

Clash of the Champions 23 – No Real Reason For This

Impact should be up either tonight or tomorrow morning.

Clash of the Champions 23

Date: June 16, 1993

Location: Norfolk Scope, Norfolk, Virginia

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Jesse Ventura

GAH I can't get away from this time period in WCW can I? This really is an awkward phase for the company as they were really transitioning from the NWA days to their own world. The problem was that no one knew what their own world was. Hogan would show up in about a year though to at least give the company direction.

This is a mere three days after Hogan left WWF in case you were wondering. The main event is Flair and Anderson vs. the Hollywood Blondes for the tag belts so there you are. Let's get to it.

Flair is back. Orndorff is hurt. Good to know.

Ron Simmons vs. Dick Slater

This was supposed to be Simmons vs. Orndorff but the injury stopped that. Simmons is over as all goodness. I'm skeptical about a guy named Dirty Dick. Who in their right mind decided to book Orndorff as a champion in the mid 90s? Simmons is a former world champion and Slater is Slater so what do you think is going to happen here? Orndorff botches interference and there's your powerslam for the pin.

Rating: D. Nowhere near enough time to be anything here. It was supposed to be a big title match I guess but at the end of the day, Dick Slater was a joke to say the least and against

Simmons it was going to be domination and that's all it ever could be.

We go to Larry and Eric who talk to...Michael Buffer??? They're interviewing the ring announcer for crying out loud. Oddly enough he comes off like he knows what he's talking about instead of like he's reading generic lines off a script. Most interesting indeed.

Steven Regal vs. Marcus Bagwell

If you're not familiar with them go with their last names. For the life of me I can't get over that Bill Dundee is Sir William. Seeing Regal in something resembling shape is amazing. Seeing Bagwell as a guy without an attitude is even more amazing. He's the rookie wonder at this point so this was a big match for him. He's in some ridiculous tag team with Scorpio at this point. Oh and there's an NWA Title match tonight.

They'll be gone in less than three months. Jesse says rugby is tougher than football. And to think I would have voted for him for President. Regal has barely been here at all so Bagwell might be more known. Oh dear. They announce that on Saturday a woman will be in Cleveland looking for Cactus Jack.

If you ever want to see what might be the dumbest storyline in WCW history, and let that sink in for a minute, look that one up. Scratch that about Regal. This is just his first live TV match. Regal gets a rollup out of nowhere to get the pin...to a big pop? Well that was different.

Rating: C+. Uh, yeah. This was over before it started and I barely remember it happening to be honest. I know that's weird to say but it was almost over before it even started in my mind. It certainly wasn't bad, but at the same time there wasn't much here. Decent stuff though.

Maxx Payne has stolen the Badd Blaster from Johnny. Oh dear.

He says he wants respect. And Payne blasts it in his face. Aww poor Johnny looking all screwed up now.

There was supposed to be a match here but now Payne wins by forfeit. Z-Man, one of the most interesting cases ever, comes out to beat up Maxx for what he did. Z-Man is the guy that worked for WWF in the late 80s, actually opening Mania 3 with Rick Martel in the team that would become Strike Force after he left. He more or less was fine one day and quitting the next, allegedly over money. He was ok in WCW but would likely be gone soon after this. He winds up tapping anyway.

NWA World Title: Barry Windham vs. 2 Cold Scorpio

This could be bad but it could be good. Windham was just holding the title for a little while before Flair got it back in about a month. Jesse asks what kind of name Scope is. Jesse brings up that he was in the Navy and Norfolk is a naval town so he's happy here. No one believes Windham has any chance of losing here as Scorpio was young, talented and over so of course the NWA can't let him have the belt. That's Flair's belt blast it.

Jesse wants to know who Jordan is betting on tonight. That's a great line. Scorpio kicks out of a leaping, and I use that term loosely, DDT. Hey! Wanna know how Badd is? Call the Hotline and find out! Yes, we'll not only give out private medical records, we'll charge you for them! Windham punches the heck out of Scorpio and this is pretty one sided.

Fans are into it though so that works. In a very cool move, Scorpio is on the apron and hits a slingshot, note that it's not a springboard, 450. Scorpio's comeback is very good but in the end he gets caught just like you would expect him to. The Leaping DDT ends it.

