

WWA Inception – Night Of WAY TOO MANY GIMMICK MATCHES

WWA: The Inception

Date: January 6, 2002 (Taped October 26, 2001)

Location: Sydney SuperDome, Sydney, Australia

Attendance: 8,500

Commentators: Jeremy Borash, Jerry Lawler

Now here's one you may have heard of but probably have never seen. Once WCW and ECW went out of business, there were a lot of wrestlers that didn't go to WWF. Well a lot of them got together and went on an international tour. This was before TNA so this was likely the most recognized talent pool outside of WWF. I have no idea what to expect here but it could be fun. The WWA stands for World Wrestling All-Stars in case you're curious. Let's get to it.

Jeremy Borash, one of the people behind this show, welcomes us to the first ever show and an Australian girl band sings the Australian national anthem.

A pretty standard opening video airs. Since this was taped months before it aired, we get clips of the show we're about to watch.

There are BIG sections of empty seats visible.

JB is about to introduce the first match but more pyro and music cuts him off. It's Bret Hart, the WWA Commissioner, with presumably the world title belt. Bret has never been in a ring in Australia before and he apologizes to the fans for taking so long to get here. It was about a year ago that he got released from WCW and he hasn't watched any wrestling since then.

A few weeks ago he came down here to do some promotional work. After doing a TV show, he heard about 9/11 and he couldn't get out of the country. He praises the people of Australia for making him feel welcome during that time, but now it's back to wrestling. Bret isn't going to be

a token commissioner. Whoever wins the title is going to have to work very hard. Now we get to the WWF, which Bret isn't thrilled with.

Hart talks about being world champion in the WWF and how no one in that company ever beat him. Then he was in WCW and the last thing he remembers is no one beating him for that title either. He runs down Goldberg, Rock, Austin and especially Vince because none of them ever beat him. Bret says tonight whoever wins this title is going to be get the torch handed to them. He says the WWA has integrity and it's time to let the fun begin.

JB and Jerry talk about how the title will be awarded. It's called the Seven Deadly Sins Tournament, meaning seven matches with seven different gimmicks. The title match will be in a cage.

We hear about some of the non-tournament matches which seem pretty weak. Luna Vachon vs. Gangrel in a Black Wedding match (whatever that means) and Norman Smiley vs. Crowbar in a hardcore match. Ok then. We also get the first round tournament matches, two of which are hardcore matches, one of which is a battle royal, and one of which that isn't listed.

International Cruiserweight Title/Seven Deadly Sins Tournament First Round: Psychosis vs. Juventud Guerrera

So not only is this for the company's Cruiserweight Title, it's also in the world title tournament and is a ladder match. Don't overbook anything there guys. Also since this isn't the first event for the company, Psychosis already won the title at a house show before this event, but the title was stripped so that the "first" champion could be crowned here. Psychosis won the first one in case you were wondering. Juvy gets on the mic before the match and does his Rock imitation which never was all that funny to me.

Something very different about this show is that the commentary comes through the PA system, meaning the fans can hear it. They head into the corner to start with Psychosis taking over. Juvy comes back with a spinwheel kick and a tornado DDT as things speed up. They head to the floor with Juvy shoving the ladder down so that the top of it slams into Psychosis' head. FREAKING OW MAN!

Back inside and Psychosis dropkicks the ladder into Juvy's face, only to get it sling shotted into his own face. Psychosis is busted open bad. Back inside and the fans aren't all that thrilled with this. Juvy hits a loud chop in the corner and the ladder is laid across the top rope. Juvy tries a sunset flip which means nothing in this so it's back to the ladder. Jerry suggests going for the belt. Gee thanks King. Juvy gets draped across the top rope and Psychosis hits a guillotine legdrop across the back of his head.

We get the first attempt at going up the ladder but Juvy hits a springboard missile dropkick to take the ladder out and send Psychosis into the top rope. Juvy gets another ladder for some reason but just like earlier, Psychosis dropkicks the ladder into Juvy to knock him down.

