ROYAL RUMBLE Lines

Wachovia Center (WhC)
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

25 January 2004 | **Robert Ortega Jr.** | **rsortegajr@dslextreme.com** | **slashwrestling–wienerboard**

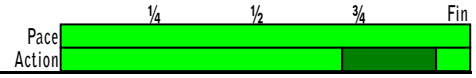
1. Dudley Boyz v 2. Batista and Ric Flair

2v2 Tag Tables — **World Tag Team Championship–Grade I**

The considerably lengthy pre-bell battle was a merit for this match. Match speed held up alright for this type of match, but have to remember that these usually go on longer. Action took a drop late, but got back up to end. However, that finish seemed a little too abrupt for tastes, especially for the stakes of this contest. Furthermore, could have done without Coachman's presence when that minute could have had a few more spots for this short frame. Considerably below expectations.

RAW 1RR 4:22[55] **37** (52[48]) 1d-1x-Mx-1d-2b-2x-Mx-1b-1d-2bⓉ1d
SpinebusterThroughTable; Moved fairly, action bounce 3/4, abrupt finish.
ⓉThroughTable; D-VonDudley by Batista at 4:21[07].

Batista 3 straight wins
DVDudley 3 straight losses



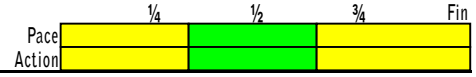
1. Rey Mysterio v 2. Jamie Noble w Nidia

Singles — **WWE Cruiserweight Championship–Grade II**

Another match where neither the length or finish seemingly fit the stakes, but arguably some value from not having a fully established finisher close out the match, as the finish would not be proximately predictable. Some good spots in this one boost with particular note going to Noble countering Mysterio's springboard crossbody. Elementally sound for time, but not nearly what it could have been with sufficient time. Perhaps a rematch will yield more.

SMACKDOWN 2RR 3:13[59] **40** Mx-2-2-1-2*1
DroppinTheDime–Pin; Broke swiftly, settled and on 2/3, some good spots.

RMystrio 4 straight wins

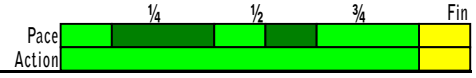


1. Chavo Guerrero w Chavo Guerrero Sr. v 2. Eddie Guerrero

Singles

Liked the slower, deliberate opening half as it effectively pronounced the rage between the Guerreros. That there was no clear control early on was a plus, as it said it would not be easy to get the other to yield. Action merits mostly from effect here, but dispelled when considering what was possible with a little more speed. Furthermore, there did not seem to be a lot of anticipatory build towards the finish. Worth another if leading to more between these two, but iffy when standing alone.

SMACKDOWN 3RR 8:04[91] **66** Mx-Mx-Mx-Mx-2-E*1-2-1-Mx-2
FrogSplash–Pin; Effect driven, deliberate early then wavering, some kick 7/8.

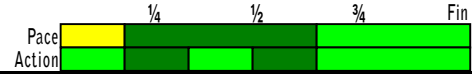


1. Hardcore Holly v 2. Brock Lesnar

Singles — **WWE Championship–Grade I**

Mostly good and swift before the bell, which carried into the official opening for this one. However, it was mostly downhill from that point. Majority of match was spent in holds with the only one worth a case was a full nelson by Holly where both rolled to the outside with it locked in. Admittedly, it bore good effect as did the finishing series. But these few pluses against the elemental lapses and an almost complete lack of balance were not nearly enough here.

SMACKDOWN 4RR 6:31[25] **34** (39[16]) 2-2-2-2-2-Mx-1-2
F5–Pin; Broke well, dug in, action fair, some recovery to close.

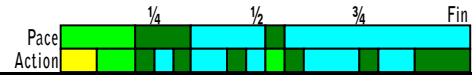


1. Shawn Michaels v 2. Triple H

Singles Last Man Standing — **World Heavyweight Championship–Grade I**

The pace line, while generally a bad sign elsewhere, goes along with the type of contest, so that can be forgiven. Liked the series of counts, with Triple H imploring Michaels to stay down, first furious that he would not, then later annoyed at Michaels' persistence. That Sweet Chin Music truly did come out of nowhere and was definitely a shining point. Can argue that the finish was a plus, showing their equality in the ring, but when the goal is to be the best, cannot help but feel a little empty. Still, worth its triple digit.

