

ECW on TNN – December 31, 1999: Not A Bad Show To End The Millennium With

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Date: December 31, 1999

Location: Westchester County Center, White Plains, New York

Attendance: 2,800

Commentators: Joey Styles, Joel Gertner

It's not often I get to say this but we close out the millennium with this. The main attraction tonight is Tanaka vs. Awesome in a rematch from last week for the title with Tanaka defending tonight. Other than that, we get to continue the seemingly never ending feud between Raven/Dreamer and the Impact Players. Let's get to it.

The Impact Players (clearly in the same spot and clothes they were in last week) talk about how the savior needs to be reborn by January 9. We get a recap of the end of last week's show.

Raven talks about being crucified for the sins of his past.

Theme song.

After Joey and Joel do their thing, here's Mikey Whipwreck to open the show. This is his return to the company after being in WCW for a year. Before he can say anything, here are the Impact Players with something to say. The Players have a lot of money to give to Mikey if he'll take somebody out, with the logic of he sold out once so why not again? The target is Raven so here's Bird Boy.

Raven vs. Mikey Whipwreck

Mikey charges at Raven and hits a dropkick to the ribs before stomping away in the corner. A slingshot legdrop to the back of Raven's head has Bird Boy in early trouble so Mikey goes to the floor. He grabs the mic and says he's 26 and lives at home but he's NOT a baby. Mikey puts Raven on a table and drops an elbow to drive him through said table as Raven is in trouble. There's a big chair shot to the back and a Russian legsweep to send Raven's back into the barricade.

That gets two in the ring as does a small package. Raven tries a backslide out of nowhere for two but Mikey kicks his head off with a dropkick for two. The drop toehold puts Mikey's face into the chair but Raven is so spent that Mikey gets two before Raven can move. Raven gets all fired up and rubs a snot rag in Mikey's face before hitting the DDT for the pin.

Rating: C. This is ECW style but it was an actual coherent match which is more than you can say for the vast majority of their stuff. Mikey is a guy that did a lot of stuff for the company back in the day but he never amounted to anything elsewhere. Raven getting to wrestle a match is very much a rarity anymore so it was a nice surprise.

Raven gets caught by a superkick to put him down post match and it's a double beating from the Players until Dreamer runs out with a chair. Not that we see this as we're seeing highlights from Tanaka vs. Awesome from last week.

Francine says Raven needs more help but Dreamer doesn't care.

Tanaka is warming up.

Awesome is ready.

Yoshihiro Tajiri vs. Super Crazy

This should be good. A quick tilt-a-whirl backbreaker takes Tajiri down but he comes back with the handspring elbow and things speed up. No one is interested in selling here and we wind up at a standoff. Tajiri drops to the floor, seemingly just so Crazy can hit a baseball slide and a moonsault press off the top to the floor. Joel does his Spanish schtick and we head back inside. Tajiri blocks a kick and fires off some of his own.

A HARD low dropkick to the head puts Crazy down and another...wakes him up enough to hit a springboard dropkicks and a moonsault. This is where most ECW matches lose me. Crazy pounds away in the corner but charges into a boot to send him to the outside. Tajiri hits a big old flip dive to take Crazy out again before sending him into the barricade. The Buzzsaw Kick puts Crazy down but there's no cover for some reason.

There's a full nelson which is countered into the spinning backbreaker hold that Tajiri used on occasion. Crazy completely no sells all of that and hits a powerbomb for two. Two thirds of the triple moonsaults hit before Tajiri crotches him and puts Crazy in the Tree of Woe for a baseball slide dropkick. Crazy tries a sunset flip but Tajiri kicks him in the head and a brainbuster finally gets Tajiri the pin.

Rating: C-. I love Tajiri but man alive these matches are annoying. The no selling from Crazy is ridiculous as he got kicked in the head and popped up for a big spot mere seconds later? THAT MAKES NO SENSE! How is that supposed to work? The high spots were good and Tajiri's kicks were good as always, but other than that there wasn't anything of note here at all.

Tanaka speaks Japanese.

ECW World Title: Mike Awesome vs. Masato Tanaka

No entrances for either guy and Tanaka is defending here. Awesome jumps Tanaka to start and hits a kind of overhead release belly to belly.

Tanaka is sent to the floor and Awesome hits a big plancha to take him down. We get the first table set up on the floor but Tanaka breaks up the powerbomb through it. A top rope cross body to the floor takes out Awesome as does a running chair shot to the head.

They head into the crowd with Awesome running the champ over in the process. That goes nowhere so Awesome hits a slingshot splash back inside for two. Tanaka won't stay down after three chair shots to the head. A fourth and fifth only keep him down for a bit and he dropkicks Awesome out of the air on an attempt at a top rope chair shot. Tanaka hits him with a chair and goes to the floor to get a second one, which he drives Awesome's head into with a tornado DDT for two.

A top rope elbow with the chair gets two as well for the champion as we're firmly into the "nothing will stop these guys" stage. Diamond Dust (flipping Stunner out of the corner) mostly misses and only gets two. Awesome hits a release German suplex and a chokebomb but he can't cover. The running Awesome Bomb gets another two and it's table time. An Awesome Bomb through the table is countered but the second attempt hits for just two.

Another table is set up but Tanaka gets up before Awesome can splash him. They head up to the top and Tanaka DDTs him through the table but he can't cover. The Roaring Elbow only gets two and Tanaka is stunned. Diamond Dust is countered and Awesome hits a spinebuster and the Awesome Splash for two. They both head up top again and Awesome pulls off a sitout powerbomb off the top for the pin and the title. Sweet ending spot.

Rating: C. This was somewhat better than last week's match but the idea of these two not being able to hurt each other at all gets a bit old after awhile. Awesome hitting that powerbomb out of the corner was pretty cool so at least they ended it with a big spot. Tanaka would never really do anything else in ECW again as he was just there and champion as part of a deal with FMW from Japan.

Post match Spike Dudley comes out and tries to beat up Awesome but he gets beaten down as well. Spike's girlfriend/fan comes in to beat up Awesome's manager but Awesome kills her with a clothesline. Spike gets put through a table to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. Questionable wrestling aside, this was probably the best show they've had in months. First and foremost, the show was better structured tonight with the top angle to open the show, then a midcard match and then the world title to close the show and set up the world title match at the PPV. It's not a good show but it makes more sense and had less stupid stuff than the rest of the shows they've had lately.

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