

MSG Classics TV report Andre vs. Warrior; Piper vs. Rude

This installment of MSG Classics is the October 28, 1989 card headlined by The Ultimate Warrior defending against Andre The Giant. The estimated crowd of 16,000 was down from the previous month's 20,000 but that show had a double main event of Warrior-Andre and Roddy Piper versus Rick Rude in Piper's return to MSG after nearly 3 years. The next month's show would only draw 8,200 with a return match of Randy Savage and Jim Duggan. Monsoon and Hillbilly Jim are our announcers. "Macho King"; Randy Savage takes on "Hacksaw"; Jim Duggan first. The WWF Crown is on the line as Savage had just won the Crown from Duggan a few weeks earlier. The "Crown" title was used in the WWF in the late 80s for mid-carders. Savage was the last WWF "King" as the title retired with him after WrestleMania VII. It does not share the same lineage as the King of the Ring Tournament Crown which would become recognized in 1993 (it had previously been awarded annually on a big house show). This "Crown" was defended like a normal title, not in an annual tournament. Savage and Duggan actually had already wrestled previously that day in Springfield, MA on a matinee. This was back when wrestlers could say they were on the road 300 days a year with a straight face. Queen Sensational Sherri is in Savage's corner and pulls down the top rope on Duggan and roughs him up on the outside. She was great at getting heat for Savage who was too cool to boo for a lot of the male fans at the time. Shawn Michaels credits Sherri for really helping his career when he first turned heel. As his manager, Sherri told Shawn that, if his opponent wouldn't sell for him, to throw them to the outside. He would and she would dig tracks in their backs with her nails. Decent enough of a match. The crowd was really up for the Crown being on the line so it was over, mostly due to it having changed hands recently. Duggan gets the upper hand on Savage but, every time he gets close to victory, Sherri interferes. Savage missed the Flying Elbow, giving Duggan another chance. Duggan hits his stupid 3-Point Stance finisher (just a clothesline) but it sends Savage to the outside. Duggan gets Savage back in the ring but chases Sherri into the ring as well, leading to Savage nailing Duggan from behind and a ref bump. Duggan had Savage covered for several 3 counts but no ref. Finish is Savage hitting Duggan with Sherri's purse for the pin. Duggan kicked out the first time but Savage covered him again, this time with his feet on the ropes. The MSG crawl at the bottom of the screen that gives all of the sports scores is directing us to the MSG website where you can vote on the top "WWE Wrestlers Ever." Someone didn't get the memo. "Mr. Perfect"; Curt Hennig versus "Superfly"; Jimmy Snuka is next. Hennig had been in the WWF for about a year now and was booked as being undefeated, as he was being groomed for a run with Hogan. Sean Mooney interviews Hennig in the "locker room area." Hennig had it all, great promos, the looks, the psychology and was a great worker before injuries took their toll. Snuka had returned to the WWF earlier in the year at WrestleMania 5 after a 3 1/2 year absence. He was extremely jacked up, especially for being 46 at the time. His arms look bigger than almost anyone in the WWE today. After his comeback, Snuka was regulated to the lower card and was never involved in any significant program. Had this been the Snuka of the late 70s or early 80s and had these two been working a humane schedule in a company that emphasized quality matches, this would have been a hell of a match. But like Duggan and Savage, Snuka and Perfect had wrestled each other earlier in the day in Springfield and were on the road too much to perform to their full potential every night. Snuka was too old, too beat up and way too jacked to wrestle like anyone remembered and was living on his name. Hennig wins when Snuka puts his head down for a back body drop and Hennig hooks Snuka for the PerfectPlex (fisherman suplex). At this point, Snuka is still enough of a name to make Hennig's latest victory significant. I wish WWE creative would watch some of these shows to learn how to get guys over. Granted, a guy with the look and talent of Hennig is rare but all those months of vignettes and the year-long win streak did wonders. The main event of WWF Intercontinental Champion The Ultimate Warrior defending against Andre The Giant in a return match is next. The previous month, The Warrior won via DQ. The Warrior had only suffered one pinfall loss on TV or PPV in his WWF career, to Rick Rude. He avenged the loss at SummerSlam 1989 and was now working Andre, who, as fans were told at this time, had only been pinned once, by Hogan. Sean Mooney interviews Bobby Heenan and Andre. Heenan is The Man. He claims Andre has never been pinned but not in the current WWE-way that insults your intelligence. It's more in the Weasel-way. Heenan ends his promo with a crack about the recent earthquake in San Francisco. Warrior storms to the ring in his usual manner which always winded him before the bell rang. Luckily for him, this time there is no bell as he attacks Andre before the bell, hits him with a flying clothesline followed by a big splash and pins Andre The Giant! With a big splash! In a matter of seconds! Before the bell rang! While his music is still playing! So the monster heel that's a great draw gets squashed in a few seconds. If that weren't enough, the heel gets screwed as the match hadn't even started. Now let's kill the announcers' credibility. "Nothing questionable about that…Andre should have been paying attention," are the wise words offered to us by Gorilla. Welcome to TNA. This same Andre-Warrior match headlined the second wrestling show I ever saw. It was in December of 1989 in Houston. As an 8 year old, I thought The Warrior slaughtering the evil giant in seconds was great. Again I was 8 and had no business sense. I remember my friend's dad calling the night the "Ultimate Rip-off." In reality though, Andre simply couldn't go anymore. His legs and back were killing him and The Ultimate Warrior was so stiff and reckless he really could have hurt Andre. After his program with Warrior, Andre only worked in tag matches with Haku. They would win the WWF Tag Team Titles later in the year but Andre would have his last match in the WWF a few months later at WrestleMania VI. This was the program that established The Ultimate Warrior as a main eventer. He would go on to win the WWF World Title from Hogan at WrestleMania VI but, due mostly to a lack of quality contenders, failed to draw as champion. The rest of the card: The Brooklyn Brawler pinned Jose Luis Rivera Bret Hart and Dino Bravo fought to a draw Al Perez pinned Conquistador #1 (Jose Luis Rivera)

Tito Santana pinned Boris Zhukov

The Bushwhackers defeated the Powers of Pain via DQ

Hercules defeated Akeem via count-out Chris Marullo Chrismarullo81@yahoo.com Match times, attendance figures and undercard info courtesy of www.thehistoryofthewwe.com