

On This Day: January 30, 1991 – Clash of the Champions #14: Scott Steiner Was Awesome

Clash of the Champions 14: Dixie Dynamite

Date: January 31, 1991

Location: Georgia Mountains Center, Gainesville, Georgia

Attendance: 2,000

Commentators: Jim Ross, Dusty Rhodes

Another one of these and it's from a pretty bad era for the company. Unlike the one later this year, this show looks atrocious on paper. This is the first one in WCW rather than the NWA so I would expect a few changes. Also Dusty is the booker again so expect the Dusty Finish to abound. The main event is Scott Steiner vs. Ric Flair for the title. I'm not exactly riveted either. Let's get to it.

After a quick look at the top two matches we get a very 80s opening. You can tell the arena is tiny. I wonder if AJ was there.

National Anthem.

Dusty talks a lot and won't shut up.

Sting/Lex Luger vs. Doom

Luger is of course US Champion here as he more or less always was. I love that old Sting music. And then again the same can be said of Doom's music. They're the tag team champions here in the longest reign in the history of the belts. Ron Simmons and Butch Reed if you weren't familiar with that. This isn't announced as a title match but the referee holds up the belts. I guess it is one then.

Reed vs. Sting to start us off. Sting overpowers Reed which is

rather impressive. Even in an armbar he shouts to the crowd. Notice what he's doing there: he doesn't let the crowd get taken out of it, even in a rest hold. That's a very nice thing to do. Luger in now as Dusty talks a lot. Ross says in about 5 seconds what it took Dusty 30 to say. We hear about Wrestlewar a little bit where Luger is defending the title.

Simmons vs. Luger now and Ron can't take him down with shoulders. You can see Simmons wanting to shout his future catchphrase. Luger dominates him with power. How often do you see Doom losing to power stuff? Luger walks into a hot shot though and the champions take over. After a break it's still Doom in control.

Simmons puts his head down though and Luger manages to get a knee/kick in to put Ron down. Simmons gets the tag though to bring in Reed who hits a dropkick of all things to take down Luger. Dusty talks about football to waste even more time. Luger finally takes down Simmons but Reed drills him with a top rope shoulder block to take him right back down. The problem is that it took him right down into his corner. Well isn't that always the way?

Sting comes in to clean house but Dan Spivey runs out of the crowd to take down Luger. Spivey was Luger's upcoming opponent at the PPV if I didn't mention that. Sting doesn't seem to care and beats up Doom on his own. Reed hits a shoulder to Simmons by mistake and he stumbles into the referee. The referee gets up in time to see Sting get thrown over the top for the CHEAP DQ.

Rating: C. Well it was fun while it lasted but I've never been able to stand that over the top rule. This was kind of a backdrop for the Spivey vs. Luger match but that didn't exactly work. It was ok I guess but the match didn't really go anywhere and the titles never felt like they were in danger at all.

We unveil the winner of the WCW's Sexiest Wrestler award. It's Z-Man. Next.

TV Title: Z-Man vs. Bobby Eaton

Z-Man is champion here. They REALLY crank in chants for Bobby here. Either that or 2000 people can chant louder for Bobby Eaton than they can for Goldberg. Dusty talks about how great both guys are. I can see why Z-Man won the sexiest wrestler thing. Apparently Zenk had already lost the title at a TV Taping so this shouldn't really mean much at all. This is live mind you so imagine his mindset.

Dusty's voice gets REALLY old when he's comfortable which he definitely is here. The problem is that he talks A LOT. Eaton works the arm a bit but goes up and Z-Man hits a sweet dropkick to send him to the floor. And then Dusty talks about how great Brian Pillman is for no apparent reason. He also can't wait to remind us that he's a former TV Champion either.

They start slugging it out as Dusty is getting harder and harder to ignore. We hit a test of strength as Ross says Terry Taylor is a tough guy. Oh dear. If this is the show I think it is we get another stupid moment in WCW history coming up very soon. As Dusty talks about getting hit in the head with a stick, Eaton goes up again and gets caught one more time.

Superkick puts Eaton down. Big backdrop and Eaton is in trouble. Who covers someone off a backdrop? Who does he think he is, Moolah? Eaton gets him down and manages to get the top rope knee drop but Z-Man gets to the ropes. Cradle gets two for the champion but he walks into a neckbreaker that gets two for Eaton.

You can see fans leaving for the concession stand. Nice to see a title match has them so enthralled. Z-Man gets a freaking back slide of all things to get the pin to retain. Eaton's shoulder might have been up though so expect another match before the airing of Arn winning the title.

Rating: C+. This started out slow but it got a lot better once they picked up the pace a bit. Eaton is a guy that is straight up underrated in wrestling as he consistently put on great match after great match. This was fine for what it was, even though it would have been understandable for Z-Man to do next to nothing out there.

