ring as things speed up a bit. Davey gets the powerslam for two as it wasn't a finisher but just a signature move at the time. The champions work over Davey as momentum changes hands a lot here tonight. They work over the arm, including with a shoulderbreaker from Valentine.

However he shows his idiocy by pulling Davey up at two. Nice job you lunkhead. And there's the idiocy coming through as for no apparent reason Dynamite gets on the middle rope and Davey rams Valentine's head into Kid's for the knockout shot and falls on Valentine for the pin and the titles. That ending came from NOWHERE and Dynamite is out cold from the shot which is kind of amusing for some reason. That's Albano's 16th title win as a manager. Hokey smoke.

Rating: B-. Fun stuff but the ending was just so freaking random. I don't get the ending as it was like they looked at the clock and realized they had no time left and were like oh crap we need to finish this. The Bulldogs were a good team and were a huge step up from the Dream Team. They would lose them to the Harts in about 8-9 months so the tag division was starting to roll at this point.

Los Angeles

Ricky Steamboat vs. Hercules Hernandez

We move to the final and by far the worst of the three locations as we're now in LA, beginning with Ricky Steamboat against Hercules Hernandez. This was supposed to be Bret vs. Ricky in the big showdown match for Mania. I'm not sure what the showdown would be for since for all intents and purposes they had no feud that I know of but a little face on face action never hurt anyone, even though Bret wasn't a face at the time so scratch that line.

They start off kind of fast but not fast enough for anything to mean much. This was a different era so matches like these

were really commonplace. There's no feud or anything here and Hercules is just a big power guy that had been given a fairly decent push so he's getting to fight one of the best guys in the company at one of the biggest shows of the year.

There is almost nothing to say here though as I've been watching for a few minutes and nothing has happened at all. Well at least nothing worth talking about that is. Hercules goes for the backbreaker as this is before the Full Nelson made him the original Chris Masters. Relatively standard Steamboat match which means it's at least passable. Herc is the big powerhouse that beats the tar out of Ricky, makes one mistake and the Dragon makes his comeback. The flying body press ends things as always.

Rating: C-. And that's almost all for Steamboat. I liked Hercules for some reason but for the life of me I don't get the point in having him be considered a better prospect than Bret was. This was the epitome of a throwaway match with nothing special at all going on in it and nothing of note to talk about really. I sat there for minutes at a time with nothing of note so I apologize for the most history based match here.

Adrian Adonis vs. Uncle Elmer

Now for the odd match of the night, we have Adrian Adonis, playing a controversial gay gimmick at the time, against Uncle Elmer, a fat hillbilly character. The crowd chants a certain homosexual slur at Adonis to start the match which he prances around the ring to.

This match is slow and mostly painful as the smaller man in the match weighs about 350lbs. When he's your agile guy, you know this isn't going anywhere. Elmer punches him and literally falls off his feet from it. Quite sad actually. Adonis has his dress, yes dress ripped off and it's just hideous. Elmer beats on him some more but misses a leg drop.

Adonis hits a top rope headbutt and gets the pin.

Rating: N/A. I never got the appeal of either of these characters and thankfully Elmer wasn't around much longer. Naturally he got a tape mainly about him and his family because that's the way the 80s went.

Junkyard Dog/Tito Santana vs. The Funks

In the next to last match of the night, we have the Funks against JYD and Tito Santana. This is another filler match that had no point at all other than two faces against a heel team. This is a much slower paced match as they do more old school stuff in there. Terry vs. Tito starts us off so we're certainly getting things started off on the right foot here.

You have three guys that belong in the Hall of Fame and JYD who is in there because he was popular in the 80s making him a LEGEND. I still don't like him but he's more bearable than some people I can't stand. This is definitely a different style than most are used to. I'd like a bit more explanation as to why they're fighting but I think It's 1986 is about as close as we're going to get. Tito dominates for the most part here, hammering away on both Funks. He was completely awesome at this point if you didn't get that.

Off to the Dog now and we get some boxing. A Texas man lost a fight to a dog. Don't bother going back to Amarillo I guess Terry. Someone please explain the appeal to me of the Dog as I just don't get it at all and never have. Dory plays Ricky Morton which just sounds wrong and gets beaten on in the corner for a bit. The forearm gets two as I guess Tito didn't have it perfected yet.

Control shifts over to the crazy men and they beat down Tito for awhile as he's really playing Ricky Morton. That still sounds wrong. After a few minutes of basic offense from the Funks JYD comes back in and everything goes nuts. Terry is thrown to the floor where there are no mats. He might have

legitimately hurt his knee or ankle there and I'm not surprised at all. With the referee not looking, Terry clocks the Dog with the Megaphone (Jimmy was managing them which I forgot to mention) and the heels steal one.

Rating: B-. Pretty fun match here with the Funks being all evil and the thrown together face team doing whatever they could to get the win. Granted that didn't happen but at least they tried. This was a better match than I remember it being and while it's still mainly formula stuff it worked rather well. I liked it and granted three of the guys being all time greats helps a bit.

WWF World Title: Hulk Hogan vs. King Kong Bundy

This is a cage match and the only one in Mania history if you don't count the Cell match at Mania 15 which most people don't. The story behind this is Bundy jumped Hogan at a SNME and hurt his ribs, which hadn't healed yet. Hogan wrestled against doctor's orders with tape all over his ribs. Simple but effective but kind of too simple as this was more or less thrown together about a month ago.

This is a very not surprising match with Bundy going for the ribs and Hogan having to fight through the pain. It's solid because it's Hogan doing what he does best but the total and complete lack of drama or anyone really caring for the most part is hurting it. Also having Jesse as lead announcer is a very odd choice.

Bundy rips the tape off of Hogan's ribs like a good heel and Hogan messes up as always by trying to pick Bundy up and of course he can't do it. There's nothing special going on here at all but it's working for the most part. Ah there's the Hulk Up. Very surprisingly we get a power slam here and not the traditional slam. Maybe his ribs really were hurt. He ties up Bundy and goes over the top to retain and end the show.

Rating: B-. It's Hogan against a monster heel not named Andre.

What are you expecting here? This was his bread and butter and the fans popped for the end (only) so I guess you can call this a success. I'm a sucker for Hogan matches in the 80s so I'd say there's probably some bias in the rating but who cares? Fairly solid match but nothing unique about it at all other than the cage aspect.

Overall rating: C+. While certainly better in the ring than the first Mania and including some storylines this time, the three venues thing is just a mess. There's really only two or three very good matches here and I'd call maybe the tag title match Mania worthy. Other than that there's a lot of filler and it's more or less 1-2 big matches per location with the rest being all filler.

This show suffers from trying to do something that had never been done before, and while they did indeed do that the overlooked one major point: the new thing they did wasn't a good idea. It's really not that good of a show overall. Watch the highlights if you want to, but don't waste three hours watching it from start to end.