

MSG Classics TV report part one

By Chris Marullo For starters, MSG Classics started at 11 EST this week and starts at 10 EST next week. The usual start time has been 8. The show seems to have run its course because I've been seeing a lot of reruns lately. I know, reruns of reruns. The first show this week is from December 30, 1988 which drew 16,000. Our announcers are Lord Alfred Hayes, Hillbilly Jim and Rod Trongard. True broadcasting excellence. First up is a grudge match between WWF Tag Team Champions Demolition and their fellow Road Warriors rip-offs, The Powers of Pain with Mr. Fuji. I've never quit seen Demolition the same way after the movie 8 MM came out. Just creepy. Demolition and The POP pulled a double switch the previous month at the Survivor Series when Fuji, who had been managing the champs, turned on them and aligned himself with Warlord and The Barbarian. Demolition had a much smaller level of Road Warrior-type appeal were the crowd wanted to cheer them so a face turn had been inevitable. The switch would have been more effective had Fuji's betrayal occurred in a match that actually meant something and cost Demolition the titles but what can you do? The month before at MSG, the two teams fought to a Double DQ so this month we're getting a No DQ Match. We get an interview with Fuji, Warlord and Barbarian before the match and almost half of what Fuji says is intelligible. As for the match, well, none of these four men were known for their selling. The story of the match is Fuji's constant interference. POP get the heat on Ax and Fuji trips Smash with his cane off the apron after Smash broke up a pin attempt. Or, as Trongard put it, Fuji "smashed Smash." But really he just tripped him. Smash finally gets tag in after Barbarian misses a flying head butt. All four men are soon in the ring and Fuji comes in and nails Smash with his cane. Just like TNA, he did so behind the ref's back in a No DQ match. Finish came when the brawl went to the outside and Warlord got back in the ring just before the 10 count. The Powers of Pain win by Count Out in a No DQ Match in 6:55. Crowd doesn't appreciate that too much. Next up is Ronnie Garvin, making his debut at the Garden, taking on Greg Valentine. It's hard to believe that Garvin had been a World Champion just a year before as he has virtually no star presence and the crowd doesn't react to him much. Lord Alfred Hayes didn't do much to hype up the WWF's hot new signing as he engaged Hillbilly Jim in a rather creepy conversation on who was prettier, Judy Martin or Rockin' Robin. For the record, it's Robin. Trongard tried to divert the attention to the match but Lord Alfred would have none of it as he thought Robin was "too skinny" for a man of Hillbilly's "distinctive taste." Where was Vince with his headset in 1988? The dream team of broadcasting continued to focus on the floundering women's division and the upcoming Royal Rumble for the first few minutes of the match. Never mind that a guy who was a World Champion just a year ago was making his debut. Granted, McMahon never acknowledged outside accomplishments at the time and there wasn't exactly a rocket under Garvin as far as a push goes but still. Garvin lasted barely more than a year in the WWF and his career was, for the most part, over shortly thereafter. It was your typical mid card WWF house show match with lots of lockups and rest holds. You have to give Garvin credit for some creative back racking and a precise head butt to the nose. Valentine gave Garvin a few chops that, had this been 10 years later, would have elicited "Whoos" from the crowd. Valentine had a shin guard gimmick called the "Hart Breaker" which, if turned just the right way, made his figure four leg lock exponentially more painful. However, Garvin took this shin guard from Valentine and was about to nail him with it before the ref jumped in and Valentine wrapped him up in a small package for the win in 17:09. Our main event this month is "Macho Man"; Randy Savage defending the WWF World Title against Bad News Brown. Brown, the 1976 Bronze Medalist in Judo, had been brought in the WWF earlier in the year under the impression that he was going to get a run on top with Hogan. Hogan took a brief hiatus shortly thereafter to film "No Holds Barred" so Brown worked with Bret Hart instead. This program with Savage didn't last very long and didn't get too much play on TV as Savage and Hogan were in the midst of a program with The Big Bossman and Akeem. This was mostly a house show program. Bad News would have a similar program a year later with Hulk Hogan. Savage came out with Elizabeth and pounced on Bad News immediately and the action spilled outside before Bad News got the early advantage. Hillbilly's brilliant analysis of the situation was the Savage needed to mount a comeback. Crowd was pretty hot for this as Savage and Elizabeth were way over at this point. Plus, there was more intensity and action in the first few minutes of this match than the rest of the card combined. Some occasional bad brawling but no long rest holds or stalling. Savage had a few dives, including a double ax handle into the crowd. The finish saw Savage win with a small package out of a body slam attempt to retain the title in 9:54. Finish came out of nowhere but the crowd was still in to it. Bad News came back to the ring and hit Savage with what Trongard described as a "disposal can" but it looked more like a trash can to me. Dave Hebner knocked the "disposal can" away from Bad News before he could get a second shot in as Savage knocked Brown out of the ring to send the crowd home happy. The Rest of The Card: The Blue Blazer fought the Red Rooster to a draw
Mr. Perfect pinned Koko B. Ware The Bushwhackers defeated Nikolai Volkoff & Boris Zhukov
Jim Duggan pinned Dino Bravo
Tim Horner pinned Barry Horowitz Chris Marullo Time limits and attendance figures courtesy of
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