



SMACKDOWN! LINES

Gund Arena
Cleveland, Ohio

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1. Kurt Angle v 2. Rob Van Dam

Singles

1SD 4:36.18 76 Mix-2-2-1-1-2-1-2-1

Anklelock-Submission; Pace well set early and action somewhat strong, driving throughout, finished well.

Good trading between Angle and RVD here and the pace was nothing to scoff at either. Match was strong quality for an opener but might have been better served as a cap to the first hour. Efforts were very apparent from both competitors. Pseudo-interference here is actually well placed going into Sunday. Cleared good marks with some effect.

1. Jeff Hardy w Matt Hardy w Lita v 2. Bradshaw w Faarooq v

FataFourWay

3. Billy w Chuck v 4. Bubba Ray Dudley w D-Von Dudley w Stacy Keibler

2SD 7:02.97 64 4-1-4-2-2-4-E-1-3

OneAndOnly-Pin; Some spots with nice exchange but also with some intermittent holes, a mixed bag to assess.

Pace of the match was wavering but the action seemed sound throughout. Theft of the wassup headbutt is becoming annoying. Finish came on something of a low note here which contributes to some overall detraction. Still, the contest was enjoyable to an extent and deserves good marks. Better desired under tag conditions on Sunday.

1. Al Snow v 2. Big Show v

HardcoreVariable

Late Entries 3. Goldust v 4. Maven

3SD 3:34.09 61 (02.03) 2-1-2-1-2-3-4

TrashcanLidShot-Pin; Late melee somewhat welcome and finish sets up an intriguing prospect, some draw.

Goldust entered late at 3:01.09 Maven entered late at 3:15.24

WWF Hardcore Championship-G3

Like the idea of Maven taking on Snow as a result of this; at Wrestlemania perhaps? Some good weapon action to speak of here and quite a step up in pace and quality from previous hardcore matches. Goldust, even though not winning, was logically placed into this match. A little lag here and not much in the area of added effect. Good though.

1. Booker T and Test v 2. Tajiri w Torrie Wilson and Edge

2v2Tag

4SD 2:43.55 70 (08.78) 1b-2t-1b-2e-1t-2e-1b

HarlemSidekick-Pin; Swift from start with some stable action, efforts complimented some, some drive, gamely.

Good results from this combination. Like the generally fast condition which was more evident early on. Like some spots like the countered Tarantula and the multiple finishers. Can't complain about the generic action here, which was sound and backed with efforts. Perhaps combination limits maximum effect, but somewhat strong here.

1. Undertaker v 2. David Flair

Singles

5SD 1:23.16 03 1-*

EyeRake(Undertaker); Though match lacked substance, a purpose was served here, but not much for merits.

Have to give the kid credit for consenting to two UT style beatings. Further fuels the fire for the Flair-UT match on Sunday, which is arguable the best built up match on the listings. Wasn't expecting Flair to get so much as a single hit in on UT so the four or five light shots were a weak surprise. Not much for merit, as per expectations.

BREAKDOWNS: Time: 5 Matches with 0 No contests (19:19.95) about 16.11 % of show time.
Types: 2 Singles (0 Title Matches); 1 Tag (0 Title Matches)
1 HardcoreVariable (1 Title Match); 1 FataFourWay (0 Title Matches)

Average Match Rating (6 Matches) 54.80
Extraneous Segment Aggregate 13.00
Overall Show Score 67.80

BestOfTheNight: 1SD KurtAngle v RobVanDam
WorstOfTheNight: 5SD Undertaker v DavidFlair

76
03

1 instance of interference (1 meaningful); Meaningful interference
5SD *RicFlair

Title Changes: Maven NewWWFHardcoreChampion

Turns: Only if you assume Maven on Snow and that's a stretch.

SPECIAL NOTE: Hardcore matches with late entries are designated Hardcore Variable and late entries will have a mark accompanying their past performance record.

Show assessment: Nice quality deal to cap before Wrestlemania. It is a shame there were not more like these in previous weeks, but this is nice to go on. I will gladly take this and run with it.

RATINGS: I still continue with the system of using pre-match action and post-match to value a contest while giving the primary emphasis to the match itself which includes basic ring psychology, pace, mechanics and execution of move sets and high spots, the finish and its enjoy-ability, and how much the match advances a story line, if there is one to advance. But another element that I must convey is that I let the opening match or two set a baseline and then perform some degree of comparison of later contests to the baseline.

NON-MATCH SEGMENTS AND SCORES

●Post1SDRegal/Kane (+1) Can't catch your rival? Then beat on RVD/Angle the next closest guy who is standing.
●McMahon/FlairOn (+1) Like the match prospect that rises from this.
●Post2SD Melee (+1) But the jokers got away.
●Trish/Lita on (+1) General favorite vs. the hometown RAW/ WM favorite. What if they both lose?
●DavidFlair/Vince (+1) Like running into the same brick wall on debut match twice, eh David?

●Hogan's tape for the video guys (0) And if he fails, the nWo will cripple him with his own production truck.
●Hogan/Rock (+3) Now that's a fine match building block. Incorporates RAW.
●Post4SD short beatdown/torture? (0) Forced to watch the spinooroni, he might rather gouge his eyes out, nah.
●SCSA/Coach on (+1) I think Hall gets the idea about that WM/ Hall/Nash WHAM! bit, but if it did not work with Trap fails Jericho last month, why here?

●Y2J/Steph on HHH (0) Blah, blah, shriek, blah, blah, again. and WM
●Post5SD UT and the Flairs (+1) David gets involved at WM perhaps? Don't put it past quite yet.
●HHH says it is unfortunate for Y2J/Steph retorts Deja vu Walls of Jericho (+3) Another good buider segment. I'll bet that table feels awfully familiar to HHH. Will they play on this at WM? I hope so.

CLOSING NOTES:

- Wow, the opener was the best here? Something unwholesome about that fact. Oh well, I'll live, will you?
- Hogan may have left first tonight, but might he be the only one leaving intact come Sunday?
- I think that video production guy was the first staff member the nWo has run into without assaulting him.
- And while Booker spinoorones to his heart's content, as Test forces him to watch, Edge is thinking, "The joke is on them, I am unconscious already."
- Good number of matches, and the potential is strong, not to mention that Wrestlemania can bring out the best in many. Watch and be amused.
- Can't bash DirecTV anymore, they are carrying it. But they are still under probation as far as I am concerned.