Rating: B. This was way better than it should have been. When Scorpio wasn't fat and was actually motivated, he could go with anyone and that's what he did here. Solid match all

around although the ending sucked to a fairly large extent just out of boringness.

Bischoff is with Sting, Dustin Rhodes and Davey Boy Smith who are in a big six man tonight. They talk to the people they don't like. Simple and not very effective. Sting gets a huge pop.

Vader/Sid/Rick Rude vs. British Bulldog/Sting/Dustin Rhodes

This should be train wreckish. Vader is world champion here in case you were wondering. Sting is as over as is humanly possible. It's bordering on scary. Sting and Rude start it off and the heat is great. Apparently Rude stole the US Title and won't give it back. Oh I remember this: there was no champion for like four months and WCW saw nothing wrong with this at all.

Sting is beating up all three guys at once. That's just amusing. We have Sid vs. Bulldog now, which would have been a showdown in 1992 WWF to say the least. In a cool looking sequence, Dustin just beats the living tar out of Vader and beats him down. Now I haven't seen this since it aired, but I would bet anything on the heels winning, just based on WCW's booking. It's been about 6-7 minutes of domination so the other team will win in the end. I mean the heels have had NOTHING.

Ah there we go: Vader beats up Goldust. Those two followed each other over the years for some reason. They feuded in WWF and were the mystery opponents brought in to fight Austin at a Cyber Sunday. The Vader Bomb hits but it means nothing yet. Dustin is taking a beating here, meaning he'll be fine soon enough.

Yep, I didn't even finish that line before his comeback. See how predictable this company is? LET THE INSANITY BEGIN! Race hits Dustin with the briefcase that the US belt is in and Rude gets the pin. Yep I was right again.

Rating: D+. This was your standard main event level tag match. It's not like anything was settled here and it's not like it was anything great. Decent enough stuff though I guess. It set up the later matches and showdowns if nothing else, but it was way too predictable.

Tag Titles: Ric Flair/Arn Anderson vs. Hollywood Blondes

I have NO clue what that music the challengers are coming out to. This is Flair's first match back in WCW. The Blonds really were underrated. Buffer does the big match intro and this is 2/3 falls. Flair gets a solid but not incredibly loud yet LONG pop. The Blonde have over 100 title defenses? Apparently this is for the NWA tag titles also. Oh that's right they're unified at this point. Oh wait that's not right.

It's just that no one cared about the NWA. That's right. They've had 100 defenses in just over three months? That's most impressive. This had actually gotten some build with the rather funny Flair for the Old segment setting this up. Good night Flair is over. How could they not just run Flair vs. Sting and made a boat load of money? See Hogan, Hulk. Flair gets a massive pop and it's Flair vs. Austin. If this was five years later, the money for that match would have financed a small country.

To my complete and utter shock, Anderson works on the arm. This is very solid stuff here with the faces dominating for the majority of the match but not all of it which is a nice perk. Anderson is beaten down with the champions working on the knee. Flair gets the red hot tag even though nothing is going to end here. Flair gets the pin on Pillman off a quick shot. This is formula tag stuff but it's working well.

Jesse points out how bad it was of the challengers to go 2/3 falls as they would be champions otherwise. Jesse is absolutely right. They're working on Arn's knee quite well so they're thinking this one out I guess. Flair gets another hot

tag and goes for the Figure Four on Austin but here's Windham for the DQ.

And it's a Dusty Finish as even though they won two straight falls, the titles can't change hands on a DQ. Paul Roma runs down for the save. Oy vey. Windham says he'll be ready for Flair. The match wound up sucking as NO ONE bought Windham as a world champion.

Rating: B+. If this has a clean finish it's an A- minimum. Just a great old school tag match between two great teams. It's nearly twenty minutes too so it got a lot of time and it paid off. WCW did manage to realize when they had a good match ready to go and could let them just do it and that's what they did here.

Overall Rating: B. This was a good show I thought. They set up the Beach Blast PPV pretty well although it had a month to go so it wasn't all ready yet. It's fun to be able to see the build and the payoff for it though as I've reviewed the PPV as well. Either way this was solid stuff with some good matches, although the show does drag a bit at times. Still worth checking out though.