Back in and Juvy rams Psychosis into the ladder before climbing up and hitting some kind of a dive which doesn't really keep going once he hits Psychosis. The ladder falls down and hits the referee but he's fine because it wasn't a planned bump. They both go up the ladder with Juvy hitting a sunset bomb to kill Psychosis. He adds a 450 for good measure and climbs up to win the title.

Rating: C+. This was a fun spot fest and that's about all you need for it to be. I'm not a big fan of the idea of just throwing two guys out there and saying the winner of this is champion, but at least it was fun in the process. The high spots in this were pretty good too and for what it was, this was a solid opener.

Some chicks called the Starettes dance. By dance I mean pose while moving a little bit.

Nathan Jones arrives with some celebrity. Lenny and Lodi, the gay tag team, greets him but he has nothing to say.

Disco Inferno needs security.

Seven Deadly Sins Tournament First Round: Konnan vs. Jesse James

This is one of the matches listed as a hardcore match earlier but here's it's announced as a dog collar (four corners variety) match. James of

course is the Road Dogg who was released from WWF soon before this. He's billed as Road Dogg Jesse James which is kind of surprising. Oh wait make that Road Dog. Big difference there. Konnan jumps Dogg during his intro and does his own version of it while holding up the Mexican Heavyweight Title.

Konnan rips into Road Dogg for being the only member of DX to get fired which fires up Roadie, but a belt shot puts him right back down. They're attached by the chain now, but it's a long enough chain that Dogg can be choked over the top rope while Konnan is on the floor on the other side of the ring. Back in and Konnan hits the Rolling Thunder clothesline and stomps away a bit. Konnan gets three corners but Roadie hits him low with the chain.

Road Dogg gets two corners but Konnan chokes away some more. Apparently you can win by pinfall here too. Thanks for letting us know halfway through the match. Road Dogg gets put in the Tree of Woe and Konnan hits a quick dropkick for no cover. Konnan hits ten punches in the corner but Dogg hits him low to break it up.

Dogg gets two corners but just like earlier, the chain goes between the legs to break it up. After three more buckles for Dogg, Konnan rips his own collar off and pulls out a metal pole of some kind to hit Dogg in the head. He takes the collar off again and goes up with the pole, only to jump into a boot to the face. Dogg hogties him, simulates anal rape, and slaps all four corners for the win.

Rating: D. This was a mess for the most part with the pinfalls being an option meaning nothing at all. Both guys were all over the place and it never got going as a brutal match. Again, that's the problem with gimmick matches for the sake of having gimmick matches: there's no reason to have the gimmicks and the match doesn't have any extra heat as a result.

We see some models getting ready for a Skin to Win match. Jerry freaks of course. One of them happens to be a man. Literally. Lawler, who liked the view before the guy turned around, ERUPTS when he sees the crotch bulge.

Devon Storm vs. Norman Smiley

Storm is more famous as Crowbar. This isn't a tournament match. Norman comes out dressed like a basketball player as is his custom. A quick cross body gets two for Storm but he gets sent to the floor. We get the first garbage can but the lid gets slammed on Storm's head. The can of weapons is thrown into the ring and Storm guillotines Smiley on the rope and hits a slingshot splash for no cover.

Storm hits a moonsault onto a chair onto Norman to hurt both guys. Norman starts dancing but gets a stick to his head for his efforts. Storm's suicide dive runs into a chair and it's table time. After the Big Wiggle (arguably more simulated anal sex. There's at least male on male spanking), Norman can't suplex Storm through the table. Devon is busted but he dropkicks a trashcan into Smiley.

A slingshot plancha puts Smiley through the table but despite Storm staying on top of Norman, there's no count. Smiley comes back and whips Storm into the barricade before putting a trashcan over him. Norman pounds away with a chair before they head up the ramp. A low blow breaks up another Big Wiggle and the brawl goes to the back. Norman is put in a cart and rammed into Disco Inferno who of course overreacts.

They come back into the arena with Norman getting wheelbarrow slammed onto a piece of barricade laid on its side. Storm pulls out another table but cracks Norman in the head with a trashcan lid first. Another table is stacked on top of the first table and Norman starts screaming. Norman escapes a powrbomb and slams Storm onto a trashcan. After some dancing by Norman, he gets slammed into the can just as easily.

Storm puts him on the top table and after climbing up the set, dives through Norman and the two tables with a big splash. It's one of those spots that looks a lot better than it actually was. Norman reaches over and covers the dead Storm for the pin. After the big spot of the match, Storm doesn't even get to win? Lame.

Rating: D. This went on WAY too long. It's the longest match of the night so far, running about ten minutes. The problem with these matches is that once you see them beat on each other for about five minutes, the next four and a half before the big spot aren't very interesting as it's the

same stuff we've seen already. Not awful, but WAY too long and Norman getting the win is kind of stupid.

Disco runs into two fruits in the back. Literally, they're guys dressed as bananas. That's not a euphemism or anything. They're men dressed like a yellow fruit that you peel and eat that has a lot of potassium in it. Disco: "I SAID I WANTED TWO SUITS! NOT TWO FRUITS!" Comedy ladies and gentlemen!

We get some brackets but they don't make a lot of sense.

???

Road Dogg

Battle Royal

Jeff Jarrett

Front Row

Juvy won and his match is listed in the first column of the brackets, but he's not in the second round. I have no idea what Front Row is either. Ah apparently Juvy has broken ribs and can't go on so he'll be replaced instead of Dogg getting a bye. Nathan Jones is Front Row. One, what kind of a nickname is Front Row? Second, why put that instead of his name?

Stevie Ray is with Bret and I have no idea what Ray asked Bret. The battle royal is now an open invitational to anyone who works for the WWA. Stevie asks if he can get in on this and Bret says go for it.

Seven Deadly Sins Tournament First Round: Battle Royal

Buff Bagwell, Stevie Ray, Devon Storm, Norman Smiley, Disco Inferno, Jerry Lawler

That's it. Six guys is all they could find and apparently before this, there were only four. That's not much of a battle royal. Disco and Bagwell are the first two out and brawl before the match starts. Ray comes in as well, as do Smiley and Storm. Yeah I spoiled the people in it. Get over it. King throws Borash into the match as well so I guess

there are seven people in it now? Ray puts Borash out almost immediately as referees and a cameraman get in. Disco throws out Storm so Storm jumps in on commentary. Borash was eliminated somewhere in there.

Some chick in a gold dress gets in as JB gets back on commentary. Jerry slams the girl down and the girl eliminates herself. Both referees are thrown out so we're down to Bagwell, Ray, Smiley, Disco and Lawler. All four agree to jump Ray but only Disco winds up charging. They do it again and this time it's Disco and Smiley that charge him. The Fruits in Suits (they're in pajamas, so I guess they're the Bananas in Pajamas which is a kids TV show from this era) come down as well because I guess there's no time limit for getting in. Ray gets dumped and Lawler does the Big Wiggle on Smiley.

Norman hits Lawler low and tries to eliminate him but Buff puts them both out. The Fruits never got in the ring and we've got Disco vs. Buff. Buff hits a cross between a double arm DDT and a Pedigree as Disco is reeling. Disco comes back with a swinging neckbreaker before we get, I kid you not, the Village People's Elbow. Ok that was kind of funny. The Fruits get in and eliminate Disco but Buff throws them both out to go on to the semi-finals.

Rating: C. Yeah it was a comedy match, but it wasn't bad at being funny. When you reach the point where it's so insane that it's funny, a match like this can work. At the end of the day, the (arguably) biggest name in the match won and it didn't last long. This was fine for what it was and I can't actually complain that much about it.

Lawler goes after the Fruits to get an interview.

The girl in the gold dress is apparently an interviewer. The celebrity and Nathan Jones make sex jokes and aren't worried about Jarrett tonight.

Seven Deadly Sins Tournament First Round: Jeff Jarrett vs. Nathan Jones

This is another one that was listed as a hardcore match but here it's a guitar on a pole. Jarrett is in his old WCW shirt so I'd bet on a lawsuit soon. Jeff says he's the chosen one with all the stroke and that he'll win the title. Basically the same thing he said in every promo in his

last WCW run. He says he's in charge of things now instead of Bret and he calls out Jones to fight. You know, like Bret said we should do.

