

= Royal Rumble (1995) =

Royal Rumble (1995) was the eighth annual Royal Rumble professional wrestling pay @-@ per @-@ view event produced by the World Wrestling Federation (WWF) . It took place on January 22 , 1995 , in the USF Sun Dome located in Tampa , Florida .

The event featured five matches based on scripted storylines and the results were predetermined by the WWF . The main event was the 1995 Royal Rumble match , which Shawn Michaels won after entering first and outlasting the 29 other wrestlers for the first time in WWF history . The event also featured a match for the WWF World Heavyweight Championship , when Diesel defended the title against Bret Hart . The match was stopped when several other wrestlers interfered and the referee lost control of the match . Two other title matches took place ; Jeff Jarrett won the WWF Intercontinental Championship from Razor Ramon , and The 1 ? 2 ? 3 Kid and Bob Holly won the final match in a tournament that determined the new WWF Tag Team Champions .

Several storylines from Royal Rumble 1995 were carried over to WrestleMania XI , the WWF 's next pay @-@ per @-@ view . Bam Bam Bigelow attacked National Football League Hall of Famer Lawrence Taylor , who was sitting in the crowd ; this set up a match between the two at WrestleMania . Pamela Anderson was at ringside and was supposed to accompany the winner of the Royal Rumble match to his WWF World Heavyweight Championship match at WrestleMania . Although Shawn Michaels won the match , Anderson came to the ring at WrestleMania with Diesel . The Undertaker 's feud with Ted DiBiase 's Million Dollar Corporation also escalated , as DiBiase 's men stole the urn that was said to give The Undertaker his power . Jarrett and Ramon continued to feud for several months , and Bret Hart targeted Bob Backlund because of Backlund 's interference in the WWF World Heavyweight Championship match .

= = Background = =

The storyline behind the WWF World Heavyweight Championship match began in 1994 , when Bret Hart was feuding with his brother Owen . After Owen was unable to win the title , he helped Bob Backlund win the belt from Bret at Survivor Series 1994 . Three days after Survivor Series , Diesel faced Backlund and won the title belt . He agreed to grant a title shot to Bret Hart , who , like Diesel , was also a fan @-@ favorite .

Also at Survivor Series 1994 , Shawn Michaels and Diesel had an argument after Michaels accidentally kicked Diesel in the face . Although the pair held the WWF Tag Team Championship together , Diesel said that he did not want to team with Michaels any longer . The title was vacated , and the WWF held a tournament to determine the new champions . During the tournament , The Smoking Gunns were forced to withdraw when Bart Gunn was injured in a rodeo accident . As a result , the 1 ? 2 ? 3 Kid and Bob Holly took their place . The Gunns requested that they get a title shot after the tournament when Bart had recovered . The 1 ? 2 ? 3 Kid and Holly advanced to the finals , as did Ted DiBiase 's team of Bam Bam Bigelow and Tatanka . The match to determine the new champions was scheduled to take place at the Royal Rumble .

The Undertaker had been feuding with DiBiase 's Million Dollar Corporation since his return to the WWF from an injury in August 1994 . During the match between The Undertaker and Yokozuna at Survivor Series 1994 , Irwin R. Schyster , one of DiBiase 's wrestlers , interfered in the match by attacking The Undertaker . The feud between The Undertaker and Schyster escalated when Schyster performed a series of vignettes in which he repossessed such items as tombstones and burial plots from people he claimed had not paid their taxes before dying . During the feud , Schyster was escorted to the ring for his matches by a group of hooded druids .

The feud between Jeff Jarrett and Razor Ramon began in late 1994 when Jarrett challenged Ramon for Ramon 's WWF Intercontinental Championship . They faced each other several times , but Jarrett was unable to win the belt . Jarrett , who portrayed an aspiring country music star , was accompanied to the ring by The Roadie , who often interfered in matches on Jarrett 's behalf .

Although no major feuds were featured in the Royal Rumble match , Baywatch star Pamela Anderson was in attendance at ringside . It was announced that she would accompany the winner of

the match during his WWF World Heavyweight Championship title shot at WrestleMania XI .

= = Event = =

Prior to the live pay @-@ per @-@ view broadcast , Buck Quartermaine defeated The Brooklyn Brawler in a dark match . In the first televised match , Razor Ramon defended his WWF Intercontinental Championship against Jeff Jarrett , who was accompanied by The Roadie . Ramon used his strength to dominate the opening of the match . Jarrett gained the momentum with a series of dropkicks and then choked Ramon with a sleeper hold . Ramon ran at Jarrett but was thrown over the top rope . He hit his knee when he landed , and The Roadie then hit Ramon from behind in the knee . Ramon was unable to return to the ring , so Jarrett was awarded the match via countout . Because the championship cannot change hands on a countout , Jarrett challenged Ramon to continue the match . Ramon agreed and nearly pinned Jarrett twice . Jarrett applied the figure four leglock to apply pressure to Ramon 's injured knee . Ramon escaped the hold and attempted to perform the Razor 's Edge . He collapsed under Jarrett 's weight , however , and Jarrett pinned him to win the title .