RAW 5RR 22:47[19] **100** Mx-Mx-2-2-1-1-E-2-1-E-E-2-2-2-Mx-2-2-E-1-E-1-1-E-Mx-1-E-Mx-E-E-E
SweetChinMusic–DoubleTenCount; Off well, settled form, running with effect.



Thirty Entries

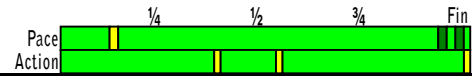
30ManRoyalRumble OverTpRope Rules — **#1Ct. WldHvy/WWE Chmpshp. Main Event at WMXX–Grade I**

Effect abound from Big Show's overall unstoppable presence to Orton's holding form until Foley did him in to Goldberg's run ending at the hands of Lesnar to Benoit's extreme perserverence. Loved the finish with Benoit struggling to force Show over the top from the adverse position on the apron and finally prevailing. Even Miller's dancing was a very entertaining reprieve. Elementally, the action and pace held up throughout. Cannot really find a bad aspect in this Rumble. Superbly done.

SMACKDOWN RAW 6RR 1:01:31[70] **135** See Page 3 For Match Chart
FrontFaceLockSlideThroughFromApron–Elimination; Ran well lengthily, effective.

Rating recorded, but not included in year-to-date bests.

Best of the Night
CsBenoit 4 straight wins



Breakdowns

Matches	6
No Contests	0
Total Match Time	1:46:31[19]
Pct. Of Show	64.95(164)

Match Types

Singles	4
Tag	1
Royal Rumble	1

Interference

1RR	—
2RR	*Nidia
3RR	*Chavo Guerrero Sr.
4RR	—
5RR	—
6RR	*Kane *Mick Foley *Brock Lesnar

Title Changes None.

Character Notes Coming off their Survivor Series encounter, Lesnar draws battle lines with Goldberg by attacking him in the Royal Rumble match.

Notable Matches

Best of the Night	6RR	**135**	30 Man Royal Rumble
Worst of the Night	4RR	**34**	Hardcore Holly v Brock Lesnar

Notable Segments

Best of the Night	S-10	**+1.25**	Flair tells Benoit the brass ring always seems to slip away from him.
Worst of the Night	S-1	**+/–0**	Batista rants about how they will defeat the Dudley Boyz tonight.

Show Scoring

Match Contribution Index	141.84
Segment Contribution Index	20.29
Overall Show Score	162.12

Assessment Some mixed feelings; hard to argue with those last two matches, but that lacking undercard drew away some excitement before getting to those two. Highly recommended for the last two matches (and a few OK segments), provided one can put that aside.