You might remember Jones from a cup of coffee he had in the WWE in 2003 but he never went anywhere. The guy is 7'0 tall and a ripped martial artist (who looks a lot like bald Kane actually), but he makes Khali looked like a ring general. Jones is also Australian so the place goes nuts for him. Jeff gets in some right hands but Jones big boots him down and loads up a chokeslam. Not only does he look like Kane but he wrestles like him too.

The chokeslam is broken up but a side slam puts Jeff down. I think you win by pin here. They head to the floor with Jarrett running from Jones. Back in and Jones hits a top rope clothesline to take Jeff down but as he goes for the guitar he gets hit low and crotched. Jeff gets the guitar, kills the celebrity (apparently a talk show host) with it, and hits the Stroke on Jones to advance.

Rating: D+. This didn't have time to go anywhere. The problem at the end of the day for Jones was that he just wasn't that good. He looked like an absolute monster but he just didn't have what it took to work in the ring. The WWE pulled him from Wrestlemania because they didn't think he could survive on a live broadcast. Think about that for a minute.

The Starettes waste more time.

Here's Lawler again to interview the Fruits. He calls them to the ring...but they can't talk. Because they're bananas you see. Now Lenny and Lodi come out (Lawler: "Now we've got four fruits in the ring." You knew someone would say it.) and gay jokes abound. Bret finally shows up and puts Lenny and Lodi in the semi-finals instead of Juvy. Oh and the bananas are out.

Seven Deadly Sins Tournament Semi-Finals: Lenny vs. Lodi vs. Road Dogg

Gee I wonder who is winning here. Lenny and Lodi get to do their land in homosexual position spots but they argue over who gets to cover Dogg. Since it worked so well, they do the same sequence over again. Jerry makes gay jokes as Lenny crawls onto Dogg for the cover. Lenny and Lodi

do the same thing over again as they argue over who should get the pin. Lenny misses a top rope dropkick and hits Lodi, but Lodi breaks up Dogg's shaky kneedrop. A botched double flapjack puts Dogg down and Lodi rolls up Lenny for two. Lenny's moonsault lands on top of Lodi and Dogg drops a knee to advance.

Rating: D-. This was stupid but you can tell Lenny and Lodi are having a lot of fun out there. Alan Funk (Kwee Wee from WCW) would replace I think Lodi in TNA and do the exact same gimmick with mixed results. Again, there was never any question who would win here but it was kind of funny I guess. Also, it was short.

Stevie puts his hat on to talk to Buff (Stevie: "I don't like looking like no fruit booty"), who cuts a very generic promo about his match with Jeff.

Seven Deadly Sins Tournament Semi-Finals: Jeff Jarrett vs. Buff Bagwell

This is a, and I quote, T*** Whips and Buff match, which means the Starretts as lumberjacks holding whips. Buff's graphic says Road Dogg but to be fair it's their first show. Apparently Buff got to pick the stipulations. Ok then. Basic stuff to start and Jeff has to avoid a whipping. A clothesline puts Jeff on the floor and the girls chase him around some more. Buff gets sent to the floor and the girls help him up and rub his shoulders.

Jeff gets one of the whips and beats on Buff a bit and it's off to a token reverse chinlock. Buff escapes with an electric chair and hammers away before sending Jeff to the floor for a whipping. Buff whips him a bit too and the referee says that's not allowed so the referee takes a few shots too. In the ring the Blockbuster hits but there's no referee. One of the girls counts and Buff (who wasn't looking) celebrates, allowing Jeff to hit the Stroke to advance to the finals.

Rating: D-. Another comedy match here and it's starting to wear thin. These matches aren't funny and at about four minutes long, they aren't coming off as important or anything like that. These are supposed to world title tournament matches but there's almost no wrestling involved at all. That gets old in a hurry.

Luna and Vampire Warrior (Gangrel) have come to Australia to renew their wedding vows but they wound up fighting and have a match tonight.

