

Thought of the Day: Wrestlemania Title Stat

Even if you stretch this holds up. In the 29 Wrestlemanias, there has never been a show where the world, IC/US and tag all changed hands.

And before anyone tries to correct me:

Warrior didn't lose the IC title at Wrestlemania 6

Pre-Show matches aren't part of Wrestlemania, meaning they don't count.

Wrestlemania 31 In Santa Clara, California

It'll likely be called San Francisco which makes better business sense.

WWE Network Details

This looks pretty good actually. From lordsofpain.net

Justin LaBar of WrestleZone.com is reporting that WWE has a targeted launch date of February 24th for the WWE Network,

which is the day after the Elimination Chamber pay-per-view. This confirms a previous report from PWInsider.com, but LaBar's sources provided him with a few extra tidbits about the Network:

- Initial price point will be in the \$10-\$12 a month range, with the sign-up being for six months.

- You'll be able to watch WrestleMania 30 on the Network, with the plan still being the reported "every non-WrestleMania pay-per-view airing on the Network in the future".

- It won't be a channel on television, but an app-like service along the lines of Netflix that you'll be able to watch online and on devices like smart TVs, PS3, PS4, X-Box 360, X-Box one, and so on.

- There will be a live, 24/7 stream of content on the Network, which is the thing that will separate it from apps like Netflix, which focuses more on-demand viewing. However, on-demand viewing will still be a part of the Network, as the entire library of Raw and Smackdown episodes, as well as pay-per-views, will be available to watch at launch.

If any more information comes out, we'll be sure to pass it along to all of you.

I'm glad it's not a TV network, though the idea of WWE streaming this stuff could be a MAJOR problem. I'll pick it up of course, but that six month idea scares me a bit.

Something I've Wanted To Say For Over 20 Years

I'm going to Wrestlemania. Booked the hotel room today, non-refundable. Buying the ticket the day it goes on sale, along

with a ticket to Axxess. I might take in the Raw the night after the show as well but I'm not sure.

I' thrilled and I can't thank you all enough for supporting me as you have. You're the reason I can make this trip. Thank you all so much.

KB

Monday Night Raw – March 22, 1999: The #1 Moment In Raw History

Monday Night Raw

Date: March 22, 1999

Location: Knickerbocker Arena, Albany, New York

Attendance: 12,264

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler

It's finally the go home show for Wrestlemania and things should be pretty much set in stone. However, since this is Russo World, it's time for some last minute changes to the midcard because he can't sit still for five minutes. There is however one major thing on this show that will be remembered for years to come. Let's get to it.

Austin arrives and talks to the driver of a beer truck. That brings a smile to my face.

Here's the Corporation to open the show. Vince talks about how great of a night Wrestlemania will be for them before handing the mic off to the European Champion Shane McMahon. Shane brags about how he can beat X-Pac like a drum but wants to do it tonight instead of Sunday. Vince says that his family is very secure and says Big Boss Man and others will be waiting on Undertaker when he arrives tonight. He believes Austin and Undertaker are working together but it's not going to work.

Rock says we're six days away from heading to Philadelphia for the end of Austin's career. Austin is shown watching in the back but Rock isn't surprised because Austin is drawn to Rock's star power. Rock guarantees that Austin can't beat him but Austin is going for a walk in the back. Vince makes Austin vs. Big Show for tonight with Rock as guest referee to make sure things are all fair.

This brings out Mankind who calls himself the best referee there is, was and ever will be, meaning it should be Rock vs. Mankind for the right to referee the main event. We're now having matches to determine the referee for the main event on the same show. That's one thing on Wrestlemania (and that's a BIG stretch) but now we're doing it on Raw? Mankind talks about how Shawn Michaels is cool with this and leaves, but Vince says cut the music. He talks about a street fight but gets cut off by Austin....in a beer truck.

It's the famous moment with Austin driving a Coors Light truck into the arena and saying he'll win the title at Mania before spraying Rock and the McMahons down with beer. This was voted the #1 moment for the first ten years of Raw which is pretty ridiculous when you think about it. It's not even Austin's biggest moment on Raw, with stuff like the first Stunner to Vince or costing Rock the title two months before this would pretty easily trump this. It's a cool moment, but it's not THAT good. Vince swimming in beer still works really well though.

Apparently JR is at a frat party. This JR IS EVIL stuff is really stupid.