Segment by Segment

●Prelude to the Royal Rumble PPV: The uncertain roads of fate.	Good montage of images.	NR
●Pre 1RR BATISTA asks the DUDLEY BOYZ what is it with them and title matches, as he and RIC FLAIR beat them at Armageddon, on Raw, and will do so tonight; BATISTA calls them the biggest three time losers since the Philadelphia Eagles.	Blah, blah, blah, less yak, more match.	0
●Post 1RR COACHMAN, barely able to speak, declares the FLAIR and BATISTA the winners; as he is about to interview the retaining champions, FLAIR says it was EVOLUTION doing what they said they would do, and concludes with "EVOLUTION forever!"	Standard issue Flair…	+0.25
●JOSH MATTHEWS interviews JOHN CENA about the Rumble, saying twenty-nine other entries are in his way; CENA says the money should be on him; ROB VAN DAM steps in and concludes CENA'S rap saying the Rumble will go to "R-V-D"; CENA thinks VAN DAM has been talking to "Mary Jane."	Cena is incapable of a bad rap.	+0.5
●Post 2RR JAMIE NOBLE chastises NIDIA for her inadvertent interference in the match, costing NOBLE the championship.	Noble knows not the concept of blind.	0
●WWE Originals Promo.	—	NR
●Prelude to Guerrero v Guerrero: The dissolution of the Guerreros: EDDIE and CHAVO and the involvement of CHAVO GUERRERO SR.	Release the rage!	NR
●Post 3RR EDDIE GUERRERO attacks an entering CHAVO GUERRERO SR, giving him a low blow in the process; EDDIE then taunts CHAVO GUERRERO and begins a new assault on him; EDDIE returns to CHAVO SR., binding him to the bottom ring rope with his tie, then returns to assault CHAVO, doing so right in front of CHAVO SR.	Chavos learn the price for treachery, the painful way by Latino Heat.	+1.0
●Mick Foley's Greatest Hits and Misses Promo.	—	NR
●JOSH MATTHEWS interviews CHRIS BENOIT about his number one position; before BENOIT can fully respond, FLAIR, ORTON, and BATISTA interrupt, celebrating with champagne and saying they just destroyed the DUDLEY BOYZ in their hometown in their own match; FLAIR continues by saying ORTON will win the Rumble, and telling BENOIT he may be the greatest technical wrestler alive, but that the brass ring always seems to slip away from his hand; FLAIR concludes, saying it is about EVOLUTION and gives the champagne a celebratory shake up before EVOLUTION departs the scene.	You can do it Benoit! We all have faith.	+1.25
●Prelude to WWE Championship: HARDCORE HOLLY is incapacitated for over a year on 12Sep02, then returns, declaring he is back to end BROCK LESNAR'S career.	But it ain't gonna happen.	NR
●TRIPLE H gets his hands taped up and prepares for battle as SHAWN MICHAELS prays before the match.	What wins out, prayer or tape?	+0.25
●Prelude to World Heavyweight Championship: Seven years in the making, from friends in DEGENERATION X, to enemies, TRIPLE H and MICHAELS look to settle the score.	Degenerated friendship comes to fore.	NR
●Post 5RR TRIPLE H needs to be removed on a stretcher after the punishment he took in his match with MICHAELS; MICHAELS, after similarly being removed from the arena, arises and wobbly attempts to walk up the ramp under his own power, but is assisted by referees en route.	Moral victory for Michaels, but I bet he would have preferred the belt.	+0.5
●Prelude to the Royal Rumble: 15 Raw and 15 SD superstars for a title shot at WMXX, all vowing to capitalize; BENOIT earns his shot but is forced into the number one slot while GOLDBERG earns the thirtieth position.	It is a truly open shot, so this should be very good.	NR
●HOWARD FINKEL prepares to announce the start of the Rumble, but BISCHOFF storms out and says he is confident a Raw superstar will win because it has superior athletes, entertainers, and general manager; BISCHOFF says HEYMAN is a joke, having soap shoved down his throat while he has the respect of all on the Raw roster; HEYMAN then storms out, but instead of speaking, he attacks BISCHOFF and the two collide until AUSTIN emerges on the ATV; AUSTIN says BISCHOFF and HEYMAN are in clear violation of the law and wants to know who started it; after hearing them both, AUSTIN stuns BISCHOFF and calls for a beer; AUSTIN gives one to HEYMAN but then stuns him as well then leaves on the ATV.	Equal opportunity stunner. See? Even Austin follows the law. Of course it is *his* law, but what are you gonna do?	+0.5
●TERRI interviews GOLDBERG backstage, saying the Rumble is about to begin and number thirty gives him an advantage; before GOLDBERG can respond, LESNAR interrupts; LESNAR that does not matter, but what does matter is he beat HARDCORE HOLLY to retain his title and TERRI should be interviewing him; GOLDBERG wants to know if LESNAR is there to put himself over; LESNAR says the last time GOLDBERG interrupted his interview, he was the champion; GOLDBERG said that was the past, but tonight after he wins the Rumble, he will get his chance to regain his title and that is all that matters; GOLDBERG asks "Isn't that right, Hardcore?"; LESNAR turns around to look for him but does not see him anywhere; GOLDBERG says some people have the nerve to call MICK FOLEY a coward, but he does not think so.	What does matter? For that we should consult the man of matters himself, The Rock. But since he is not here, let's say they are both right and get to the Rumble.	+0.5
●TAZZ presents his keys to victory for the Royal Rumble match.	Sports TV style effect. Gold!	+0.25
●Post 6RR A tired CHRIS BENOIT emphatically celebrates his Rumble win and newly earned WRESTLEMANIA XX title shot.	Has the brass ring, the gold belt comes next.	+0.5

Closing Notes

1. I was wondering if anyone was going to do something about Nunzio on the outside. Good to see Cena did not let me down.
2. The look on Orton was priceless when Foley's music hit. Nice touch readjusting the knee guards and preparing before Foley stormed in.
3. Speaking of Orton and Foley, I cringed strongly when Orton hit that chairshot. True pain by visual diffusion. OWWWW!
4. Nice to see Ross and Tazz call the Rumble. How long has it been since Ross has sat at ringside on a televised event?
5. If Michaels merely prayed to survive his match, good news Shawn! But I guess you will figure that out when you gain your mental faculties back.

