

On This Day: March 26, 2001 – Monday Nitro: The White Flag Of The Monday Night Wars

Monday Nitro

Date: March 26, 2001

Location: Boardwalk Beach Resort, Panama City, Florida

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Scott Hudson

So in case you're not getting the date or the significance, this is the final Nitro. Three days prior to this (or so) Vince bought WCW from Turner and the Monday Night War came to an end. In short, this is it. This is the end of WCW vs. WWF. Vince has won and everyone knows it now. As for the show, it's being billed as Night of Champions, despite there being two title matches but whatever. This is an historic show and I remember being SHOCKED, so let's get to it.

We open with Vince McMahon in the Raw interview area, talking about how he's bought the company and its fate is in his hands. Tonight there will be a simulcast where he'll explain things. This is bizarre.

Even their intro video sucked at this point.

Scott and Tony talk about how stunned they are about this.

And here's Ric Flair. Oh this should be good. His hair being spiked is just wrong for some reason. He gives a very emotional speech, talking about how great his time in the company has been, which based on what I've read is nonsense, but he belongs out there on the final show and that's all there is to it. Flair breaks kayfabs and says that Vince's Dad voted for him to be world champion back in 1981. This is mainly about the holding the company in the palm of your hands thing. Flair makes one final request: if this is the last

night, he wants Sting one more time.

WCW World Title/US Title: Scott Steiner vs. Booker T

This is title for title with Booker as US Champion. They slug it out in the middle and Booker hits a bit spinning heel kick to take over. This is outside mind you. We hear about how the US Champion is the #1 contender, which NEVER happened if you think about it, kind of making it a running joke. Midajah slaps Booker in the face.

Steiner swings a lead pipe at Booker but he hits the post instead in kind of a scary move. Scott moves onto a Bow and Arrow which doesn't do much. A kind of botched dropkick and Booker starts his comeback. Ghetto Blaster (Axe kick) hits and we get a Spinaroooni. Side Kick and it's ALL Booker here. Book End is blocked for two. They're FLYING through this. Book End is the counter to a powerbomb and it makes Booker the world champion again. Literally this didn't break 6 minutes.

Rating: C-. Not terrible I guess considering they had to fly through this but there wasn't much here. No one can beat Steiner in like 4 months and Booker does it in five minutes? They couldn't give this a few more minutes? It was kind of a formality I guess but it just could have been done far better. Not awful though.

Vince blasts Panama City and WCW. Great to see that Vince spent millions of dollars on something that sucked.

3 Count vs. Rey Mysterio/Billy Kidman vs. Kaz Hayashi/Yun Yang

Winners get a Cruiserweight Tag Title shot later. Yang is more commonly known as Jimmy Wang Yang and a member of 3 Count is now Shannon Moore. Everybody does a bunch of flips and dives to the floor with no rhyme or reason to them. Yang sends Rey into the buckle and hits a huge corkscrew moonsault called Yang Time. This is under tornado rules apparently. BIG 450 from Evan Karagis but Kidman makes the save. For the finish,

imagine Moore being in position for Orton's DDT but turned face up. Rey hits a springboard legdrop on him there to end it. I didn't skip anything in the description. It was really that fast.

Rating: C+. Entertaining match but at under four minutes how into it can you get? This was just to give the challengers a disadvantage against Skipper and Romeo later on. The spots were shaky but hey, it's the last night of the company so who cares? Not bad but nothing we haven't seen a million times before and better.

Trish brings Vince some champagne but they make out instead.

We recap the GREAT Chavo vs. Helms rivalry.

Cruiserweight Title: Chavo Guerrero vs. Shane Helms

Back in the dying days of WCW, one of the few things they NAILED was Chavo, who was absolutely awesome for about a year before the company closed. Shane has an intro with dancing girls a rap that he performs and lights. Shane was very popular as well mainly due to just doing awesome things in the ring. Nice belly to back by Chavo as the fans actually seem into this.

Tony tries to talk about how WCW has been about the youth. That's just funny. Actually it isn't, because having that not be the case is a big reason as to why the company died. High cross body from the top for the champion for two. T-Bone gets two. Ton of reversals into a Northern Lights Suplex for two. Very fast paced match here.

More reversals into the Sugar Smack (Superkick) and then the Vertebreaker is blocked. He can't get out of the second one and it ends the match. That move is both awesome but also scary, which makes me understand why they wouldn't let it be used in the WWF, as it was just too much of a liability.

Rating: B-. Again good match but at like four and a half minutes how into it can you get? Everything is in fast forward speed tonight and it's kind of taking me out of the show. This is the polished up version of WCW since it's not being treated like a serious company anymore but rather an All Star show, which helps it a lot I think. Nothing special here, but good enough.

Ad for Slim Jims with Randy Savage, who was out of WCW for about a year at this point if not more. Yeah his last match in WCW was in August of 99.

Remember the Titans is on VHS and DVD. That's amusing.

