

= Royal Rumble (2005) =

Royal Rumble (2005) was the eighteenth annual Royal Rumble professional wrestling pay @-@ per @-@ view event produced by World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) . It was presented by PlayStation 2 and took place on January 30 , 2005 , at the Save Mart Center in Fresno , California and featured talent from both the Raw and SmackDown ! brands . As has been customary since 1993 , the Royal Rumble match winner received a match at that year 's WrestleMania , (in this instance : WrestleMania 21) for his choice at either the WWE Championship or the World Heavyweight Championship .

Five professional wrestling matches were featured on the event 's supercard , a scheduling of more than one main event . The main event was the annual 30 @-@ man Royal Rumble match , which featured wrestlers from both brands . Batista , the twenty @-@ eighth entrant , won the match by last eliminating John Cena , the twenty @-@ fifth entrant . The primary match on the Raw brand was Triple H versus Randy Orton for the World Heavyweight Championship , which Triple H won by pinfall after performing a Pedigree . The primary match on the SmackDown ! brand was a Triple Threat match for the WWE Championship between reigning champion John " Bradshaw " Layfield , Kurt Angle , and The Big Show , which JBL won by pinning Angle after performing a Clothesline from Hell . For the first time since The Wrestling Classic , no tag team match was assigned .

= = Background = =

The professional wrestling matches at Royal Rumble featured professional wrestlers performing as characters in scripted events pre @-@ determined by the hosting promotion , World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) . Storylines between the characters were produced on WWE 's weekly television shows Raw and SmackDown ! with the Raw and SmackDown ! brands ? storyline divisions in which WWE assigned its employees to different programs .

The main feud heading into the Royal Rumble on the Raw brand was between Triple H and Randy Orton over the World Heavyweight Championship . Their feud started on the night after Summerslam , when Orton was kicked out of Evolution by Triple H. The following month , at Unforgiven , Triple H defeated Orton to win the World Heavyweight Championship . At Survivor Series , Team Orton (Orton , Chris Benoit , Chris Jericho , and Maven) defeated Team Triple H (Triple H , Edge , Batista , and Snitsky) in a four @-@ on @-@ four Elimination match . Orton won the match for his team by last eliminating Triple H. Two months later , at New Year 's Revolution , the pay @-@ per @-@ view three weeks before the Royal Rumble , Triple H won an Elimination Chamber match to win the vacant World Heavyweight Championship . Triple H won the match by last eliminating Orton following outside interference from Evolution members Batista and Ric Flair . The next night on Raw , Orton defeated Batista to become the number one contender to the title at the Royal Rumble . The following week , after a verbal confrontation between the two in the arena , Triple H ambushed Orton backstage . They fought until Orton tried to use a steel chair , and Triple H fled . On the January 24 episode of Raw , Orton faced off against Ric Flair . During the match , as the referee was knocked down , Triple H came in and attacked Orton along with Flair . Orton , however , fought off both men and won the match .

The main feud on the SmackDown ! brand was between John " Bradshaw " Layfield (JBL) , The Big Show , and Kurt Angle , with the three feuding over the WWE Championship . On the December 16 , 2004 , episode of SmackDown ! , Angle challenged JBL to a match for the WWE Championship . The Cabinet (Orlando Jordan , Doug , and Danny Basham) interfered and attacked Angle , causing the match to end via disqualification . They continued to attack Angle after the match until The Big Show came out , beat down everyone , and signaled to JBL that he wanted the title . In the weeks that followed , a Triple Threat match for the title between the three was booked for the Royal Rumble . Following this , JBL set up Angle to anger The Big Show , but Angle angered JBL in response . After realizing this , JBL aligned himself with The Big Show and confronted Angle ; however , JBL turned on Big Show and beat him down with Angle . On the January 27 episode of SmackDown ! , SmackDown ! General Manager Theodore Long booked a Last Man Standing match

between JBL and Angle for later that night . The two eventually turned on each other , and the match ended in a no contest . It was later revealed that the match was Big Show 's idea .