30 Man Royal Rumble (90 sec. Int) Over Top Rope Rules–6SD (25Jan04)

Total Time –1:01:31[70] **Rating – 135**

#1 Ct. WldHvy/WWE Chmpshp. Main Event at WMXX–Grade I

#	Entry	Ring In	Ring Out	Eliminated By	Means of Elimination	Momentum Lines
1	Chris Benoit	START	FINISH	WINNER	—	—
2	Randy Orton	START	33:47[93]	Mick Foley–1	Clothesline	Mx–1–2–1
3	Mark Henry	1:51[36]	7:03[49]	Chris Benoit–2	ElbowSmashClotheslineToBack	1–3–1–3
4	Tajiri	3:12[92]	6:54[14]	Rhyno–1	GoreIntoCompetitorIntoVictim	Mx–1,4–1–3,1–1,2–3,4
5	Bradshaw	4:48[43]	5:25[41]	Chris Benoit–1	ArmHookMomentumCarry	5–1 → E–3,1–2
6	Rhyno	6:24[60]	20:36[09]	Chris Benoit–3	ShoulderThrow	6,4–6 → 1 → Mx–6
7	Matt Hardy	8:07[04]	22:26[00]	Rene Dupree–1	DropKick	7–1–6,2–7,1
8	Scott Steiner	9:50[09]	16:39[19]	Booker T–1	CarryOverTopRope	8–1,2–7,6–1
9	Matt Morgan	11:31[48]	23:45[61]	Chris Benoit–4	CarryOverTopRope	6,9–9,8–9,7,6–Mx
10	The Hurricane	13:11[67]	13:32[09]	Matt Morgan–1	ShoulderCarryThrow	10–6,9–9 → 6,8,9–Mx–2,7
11	Booker T	15:07[25]	24:18[42]	Randy Orton–1	ForceOverTopRope	1,6,11 → 1,6–1,6,7,11
12	Kane	16:57[41]	18:27[11]	Booker T–2	ForceOverTopRope	11 → 12
13	Spike Dudley	DNE[1]	—	—	Chokeslam	11 → *1,2,9–1,6,11–2,7,11
14	Rikishi	20:33[74]	24:12[68]	Randy Orton–2	CarryOverTopRope	1 → 14–14,2,7,14,11,1
15	Rene Dupree	22:02[25]	22:34[98]	Rikishi–1	SavantKick	Mx–15 → 14 → 2,11–1,14
16	A-Train	23:21[83]	25:05[69]	Chris Benoit–5	CarryOverTopRope	Mx–1 → Mx–2 → 2 → 16
17	Shelton Benjamin	25:03[34]	25:41[09]	Randy Orton–3	CarryOverTopRope	1 → 17–2 → 1–E
18	Ernest Miller	26:49[25]	27:45[24]	Randy Orton–4	RunningHeadGrappleToss	⊗–2 → Mx–2
19	Kurt Angle	28:32[59]	57:32[54]	Big Show–4	RollOverTopRopeMomentumForce	19–1–19–2
20	Rico	30:06[18]	31:10[96]	Randy Orton–5	Fireman'sCarryFlapJack	19,2–19,20–1,2–2 → 1–19
21	Mick Foley	33:05[32]	33:47[93]	Self Elimination[2]	ClotheslineMomentum	2–⊗–2–Mx–21 →→ 19–1
22	Christian	35:00[01]	42:37[51]	Chris Jericho–1	BackDrop	1–22–19–1
23	Nunzio	45:24[15]	49:12[28]	Goldberg–3	MilitaryPressThrow	*1,22–22–19–1
24	Big Show	38:57[15]	1:01:30[41]	Chris Benoit–6	FrntFaceLockSlideThroughFrmApron	1–24–24
25	Chris Jericho	40:11[44]	55:04[54]	Big Show–3	Chokeslam	24,25–24–Mx–25
26	Charlie Haas	41:42[73]	48:37[01]	Goldberg–1	CarryOverTopRope	Mx–22,24,25–19,22,25–25 → 24,26–24
27	Billy Gunn	43:16[93]	48:59[86]	Goldberg–2	Clothesline	27–27,26–26,19–25,26–26,1–24
28	John Cena	45:25[69]	52:55[47]	Big Show–1	RunningHeadGrappleToss	27–1–Mx–24,19,25,1–28,19,23
29	Rob Van Dam	46:35[47]	53:13[16]	Big Show–2	BellyToBellyForwardToss	27,24–29,27–23,26,27,19,1–19,28,24,27,25
30	Goldberg	48:09[69]	50:17[17]	Kurt Angle–1	CarryOverTopRope	30 → 30 → 30 → 30,19,29*1–1,25,19→19,1,28–Mx–24–29,25,28,1,10–24 → Mx–24 → Mx–25–Mx–24 → Mx–24–24–19–19–24 → E–1–E–1–E–Mx–1 →