The Undertaker faced Irwin R. Schyster in the next match . The Undertaker gained the advantage at the beginning and held it until Ted DiBiase called his druids to the ring . When The Undertaker attempted to attack Schyster from the top rope , the druids shook the ropes and caused him to fall . Schyster performed a clothesline to knock The Undertaker out of the ring , where he and the druids attacked The Undertaker . When the match returned to the ring , Schyster was in control . Both men got knocked down , however , and a druid snuck into the ring and rolled Schyster on top of The Undertaker for a pinfall attempt . The Undertaker kicked out and attempted to perform the Tombstone Piledriver . A druid interfered to prevent the move , but The Undertaker performed a chokeslam on Schyster to gain the pinfall victory . After the match , Ted DiBiase called out Corporation member King Kong Bundy to help Schyster attack The Undertaker and steal the urn , which was said to be the source of The Undertaker 's power .

The WWF World Heavyweight Championship match was next , in which Diesel defended the title against Bret Hart . Diesel began the match by clotheslining Hart , but Hart gained the advantage by focusing on injuring Diesel 's knee . He performed the figure four leglock twice before attacking Diesel outside the ring . Diesel regained the advantage by using his size and strength to throw Hart and perform power moves to wear him down . Hart tied Diesel 's legs to the ring post with a piece of tape and kicked him repeatedly . Diesel recovered and performed the Jackknife power bomb on Hart . Before the referee could count the pinfall , Shawn Michaels ran to the ring and attacked Diesel . The referee ordered the match to continue , and the match went back and forth until Hart used the Sharpshooter submission hold to place pressure on Diesel 's injured leg . Owen Hart interfered by attacking Bret , but the match was ordered to continue . Bret Hart and Diesel brawled until Bret rolled Diesel up for a pinfall . The referee was knocked unconscious , and Michaels , Jarrett , and The Roadie came to the ring to attack Diesel . Meanwhile , Owen Hart and Bob Backlund attacked Bret Hart . Because the referee could not control the match , it was declared a draw and Diesel retained his championship .

Bob Holly and the 1 ? 2 ? 3 Kid faced Bam Bam Bigelow and Tatanka next in the final match of the WWF Tag Team Championship tournament . Tatanka began the match by using his strength against Holly , but Holly soon turned the match around by performing a hurricanrana throw . Bigelow used his strength against his opponents , but the 1 ? 2 ? 3 Kid performed a hurricanrana on him as well . Bigelow regained the advantage by kicking the Kid in the back of the head and controlled the match until the Kid threw him out of the ring . Bigelow and Tatanka turned the match around again , using power moves to wear down their opponents . At one point , Bigelow held the Kid for Tatanka to attack , but Tatanka accidentally hit Bigelow instead . The match ended in a similar manner , as Tatanka knocked Bigelow off the top rope when Bigelow attempted to perform a moonsault . The 1 ? 2 ? 3 Kid pinned Bigelow to win the match and the WWF Tag Team Championship . After the match , the crowd heckled Bigelow . He responded by pushing retired NFL player Lawrence Taylor , who was at ring side , laughing about Bigelow 's loss .

In the main event , Shawn Michaels was the first entrant in the Royal Rumble match , while Davey Boy Smith was the second participant . Every 60 seconds , another wrestler entered the match . As Owen Hart made his way to the ring , he was attacked by his brother Bret . As a result of the attack , Owen was quickly eliminated from the match when Smith , his brother @-@ in @-@ law , threw him out of the ring . King Kong Bundy and Mabel , the two biggest competitors in the match , fought until Mabel eliminated Bundy . Lex Luger then entered the match and eliminated Mabel . Bret Hart returned later and attacked Bob Backlund as Backlund was about to enter the match . This enabled Luger to eliminate Backlund quickly , after which Backlund and Bret continued to fight . The final four participants remaining in the ring were Michaels , Smith , Luger , and Crush . Luger attacked Crush but was eliminated by Michaels . Crush then convinced Michaels to work with him but then turned on Michaels by attacking him . Michaels scratched Crush 's eyes , which enabled Smith to eliminate Crush . Michaels and Smith , the first two entrants , were the last two wrestlers remaining . Smith threw Michaels over the top rope and began to celebrate . Michaels , who had only touched the floor with one foot , was not eliminated from the match , however . He attacked Smith from behind and threw him out of the ring to become the first wrestler to win the Royal Rumble after entering first . Michaels celebrated in the ring with Pamela Anderson .