The replay shows that it wasn't even close with Eaton completely kicking out before three. That was pretty bad.

Alexandra York (Terri) says that she has selected the newest member of the York Foundation (computer assisted heel group that more or less sucked) and we'll see him tonight.

Fabulous Freebirds vs. Allen Iron Eagle/Tommy Rich

I don't know who Eagle is either. This is Garvin and Hayes. The Birds are heels here but good luck getting a team called the Freebirds booed in Georgia. Dang it now I'm going to have Badstreet USA stuck in my head all day. Hayes and Rich start as we actually get a reference to the world title reign of Rich. Eagle is another Indian character.

The Indian character of course chops a lot. I'm stunned too. Garvin does....something and down goes Eagle. Eagle ducked his head like he was going for a backdrop and Garvin ran up to him to set for a DDT (finisher) but Eagle just fell backwards. Weird as heck but whatever. We hit the chinlock as this isn't much at all. Hayes punches him and it sounds great. Eagle forgets to sell and just stands there, making him one of the worst guys I've seen in a long time.

Dusty and Jim try desperately to say that Eagle was stunned from the move and it's just funny as can be. Anyway, Hayes is ticked and beats the tar out of him on the floor with some hard stuff. When Michael Hayes is the ring general, you know you're in real trouble. Dusty of course talks about being able to go down Badstreet and be ok because he's tough.

Amazingly enough they manage to screw up something else with Eagle not realizing that Garvin is supposed to be doing a blind charge so Garvin has to throw up a knee to save the spot. Everyone comes in and we get an awkward looking kick to the guy before an awkward looking sunset flip sets up the tag to Rich that isn't seen. The Birds DDT the heck out of Eagle to end it, thankfully.

Rating: D-. This is a horrible match, but it's one of those matches where you can laugh at it very hard. The match is bad, don't get me wrong, but Eagle was so bad that he was hilarious. There were at least 5 botched spots in a seven minute match. Let that sink in for a bit. It really was that bad.

Dusty talks to Paul E. Dangerously about the arm wrestling match tonight with Missy Hyatt and implies that Paul is gay. Dusty of course has more to talk about which is what he's there for. Dusty's comments here are flat out sexist but it's Georgia so he can get away with it I guess. Somehow Heyman gets into I Have A Dream. Moving on.

Joey Maggs vs. Sid Vicious

What do you think is going to happen here? Sid brings his own paramedics with him if that tells you anything. Sid's hometown of Anywhere He Darn Well Pleases is still great stuff. He's a Horseman here too. A clothesline and powerbomb end this in maybe a minute. Sid was a bit of a nut but that powerbomb was sweet every time. The paramedics come out and we take a break. Back with Sid beating up Maggs some more on the stretcher. That's kind of awesome.

Tony talks to Sid who says everyone fears him.

Ricky Morton vs. Terry Taylor

Here's another one of WCW's famous goofs. Terry Taylor is introduced as the Computerized Man of the 90s. That would be

all fine and good except for one thing: That was his name once he turned heel. The problem is that the heel turn was that the heel turn hadn't happened yet, completely giving away the ending of the match. Why did Capetta (ring announcer) even have that on his card? What sense does that even begin to make? Early 90s WCW is made fun of a lot, but it's not really a secret as to why is it?

Taylor wants respect or something, also giving a good indication of the already spoiled heel turn. Robert Gibson is injured here which would eventually lead to Morton joining the York Foundation as well. Technical/feeling out process to start with no one being able to get a distinct advantage. Nice arm drags by Morton. They speed things up a bit but still no one can get an advantage.

We take a break as Taylor hits the floor to break the momentum. Back with Terry holding an armbar. Nice jawbreaker by Morton has Taylor in trouble though as they're going back and forth rather nicely here. Dusty of course can't stop talking long enough for Ross to talk about the match but it's Dusty's show so who cares? Alexandra York comes down now as we're not sure who she's here for. Apparently no one was listening to the intros either.

For no apparent reason we get an inset promo from York, saying that Taylor is indeed the newest member of the York Foundation and that her computer has told her how he's going to win this. That was the gimmick of the Foundation: the computer would predict the outcome of the match, such as here where it says the time of the fall and what Taylor will win with. It's as dumb as it sounds.

Morton gets a small package for two as Taylor turns heel and wrestles all evil and such. A bad bulldog gets two for Taylor. It amazes me that they had wireless so early in the 90s. Morton hammers away in the corner and gets a suplex for two. Dropkick puts Taylor down but a second misses and Morton hits

the mat rather hard, allowing Taylor to steal the pin.