Superscript Notations

[1] Did not enter: Spike Dudley incapacitated by Kane while en route to the ring.
[2] Mick Foley's self-elimination does not count towards official elimination total.
[3] Simultaneous Elimination.
[4] Spike Dudley – Not Eliminated: Never entered ring.
[5] Chris Benoit – Not Eliminated: Winner.

Other Notes

Interference marks denote those acting to the effect of the contest after their elimination or acting to the effect of the match while not being an official entrant.
Order of interference: *Kane *Mick Foley *Brock Lesnar

Accompaniers

3. Mark Henry w Theodore Long
18. Ernest "The Cat" Miller w Lamont

Rank by Number of Eliminations

1	Chris Benoit	6
2	Randy Orton	5
24	Big Show	4
30	Goldberg	3
11	Booker T	2
25	Chris Jericho	1
19	Kurt Angle	1
9	Matt Morgan	1
21	Mick Foley	1
15	Rene Dupree	1
6	Rhyno	1
14	Rikishi	1
–	Total Eliminations	*27

* Standard of 29 eliminations reduced for the following reasons:
● Spike Dudley incapacited before entering ring. [1]
● Mick Foley eliminated self in course of other elimination. [2]

Rank by Time in Match (In Ring Time:Actual Entry – Elimination)

1	Chris Benoit	1:01:31[70]
2	Randy Orton	33:47[93]
19	Kurt Angle	28:59[95]
24	Big Show	22:33[26]
25	Chris Jericho	14:53[10]
6	Rhyno	14:11[49]
7	Matt Hardy	14:18[96]
9	Matt Morgan	12:14[13]
11	Booker T	9:11[17]
22	Christian	7:37[50]
28	John Cena	7:29[78]
26	Charlie Haas	6:54[28]
8	Scott Steiner	6:49[10]
29	Rob Van Dam	6:37[69]
27	Billy Gunn	5:42[93]
3	Mark Henry	5:12[13]
23	Nunzio	3:48[13]
4	Tajiri	3:41[22]
14	Rikishi	3:38[94]
30	Goldberg	2:07[48]
16	A-Train	1:43[87]
12	Kane	1:29[70]
20	Rico	1:04[78]
18	Ernest "The Cat" Miller	:55[99]
21	Mick Foley	:42[61]
17	Shelton Benjamin	:37[75]
5	Bradshaw	:36[98]
15	Rene Dupree	:32[73]
10	The Hurricane	:20[42]
13	Spike Dudley	—

Order of Elimination

5 Bradshaw
4 Tajiri
3 Mark Henry
10 The Hurricane
8 Scott Steiner
12 Kane
6 Rhyno
7 Matt Hardy
15 Rene Dupree
9 Matt Morgan
14 Rikishi
11 Booker T
16 A-Train
17 Shelton Benjamin
18 Ernest "The Cat" Miller
20 Rico
2 Randy Orton [3]
21 Mick Foley [3]
22 Christian
26 Charlie Haas
27 Billy Gunn
23 Nunzio
30 Goldberg
28 John Cena
29 Rob Van Dam
25 Chris Jericho
19 Kurt Angle
24 Big Show

13 Spike Dudley[4]
1 Chris Benoit[5]