

Monday Nitro – December 16, 1996 – Three New NWO Members

Monday Nitro #66

Date: December 16, 1996

Location: Pensacola Civic Center, Pensacola, Florida

Commentators: Eric Bischoff, Ted DiBiase

We're in Florida this week and we're just about to Starrcade with only one show after this before the big one. Also tonight is the last televised Sting match for over a year. That's assuming he wrestles of course. We'll also get more of the Piper vs. Hogan buildup which should be somewhat entertaining. Let's get to it.

Here's the NWO to start and they storm the announcers' desk. Eric wants to do commentary and Larry says he's not leaving. DiBiase and Virgil aren't enough to make him leave. Tony leaves and Larry finally goes also.

We get a clip from the ending of last week's show. Hogan is here tonight.

TV Title: Psicosis vs. Steven Regal

I don't think this is a title match. Oh so it is. Eric says they'll be taking over New Japan next. They fight over a wristlock to start and hit the mat where Regal takes over. Regal works on the arm and Bischoff implies that Regal will join the NWO soon. We take a break to NWO music and Bischoff promising something special. Back with Regal firing off European uppercuts in the corner.

Rolling cradle gets two. Psicosis speeds things up to send him to the floor. The fans are getting into this too. Psicosis hits a big dive to the floor and a top rope sunset flip for two. A top rope rana gets the same and the fans are really

into this. The guillotine legdrop gets the same but I don't think that was Psicosis' finisher yet. Regal comes back with a suplex but his neck is hurting him.

Regal hooks the crossface part of the Regal Stretch and Psicosis taps but it doesn't count yet. Now it's a half nelson as Regal works on the neck. Butterfly suplex for two. Regal tries a top rope butterfly suplex but Psicosis knocks him down and hits a kind of frog splash for two. Psicosis superkicks him down (good one too) and tries a victory roll but Regal slams him onto his face and the Regal Stretch gets the submission.

Rating: B. I would ask where this came from, but as I say over and over on here: giving talented people time usually means you're going to get a good match. Psicosis really had the fans into this and I think had them believing that the title was in danger. The idea of someone that was viewed as having only a tiny chance would be used again in February.

We recap the Sting vs. Rick Steiner stuff.

Big Bubba vs. Chavo Guerrero Jr.

Bubba knocks him into the corner to start but Chavo manages to speed things up to take over. He gets Bubba tied up in the ropes and dropkicks him to the floor. Bubba slams him out there though and Chavo is in trouble. Back inside a splash misses and Chavo hits some dropkicks. He fights out of a powerbomb position with right hands but jumps into a Bossman Slam for the pin.

Here are Sonny Onoo and Masa Chono. Sonny is his agent and is negotiating with New Japan for his contract. Sonny opens his jacket to reveal a New Japan show. Chono opens his jacket to reveal an NWO shirt. Chono yells at Sonny and Gene wants to know what he says. Sonny says something in Japanese. Gene: "IN ENGLISH YOU IDIOT!!!"

Chris Jericho vs. Masa Chono

Chono sends him to the floor and Jericho has no idea what to do with this guy. Chono knocks him down and yells at the referee. Sunset flip gets two for Jericho. Jericho tries to fight back but Chono is too much for him. Masa goes up but Jericho manages to get a superplex followed by a spinwheel kick for two. A top rope version of the kick misses but Jericho lands on Chono's back. I think Chono was supposed to duck but didn't get completely out of the way. Jericho gets knocked into the ropes and his foot gets tied into them. Chono chokes him until it's a DQ.

Rating: C-. Not a bad match but Jericho wasn't ready to hang in there with Chono yet. Also this was designed to be almost total domination for the new NWO guy which was par for the course at this point. I don't remember when WCW's first major win was but it would be awhile coming unless I'm overlooking something.

We recap last week's Piper stuff as well as his segment with Flair.

Here are Flair and the Horsemen minus Benoit. Anderson says he'll take out Sullivan tonight. Flair tells Benoit to get home. Debra doesn't like Woman. Mongo says be ready Arn. Flair loses his voice and says Piper will kill Hogan.

Dave Sammartino vs. Dean Malenko

Did they lose a bet or something? The last national match I can find for Sammartino before this is at Wrestlemania I. That's over 11 years ago! Did they owe Bruno a favor or something? They fight over the arm to start and Dean takes him to the mat like he's fighting a no talent hack that is in the ring because his dad is famous. Small package gets two. A tiger suplex ends this. Not even enough to call it a squash. It was more like a workout with a punching bag for Dean.