Rating: C. It's ok and the early part is good but other than that this was kind of flat. Morton's singles time was kind of awkward as he was definitely the better half of the team but he wasn't someone people wanted to see without his partner. This was ok but nothing really all that special.

We get a preview of the Japanese women's wrestling at WrestleWar. And 8 seconds is all we get of that.

We see Sting getting the Wrestler of the Year award which allegedly was totally rigged or something.

Dusty talks (naturally) about the Gulf War and praises the troops. The war had just ended or was about to end which messed up the Wrestlemania plans Vince had. How dare international politics and wars get in the way of Wrestlemania??? Didn't Sadaam watch Superstars?

Ranger Ross vs. El Cubano

Ross is a military dude that would be gone soon after this and in prison for robbery, domestic violence, embezzlement and attempted arson by 1996. Somehow an evil masked Communist is looking like a good guy all of a sudden. Cubano is just a masked guy that is apparently Cuban. In an inset interview Ross praises the troops as well.

Apparently if you can see a guy's face you can read their mind. This is of course according to Dusty. JR says that Ross (the wrestler that is) is a great role model for anyone of any color. Really? The color line was needed there? Cubano misses a top rope splash and Ross sends him to the floor. Ross runs to the ropes and dives over feet first in a plancha type dive. It wasn't to hit Cubano or anything. That's just how he left the ring. A rollup ends it maybe 8 seconds later.

Rating: N/A. The odd comments here were more interesting than

the match. This went nowhere of course as it was a generic evil guy against Ross who was gone probably before the next PPV. Just a squash.

Ad for WrestleWar and Wargames.

Arn Anderson/Barry Windham vs. Renegade Warriors

The Renegade Warriors are the Youngblood brothers minus Jay who was dead by now. There are massive portraits of the Horsemen behind the ring on the wall. Yeah this isn't going to be dominance at all. The Warriors jump the Horsemen to start and it's a big brawl. Sweet merciful crap they look stupid though with their tights being more or less bright plaid.

Windham and one of the Warriors start this off. Arn's eyes are flat out hilarious. When he gets freaked out you would think he was in a Three Stooges sketch with how freaked out he is. Dusty really likes to remind us that this is in color. Ok Chris is in the singlet. Arn takes him to the mat and works the knee but gets rolled up for two and Arn wants time out.

Off to Barry now and the Horsemen can't get anything going at all here. Mark beats up Arn a bit. Oh I forgot: the Warriors are Mark and Chris. That might help a bit. Arn gets a spinebuster out of nowhere and the writing is on the wall now. Off to Barry who gets a kind of jumping DDT for two. Dusty rambles about putting your wife in a front facelock and something about a shotgun as Arn and Chris ram heads.

Atomic drop takes care of Chris but they botch Arn's pump splash out of the corner as he never hits it but he more or less did here since Chris didn't roll out of the way and barely got a knee up. Mark back in and it's a big brawl all over again. He gets sent to the floor though and the Horsemen just destroy Chris with a lariat and the superplex for the easy pin.

Rating: D+. Just a long match that wasn't interesting or

anything as we needed seven and a half minutes somehow to show that the Horsemen are awesome over a glorified jobbing tag team. Nothing that terrible but it still wasn't all that good at all. Too long as it should have been about half this long.

We get a clip of Vader vs. Stan Hansen from Japan which was a freaking war. They've having another match at WrestleWar. Hansen, tobacco flowing everywhere, says that it'll be a real war between real men at the PPV.

Buddy Lee Parker vs. Brian Pillman

Parker is the guy that trained Goldberg and is widely considered to be one of the biggest jerks in the history of wrestling. In short, he was very short and according to Batista had a bad case of Napoleon Syndrome, meaning he hated being small so he tried to use his authority as head of the Power Plant to compensate for it, including telling Batista he had no future in wrestling for some reason. He was a jobber that thought he had meant something in other words.

This is really just a way to talk about WarGames which Pillman is in. He would be the ending of the match as Sid would more or less kill him with a powerbomb and they had to stop the match due to it. Crucifix gets two for Pillman. Even Parker's basic offense looks bad. Dusty says he has a daughter named Cody. I'll leave that one alone. Pillman gets a great plancha over the top to take down Parker on the ramp. Top rope cross body ends this squash (notice a theme going on here?) with barely a bit of sweat from Pillman.

Rating: D+. This was a squash but it was a bit longer than the other ones tonight outside of the tag match. Pillman looked great but since he's in the main event of a PPV shouldn't we expect that? A squash is fine but what's the point of having a bunch of them on one show, especially a major one like this? This wasn't much at all but Pillman's flying was awesome stuff.

