

= King of the Ring (1994) =

King of the Ring (1994) was the second annual King of the Ring professional wrestling pay @-@ per @-@ view (PPV) event produced by the World Wrestling Federation (WWF) . It took place on June 19 , 1994 , at the Baltimore Arena , now known as Royal Farms Arena , in Baltimore . " King of the Ring " is also the name of the tournament that was the focus of this pay @-@ per @-@ view event . The tournament to determine which wrestler would be crowned King of the Ring actually began the month before the pay @-@ per @-@ view , as the wrestlers gained entry in the tournament by participating in qualifying matches . These matches were held throughout May 1994 on WWF television programs , although the WWF did not explain how wrestlers were selected to compete in the qualifying matches . The second , third and fourth rounds of the tournament were televised on the pay @-@ per @-@ view broadcast on June 19 .

Owen Hart won the tournament by defeating Tatanka , the 1 ? 2 ? 3 Kid and Razor Ramon over the course of the evening . He used his coronation ceremony to criticize his brother Bret , with whom he was feuding . The Hart brothers ' feud led to a Steel Cage match for Bret 's WWF World Heavyweight Championship . Although Owen lost the title match , the feud carried on as more family members got involved .

In addition to the tournament , several other matches were held at the event . In a grudge match between two semi @-@ retired wrestlers , " Rowdy " Roddy Piper defeated Jerry Lawler . Bret Hart defended his WWF World Heavyweight Championship against Diesel . Diesel won the match when Hart 's brother @-@ in @-@ law Jim Neidhart interfered . As a result , Hart retained the title . The other match was for the WWF Tag Team Championship , in which The Headshrinkers successfully defended the belts against the team of Yokozuna and Crush .

= = Background = =

Participants in the tournament qualified in matches televised during WWF programs in the weeks prior to the event . The first qualifying match took place on May 7 , 1994 . Irwin R. Schyster (I.R.S.) defeated Scott Steiner in a match televised on WWF Superstars . The next qualifying match took place on the May 9 , 1994 episode of Monday Night Raw , when Razor Ramon defeated Kwang with a Razor 's Edge in a qualifying match to enter the tournament . In a match televised on May 14 , 1994 , Mabel (of Men on a Mission) defeated Pierre (of The Quebecers) to qualify for the tournament . Two days later , the May 16 , 1994 edition of Monday Night RAW , Bam Bam Bigelow qualified for the tournament by defeating Thurman " Sparky " Plugg .

The remaining qualifying matches built up to the tournament and developed storylines that played out on the pay @-@ per @-@ view . Lex Luger faced Jeff Jarrett in a qualifying match on May 21 , 1994 . During the match , Crush came to the ring and fought with Luger . Jarrett won the match by countout and advanced to the tournament . Owen Hart was scheduled to wrestle Earthquake on May 23 , 1994 for a spot in the tournament , but the plan was changed after Earthquake left the WWF . To explain Earthquake 's absence , the WWF showed footage of Yokozuna wrestling Earthquake and claimed that Earthquake had sustained an injury . Doink the Clown took Earthquake 's place , but Owen Hart won the match to qualify for the tournament . Next , on May 28 , 1994 , a qualifying match between the 1 ? 2 ? 3 Kid and Adam Bomb was televised on WWF Superstars . The Kid won after Kwang attempted to interfere on Bomb 's behalf . Kwang accidentally spat green mist in Bomb 's face , allowing the Kid to get the victory . In the final qualifying match , Jimmy Del Ray was originally scheduled to face Tatanka in a match televised on Monday Night Raw on May 30 , 1994 , but Crush took Del Ray 's place . The kayfabe reason given was that Crush 's manager , Mr. Fuji , made a deal with Jim Cornette , Del Ray 's manager , to allow Crush to compete . The match ended in a double countout , after Fuji and Chief Jay Strongbow , who was seconding Tatanka , got involved . This led to a Lumberjack match on Monday Night Raw the following week . Tatanka won the match and the spot in the tournament , after Lex Luger gained revenge for Crush 's interference in his match by attacking Crush .

The Headshrinkers had recently become faces after signing Captain Lou Albano as their manager .

They received an immediate push and won the World Tag Team Championship by defeating The Quebecers on the May 2 , 1994 edition of Monday Night Raw . Meanwhile , Yokozuna was being buried by the WWF after losing the WWF World Heavyweight Championship at WrestleMania X and being defeated by Earthquake in a Sumo match . He teamed with Crush , who was also managed by Mr. Fuji , to challenge The Headshrinkers for the tag team title at King of the Ring .