Tag Titles: Owen Hart/Jeff Jarrett vs. The Brood

It's Edge/Gangrel challenging. Gangrel pounds on Owen to start but gets caught in a spinwheel kick. Off to Edge who gets about a foot away from Owen as Hart dives over. They call it a powerslam but I think that move needs actual contact to count. Jarrett comes in and gets caught in the Edge-0-Matic for no cover. Christian comes in from the floor as I guess we're under Freebird Rules. Again it's Russo World so why not. Edge gets two off a high cross body as the teams have changed corners. Everything breaks down and Owen hooks the Sharpshooter on Edge but Public Enemy comes in for the no contest.

Everyone brawls but the lights go out. They come back on to reveal Debra covered in blood. Somehow after that match, we needed a battle royal with the last two guys in the ring getting the title shot at Wrestlemania.

The Outlaws say they'll beat each other tonight.

The Corporation gives Shane a pep talk and the Stooges are sent to get coffee.

Hardcore Title/Intercontinental Title: Billy Gunn vs. Road Dogg

Title vs. Title with Roadie defending the IC Title and Gunn defending the Hardcore Title because Vince Russo likes to mess with us. This isn't a hardcore match despite the title being on the line. Feeling out process with both guys scoring with basic stuff until Roadie armdrags Gunn into the corner. Gunn sends him into a corner as well, only to be punched down for the shaky knee. Billy armdrags Roadie down a few times and hits the Fameasser but here are Snow, Goldust and Venis for the DQ.

Rating: D-. As is the case with almost any wrestling in this era outside of the main event, this was worthless. There are two problems here. First of all is the aforementioned double switch. It messed up months of

stories and gave us Billy Gunn as a hardcore guy which didn't fit at all but it was surprising so it's good right? Second, no one wanted to see the Outlaws fight so no one was interested in the match. Nothing to see here.

Something scares the Stooges.

Back from a break and the Stooges have been attacked by.....the Legion of Doom? Oh because of the imitation last week. Yeah whatever.

Here's Blue Meanie with a chair to call out Ken Shamrock for some reason. He says that the company isn't big enough for the both of them so tonight the Meanie is taking a stand. Shamrock's music hits but it's Ryan instead of Ken. Meanie tries to spank her but here are Ken and Goldust, who wind up brawling as Meanie and Ryan bail. Meanie saves Goldust from the ankle lock with a chair shot. I guess that's your Intercontinental Title build.

Back to the JR frat party as JR wants girls.

The Ministry of Darkness arrives.

Sable vs. Ivory

Non-title. Ivory's friend D'Lo Brown jumps in on commentary. Sable wants to stretch before we get going and we hear about Hardcore Holly vs. Al Snow vs. Billy Gunn at Mania. Cue PMS as Sable hits a horrible kick to Ivory's ribs. Terri and Jackie yell at D'Lo and Ivory gets a pair of near falls. Jackie trips Ivory and Sable wins with the powerbomb. This was nothing, again.

Tori comes in and beats Sable down.

Mankind vs. The Rock

The winner gets to referee the main event tonight. They brawl to the floor to start with Rock being sent into the steps, only to come back and post Mankind. The referee takes a chair away from Rock but he suplexes Mankind on the floor as they head inside. Mankind comes back with a slam of his own to set up his own People's Elbow but only hits mat. A low blow stops Rock's comeback but Mankind is a good guy so it's ok. Rock hits him low right back and it's out to the floor again.

We get the always funny mid-match commentary from Rock but the distraction lets Mankind score with a clothesline. Back in and Rock stomps away in the corner but Mankind fires off right hands of his own. The referee gets bumped so there's no one to count after Rock hits a DDT. Back up and Mankind hits the double arm DDT but still no referee. Instead it's Socko time, which draws out Big Show to chokeslam Mankind, drawing the DQ from the awakening referee.

Rating: C. This didn't have time to develop but Rock vs. Foley is always worth checking out. There's natural chemistry there and you just can't teach something like that. Mankind was on the down side of his career at this point but he was still more than a big enough deal to give the fans hope.

Rock yells at Big Show.

Kane vs. Goldust

Goldust vs. Shamrock vs. Venis vs. Road Dogg is announced for the PPV. No match though as Goldust throws a fireball at Kane, revealing himself to be HHH in disguise. This is retaliation for Kane burning Chyna a few weeks ago.

Austin tells Mankind to stay out of his way in the main event.

X-Pac vs. Shane McMahon

This is non-title and in the parking lot. Pac kicks him down and pounds away, drawing the Mean Street Posse in to beat Pac down. The rich guys speed off in sports cars.

Ken Shamrock/Big Bossman/Test vs. Undertaker/Acolytes

Brawl to start (duh) with Boss Man staring Taker down. He blasts Undertaker in the head with the nightstick but Taker sits up. Everything heads outside and then into the crowd as another "match" ends in less than two minutes.