Another feud heading into the event from SmackDown ! was between The Undertaker and Heidenreich . Their feud first started in 2004 at No Mercy , the pay @-@ per @-@ view in October . Heidenreich helped John " Bradshaw " Layfield (JBL) defeat Undertaker in a Last Ride match by attacking Undertaker and putting him in the hearse . At Survivor Series , Undertaker defeated Heidenreich by pinfall after executing a Tombstone Piledriver . At Armageddon 2004 , Heidenreich once again cost Undertaker his title match against JBL in a Fatal Four Way that involved Booker T and Eddie Gurrerro by pushing Undertaker backwards while holding JBL in the tombstone piledriver position , before JBL pinned Booker T after a Clothesline From Hell . Smackdown 's General Manager Theodore Long let Undertaker name the stipulation for his match against Heidenreich at Royal Rumble . As Heidenreich mentioned his fear of caskets , Undertaker chose to face him in a casket match for Royal Rumble .

A preliminary Raw brand feud was between Shawn Michaels and Edge . Their feud started at Taboo Tuesday 2004 when Michaels was voted over Edge to face Triple H for the World Heavyweight Championship . At New Year 's Revolution 2005 , Edge lost a shot at the title in an Elimination Chamber with Michaels as special referee . In the Elimination Chamber , Michaels superkicked Edge , followed by a lionsault from Chris Jericho , with Jericho making the cover . Believing it was Michael 's fault that he was not crowned champion , Edge speared Michaels and the two men were booked into a match at Royal Rumble .

= = Event = =

Before the event went live on pay @-@ per @-@ view , Maven defeated Rhyno in a match taped for Sunday Night Heat . The first match that aired was between Edge and Shawn Michaels . Edge mocked Michaels by performing some of Michaels ' signature taunts during the match . Edge gained the advantage after an Edge @-@ O @-@ Matic (sitout rear mat slam) outside the ring . Michaels fought back until Edge left the ring . Michaels came after him , but , with the referee 's distraction , Edge speared Michaels , both outside and inside the ring . Michaels then knocked Edge off the second rope and executed a diving elbow drop . Edge countered a superkick attempt into an electric chair drop and applied the Edgecator . Michaels broke the hold and attempted a roll @-@ up , but Edge rolled through and pinned Michaels while holding the ropes .

The second match was a Casket match between The Undertaker and Heidenreich . The match started back and forth until Heidenreich sent The Undertaker into the side of the casket . The Undertaker came back , applying the triangle choke until Gene Snitsky interfered and attacked The Undertaker . Snitsky and Heidenreich double @-@ teamed The Undertaker and called for the casket to be opened . Kane was revealed to be inside the casket , and he climbed out . He attacked Snitsky and Heidenreich and fought Snitsky into the audience . Heidenreich sent The Undertaker into the steel steps and pushed the casket into him . Heidenreich put The Undertaker in the casket after applying the cobra clutch . The Undertaker stopped the lid from closing with his arm , gaining control briefly . Heidenreich fought back and put The Undertaker in the casket again . The Undertaker , however , fought out of it and executed a chokeslam and a Tombstone Piledriver . Shortly after , Undertaker put Heidenreich in the casket and closed the lid to win the match .

The third match was a Triple Threat match for the WWE Championship between champion John " Bradshaw " Layfield (JBL) , The Big Show , and Kurt Angle . In the opening minutes , Angle stayed on the outside of the ring , leaving Big Show and JBL on their own . Angle came into the ring to break up a pinfall attempt , but Big Show kept the advantage over both men . Angle hit Big Show with a television monitor to send him through an announce table , thus leaving Angle and JBL on their own . Big Show returned a few minutes later and continued to control the match . Big Show tackled JBL through the steel barricade and performed a flapjack to Angle onto a steel chair . Shortly after , Luther Reigns , Mark Jindrak , Doug , and Danny Basham attacked Big Show , and Orlando Jordan helped JBL back into the ring . JBL then executed a Clothesline from Hell on Angle and pinned him to retain the title .