After beating Razor Ramon for the WWF Intercontinental Championship in April 1994 , Diesel was in the midst of a major push . He was considered the top contender to Bret Hart 's WWF World Heavyweight Championship , and a match was booked for King of the Ring in which only Hart 's title would be on the line . The feud intensified on the May 30 , 1994 , episode of Monday Night Raw during Jerry Lawler 's interview segment , The King 's Court . During an interview with Hart , Lawler invited Diesel and his friend Shawn Michaels to confront Hart . After a verbal confrontation , Diesel performed his Jackknife Powerbomb on Hart , after which Diesel , Michaels and Lawler attacked Hart . The following week on Monday Night Raw , Bret announced that he would have a family member , whose identity would be a secret until the pay @-@ per @-@ view , in his corner to help prevent Michaels from interfering on Diesel 's behalf .

The buildup to the main event match began at WrestleMania X. " Rowdy " Roddy Piper had served as the guest referee during the main event match between Bret Hart and Yokozuna , and Jerry Lawler was a commentator . Following WrestleMania , Lawler used his interview segment , The King 's Court , to insult Piper . After a match was signed between the two , Lawler insulted Piper further by introducing a scrawny fan dressed as Piper on The King 's Court . He claimed that this impersonator was Piper himself , and he made the fan kiss Lawler 's feet .

= = Event = =

King of the Ring 1994 was held at the Baltimore Arena in Baltimore on June 19 , 1994 . Before the pay @-@ per @-@ view broadcast began , Thurman " Sparky " Plugg beat Kwang in a dark match . As the event began , it was revealed that retired football player Art Donovan would be one of the commentators for the evening . Donovan 's appearance would become infamous among wrestling fans for being seemingly uninformed about the product as well as generally befuddled behavior such as repeatedly asking how much certain wrestlers weighed . He was joined by Gorilla Monsoon on play @-@ by @-@ play , who inadvertently referred to Donovan several times as " Art O 'Donnell " , and Randy Savage . Monsoon , who had not called a pay @-@ per @-@ view since 1993 's Royal Rumble after being phased out in favor of Jim Ross and later Vince McMahon , served as McMahon 's replacement due to McMahon 's preparation for his upcoming trial for steroid distribution . To cover up his absence , it was announced that McMahon could not appear because he was recovering from neck surgery .

In the first match of the tournament , Bam Bam Bigelow got the early advantage by attacking Razor Ramon from behind . Ramon gained momentum after Bigelow missed a diving headbutt , but Bigelow used his strength and got Ramon in a torture rack . As Bigelow climbed the ropes , however , Ramon threw him back into the ring and scored the pinfall .

The following match saw Irwin R. Schyster face Mabel . When Schyster charged at Mabel before the bell , Mabel used his strength to block Schyster and to then powerslam him . Schyster was not able to use much offense due to the size of his opponent . He scored the win , however , when he shook the ropes as Mabel was about to attempt a maneuver from the top rope . Mabel fell to the mat , allowing I.R.S. to pin him .

At the beginning of the next match , Tatanka attacked Owen Hart before the bell . The match soon moved into the ringside area , where Hart gained the advantage . After a sleeper hold by Hart and a DDT by Tatanka , Hart reversed Tatanka 's sunset flip attempt and pinned him to advance to the next round .

Jarrett used his strength against the 1 ? 2 ? 3 Kid in the following match . The Kid fought back with a spinning heel kick , but Jarrett regained control . Toward the end of the match , The Kid sustained a kayfabe injury to his knee . Jarrett tried to use this to his advantage by using the Figure Four leglock , but The Kid blocked the hold by using a small package to pin Jarrett for the victory . Upset

at being eliminated from the tournament , Jarrett responded by performing three piledrivers on The Kid after the match .

The WWF World Heavyweight Championship match between Bret Hart and Diesel came next . Diesel was accompanied by Shawn Michaels , and Hart was joined by brother @-@ in @-@ law and former tag @-@ team partner Jim Neidhart . Diesel used his size against Hart , but Hart managed to perform a Figure Four leglock on Diesel . After this was broken , the wrestlers fought outside the ring . Michaels got involved and attacked Hart . Back inside the ring , the Hart and Diesel fought as Michaels removed the turnbuckle pad . Hart reversed Diesel 's attack , however , and slammed Diesel 's head into the turnbuckle . Hart put Diesel in the Sharpshooter , but Diesel easily reached the ropes to break the hold . Michaels attacked Hart while the referee 's back was turned , which allowed Diesel to perform the Jackknife powerbomb . Before he could pin Hart , however , Neidhart interfered to cause the disqualification and allow Hart to retain his title . After the match , Diesel and Michaels attacked Hart , but Neidhart left the ring .