The lights go out as we go to a break.

The lights lead nowhere as a disheveled Vince has something to say after the break. He shows us the beer bath again before guaranteeing that Austin won't enjoy what's coming. There's no chance that Austin wins the title back on Sunday because tonight's guest commentator will beat him at Wrestlemania.

Big Show vs. Steve Austin

This was supposed to be the main event of Wrestlemania 2000 if you can believe that. Mankind is guest referee. Austin flips Show off to start but gets thrown into the corner. Show won't be whipped across the ring and chops Austin down. Austin slips away and takes Show's leg down before trying to wrap it around the post. Big Show kicks Austin over the barricade from his back but Mankind breaks up some choking.

A buckle pad was ripped away in the process and Austin is rammed face first into the steel for two. Austin tries a Stunner but Big Show casually picks him up and launches Austin away. Austin staggers to the floor and Big Show press slams him on the concrete. Rock: "It wasn't on his head but the Rock will take that."

Show picks him up again but Austin posts him for no effect. Instead Austin gets launched into the post to put him down again. Mankind grabs a chair to force it back into the ring as Austin is in big trouble. There's a bearhug on Austin but he finally bites his way out. The Thesz Press takes Show down and Austin grabs the chair. Two shots to the leg and three to the head (Mankind is cool with it) set up the Stunner for the pin.

Rating: C. Just a brawl here to give the fans something to get excited about for Sunday. There's nothing wrong with combining the two feuds into one match and I'm glad that it wasn't the standard tag match for a change. Big Show really came off like a monster here and Austin needing to heat to beat him was a nice touch.

Post match two brawls break out with Rock hitting the Rock Bottom on Austin to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. Well it definitely hyped up Wrestlemania, but the booking isn't much in the way of quality. Wrestling was cast off during 1999 in favor of fast segments disguised as wrestling matches to build interest into an eventual match. The problem was when those matches sucked, what were the fans supposed to care about? Good buildup show, not a great show in general.

Here's Wrestlemania if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2013/03/24/wrestlemania-count-up-wrestlemania-xv-russo-at-his-best/>

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of Complete 2001 Monday Night Raw Reviews at Amazon for just \$4 at:

And check out my Amazon author page with wrestling books for

just \$4 at:

Thought of the Day: Wrestlemania Main Events Aren't All That Great

So while wondering about why Rock vs. Austin II isn't considered a masterpiece most of the time, this occurred to me. Wrestlemania main events are rarely anything above pretty good. Let's look at this.

1. Hogan/Mr. T. vs. Orndorff/Piper. Good match but nothing all that great.
2. Hogan vs. Bundy. Nothing special.
3. Hogan vs. Andre. Historic match but the action itself isn't much to see.
4. DiBiase vs. Savage. Both guys were tired and the focus was on Hogan. This is probably the best of the first four.
5. Hogan vs. Savage. You can stretch and call this a classic but it's really just an extended Hogan formula match.
6. Hogan vs. Warrior. Yeah it's a classic but it's mainly for the atmosphere.
7. Hogan vs. Sgt. Slaughter. Again just a Hogan formula match.
8. Hogan vs. Sid Justice. Another Hogan formula match but a bad one.

9. Hart vs. Yokozuna. As good as it could have been but it's nothing great either.
10. Hart vs. Yokozuna. Better than the previous year's but it's still not a great match.
11. Taylor vs. Bigelow. This match is better than people remember but it's bad by the standards of regular wrestlers.
12. Michaels vs. Hart. This is chronically overrated but if you want to stretch it's a classic.
13. Sid vs. Undertaker. Just no.
14. Michaels vs. Austin. This is a classic, especially given the injuries.
15. Austin vs. Rock. Their later matches are better but this is a Russo special which holds it back.
16. HHH vs. Rock vs. Foley vs. Big Show. Should have been Rock vs. HHH, making the first 20 minutes pretty pointless.
17. Austin vs. Rock II. Masterpiece, period.
18. Jericho vs. HHH. Good yes, but the ending was never in doubt. Also it was HHH vs. Stephanie in reality.
19. Lesnar vs. Angle. Certainly a classic but there are better matches on this show.
20. HHH vs. Michaels vs. Benoit. Masterpiece.
21. HHH vs. Batista. Book it better and the match is a classic but it wasn't anything great.
22. Cena vs. HHH. Didn't work for me at all.
23. Cena vs. Michaels. Classic bordering on masterpiece.
24. Undertaker vs. Edge. Forgotten masterpiece.

