

On This Day: January 8, 2001 – Monday Nitro: To No One's Shock, This Show Makes Little Sense

I did this one specifically for this series so today you get a double shot.

Monday Nitro

Date: January 8, 2001

Location: Xcel Energy Center, St. Paul, Minnesota

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Scott Hudson, Disco Inferno

It's the go home show for Sin and since this is 2001 WCW, odds are things are going to make a lot more sense than they did the year before. Scott Steiner is world champion and is getting ready to face Sid and Jeff Jarrett in a fourway on Sunday. That's only three names though, because the fourth man is a MYSTERY MAN who is running around in a mask at the moment. Let's get to it.

Here's Ric Flair who is CEO of the company and flanked by security here. Flair sucks up to the Vikings fans so apparently he's a face here. He talks about how awesome WCW is but he has business to attend to. Apparently no one wants Mike Sanders to be Commissioner because Sanders won it in a match. Flair isn't sure but there might have been outside interference to win the job. I guess Flair doesn't watch his own matches. Anyway, Sanders has to defend the job on Sunday.

As for the world title, Scott Steiner interfered in some match on Thunder so Flair isn't sure who to put in the main event. Yeah it's six days before the PPV and they don't have a main event. Here's Jarrett to say

he's already in the three way on Sunday, so Sid shouldn't get in because Sid didn't beat him. Logical enough I guess. Flair says Jarrett is being a Tennessee Titan (how is that an insult?) and says there's no three way on Sunday.

This brings out world champion Scott Steiner who wants the three way with Jarrett and the Mystery Man. Instead, it's going to be a fourway with Sid thrown into the mix. Steiner freaks so Flair shows us a clip of Steiner and Jarrett arguing over Jarrett getting into a qualifying match for the PPV title shot. Now we get a clip from Starrcade where Jeff accidentally hit Steiner with a guitar. Wouldn't Steiner know both of these things already? Tonight it's Steiner vs. Jarrett for the title.

Goldberg and Sarge, as in Buddy Lee Parker, get here. Goldberg is looking for Kronik.

Mike Sanders complains about being put in the match on Sunday. Tonight it's Ron Harris vs. the Cat, as in Sanders' opponent at Sin.

Shane Douglas yells at Flair in the back and gets a match with Sid as a result. If Shane wins, he might get into the title match.

Chavo Guerrero vs. Shannon Moore

Moore is in 3 Count here which is always awesome. Chavo is Cruiserweight Champion but this is non-title for no apparent reason. The last days of WCW didn't get much right but Chavo was on fire around this time so the match should be good. Apparently Shane Helms, Moore's 3 Count teammate and guest commentator for this match, gets a shot on Sunday. Chavo runs his mouth to Helms before the match to hype Sunday. Actually he does even better than that and makes this a title match. If he loses, his rematch is Sunday so Helms is locked out on Sunday.

Cruiserweight Title: Chavo Guerrero vs. Shannon Moore

Shannon jumps him to start and hits some Hardy style offense, including a kind of Whisper in the Wind and Poetry in Motion minus a Matt in the corner. Chavo comes back with a belly to back suplex and some HARD chops. Off to a modified chinlock as Chavo yells trash at Helms. After we kill some time in that, Shannon fights up and gets a fast two off a victory roll. A small package gets the same and it's back to the chinlock. That goes nowhere so Guerrero settles for a dropkick for two.

Moore comes back with a spinning springboard Fameasser for a near fall of his own before putting Chavo on the top. He tries a springboard something but botches it badly, falling down without touching Chavo at all. A headscissors puts Chavo down for two but he can't hit a sleeper slam (second Billy Gunn move of the match). Chavo grabs a brainbuster (by name only as it was really a suplex) to retain out of nowhere.

Rating: C. This was your usual cruiserweight spot fest but that's perfectly fine. At the end of the day this had a lot of untapped potential with Shane wanting to get the title shot but not wanting to screw over his partner at the same time. Instead, Helms sat on the floor and did nothing at all. That's WCW for you: the one time character development would be good, they don't do it.

Shane chases Chavo off to prevent another brainbuster.

Kwee Wee and Paisley (Sharmell) arrive and Sanders beats up Kwee Wee (the resident flamboyant gay character) for no apparent reason. Big Vito makes the save for an even less apparent reason.

Luger and Bagwell are in the back standing there. Nothing is said, nothing is done. Ok then.