Hour #2 begins and it's Tony, Bobby and Tenay back on commentary.

We look at Chono joining the NWO again.

Ice Train vs. Jerry Flynn

Train destroys the martial arts guy to start but walks into a clothesline. Tony plugs the NWO PPV even though he doesn't want to. Train takes him down again and this is a really boring match. He wins with an ankle lock of all things.

Rating: F. This is one of those times where you have to wonder what WCW was thinking. I mean...why does this match exist? Who thought this show needed Ice Train vs. Jerry Flynn? Ice Train would have four more matches on Nitro through May and then wouldn't be on this show for over three years. Flynn would be about the same. I don't get it.

Post match Syxx brings out the Outsiders. The Outsiders talk for a bit and the gist is Faces of Fear vs. Outsiders tonight.

Video on Sting abandoning WCW.

Rey Mysterio Jr. vs. Bobby Eaton

Eaton goes for the knee quickly and works on the arm. Mysterio vs. Liger is announced for Starrcade. Rey sends him to the floor and hits a dive to take over. They head back in and things slow down. Rey works on the arm which isn't something I ever recall him doing. Eaton takes over again and the top rope knee drop gets two. Eaton goes up again but Rey crotches him and hits a top rope rana for the pin.

Rating: D+. This was a big surprise for me. With the talent you have in there, this was a big disappointment. I think the problem at the end of the day is that Eaton isn't used to being the much bigger guy and that messed him up. The match isn't terrible but they weren't clicking at all.

Benoit and Woman are still in Germany and have another video, basically saying Benoit has taken Woman from Sullivan.

Arn Anderson vs. Kevin Sullivan

Sullivan blames Schiavone for showing the videos on the way to the ring. The brawl starts in the aisle and Sullivan throws a chair at his head. Anderson misses a swing with the chair and hits the post by mistake. They go into the ring for what must have been a good 4 seconds before heading into the crowd.

They go into the ring for the first time that you can actually keep track of and the referee gets a DDT. Sullivan double stomps him and ties Anderson into the Tree of Woe but Anderson manages to kick him low. Here's Hugh Morrus who gets a DDT. Konnan gets a left hand and Sullivan manages to hit Anderson with a wooden chair for the pin.

Rating: N/A. I can't really grade this as a match because it was a brawl instead of an actual match. It was entertaining which is really all you can ask for here. Benoit would get back soon enough, namely due to being in the US Title tournament. This was a fun brawl but there isn't much of a reason to watch it from a storyline perspective as the heat was on Benoit.

Rick Steiner vs. Sting

Sting comes from the rafters and through the crowd. That doesn't look like Sting at all. A second one comes out and that one looks more like him. The second one is the real one. The fake one has a ball bat. And so does the real one. The fake one throws his bat to Scott and the real one throws his to Rick. They turn around and offer a free shot to the Steiners, but the real Sting hits a Death Drop on the fake one, who we're told is the NWO Sting. The real one walks out. No match.

Here's the NWO in full force. Well at least the big names as

Giant and Hogan are here with Vincent and DiBaise. Liz is there too. DiBiase demands a spotlight for Hulk. Hulk calls out Piper when we know Piper isn't here. Hogan talks about starting here like Piper started in Charlotte last week. He says he was beating up Andre the Giant when he stated. Vincent is sent to the back to find Piper. Hulk says he could beat up Flair and Piper at the same time. Vincent comes back and tells Hogan that Piper ran out the back door. Hogan poses and dances to end this.

Faces of Fear vs. Outsiders

Brawl to start and Hall loads up the Edge on Meng. Barbarian breaks it up and Big Bubba comes in and joins the NWO, beating up Meng. Sullivan comes out and is knocked backwards. The Dungeon comes in but they're outnumbered. The whole NWO comes out and some WCW guys join in as well. Scott Norton drops Ice Train on the floor and is NWO as well.

Sting comes in and the brawl stops. The fight stops and Anderson swings at Sting. Sting ducks and hits Anderson. Mongo gets in some shots so Sting hits him too. Rey jumps on him and is slammed down. Sting walks out to end the show. He only hit people that attacked him.

Overall Rating: B-. This is a hard one to grade. It's a very entertaining show and I can't take that away from it. However there's something very important to note. With the three new additions to the NWO, counting non-wrestlers, there are now SIXTEEN members. The common problem people have with the NWO is that there were too many members. Within the last two weeks, they've added 4 new members, most of whom mean nothing. You could argue that Bubba is the biggest name as most American fans didn't know who Chono was. You can see the problems that will plague the group starting here.

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