25. HHH vs. Orton. Huge mess.

26. Undertaker vs. Michaels. Masterpiece, though a step beneath the previous year's.

27. Cena vs. Miz. This was a mess to put it nicely.

28. Rock vs. Cena. Classic for sure and the hype brings it up to masterpiece.

29. Rock vs. Cena II. Not as good but we'll stretch and call it a classic.

So out of 29 matches, 11 at most are great matches and that's a stretch. Less than half and closer to a third are great matches. If you're realistic about it, only about seven Wrestlemania main events have been at the highest level. You would expect more out of the biggest show of the year.

Thought of the Day: The WWE Treadmill

I'm finishing Smackdown and this became even more obvious. One of WWE's biggest problems is that the year is so repetitive and it's the same pattern over and over again. Think about this.

The year starts the night after Wrestlemania where something big happens to set up Extreme Rules. After that PPV we go to the start of the big summer angle which usually culminates at

Summerslam or the next month's show. During the big summer angle we hit MITB, meaning the next few months are spent teasing cash-ins, usually starting around Summerslam. Then we lighten up a lot until the end of the year through Survivor Series and TLC. The new year brings the Rumble and the start of the Road to Wrestlemania. The Rumble establishes one of the major matches, the a few weeks later we get the return of the big name for the other Wrestlemania main event. Then it's the Chamber to establish the other title match and six weeks later it's Wrestlemania to close out the WWE year.

How many years in a row have you seen that exact sequence?

The Clown Is Down

Matt Borne, the original Doink the Clown, passed away today at the age of 55. No word on the cause yet. Borne wrestled at the first Wrestlemania against Ricky Steamboat and as Big Josh, a lumberjack character, in the early 90s in WCW.

That's rather sad.

First Official Wrestlemania

Buys Report

This number will still be tweaked over the summer until the final number is announced in August. So far it did.... 1,048,000 buys. Here's how that stacks up over recent years:

2009 – 960,000 buys

2010 – 885,000 buys

2011 – 1,059,000 buys

2012 – 1,217,000 buys

2013 – 1,048,000 buys (prelim. figure)

Odds are it'll go up, meaning it'll be the second highest total in the last five years. Isn't it interesting that of the last five years, the two lowest are the ones Cena didn't main event?

On This Day: May 11, 1985 – Saturday Night's Main Event #1: Dig That Wrestlemania Fallout

Saturday Night's Main Event 1

Date: May 11, 1985

Location: Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum, Long Island, New York

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Jesse Ventura

So I figured this was a good one to get around to. This is the fallout show from Mania but there isn't a ton of fallout. No one really knew what this was going to be like but it was an experiment worth trying at least. It was the first chance a lot of people would have to see these guys on television as it was shown on NBC in prime time which was unheard of back then. Either way, this should be fun so let's get to it.

As usual we open with the main faces for the night talking. Wendi Richter and Cyndi Lauper are talking about the match with Moolah tonight and Hogan and Mr. T. say they're ready for Bob Orton tonight. As always, the music rocks. Jesse is in pink. He can get away with it though.

Iron Sheik/Nikolai Volkoff/George Steele vs. Mike Rotunda/Barry Windham/Ricky Steamboat

That's quite the face tag team. This was on the SNME DVD (great DVD that should certainly be picked up if you can find it. Awesome stuff on it) as an extra. Blassie is with the heels and Albano is with the faces. The two foreigners had taken the tag titles from the US Express at Wrestlemania for a token tag title change.

About a year prior to this, the US Express had been using Real American for their theme music. That went to Hogan of course and here they use Born in the USA by Bruce Springsteen which works like a charm for them as it's perfect. We start with Windham and Steele which is an odd matchup if there ever has been one.

Sheik was hitting the end of whatever usefulness that he had at this point. Rotundo would soon head to WCW and become a member of the Varsity Club, ending in an awesome moment with Rick Steiner taking the TV Title from him after months of being talked down to by him. Wow what a tangent that was.

Oh and he's more commonly known as I.R.S. Oddly enough the faces dominate early on. We go to commercial with the faces

dominating. We begin the awesome SNME tradition of not having action during commercials so we don't have to be all confused about how we got to a point during a break.

Wow there are four hall of fame wrestlers in here and two on the floor. That's rather impressive, especially considering that the two that aren't in there are two of the three most talented. Steele comes in and his teammates abandon him, allowing Windham to get a quick rollup for the pin. Steele eats a turnbuckle and the tag champions beat him up. That doesn't last long as Albano comes in to calm him down and Steele is a face.

