

What Killed WCW (WCW Clue) Final Part

[Part 1](#)

[Part 2](#)

[Part 3](#)

[Part 4](#)

Looking over these six, I think we can knock off two right away: Hogan's signing and Arquette winning the title. The former is easy: they DID recover after it and hit their all time highest after it. As for Arquette, I think that once they had hit April of 2000, there was no way they were going to recover and it's not like the title had meant anything in a long time anyway.

That leaves us with four possible suspects:

1. The Radicalz Jump Ship – January 17, 2000
2. Vince Russo Hired – October 5, 1999
3. Formation of NWO Wolfpac – May 4, 1998
4. Starrcade 1997 – December 28, 1997

Now the question becomes, what was WCW able to do after all of these things? Were they already done by the time they reached any of them? Was one of these moments the one that sent them over the cliff? There are many ways to come at this, so whichever way you want to go with is fine. We have people leaving, people arriving, a start of a new angle, and a culmination of an old angle. Let's take a look at these in chronological order.

Starrcade 1997: Now this was certainly a blow to WCW because it was their first major taste of failure after almost a year and a half of being unable to do anything wrong. Now, what

people don't seem to realize is that this show catapulted them up into MUCH higher ratings than they had been seeing before. In February, the show set a record for its highest TV rating ever, only to break it two weeks later. People were watching and they were watching in numbers they had never hit before.

It wasn't really until May (we'll get there in a bit) that things fell apart. The numbers for Raw were going up also, but Nitro had a good 4 months to keep the fans interested with something new. They also had Bret Hart, so it wasn't so much that Starrcade killed them, but rather the following months that really injured them. All Starrcade did was show that WCW could in fact be hurt. Therefore, I think we can eliminate Starrcade 97 from the possible suspects.

In reverse chronological order:

1. The Radicalz Jump Ship – January 17, 2000
2. Vince Russo Hired – October 5, 1999
3. Formation of NWO Wolfpac – May 4, 1998

Formation of NWO Wolfpac: I wasn't thinking much of this one but when I look at the numbers more and more, I'm thinking there might be something more to it. When you look at May 4, 1998's Nitro, other than the NWO being split in two, nothing else happened that night. Hogan was already champion and had been for a month but things were fine.

However, once that show happened, within about six weeks of a record high rating in late April, the number had lost over 20% of its rating. Raw's went up a bit, but they weren't exactly jumping off the page. In short, it appears that fans were not wanting to watch what WCW had to offer. That's the difference between Starrcade and this: after Starrcade the fans kept watching, but after this the fans left. Therefore, we're keeping it on the list.

Vince Russo Hired: This works the same as Starrcade but in a

lesser version. The ratings went up for a few months after he arrived. People were interested again and then WCW fell apart and things just went through the floor in 2000. Russo was fired in I think April before being brought back and making himself WCW Champion but that's a different story. Anyway, since things did in fact improve for awhile and they had one last chance to maybe salvage something, I think we can eliminate this one and cut it down to the final two.

In reverse chronological order:

1. The Radicalz Jump Ship – January 17, 2000
2. Formation of the NWO Wolfpac – May 4, 1998

The Radicalz Jump Ship: With this one, I think we might have a winner. In 1999 you had two major names leave: The Giant (Big Show) and Chris Jericho. Both guys bailed when they realized there was nothing left for them in WCW because the company was in big trouble. They made the jump, but they were about six months apart, meaning they could be replaced. As for the Radicalz, they all jumped in one night. Malenko, Benoit and Saturn all had their final matches for WCW at Souled Out 2000.

Now think about that for a minute. Imagine you lose four guys (remember that Eddie left too but wasn't on the PPV card) in one night. Imagine if WWE lost let's say Bryan, Barrett, Rhodes and Kofi all in one night. That's a lot of stuff they'd have to replace in a hurry. You would have to throw guys up there all of a sudden who may not be ready for it, you have to convince people to not go and watch them elsewhere and watch your new guys. That's not easy, especially when things were already falling apart as they were. This was a bad moment and yet another big blow to the company.

Now which of these two was worse? I think I have the answer and it's one word long: Goldberg.

Much the same way that Russo and Starrcade 97 can be written

off, the key difference was that after the NWO Wolfpac formed, things were about to get new life in the form of Goldberg. In about two months, WCW would win a night in the ratings due to Goldberg vs. Hogan (why that wasn't a PPV show is still beyond the common sense of most people) and everything would change. Also, they had ANOTHER good run with Ultimate Warrior showing up in the fall where they won 8 weeks in a row. The NWO moment was bad and things dropped quickly, but they were right back on top later that year.

With the Radicalz leaving, everything was falling apart, but they were already falling apart. The difference was with this big blow, they didn't recover. The company continued its downward spiral and was out of business in about 14 months, which I think everyone knew was just a matter of time anyway. Everyone knew at that point that WCW was going down and they were going down hard. Ratings kept dropping and the match quality (arguably of course) got worse minus those four. It also gave WWF a nice boost of new talent which didn't help anything for WCW and was the final blow which they weren't going to recover from.

So there you have it: after all of the years of WCW screwing things up and somehow managing to come back, it was a group of people rising up together and just walking out that did them in. WCW survived for a little bit after that but they were living on borrowed time. Therefore to me, it was the Radicalz leaving that was the move that killed WCW. To keep up the gimmick of this piece:

As for who killed WCW, the Radicalz did, in Ohio, by walking out.

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