

WWE Smackdown TV report for July 18

WWE Friday Night SmackDown! Report 7/18/08

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By Ryan Mulligan
Email: rmulligan82@gmail.com

AIM: [thecivilianexile](http://thecivilianexile.com)

Line of the night, courtesy of Mick Foley: "He's going off the rails on the gravy train!"

Last week on "SmackDown!" Edge and Vickie's seemingly eternal flame was momentarily extinguished, but suffering bred adoration and only strengthened the bond uniting their souls, as their catastrophic break-up was mended in a tender moment of genuine compassion and their wedding reinstated. Also, Kozlov got a theme song.

Earlier today, Edge and Vickie Guerrero got MARRIED~! And we get to see highlights of the festivities! I guess they figured the amount of booing for a live wedding-ceremony might be epically loud and would make the whole scene too legendary. That's just not something people would want to see. Best-man Chavo, fresh off jobbing to Evan Bourne, gets even less impressive by failing to find the ring. Shades of Slash in the "November Rain" video. He eventually finds it, "I do" s are exchanged, they are pronounced man and wife and kissing ensues. It seems like there's not much of a crowd watching this. Well, I guess they are heels. Tonight on "SmackDown," THE RECEPTION!!!

Inside the arena, The Edgeheads, Bam Neely and the Wedding Planner of Doom are all seated at the same table, which is a pretty impressive level of FAIL to assemble all in one place. Chavo, with newly restored hair, is out next, followed by our saviors, Edge and Vickie, who come out to "Here Comes the Bride." It would rule if the church organ segued into "YOU THINK YOU KNOW ME!!!" The crowd boos the crap out of this. Chavo makes a toast and proclaims their love the greatest of all, although he does say Edge beating Triple H at the Bash for the title would be an even greater moment. He presents a mock-WWE Magazine cover featuring Edge holding the WWE Title. They sure do that a lot these days. Edge thanks him and says to get this show started.

Finlay and Hornswoggle vs. Curt Hawkins and Zack Ryder
In case you missed it, both of these teams, plus Jesse and Festus, will challenge Miz and Morrison for the WWE Tag Titles in a Four-Way match at the Bash on Sunday. Let me see if I can work this out: the Hardys defeated Miz and Morrison in a non-title match on "ECW" on Tuesday, but they're not in the title match, but Hawkins and Ryder are, and they have seemingly never won a match. Failure. Edge calls the Irishmen cheaters (well, it's true) and announces himself as the

special guest referee for the match, as Charles Robinson is screwed with once more. The heels are working in suits. I hope that doesn't hurt their work-rate. Finlay is slow to break in the corner with Hawkins, so Edge shoves him. Finlay doesn't strike me as the type of person one should shove. Hawkins starts winning following an Edge distraction. He tags in Ryder, who delivers a neckbreaker. Foley notes that the Edgeheads are even less distinguishable without their trunks with names on them. Finlay catches one of them (legit indistinguishable) with a boot coming into the corner and then throws Swoggle at him. Double seated-sentons! Edge screws with Finlay some more, so Finlay lifts him up into Celtic Cross-position! Unfortunately, Finlay gets clipped before he can execute the move. Edge then spears Finlay and counts him down. Well, I guess Hawkins and Ryder did win a match. Okay, now they deserve a title shot.

Winners: Curt Hawkins and Zack Ryder

Us lucky viewers get to witness Edge and Vickie's first dance as a married couple. They dance to the Savage and Elizabeth song from all those years ago. You know the one. Also, it's being sung live by two jobbers, and they're failing at it. They should've had Jillian and Trevor Murdoch sing it. Oh wait. Anyway, Edge and Vickie are all smiles and the whole thing reeks of awesomeness until The Big Show comes out, pushes Edge aside and starts slow-dancing with Vickie! Edge puts the kibosh on that and tells Show that he's wrestling next, against mystery opponents! That's plural. Show sells that by SMILING! See, Mark Henry, that's how you big-men sell challenges.

Handicapped Match: The Big Show vs. MVP, Shelton Benjamin, Vladimir Kozlov and The Great Khali

Just to clarify: Edge, by marrying Vickie, is now serving in the role of a dual General Manager with Vickie. That's right: we've got TWO evil matchmakers running this show now. I never get tired of the evil matchmaker-routine. Shelton starts the match for his team. I'll never understand stuff like that. Show tosses him in the direction of his corner, so Shelton tags in MVP. MVP brings the ha-ha, however, and quickly tags in Kozlov. Kozlov, who rules almost in spite of himself, tries a judo-throw on Show, but Show shrugs him off too. Khali then tags himself in. After the dueling-giants spots we've all grown to love, Show clotheslines him down. The heels start randomly running into the ring, so the ref disqualifies them, but Show kills them all anyway. The numbers-game eventually is too much for Show, as Khali is able to catch him with a head-chop. Shelton kicks Show in the head, followed by MVP connecting with a running Yakuza kick in the corner and Kozlov hitting a running-headbutt on Show, all of which combines to kill him. Khali picks up his corpse and Tree Slams it. Could they seriously not have defeated him 4-on-1? Why were they so impatient? Kozlov totally has a loss now, by the way. I'm counting it.

Winner: The Big Show

Tonight, we're apparently seeing Matt Hardy vs. Jeff Hardy, with no explanation given. Okay.

EXCUSE ME~! Vickie's in the ring, drawing massive amounts of heel-heat, as per usual. SHE HAS SOMETHING TO SAY! It's time for the traditional throwing of the bouquet. The divas are lined up outside the ring, but before the tossing can commence, Michelle McCool beats the crap out of Natalya, getting revenge for last week's ill-advised suplex on the floor. Security sends McCool away. Cherry catches the flowers! I wonder if that'll lead anywhere in the long-term. Vickie says she was worried about Cherry, because she seemed to have trouble finding someone. Man, Vickie's such a killer heel. She says that Cherry will get to wrestle Vickie, but firstâ€¦!

Cherry vs. Natalya

Natalya overwhelms Cherry with flower shots of immense pain and a sharpshooter for the quick win.

Winner: Natalya

Vickie then immediately pins Cherry, moving her even further down the list of contenders for the new Divas Title. I wonder what would've happened if Victoria caught the bouquet. Was that a worked-throw?

Jimmy Wang Yang vs. Brian Kendrick (with Ezekiel)
Kendrick, in his "SmackDown!" re-debut, is now inexplicably a heel, and he's accompanied by a bodyguard-type called "Ezekiel." Think Bam Neely, but intimidating. I don't know why they don't just bring back the Spanky gimmick. Maybe it's too HBK-lite. Yang, who's now quite well, opens up with a headlock-takedown, which eventually becomes an arm-bar submission, but Kendrick makes the ropes. Yang fires off a hurrancanrana and a clothesline that takes Kendrick to the floor. Kendrick avoids a plancha to the outside. Yang lands on his feet, but an Ezekiel-distraction allows Kendrick to connect with a clothesline on the floor. Back inside, Kendrick works the left-arm with kicks and an arm-bar. Hammerlock slam by Kendrick. Yang eventually mounts a comeback, getting in a backslide for two and a missile dropkick for two more. He hits an enziguri and goes up for the moonsault, but Ezekiel's up to his diversionary tactics again, which allows Kendrick to yank Yang off the top and finish him with Sliced Bread #2. Afterwards, Kendrick re-applies his leather-printed jacket, showing some flashes of the Spanky of old, so maybe they are going in that direction. Anyway, good television match.

Winner: Brian Kendrick

Backstage, Edge is confronted by a Slim Jim-representative, who gives Edge a box of Slim Jims. More on this story as it develops.

Mr. Kennedy vs. Umaga

Kennedy slaps hands with fans on the way out, which is a strange sight. You-Manga flattens him with a shoulderblock early on, but misses a random headbutt off the ropes just after. Kennedy hits an avalanche in the corner, but follows that up by running into the back of Umaga's elbow. Nerve-hold #1. Kennedy gets out of that, but gets caught with a knee to the mid-section coming off the ropes. Nerve-hold #2. Kennedy momentarily dies for a few seconds in the middle of the hold, but manages to revive in time to keep his arm elevated on the third raising of it. He comes off the ropes again, but this time is met with a Samoan drop, as we go to a commercial.

We're back, and Umaga is still winning. Nerve-hold #3. Funny if Edge started a "Boring" chant from the ramp. Kennedy gets out again, but fails on a body slam-attempt. Nerve-hold #4. Once out this time, Kennedy runs into a throat-thrust. Umaga goes up to the second-turnbuckle, but misses with a flying headbutt. He follows that up by missing with a Stinger Splash and connecting headfirst with the ring-post. This whole match has been predicated on failure. Kennedy with the follow-through roundhouse for two. The Mic Check is avoided, and the Samoan Spike ends this one in a hurry. I like the idea that Umaga was just toying with him the whole match and once he sensed danger, he quickly put Kennedy away, but Kennedy didn't come off looking strong at all here, if they're concerned about that.

Winner: Umaga

Next up is Edge starring in a Slim Jim commercial. I seriously haven't thought about Slim Jims in years. Anyway, it features Edge being annoyed by a huge line at the DMV. The line's huge because the lady at the counter is sleeping on the job. Nobody thinks to wake her up, so Edge unleashes a mini Devil-Edge who snaps into a Slim Jim and goes crazy, wreaking havoc and getting Edge to the front of the line. He demands a specialty license plate reading: "SPICY." 3 ½***

Non-Title Match: WWE Tag Team Champions John Morrison and The Miz vs. Jesse and Festus

BISCUITS AND GRAVY!!! Apparently, somebody did indeed ring a bell in the general vicinity of Festus following last week's show, because he comes out in his usual comatose state. He freaks at the bell, and the heels wisely bail. Jesse starts for his team. Maybe he's just over-confident. Jesse suplexes Morrison directly on his head. That's how you start a match. Morrison gets too close to Festus, so Festus barks at him. Festus is tagged in. Bear-paw to the throat! Fall-away slam on Morrison. He tags in Jesse and slams him onto Morrison. Jesse with a monkey-flip and a high cross-body for two. Miz eventually grabs Jesse's hair from the apron, and Morrison runs over him with a clothesline. Jesse is YOUR face-in-peril. Well, not for long, as Jesse quickly makes the hot tag to Festus, who comes in with bear paws-aplenty and big boots to both heels. Flying Biscuit on Miz!