Rating: C-. Eh this was fine. It wasn't meant to be anything special other than a way to get Steele out of the dark side, but the heel offense consisted of about four Volkoff punches and other than that it was a complete squash. I don't get why it was so one sided, but it did its job and wasn't bad at all so for the first match in show history this was perfectly fine.

The heels blame Steele for the loss and Steele and Albano scare them off.

Piper's Pit

The guest is Paul Orndorff, who was Piper's partner in the main event of Wrestlemania. Orton is there as well. Paul more or less says go ahead and try to beat me up to Orton which Piper tries to defuse quickly. Piper has to be high on something. Either that or he's just completely insane. I'm not sure which it is.

Piper keeps insulting Orndorff and then he would jump up and yell at both guys who run and scream. Piper finally gives up and calls Orndorff a piece of garbage and Paul cleans house. A piledriver is blocked by a cast shot from Orton. Mr. T. makes the save. Ok, we get it: Mr. T. is in a wrestling company. Let it go already.

Hogan says he dedicates the match tonight to his mother. Ok then. He's also happy about Paul's recent face turn.

WWF Title: Hulk Hogan vs. Bob Orton

Hogan coming out to Eye of the Tiger is some combination of odd, awesome and epic. You figure out the proportions. Naturally it starts out with Hogan completely dominating Orton. This was also on the DVD but the color and picture quality were WAY better there. It looks bad here to say the least. This is exactly what you would expect it to be: Hogan works the arm and then a shot from Orton gives him control. Our hero is in trouble. WHAT IS HE GOING TO DO???

Well at the moment he's going to get his teeth kicked in a little more. And of course there's the comeback and you know the finish. Actually I typed too soon. Hogan drops an elbow and uses a headbutt of all things. Orton takes over again. This is most odd indeed. Hogan fights out of the superplex and comes off the top rope! He goes for the leg but Piper runs in for the DQ. The heels beat up T and set for the double team but Orndorff runs out for the save and the full face turn.

Rating: C. This was just pure average. It was what you expected but the DQ was kind of odd. It's not like a pin would have been odd here but whatever. This was fine for what it was. Hogan gets on TV and the biggest star got to showcase himself.

After a break we come back to the three of them posing and you can just tell that Vince wants to screw all of them.

Gene is with Cyndi Lauper and Albano. Lauper has a VERY annoying voice. These two started the Rock N Wrestling Connection and launched wrestling into the stratosphere.

They air her new video which has about ever wrestler with a cameo in it other than Piper who shows up to yell about it. That was awesome actually.

Women's Title: Wendi Richter vs. Fabulous Moolah

Before the match, Moolah says she's tired of the interference so Lauper is barred tonight. The reading of the announcement that Lauper is gone tonight takes the better part of forever to get through and FINALLY we get to the match. This was match number two that fueled the mega run that wrestling went on.

We're on the floor nearly immediately. To say Richter was popular at this time was the understatement of all time. She would actually main event house shows if you can believe that. Surprisingly, Moolah is being beaten down for the most part here. Considering she was champion for about 30 years, that's saying a lot. Yes I know she didn't really hold it that long but that's kayfabe for you. Richter gets a quick small package for the pin.

Rating: D+. This is just long enough to grade but there isn't anything of note here. It's ok but that's about it. Women's wrestling back then was more of a mess than it is now, but the women could work MUCH better than they can today for the most part. Ok not really but these two had a feud going and that was better than nothing. Yeah the match sucked and I'm rambling.

JYD has his mother here for Mother's Day. Her name is Bertha.

Pete Doherty vs. Junkyard Dog

Take a wild guess who wins here. Grab Them Cakes is a decent song if nothing else. Them Cakes means a woman's hips in case you were wondering. Oh never mind that's Another One Bites the Dust. Wow my hearing must be off. And it's a three minute squash with Doherty being on the floor for a lot of that. JYD and his mom dance afterwards.

Rating: N/A. This was just thrown in for filler as a lot of stuff was around this time.

We come back to see Cyndi Lauper's Mother's Day party. It's just a long line of wrestlers with their "mothers" including Hogan. They all say they love them and then a food fight starts.

Jesse and Vince wrap things up.

Overall Rating: C+. It got the big names on TV other than Andre but he was a very sporadic guy at this point. This was fine for a debut but you could see that it was a lot of rehashing Mania which to be fair was so groundbreaking that they didn't have a lot of other stuff to go with. Also, that was the hottest thing in the world back then so they were right to go with it I guess.

Not bad but a lot more for entertainment than wrestling which is fine. Great job of showing who everyone is though so that's a major plus. Check it out because it's a huge deal as far as starting a big tradition so there we are.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my book on the History of the WWE Championship from Amazon for just \$5 at: