

On This Day: January 15, 1996 – Monday Nitro: Hogan vs. Meng And Sting vs. Flair. It's The 80s All Over Again!

Monday Nitro #20

Date: January 15, 1996

Location: James L. Knight Center, Miami, Florida

Commentators: Eric Bischoff, Bobby Heenan, Steve McMichael

We hit the 20th show as somehow we're five months into this series. Tonight it's Luger vs. Savage...again, which should be at least watchable as they tend to be when they fight each other. Hogan vs. Meng as well could be ok. Also we have some guy named Flair vs. some guy named Sting. Wow they really aren't going for originality are they? Let's get to it.

Apparently Hogan vs. Meng is billed as just a match vs. a member of the Dungeon and Sting vs. Flair is for the title. Sting vs. Flair is billed as the main event. Keep that in mind. Savage is going to get the winner, presumably at the PPV but they imply next week.

Randy Savage vs. Lex Luger

Apparently if Savage wins or loses he still gets the shot. What the heck kind of sense does that make? Why would Savage deserve a title shot if he loses here? Luger jumps him early as apparently he's beaten Savage three times in a row now. He beats Randy down on the floor but Savage goes to his vast array of right hands. Heenan again manages to not be able to tell time, saying they've been on the floor for six or seven minutes when it's been maybe 90 seconds.

Savage gets a top rope axe handle for two as they're flying

through this. Randy takes over as this is far closer to a brawl than a wrestling match so far. He gets Luger down with a slam and goes up with a HUGE elbow but Luger gets up. Luger throws him in the Rack for the submission of all things. Lex won't let go though which is rather surprising. There lies your #1 contender, which Luger points out.

Rating: C+. Savage submitting? Wait the replay shows that Savage's arm dropped three times, not that he gave up. That makes more sense. This wasn't anything really bad at all with both guys brawling for the most part which makes sense as this was a big time feud. Not bad at all for the most part.

We're supposed to have a tag match with Horsemen vs. Dungeon but they all come out at the same time and not ready to fight. They have the new US Champion, the One Man Gang whose initials are far more amusing now. Anderson says he and Sullivan agree that there's no point in having this war any longer as no one is going to win and it doesn't gain them anything else. That's why they feuded for another 6 months.

Sullivan says Flair is awesome and that the Yankees or the Red Sox would love to have him. Giant/Flair vs. Savage/Hogan at the Clash. Sullivan respects Anderson too, but he doesn't respect Pillman at all. Pillman goes all nuts again about not being afraid so Anderson smacks him upside his head.

Since that match didn't happen, here's a standby match.

Public Enemy vs. American Males

This is Public Enemy's debut. I don't see good things for a match where Marcus Bagwell is the ring general. The Males jump the males and clear the ring to start. Eric says they're bringing the newest athletes every week. As in a guy that was rookie of the year ten years ago, a guy that won the world title 8 years ago and former tag team champions are brand new. Got it.

The Males clear the ring again because the first time didn't explain things well enough I guess. There's the ECW chant which I'm sure Bischoff has never heard of before. Riggs gets a sunset flip on Grunge for two. Some heel cheating lets Grunge take over for the first time which lasts about 4 seconds.

Heenan suggests Public Enemy use spraypaint to draw pictures. Eric: No spraypaint here. That's rich. A few seconds later Grunge rolls up Bagwell with tights to win it. This was about as much nothing as you could squeeze into three minutes. Post match the winners put the Males through tables which was a new thing for mainstream audiences at the time. Mongo says they'll have to pay for those tables. I get why the Dudleys can't retire now.

WCW World Title: Sting vs. Ric Flair

How many times has that been written over the years? Jimmy is with Flair here. Sting with a pair of nipups to counter Flair and freak him out. We hear again about the lack of PPV this month which is rather stupid. Now let's talk about Mike Ditka for awhile. Also, the world title match is on third so that Hogan vs. Meng can go on last. Let that sink in a bit.

Sting gets a top rope suplex as we take a break. Sting misses a splash on the ropes as we're back to allow Flair to take over. There's a sleeper by Sting but Flair gets a belly to back to escape. They slug it out on the ropes which of course Sting wins. And screw that as Sting goes too fast and gets caught. Figure Four is reversed into a small package for two though.

Backslide gets two for Sting. And there's Flair's back to fulfill contractual obligations. Bobby sounds a bit snookered. Sting no sells a chop and here he comes again. Jimmy gets up on the apron to do no good. Here's Luger to take care of him but when he snatches the Megaphone from Jimmy it hits Sting in

the head. The referee is fine with this for some reason and Flair throws on the Figure Four and Sting can't move so it's a pinfall for Flair.

Rating: C+. Definitely one of the weaker matches they've had but this is a pairing where the rating goes up automatically because of who is in there. These two are guys that have such a history and chemistry together that anytime they fight it's worth seeing. Nothing great but nothing bad at all which makes for a fine match.

And of course Hogan hits the ring IMMEDIATELY to get as much camera time as possible. I mean less than ten seconds passed between the bell ringing and Hogan and Savage hitting the ring. Hogan yells at Sting about Luger not being on their side and Savage agrees. Again, WHY WAS THIS NEVER A TAG MATCH IN THE MAIN EVENT OF A PPV??? Sting didn't realize Luger did it apparently.

Sting leaves and it's the Hulk Hogan Show! He asks Savage why he's getting a title shot when Luger beat him four times and Hogan is on such a roll. That's...actually kind of a good point. Why shouldn't Sting get a title shot if they agree he got shafted just now? Savage says he's got the shot so get over it.

Jim Belushi will be on Saturday Night. Kind of odd but it's mainstream appeal I guess.

Hulk Hogan vs. Meng

Yes, this goes on after the world title match between the two biggest stars in WCW history. The stupidity of this is the theme of Super Brawl is IT'S ALL ABOUT THE TITLE. Bischoff starts the kissing up immediately, saying that he's the king of the sport. Yes, the world champion means nothing and no one else means anything either. It's all about Hogan.

Meng takes over early as Bischoff likes to say HULK HOGAN a

lot. Meng hits the nerve hold as Bischoff talks about how great WCW is. Heenan keeps talking about how Hogan is going to lose and how he has to be right eventually. Meng uses some spike object on Hogan, gets two, Hulk Up, you know the rest, Hogan wins with a shot with the spike.

Rating: C-. Standard 4 minute Hogan beats up a monster match from the 80s. It's nothing special at all and I mean that pretty literally because it's been done so many times. This was needing to go on after the main event right? Can't you see the connection there? Hogan does something he's done 1000 times so it goes on after the world title. Sure why not.

Savage came out to help and Hogan shakes his hand. The announcers recap things to end the show.

Overall Rating: C-. FAR weaker show from last week and what a shock that happens when the older guys were out there. This Hogan stuff needs to end soon and it will as we inch closer and closer to May and the Outsiders. Not a good show by comparison but it wasn't bad. They were really pushing this whole great month of wrestling and it worked to a certain degree. This wasn't bad but by comparison it was if that makes sense. Twenty shows in the book. Not bad.

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