= = Aftermath = =

The day after Royal Rumble , the 1 ? 2 ? 3 Kid and Bob Holly faced The Smoking Gunns . The Gunns won the match and the WWF Tag Team Championship . By losing the belts after one day , the Kid and Holly tied what was at that time the record for the shortest tag team title reign in WWF history .

Razor Ramon faced Jeff Jarrett at WrestleMania XI in a rematch for the WWF Intercontinental Championship . To counteract The Roadie 's interference , Ramon was accompanied by his friend the 1 ? 2 ? 3 Kid . Ramon won the match by disqualification but did not win the title . On May 19 , 1995 , Ramon defeated Jarrett in a ladder match to regain the championship , but Jarrett won the belt back three days later .

The Undertaker faced King Kong Bundy at WrestleMania XI . Although The Undertaker won the match , Kama , another member of DiBiase 's Corporation , took possession of the urn and melted it down into a necklace . The Undertaker defeated Kama in dark matches at In Your House 1 and In Your House 2 . They faced each other in a casket match at SummerSlam 1995 , which The Undertaker won to end the feud .

Bret Hart wrestled an " I Quit " match against Bob Backlund at WrestleMania . Hart won the match after the referee determined that Backlund had conceded defeat . Bret 's feud with Owen was not featured again , but the two did not reunite until they formed The Hart Foundation in 1997 with brothers @-@ in law Davey Boy Smith and Jim Neidhart .

Despite Michaels winning the right to be escorted by Pamela Anderson to his WWF World Heavyweight Championship match against Diesel at WrestleMania , Anderson came to the ring with Diesel instead . Michaels 's bodyguard , Sycho Sid , attempted to interfere on Michaels 's behalf but ultimately helped Diesel retain the title . Diesel offered Michaels a rematch , and Michaels told Sid that he would not be needed in the upcoming match . Upset with Michaels , Sid attacked Michaels until Diesel came to Michaels 's rescue . Diesel and Michaels became allies once again and teamed up to win the WWF Tag Team Championship later that year .

Bam Bam Bigelow challenged Lawrence Taylor to a match , which Taylor accepted after initially refusing . Diesel trained Taylor , who beat Bigelow at WrestleMania XI . Embarrassed , Bigelow challenged Diesel to a match for the WWF World Heavyweight Championship . Tatanka was at ringside for the match ; he turned on Bigelow and caused him to lose . Bigelow attacked Tatanka after the match , which led to Sid , a new addition to the Corporation , to come to Tatanka 's defense . This led to a tag team match at King of the Ring 1995 , where Diesel and Bigelow defeated Tatanka and Sid .

= = = Reception = = =

The event was attended by 10 @, @ 000 fans , which is approximately the maximum capacity of the USF Sun Dome . This attendance figure was down from the previous year 's attendance of 14 @, @ 500 , but higher than the following year , when 9 @, @ 600 people attended Royal Rumble 1996 . From the ticket sales , the WWF gained \$ 140 @, @ 000 ; again , this was lower than in 1994 but higher than in 1996 . The pay @-@ per @-@ view buyrate of 1 @.@ 0 , however , was higher than 1994 's 0 @.@ 9 figure but lower than 1996 's buyrate of 1 @.@ 1 .

Current WWE wrestler Cody Rhodes has stated that Michaels 's win , in which he was the first wrestler to enter the ring in the # 1 position and win the match , is his favorite ending to a Royal Rumble match . Reviewing the event for Online Onslaught , columnist Adam Gutschmidt evaluated the event as acceptable but not exceptional . He found the Royal Rumble match to be the best part of the show , although he claimed that the WWF 's switch to having wrestlers enter every 60 seconds hurt the match . He also found the inconclusive ending to the WWF World Heavyweight Championship match frustrating and rated the match between The Undertaker and Irwin R. Schyster as a " dud " . The event has also been rated by customers at Amazon.com , who have given the event four and a half out of five stars .

Royal Rumble 1995 was released on VHS in North America by Coliseum Video on March 8 , 1995 . It was released in the United Kingdom in VHS format on May 8 , 1995 . The event , packaged together with Royal Rumble 1996 , was also released on DVD in the United Kingdom as part of the WWE Tagged Classics line on April 17 , 2006 . On October 15 , 2007 , WWE released the event in the United Kingdom as part of the Royal Rumble Complete Anthology DVD set .

= = Results = =

= = = Tournament bracket = = =

The tournament was held between December 1994 and January 22 , 1995 . The tournament brackets were :

= = = Royal Rumble entrances and eliminations = = =

A new entrant came out approximately every minute .

Shawn Michaels was the first superstar to win the Royal Rumble from the # 1 entry . Also , it was the first time that the first two entries were the final two in the match .