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It's time to arm wrestle! This was part of the never ending until it ended feud between Paul E. Dangerously and various men as he was feuding with Missy here. Some country DJ is the ring announcer for this. Oh and let's talk about the troops because that's just what southern people do. Dangerously being billed as the Psycho Yuppie continues to crack me up.

This is one of the funniest moments in company history as Missy comes out in this big workout jacket but as she is warming up and Paul isn't looking, Missy takes the jacket off to reveal a low cut top. Heyman's jaw drops and Hyatt gets the easy win in like two seconds. Funny stuff.

Lawrence Taylor is chilling with the Horsemen at some bar in New Jersey, even though Flair is defending the title tonight in Georgia. This was odd and rather pointless indeed.

WCW World Title: Scott Steiner vs. Ric Flair

From what I can find, both Flair and Dusty (booking here) came to Scott and flat out said the title is yours, just say the word. Steiner was absolutely awesome at this point and he really was on the verge of shattering the glass ceiling and becoming the top guy in the world. However, he turned them down because it was pretty clear that as soon as his singles push went into effect, Rick was gone. He wouldn't win the world title for nearly ten years.

Hiro Matsuda is here from NJPW because the first Superbrawl with Fujinami vs. Flair is coming up. El Gigante is here too. Flair won't shake his hand which resulted in a brief feud between them. Flair has been champion less than three weeks here, getting it back from Sting earlier this month. This has TV time remaining which I'd almost bet anything on that playing into the finish.

Flair shows off his biceps and Steiner is like boy please.

Feeling out process to start as you would expect there to be. Steiner counters a top wristlock and Rick gets in Ric's face as he grabs the ropes. Dusty thinks Scott would like to go into WrestleWar as World Champion. You can't buy analysis like this people.

Flair hits the floor a bit to buy some time as Scott has been on fire so far. A little more feeling out stuff results in Scott grabbing another armbar. This is some nice technical stuff so far. Flair goes for the knee and Steiner is like oh no you didn't and clotheslines the tar out of him so Flair hides again. Surprisingly an atomic drop breaks up Steiner's momentum. I'm surprised his balls can feel anything with all those steroids in him.

Rick shoves Ric's feet off the ropes when Flair tries to cheat. Is there a reason for those portraits of Anderson and Windham to still be there? Steiner powers out of a cover as we take a break. Back with Steiner throwing the Figure Four on Flair. He's no Jay Lethal though so he can't get the tap out. How often do you see a face in control when you come back from a break?

In an awkward looking spot, Flair charges at Steiner but Steiner falls backwards and Flair goes over the ropes. In the awkward part Steiner is supposed to go over also but didn't have the momentum so after he was stopped he jumped into the air and went over the top. We have ten minutes of TV time left. Flair goes in for the kill on the knee and yells at Rick a lot.

Figure Four goes on and Steiner is in trouble. As we wait for the inevitable reversal, I wonder why the ring ropes were blue, black and yellow. What kind of a weird combination is that? The hold is broken via rope so Flair puts it on again in the middle of the ring. Steiner easily turns is over and we're back on now.

Flair goes to the floor and Steiner takes him down with a Steiner Line. Down to five minutes remaining. Steiner pounds away in the corner as his leg is ok now. Nick Patrick stops Steiner from punching and Flair a shot in to take over a bit. Ross takes a breath so Dusty talks for a minute or so about how much experience he has in the ring. Under four minutes and Steiner gets a bad sleeper.

Steiner clotheslines Flair over so they alter the rules again so that's not a DQ with three minutes left. Knee drop by Flair as Steiner is in trouble. Two minutes left and Flair is in the stall mode. Steiner gets a sweet bridge up into a Tiger Bomb but doesn't cover for no apparent reason.

Ric is on the floor with a minute left. Steiner Line has Flair reeling with 30 seconds left. Flair Flip out of the corner and there's not enough time. Belly to belly gets two as the bell rings for the time. The whole TV time thing is bogus as we go off the air a minute and a half after TV time expires. Ah ok we needed to show the credits. That explains it. Heaven forbid we don't know that Ted Turner is responsible for this.

Rating: B. This was good for what it was but with more time it could have been great. Like I said this could have been a title change if Steiner had given it the ok but he decided a tag team was more important. Anyway this was good stuff and it worked rather well considering Steiner didn't have much big match experience at all. Fun match and interesting for the most part but the ending might as well have been announced at the beginning given how obvious it was.

Overall Rating: D+. Well they tried but at the end of the day there was too much weak stuff here to make this a really good show. The main event is solid but other than that there wasn't much here at all. Far too many squashes and uninteresting matches for the first hour and a half setting up a good main event doesn't make a good show though. 91 was really bad for WCW down the line and this was probably the best time for them

in the year until the very end of the year. Pretty bad show
but the main event is solid. That's about it.
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