Following the WWF World Heavyweight Championship match , the second round of the tournament began . Razor Ramon attacked his opponent , I.R.S. , in the aisle before the match . The two brawled outside the ring . Afterwards , while using the ropes for leverage , I.R.S. gained the advantage inside the ring by applying a chinlock . Ramon escaped the hold , kicked Schyster and performed the Razor 's Edge for the win .

In the other semifinal match , Owen Hart attacked the 1 ? 2 ? 3 Kid before the bell . Hart used his momentum to wear The Kid down with aerial maneuvers . Although The Kid briefly gained the advantage , Hart performed a powerbomb on him and then used the Sharpshooter to make The Kid submit .

The next match was the World Tag Team Championship match . The Headshrinkers gained the early advantage , but Mr. Fuji helped his team by hitting Fatu with the Japanese flag . Yokozuna performed a leg drop on Fatu , but Samu was able to tag in . All four wrestlers fought in the ring before the brawl moved to the arena floor . Crush performed a superplex on Samu , but Lex Luger came to ringside and distracted Crush . This allowed Samu to attempt a roll @-@ up . Crush recovered , but Fatu tagged in and pinned Crush to retain the belts .

Razor Ramon began the final match of the tournament by bodyslamming Owen Hart . Hart used a spinning heel kick and an abdominal stretch to gain the advantage . Ramon performed a back suplex on Hart from the top rope and attempted to use the Razor 's Edge . Hart threw him onto the arena floor , however , where Neidhart attacked Ramon . Hart pinned Ramon and proclaimed himself the " King of Harts " during his coronation ceremony .

Prior to the main event match , Piper revealed that the fan humiliated by Lawler in the King 's Court segment would be in Piper 's corner during the match . Piper started the match by throwing his kilt in Lawler 's face and attacking him . The match consisted mainly of brawling , and Lawler was frequently distracted by the fan who was standing in Piper 's corner . Lawler gained the advantage by performing a sleeper hold and a piledriver on Piper . He attacked Piper with a foreign object , which knocked Piper to the mat . Then , while trying to pin Piper , Jerry Lawler placed his feet on the ropes for leverage . The fan at ringside pushed Lawler 's feet off , however , which allowed Piper to perform a back suplex and get the victory .

= = Aftermath = =

Owen Hart 's victory intensified his feud with his brother Bret . Having defeated him at WrestleMania X and replicated Bret 's victory in the 1993 King of the Ring tournament , Owen set his sights on Bret 's WWF Championship . The two met at SummerSlam 1994 in a Steel Cage match for the title . Jim Neidhart was in the audience to support Owen . Davey Boy Smith , another brother @-@ in @-@ law of the Hart brothers , got involved with the feud by siding with Bret after Neidhart attacked Smith after the cage match .

Because the pay @-@ per @-@ view focused on the tournament , few major feuds were highlighted . Aside from Owen Hart , the tournament did not figure prominently into the future storylines of any of the other participants . The qualifying match between the 1 ? 2 ? 3 Kid and

Adam Bomb did , however , help advance a storyline . Bomb and Kwang , both managed by Harvey Wippleman , began feuding shortly after King of the Ring when Wippleman and Kwang turned on Bomb . Bomb began wrestling as a face as a result . Their feud did not end with a major blow off match , however . Instead , it was quietly resolved in a dark match prior to the SummerSlam 1994 broadcast .

Roddy Piper did not reappear on WWF programming again until 1995 , and Lawler returned to doing commentary as well as feuding with Bret Hart .

Despite failing to capture the WWF Championship at King of the Ring , Diesel continued to enjoy an unprecedented push . In 1994 , he became the first wrestler in WWF history to win the WWF 's Triple Crown in one calendar year . The Headshrinkers dropped the tag team title to Diesel and Michaels one day before SummerSlam 1994 . Diesel followed this up by winning the WWF Championship on November 26 , 1994 .

= = Results = =

= = = Tournament brackets = = =

The tournament took place between April 13 and June 19 , 1994 . The tournament brackets were :

^ In a May 30 , 1994 , King of the Ring Qualifying match , Crush (replacing the originally announced Jimmy Del Ray) and Tatanka wrestled to a Double Count @-@ Out on Monday Night Raw . The two wrestled again the next week on Raw in a Lumberjack match for the final slot in the King of the Ring .