Booker says he's not done yet.

Tag Titles: Lance Storm/Mike Awesome vs. Chuck Palumbo/Sean O'Haire

The more famous guys are challenging. Team Canada won a non-title match last week to get this. See, why is logic like that so complicated? That's a basic story and it gives perfect justification as to why we are where we are here. After a quick break, Vince is with Trish again and Cole interrupts them. He says a bunch of WCW related people are worried and Vince threatens to fire Cole. PLEASE DO IT VINCE!

Storm of course starts with technical stuff. Tony almost says World Tag Titles but has to shift to WCW Tag Titles. Slingshot splash by Awesome for two. Hot tag to O'Haire and he beats the crap out of Awesome, hitting his weird reverse Samoan Drop. I could watch Lance Storm throw superkicks all day. Palumbo hits his Jungle (super) kick and the Shawnton Bomb ends it.

Rating: C-. I always liked all four of these guys so I was a fan of this feud. The match of course was really short so it's kind of hard to grade, but at the same time this was ok I guess. It put the champions over and didn't give us a title change for the sake of a title change, so I can't really

complain about that at all. Decent match but again nothing great at all.

Recap of Bigelow vs. Stasiak. Stasiak has Stacy and is doing something close to what Dolph Ziggler is doing at the moment. If he loses he has to get a tattoo.

Shawn Stasiak vs. Bam Bam Bigelow

They set this up last week so they have to throw it on here. Bigelow brings the tattoo kit with him. These two feuded for a few months and we were never told why they got so much time. I guess someone thought it was a good idea for some reason? Flying...something misses from Stasiak and Bigelow goes up for the headbutt. It hits but there's Stacy to be hot. She interferes and a neckbreaker from Shawn ends it.

Rating: N/A. At least we got to look at Stacy.

Regal shows off his shirt to Vince. He tells Vince that it might be a bad idea to buy WCW. This was pointless.

We get a highlight reel of champions to play up the Night of Champions thing, which is always fun.

Vince says it's just about that time.

Cruiserweight Tag Titles: Rey Mysterio/Billy Kidman vs. Elix Skipper/Kid Romeo

This was the final of the tournament to give us the original champions, 8 days prior. The announcers continue to insist how much WCW loves young guys. Romeo never did anything at all but Skipper wound up in TNA. Kidman and Mysterio I think you know of. Hot tags to Rey and Skipper as it's pretty clear that this is going to be another 3 minute or so match.

Scott points out that the champions were just thrown together. Bronco Buster to Elix (really Elix?) and it turns into a huge mess. Rey with a springboard falling headbutt for two but

Skipper makes the save. More near falls follow and Kidman gets out of Skipper's Play of the Day and hits the Kid Crusher (Killswitch) for the final title reign in the history of the belts.

Rating: B-. Another 4 minute yet still entertaining match. I remember when the titles were announced that more or less no one wanted to see them but when did that stop WCW? This wasn't anything special at all but it was pretty solid I guess. Skipper and Romeo were just thrown together and told they were the best team. The belts lasted 8 days so it's not like they meant anything.

Sting cuts a very energetic promo about fighting Flair one more time.

Vince is walking down a hall.

Ric Flair vs. Sting

Something just feels right about saying that. Flair is in a t-shirt here, which is fine with me as if nothing else it makes him look decent. He looks skinny here. The announcers point out that Sting never jumped but Flair did. Not exactly but hey who cares about history right? They recap Flair vs. Sting which is always fun. Hudson tries to talk about how Flair vs. Sting went against Mania 4. What Hudson isn't mentioning is how badly WCW got slaughtered as Mania 4 outdrew Mania 3.

Tony talks about how we've seen this match thousands of times. I was thinking more like 15 but whatever. There's the press slam from Sting which never gets old. And there's the Flair Flop which brings a smile to my face. This is more or less Sting vs. Flair's Greatest Hits as they're just doing their basic spots. Dropkick misses and it's time for the leg. Figure Four goes on and Sting is in trouble!

Could he submit? Will he give up? For the first time ever will Sting tap out to Flair? If you don't know the answers to those

questions, just leave now as I can't help you. Basic comeback occurs and there's the Scorpion for the tap out. They hug as they should do to end this.

Rating: C+. Like I said this was just the short version of their match as they had no angle or time here, but this wasn't supposed to be a major match. It was a feel good moment which is what it was supposed to be. Fine for what it was, which is the best description that I can give it.

I'm going to cut the review here, because at this point the simulcast begins and since I'm going to do the Raw from this night next I'll just review it in there since it'll be literally the same stuff.

Overall Rating: C+. Well the idea of the night of champions thing was good but the breakneck pace of the show made it rather annoying as there was just too much going on at once. It's ok I guess but it's not much more than that. It says a lot that one of their best shows in years had no context or angles worth anything to speak of. This was an ok show, which obviously should be seen for historical purposes. Decent show for what it was, but more important or history than anything on the card itself.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews