

Monday Nitro – November 24, 1997: We Need More Sick Boy

Monday Nitro #115

Date: November 24, 1997

Location: Wendler Arena, Saginaw, Michigan

Attendance: 5,879

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Bobby Heenan, Tony Schiavone, Larry Zbyszko

With World War 3 out of the way, we're down to five Nitros left before Starrcade. Scott Hall won the battle royal last night after there was yet another fake Sting sighting. That sets Hall up as #1 contender for Souled Out in January, which would be like winning the Rumble for a shot at Extreme Rules today. Anyway, all eyes are on Sting vs. Hogan now which means the drama is going to be cranking up. Let's get to it.

Here's the NWO to open things up. Bischoff does the usual gloating while smoking a cigar. Hogan brags about how awesome the team is and offers anyone interested a title shot tonight. This brings out Giant who accepts the challenge but JJ Dillon comes out and says Giant has to sign a waiver because of his bad hand. You know, because we need to bring in the legal department to make sure an interesting match is ok.

Tag Titles: Steiners vs. Disorderly Conduct

That would be Mean Mark and Tough Tom who jump the Steiners before the bell. This goes about as well as you would expect it to for them with the champions clearing the ring and throwing I think Tom to the floor after a belly to belly from Scott. Off to Rick who walks into a side slam from Mark and a forearm drop gets two. Rick easily shrugs it off and brings in Scott to clean house with forearms to the back and a belly to belly to Tom. Everything breaks down and it's the Steiner Bulldog (after about three tries by Scott to get the wide load up) to Mark for the retaining pin.

Rating: D+. Again, what did you expect here? Disorderly Conduct were your standard brawling jobber tag team who were there to make the Steiners look good. Granted that didn't really happen but at least the Steiners get to defend the titles for once. These would be the WCW Tag Titles mind you and not the NWO ones that the Outsiders have at the moment.

Nitro Girls.

Booker T vs. Meng

Meng powers him down to start but Booker speeds things up and hits a quick forearm. A backdrop puts Meng on the floor, which only ticks the monster off. The announcers ignore the match and talk about Giant vs. Hogan as Booker is backdropped down, only to spin back up. That lasts about a second as Meng catches the side kick in the air and slams Booker down for two. Meng goes to clubberin in the corner and pounds Booker down with a shot to the back. Booker dodges a charge and rolls through a powerbomb for a very fast pin. This would be an upset still at this point.

Post match Meng puts Booker in the Tongan Death Grip but Stevie Ray blasts the monster with a (wooden) chair. Barbarian comes out and it's a beatdown of Harlem Heat.

Nitro is the official spokesman for Alien Resurrection. Ok then.

We recap JJ Dillon trying to sign Raven.

JJ and Gene go up to Raven after delivering him an ultimatum last night. Apparently Raven signed earlier today but with some clauses, including that every match is under his rules and he only has to wrestle when and against whom he wants. Riggs is officially with Raven and the Flock now.

Chris Benoit vs. Raven

Actually scratch that as Raven throws in Sick Boy to fight in his place.

Chris Benoit vs. Sick Boy

Benoit is fine with beating up Sick Boy instead but gets caught by a springboard back elbow from Sick Boy. Benoit drops him over the top rope to take over but Diseased Man comes back with a missile dropkick and some choking. Benoit fires off some chops in the corner but stops to glare at Raven, allowing Sick Boy to take it to the floor. Now the newly debuted Lodi distracts Benoit and lets Sick Boy to get in some more shots to take over again. A springboard guillotine legdrop misses Benoit though and the Swan Dive connects, only to bring in the Flock. Benoit fights them off and the Crossface gets the submission on Sick Boy.

Rating: B-. I don't remember much about Sick Boy but this was a VERY impressive performance. He was flying all over the place and hitting some very crisp moves which had Benoit in trouble. Why didn't we ever get to see more of this guy? I don't think I ever remember a Sick Boy match and apparently that's kind of a shame.

Post match Benoit gets beaten down by the Flock and put in the Rings of Saturn.

We get a video from the NWO about Hall tormenting Zbyszko. Larry is ticked off about it and goes to the ring to call out Hall...again...as papers fall from the ceiling. They have a shot of Hall's foot on Larry's chest from I think Halloween Havoc. Good thing they had these ready in case Larry decided to storm the ring. Eric comes out and after babbling about how Hall is too busy to fight Larry, he talks about how he's beaten Larry twice now. A challenge is made for a third fight and Larry accepts, or at least it seems like he does.

Prince Iaukea vs. Alex Wright

Can Iaukea just fall in a hole already? A quick headlock puts the Prince on the mat and it's time to dance again. Wright misses a charge into the corner and gets backdropped into a chinlock by the Prince. Alex fights up but has to stop to argue with Debra. A shoulder puts Prince down and there's more arguing with the blonde. Debra gets up on the apron and gets her dress caught on the buckle so she can't get down. The distraction lets Iaukea hit a top rope cross body for the pin.

Rating: D. Nothing to see here as it was more of an angle than a match with the focus being on Debra. I'm pretty sure this would be it for her though as she would be in the WWF by January at the latest. Iaukea continues to be one of the most bland guys in the history of the company, yet he keeps winning matches like this.

Wright fires Debra post match.

Video on Sting vs. Hogan.

Disco Inferno vs. Randy Savage

Savage armdrags Disco down and Liz Disco up for good measure. They head to the floor and Liz shoves him into the post in the most physical move you'll ever see from her. Back in and Savage slams him down before ending Disco with a pair of elbows.

Post match Savage drops a third elbow but the referee breaks up a fourth. Savage lays out the referee and spray paints Disco. Now the fourth elbow hits.

Dean Malenko vs. Brad Armstrong

Malenko takes it into the corner to start before they head to the mat. Armstrong is one of the few people who can actually hang with Dean down there so he goes after Malenko's legs. That gets him nowhere so instead

Brad suplexes him down for no cover. Armstrong pounds away some more for a quick two but Dean dropkicks him down and cranks on Brad's arms to take over.

The fans chant boring as this isn't your usual cruiserweight match with everyone flying all over the place. They trade some quick near falls off backslides and rollups until Brad slams him down for two. Back up and Dean sends him into the corner, only to charge into a boot. Being the wrestler that he is though, Dean pulls the leg down and locks on the Cloverleaf for the win.

Rating: C. Armstrong wasn't quite the same guy that he was back in the early 90s but he could still move pretty well out there. Also he's the kind of guy you can throw out there for a decent match and make Dean look good in the process. I mean, you can't just have Malenko vs. Guerrero and Mysterio every week without it getting boring.

Mongo brags about knocking out Goldberg when Debra comes up to try to rekindle their relationship. He thinks about it then yells at her to leave, thank goodness.

The Nitro Girls do their thing.

Buff Bagwell vs. Chris Jericho

In an amusing bit, Jericho fakes a heart attack ala Sanford and Son from his pyro going off. We get Buff's usual start to a match as he takes Jericho down with a pair of armdrags and poses a lot. Jericho comes right back with a spinwheel kick and a clothesline to send Buff out to the floor. A Canadian plancha takes Bagwell down again and Jericho sends him into the steps for good measure. Back in and the Lionsault gets two. Even back in the 90s that move was barely a finisher.

Buff sends him into the corner and pounds Jericho down before hitting a

forearm off the ropes. A cover with a single knee and Buff posing gets two and Jericho is mad. Bagwell puts him right back down with a clothesline and it's off to a chinlock. After a quick argument with the referee allows Jericho to get a two count, Buff loads up the Blockbuster but gets crotched down. A top rope rana gets two for Jericho as does a spinwheel kick, but he walks into a boot in the corner and the Blockbuster ends our Canadian hero.

Rating: C+. Not bad here as Jericho was really starting to come into his own in the ring. Bagwell was Bagwell, which is to say he was almost all character and next to nothing in the ring. The Blockbuster looked good but other than that, Buff's offense is almost all slow paced and basic, which doesn't make for an entertaining match.

US Title: Ray Traylor vs. Curt Hennig

As Hennig comes to the ring, we hear about Tenay making a documentary about the late Brian Pillman with the profits going to Pillman's family. Cool idea. Hennig immediately bails to the floor but Traylor goes to the floor for an uppercut. Back in and Traylor pounds away in the corner and a splash sends the champion to the floor. They go inside again where Ray misses a charge and Heenan sounds like he wants to join the NWO.

Hennig hooks a reverse chinlock but Traylor comes back and goes after Curt's knee. Curt slams his other leg into Ray's head to escape and it's back to the chinlock. Traylor powers out and rams Hennig's head into all three of the buckles in a corner to take over again. The reverse crotch on the post slows Hennig down again and there's the Boss Man Slam for two, because Hall was late running in for the DQ.

Rating: C-. Not bad but by this point it's obvious what's coming no matter how the match goes. That's a problem that WCW needed to address but they never found a way around it and the reactions eventually stopped happening at all. Also, Traylor's character is done now as there's no reason to buy him as a threat to anyone anymore.

The NWO beats and paints Traylor post match.

WCW World Title: The Giant vs. Hollywood Hogan

A Vincent distraction lets Hogan get in a few shots from behind as Rude and Bischoff take over the announcers' desk, complete with Eric slapping Tony across the face. Back to the match as Hogan clotheslines Giant to the floor and works on the broken hand for a bit. They head back inside for an elbow drop from Hogan but Giant shrugs it off and pounds at Hogan's ribs and head. There's a quick chokeslam but Giant hurts his hand in the process. Cue Sting, who is now about 7' tall with long brown hair, to blast Giant in the hand with the bat for the DQ.

Rating: D. This was more of the same from the US Title match: we were just waiting on the run-in to end the match which doesn't make for the most interesting five minutes in the world. Thankfully the announcers were NWO so we didn't have to listen to them thinking that was really Sting. Anyway nothing to see here, as usual.

The rest of the NWO comes in for a beatdown and here's Sting...who falls through the mat and is another mannequin. Nash and Hogan beat on him with the bat as the fans chant for Sting to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. This wasn't bad. They furthered a lot of stories and we even had a good match in Sick Boy vs. Benoit. On top of that we're inching closer to Starrcade which means Bret should be here soon, along with the final push towards Hogan vs. Sting. The wrestling continues to be just ok at best for the most part and the constant DQ's are really getting old, but at least we're getting to the good drama part.

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