The fourth match was between Triple H and Randy Orton for the World Heavyweight Championship . Prior to the match , Raw General Manager Eric Bischoff banned Evolution (Batista and Ric Flair) from ringside . Orton had control at the start of the match until Triple H countered an RKO attempt by throwing Orton out of the ring . Triple H kept the advantage and targeted Orton 's left knee until Orton kicked him into an announce table . Orton kept the advantage until he suffered a kayfabe concussion from missing a DDT . Triple H knocked both Orton and the referee down with a clothesline and took out a sledgehammer from beneath the ring . He tried to hit Orton with it , but Orton pulled him into the ringpost . Triple H performed another clothesline and a Pedigree to win and retain the title .

The final match was the Royal Rumble match . Before the match began , Kurt Angle stole Nunzio 's entrance number , taking his spot in the match . After the tenth entrant , Raw General Manager Eric Bischoff came to ringside , and SmackDown ! General Manager Theodore Long also came out soon after . The participants then divided into their brands and fought against each other until they worked together to eliminate Muhammad Hassan , the thirteen entrant . Scotty 2 Hotty , the fifteenth entrant , was attacked by Hassan during his entrance and never entered the match . Angle , the twentieth entrant , dominated upon entering the match until Shawn Michaels eliminated him . Angle came back in later to eliminate Michaels and continued to attack him afterwards . Jonathan Coachman , the twenty @-@ first entrant , spent a lot of his time in the match holding onto the bottom rope as he was not a wrestler . The final four participants remaining were Batista , John Cena , Edge , and Rey Mysterio . Edge fought with Mysterio and threw him over the top rope , but he stayed on the apron . Edge then executed a spear to eliminate Mysterio . Cena and Batista then eliminated Edge as he was attacking them . Cena tried to perform an FU on Batista to the outside , but Batista fought off . Batista then attempted a Batista Bomb to the outside , but was countered with a headscissors takedown by Cena , sending both over the top rope and touching the floor at the same time . The referees for the Raw brand believed Batista to be the winner while the SmackDown ! referees believed Cena to be winner . Following this , WWE Chairman Vince McMahon came to the ring , in the process legitimately tearing both his quadriceps muscles , and ordered the match to be restarted with the final two participants , Batista and John Cena . Batista tossed Cena over the top rope following a Spinebuster to win the match .

= = Aftermath = =

The following weeks on Raw surrounded Batista 's choice of which champion to face at WrestleMania 21 . Triple H devised a scheme to have Batista almost run over by a limousine resembling John " Bradshaw " Layfield (JBL) 's , so Batista would challenge JBL instead of himself . Batista became aware of the scheme and chose to face Triple H for the World Heavyweight Championship at WrestleMania , thus leaving the Evolution stable in the process . He won the title , and their feud continued until he was drafted to SmackDown ! on June 30 . Batista remained champion until the January 13 , 2006 , episode of SmackDown ! when he surrendered the title due to injury .

John Cena went on to win a tournament to become the number one contender to the WWE Championship at WrestleMania 21 . The tournament concluded in a match between him and Kurt Angle at No Way Out , which Cena won after performing an FU . Following this , he began an angle with JBL . Cena defeated JBL to win the title at WrestleMania , and their feud ended after Cena retained the title in an " I Quit " match at Judgment Day . Cena would then go to hold on to the title until New Year 's Revolution 2006 when Edge cashed in the Money in the Bank contract he won at Wrestlemania 21 and defeat Cena after an Elimination Chamber match .

Following the Royal Rumble , Randy Orton and Kurt Angle began feuding with The Undertaker and Shawn Michaels , respectively . The Big Show faced JBL in the first ever barbed wire steel cage match for the title at No Way Out , which JBL won to retain the title . Orton briefly feuded with Christian before moving on to feud with The Undertaker , which spanned nine months . After losing his title match at No Way Out , The Big Show faced Akebono in a sumo match at WrestleMania , and he briefly feuded with Carlito afterwards .

= = Results = =

= = = Royal Rumble match entrances and eliminations = = =

Red ? ? and " Raw " indicates a Raw superstar , blue ? ? and " SmackDown ! " indicates a SmackDown ! superstar . A new entrant came out approximately every 90 seconds .

^ Scotty was attacked by Hassan before he made it to the ring , and therefore was unable to compete and never officially entered the match .

^ Kurt Angle had been eliminated by Shawn Michaels and then returned to the ring , and eliminated Michaels in retaliation .