Rocket launcher on Miz, but Morrison breaks up the pin-attempt. Thankfully, they don't DQ him for that. Festus and Morrison go to the outside, where Festus misses a charge and eats the post, but is able to own Morrison with the fireman's carry flapjack on the floor! Unfortunately for the human race, Miz is able to defeat Jesse following the Reality Check back inside. I can't remember seeing Jesse and Festus lose. I don't like the feeling. Good match, but I wonder why Miz and Morrison had to beat one of their challengers two days before the ppv. Well, I guess losing three times in the last week wouldn't have been that good for them. Jesse and Festus as the new champs at the ppv? A man can dream.

Winners: John Morrison and The Miz

It's time for the "Raw Rebound," highlighted by the death of John Cena, amid other examples of general unprofessionalism. It's not until after this package airs that JR FINALLY lets the tv-audience know that Cena is in fact alive and managed to avoid the attempt on his life. They couldn't have said that at the top of the show or, God forbid, on "ECW?" If I were eight years old, I would've been worried sick about Cena maybe being dead for the past few days. Anyway, Foley and JR then run down the card for the Bash. They don't mention it, but Shelton's challenging Matt Hardy for the U.S. Heavyweight Title, as a result of his defeating Hardy on last week's show. Triple H, Batista, Cena, Mark Henry, Jesse and Festus, Michelle McCool, Chris Jericho and Shelton Benjamin would reign victorious, if I had the book.

Non-Title Match: U.S. Heavyweight Champion Matt Hardy vs. Jeff Hardy

Okay, they confirmed that this match was booked just because Edge and Vickie are that damn evil. Plus, we're in the Hardys' home-state, so it's even more dastardly. The Hardys come out together and throw cake at Chavo on the ramp. They mostly miss him, but he sells it anyway. What a champ. We start off with reversals of arm-bars and the like, as we get the "I don't want to hurt you, because we're brothers" routine. Matt with a hip-toss and roll-up for two. He goes for a premature Twist of Fate, which is shrugged off, and Jeff hits the Whisper in the Wind out of nowhere for two. Jeff skins the cat on a toss-attempt, but gets clotheslined right back out. He comes back in and goes for a Twist of Fate of his own, which is avoided, but he is able to connect with a harsh descending dropkick in the corner. It's on now. Jeff with the Side Effect, but the Swanton misses. Matt with a moonsault for two, at which point Edge and his cronies run in for the schmozz. The heels beat the Hardys down, ending with Edge spearing both men. Just one of those shows, so I can accept it. The match, while good and clearly headed in a rule-direction, was somewhat marred by a dead crowd who didn't know which Hardy to cheer for.

Result: No Contest

After a break, every member of La Familia, including fledgling member Alicia "Wedding Planner" Fox are gathered in the ring. Edge presents Vickie with a HILARIOUS video showcasing examples of their true love for each other. Once the video ends, the proceedings are interrupted by TRIPLE HACH! He comes out to the top of the ramp and deposits a giant box on one of the tables. He assures us he's not secretly

married to Vickie. Oh, Triple Hach. He's there to celebrate their true love too. He's brought gifts of his own. The first is a video, dated 7/17/08, which begins with Edge sitting alone on a couch until THE WEDDING PLANNER OF DOOM walks onscreen and sits next to him! Ooh! She says she's looking for Vickie. Edge responds calmly to this in the ring, reassuring Vickie it's all good. Things get weird, as Edge becomes overwhelmed by Alicia's bodily odor (hey, whatever works) and suckers her into massaging his "trapezoid." HHH stops the tape here, as Edge says he's had a history of neck problems. He's starting to worry, so he sends the heels out after HHH, who reveals what's in the box: the sledgehammer, which, of course, makes the heels back off. The tape resumes, and now Edge is massaging Alicia! Ooh! Edge, in the video, for some reason, tells Alicia that Vickie wears granny panties. Cue HHH stopping the tape and producing a pair as a gift for Vickie. Oh, Triple Hach. He restarts the tape again, and Edge and Alicia finally start making out! Passionately! Vickie literally ATTACKS Edge in the ring and screams "I HATE YOU!!!" as the show ends. The Honeymoon is over before it even started.

This was one of those shows dominated by a heel General Manager (in this case two of them), which meant whacky booking and plenty of heel beatdowns, which is beyond played out at this point. However, since the Axis of Evil was broken up at the end of the show, I don't mind this one week of heel-overkill that much. My hope is that Edge and Vickie feuding with each other will cut down on stuff like this. The build for HHH/Edge at the Bash was put on the backburner to play out the Edge/Vickie saga, which leads me to believe HHH is retaining, and that the Edge/Vickie feud will resume without the title being involved. It's been a wild and frequently awesome ride with Edge and Vickie dominating "SmackDown!" together. Let's hope the show can survive without the benefit of their united awesomeness. On the bright side, it still has Festus.
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