Luna Vachon vs. Vampire Warrior

This is a Black Wedding Match, which I think means hardcore but I have no idea for sure. Luna slaps him and Gangrel won't fight back because it's his wife. Gangrel finally kind of slams her down and we head outside. There's wedding themed stuff on the floor and Gangrel takes a cake to the face. Luna gets tongs and grabs Gangrel's balls with them. We get a pumpkin shot in and you can connect the dots on this one yourself I think. Luna throws down her wedding ring and spits at him, earning her an inverted DDT for the pin. Nothing here at all but ANOTHER comedy match.

Stevie is with the guy in women's clothing but his identity stays a secret.

Queen B vs. Violet vs. Sharon A. Wad vs. Adera James

I have no idea which is which. Wad is the guy. You can figure out what happens here: the man dominates the models (Queen is a Penthouse Pet) until they team up on him and hit three straight Shattered Dreams on him. It's Danny Dominion in drag apparently. Who is Danny Dominion? I have no idea, nor do I care. Dominion comes back and pounds away as this goes nowhere. Two girls lose their tops and THIS KEEPS GOING. This isn't wrestling at all and FINALLY James wins. Screw this nonsense.

We hear about some upcoming shows as the cage is lowered. Lawler and JB suck up to the crowd to fill in time.

The Starettes dance AGAIN but Disco interrupts them. He says this is about him instead of dancing girls and comes to the ring. Disco says he should be in this match and he's not because of the Fruits. They come out and beat Disco up, sending Inferno up the cage in retreat. Disco SHOVES ONE OF THEM OFF THE CAGE in a big bump. The Fruit is pretty much dead so he gets dragged off. This is your time being wasted people, not mine.

WWA World Title: Jeff Jarrett vs. Road Dogg

Bret comes out to do commentary and they fill even more time with long

entrances. Jeff takes Dogg down to start and pounds away in the corner. There's a cameraman in the ring which is kind of distracting. It also doesn't help that the closeups show that a lot of the shots aren't hitting. Dogg hits the shaky punches and knee drop for two. I think you can win by escape too but it's not really clear.

Dogg gets sent into the cage but he comes back and sends Jeff into it as well. This is as basic as you can get so far but it's nothing bad. Jeff gets sent into the cage again as Dogg takes over. Both guys go to the top and Jeff climbs down....but that doesn't count here, making the whole cage pretty worthless. A bell shot busts Jeff open and they head back in for a sleeper from Jarrett. There is literally blood dripping down onto the mat from Jeff's head. That's sick stuff man.

Road Dogg gets up at two arm drops and rams Jeff into the cage to escape the hold. Dogg puts on a sleeper of his own but Jeff suplexes him down for two. A forearm from Roadie takes out the referee and Jeff walks out the door to pick up his guitar. The guitar kills Dogg and Jeff puts him in the Sharpshooter but Bret won't let the bell ring. It's a cage match so why is this illegal? A second referee comes in and gets bumped and Dogg low blows Jarrett. Now Dogg puts Jeff in the Sharpshooter but Bret STILL won't ring the bell. Roadie steals the belt from Bret, misses a shot with it and takes the Stroke to give Jeff the title.

Rating: D+. This didn't work for me. After the night of overdone matches, they overdo it even more to end the show? Even in 2001 the Montreal stuff was old and no one was interested in it anymore. The match was getting good at the end but I don't think many people bought Dogg as a legit threat.

Post match Bret gets in the cage and Jeff backs down from him. Bret takes the legs out and puts Jeff in the Sharpshooter to end the show. Nice job of making the CHAMPION look good on the first show guys.

Overall Rating: D+. This is a hard one to grade. First and foremost, it's their first PPV. They had four more and a bunch of house shows to get their ideas right and hopefully ditch some of the comedy matches. The good thing here is they have a champion and it's probably their best

option. This show cost \$20 when it aired and I can't say I'd hate myself for paying that at the time, but I'd be skeptical about paying that again. If nothing else, these guys are WAY better than a lot of indy geeks you'll see, so it's not a total loss. Bigger names would come in soon enough though which would help a lot. Not great but not awful.

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