Ernest Miller vs. Ron Harris

Miller has Ms. Jones, a decent looking Hispanic chick who dances with

him, in his corner. Both Harris Brothers get in the ring and Miller says he may be mad but he's not crazy. He says he has no beef with them but they look like baby Frankensteins and the beating is on. We finally get down to Ron pounding on Miller on his own for a few minutes until the Cat (Miller) comes back with his kicks and dancing elbow. The referee gets in Miller's face and the twins switch. Not that it matters as they come in and hit their H Bomb finisher for a fast pin. Nothing to see here, other than somehow overbooking a two minute match.

Post break, Miller dances in the back.

General Rection wishes Sid luck.

Jarrett tells Steiner to not let Flair get in his head. There are enough people in there already.

Mike Sanders and the Natural Born Thrillers and the commissioner makes Vito/Kwee Wee vs. two "randomly selected opponents."

Luger and Bagwell tell Kronik that Sarge and Goldberg have been talking trash about them. A non-sanctioned match is made for later.

Here's Team Canada (Lance Storm, Mike Awesome, Elix Skipper and Major Gunns) to talk about their opponents on Sunday: the Filthy Animals. Tonight it's Storm vs. Kidman but on Sunday, the Canadians want a Penalty Box match. If you break a rule, you go to the box. I guess the match is made.

Lance Storm vs. Billy Kidman

Kidman hits a fast rana to take over but he gets draped over the top rope to slow him down. Awesome throws in a chair which Storm wedges between the top and middle ropes but Kidman slows him up to avoid being rammed. Storm hits a backbreaker and bends Kidman over his knee for a bit. We hit

the abdominal stretch for a bit before Storm springboards into a dropkick to put both guys down.

Kidman speeds things up and hits a BK Bomb (Sky High) for two before Storm hits a superkick for the same. Kidman's kickout sends Storm's head into the chair (not a DQ for no apparent reason) and Kidman rolls him up for two, as Awesome pulls Billy to the floor. A brawl breaks out but it's STILL not a DQ. Kidman hits the Kid Crusher (Killswitch) for the pin.

Rating: C-. Again the match was fine but they overbooked it with weapons and interference that just wasn't needed. I get the brawling on the floor between the teams, but at the same time, did we really need to see everything else going on? That kind of stuff can get really annoying and distracting after awhile and that moment was about a year ago in WCW.

Shane Douglas vs. Sid Vicious

Shane jumps him to start but Sid will have none of this selling stuff. We quickly head to the floor where Sid sends him into the barricade to put Shane in even more trouble. Douglas gets dropped face first onto the announce table as the beating continues. Back in and Shane hits Sid low to take over for a bit. Sid comes back with a big boot but Shane pokes him in the eye to break up a chokeslam. The second attempt connects though and a powerbomb ends this quick. Not much above a squash here.

Steiner and Jarrett jump Sid as he leaves.

Flair says Sanders is out of control but he thinks things will work out for the best. If Steiner and Jarrett don't go their hardest, they're both suspended and Steiner is stripped of the belt. Also the penalty box match is on and Jim Duggan is referee for no apparent reason. Duggan says he'll call it fair. Why isn't he wearing a shirt?

Here's Hardcore Champion Terry Funk with something to say. He says he's

the king of hardcore and it's about time for the CEO to realize he's the king. Flair wants to destroy him by putting him against nobodies like Crowbar. Apparently if Funk associates with nobodies like that, he'll become one. Gee, GREAT way put over young talent there guys. Funk wants GOLDBERG in a hardcore match. Or Steiner. Or Page. Crowbar finally comes out with a chair (and Daphne dancing with sparklers for some reason) to say he stood toe to toe with Funk at Starrcade. Crowbar idolized Funk growing up apparently. Funk: "You should idolize me."

Funk says there wouldn't be hardcore in this country if not for him because he started ECW. Is this an attempt to turn Funk heel? Crowbar says he's tougher than anyone Funk has ever fought and on Sunday, he'll take the title from Funk. He promises to take the torch from Funk and become the new leader of hardcore. He charges the ring now but Funk bails. Ok so Funk is a heel. That makes a lot more sense.

Meng sneaks up on Funk and hits him with a chair but can't put Funk down. He kicks Daphne instead and Death Grips both Funk and Crowbar (literally through the wooden chair Crowbar was holding) and takes the belt, saying (!!!) that if they want the belt, come take it from him. Meng would win the title on Sunday and sign with WWF, returning to the company at the Rumble. You know, because putting a title on a guy you don't have signed to a contract (in other words, EXACTLY what WCW exploited with ECW) was stupid.

We go to an office in the back (presumably Sanders') where someone changes the envelope that he had earlier with the names for the match later.

Kronik vs. Goldberg/Dwayne Bruce

The idea here is that Goldberg has to match his old winning streak to get another title shot and if he loses, he's out of WCW. Bruce is a tiny trainer and has a broken arm thanks to Luger and Bagwell. Adams jumps Goldie in the aisle as Clark beats up Bruce in the ring. Clark, ever the

genius, goes out to help beat up Goldberg instead of beating up the career jobber with a broken arm. Even SCHIAVONE says this is stupid.

Clark sends Bruce's arm into the post as the two of them officially start the match. Off to Adams as Hudson panics. There's a gorilla press to Bruce but he counters a suplex into a bad DDT. Hot tag to Goldberg, Kronik gets in some offense, Goldberg remembers he's Goldberg, house is cleaned, Jackhammer, pin. Not enough of the actual match to rate but it was nothing of note.

During Goldberg's offense, Luger and Bagwell came out and ripped the cast off of Bruce's arm and beat on the broken arm for a good while. They beat Goldberg up as well and Luger decked Adams for no apparent reason.

Here's Sanders to pick the names to face Kwee Wee/Big Vito. If your name IS NOT in the envelope, you're banned from ringside. Apparently this is a last man standing match for no apparent reason. The names are Sanders, Chuck Palumbo, Sean O'Haire (all Natural Born Thrillers) and then the fourth and fifth are DDP and Nash, making it a 3-2 handicap last man standing match. Sure why not. Oh and Page and Nash are tag champions who just happen to be defending against O'Haire and Palumbo on Sunday.

Natural Born Thrillers vs. The Insiders

It's a huge brawl to start of course with Page getting beaten down by Chuck in the corner. The camera work sucks here as they keep focusing on one thing when a simple wide shot would be perfect. Palumbo and O'Haire superkick each other so only Sanders is left standing. Page hits him low to put all five guys down. Everybody gets up at about 8 thank goodness and Page cleans house. The other Thrillers try to run in but Kwee Wee and Vito (weren't they supposed to be in this?) hold them off. Page and Nash win with their finishers. This wasn't even three and a half minutes long.

Rating: F. This was not only bad, but REALLY stupid at the same time. We have the challengers for Sunday with a man advantage and they lose in

less than four minutes in a match where you have to stay down longer than for a regular pin? This company deserves to go out of business. Oh and of course Page/Nash would drop the belts on Sunday, because this match means nothing at all.

WCW World Title: Scott Steiner vs. Jeff Jarrett

Steiner says he would beat anyone thrown out here tonight but he gets to face his friend instead. Actually he isn't and Flair can get over it. Jarrett is in the back and says it's not happening either. Post break here's Jeff to say the two of them are tired of this c-o-n-spiracy stuff so the match isn't happening until Sunday. Flair comes out and says have the match and Jeff is all okey dokey so there's the bell.

Jarrett pulls back the guitar but Midajah (Steiner's chick) warns Scott and the beating begins. Steiner charges into some boots in the corner to put him down and Jeff chokes away a bit. A jawbreaker and atomic drop stop a Steiner comeback and a top rope cross body gets two. Steiner comes back with a tilt-a-whirl side slam but stops to pose instead of covering.

Jeff gets put in the Tree of Woe so Steiner can choke a bit and we head outside. Jeff is whipped into the barricade a few times before Steiner slams him onto the announce table. A WEAK low blow slows Steiner down and back inside we go. Back in and Steiner blocks the Stroke before getting two off the belly to belly. Sid and the Mystery Man run in for the double DQ.

Rating: D. This was pure filler with an ending that should have been seen coming a mile away. Steiner was all muscle and dominance and we didn't have time to see if that would mesh with Jarrett's basic style. Make no mistake: Jarrett could wrestle with anybody but Steiner was a hard style to work with. The match was nothing at all though.

The fans bark because they think it's Rick Steiner (it's not) and a big brawl ends the show.

Overall Rating: D+. This wasn't terrible, but the lack of star power and the BIG barrier between the old and new guys really stands out here. WCW was long past dead at this point so it's not like it matters in the long run anyway. Sin was built up well and wound up being a pretty decent show if I remember right, but overall there's just nothing worth seeing here with some head scratching booking, pretty lame matches and nothing that makes me want to watch Sin. Again though, the company was dead by this point anyway and the stuff that happened at Sin was just filling time until they closed the doors.

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