

Thunder – March 19, 1998: If This Is The B Show, I Don't Want To See The C Show

Thunder

Date: March 19, 1998

Location: Hullman Center, Terra Haute, Indiana

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Lee Marshall, Bobby Heenan

We're back on dry land for Thunder now and headed towards Spring Stampede. After both Uncensored and Nitro two things are clear: the NWO is fighting and no matter how sick of it we are, there's no way we're getting away from it. Other than that there's a lot of good stuff going on in the midcard, but we have to get through all the NWO stuff to get there. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the end of Nitro.

The announcers talk for a LONG time, as in like two minutes straight. The only thing to come out of this is Sting vs. Savage for the title at Spring Stampede.

Cruiserweight Title: Chris Jericho vs. Super Calo

Jericho says he loves Terry Hutt Indiana. Calo jumps him from behind to start but Jericho easily punches him down to get a breather. A clothesline puts Jericho down for two and Calo hits an ax handle to the back to send him to the floor. Jericho is back in a few seconds later and hits a quick vertical suplex for two (arrogantly of course).

A slingshot splash gets two more on Calo and a spinwheel kick in the corner has Calo in even more trouble. We hit a quick chinlock but Super

is quickly up and knocking Jericho out to the floor. There's a big suicide dive which gets two back inside and a middle rope missile dropkick gets the same for Calo. Jericho ducks under a cross body and it's the Liontamer for the submission.

Rating: D+. Jericho is awesome at this point but he needs someone better than Calo to get a good match. Calo was sluggish out there and didn't look to be all that interested in the match. Also Jericho didn't even steal that stupid hat from Calo for the trophy case so there isn't much good out of this.

Kendall Windham vs. El Dandy

Seriously? Did the booker owe these guys a favor or something? The match actually starts during the break with Kendall pounding away. They head to the outside with Kendall in control but the crowd is looking away. Here's Raven with the Flock and the US Title belt. Apparently he stole it last night on MTV and we'll get a clip showing what happened later on. Dandy comes back with some cross bodies but gets bulldogged down for the pin in a short match.

Hennig and Rude come out to talk about Curt vs. Rick Steiner later tonight. Hogan has sent them on a mission to destroy Bret Hart and you don't see him here anymore. The town is insulted and they talk about ruling wrestling for fifteen years. Not much to say here.

Perry Saturn vs. La Parka

La Parka comes out with the chair and wearing something that looks like an apron. In a smart move, Saturn clotheslines La Parka out of his boots during the dance to take over. A suplex gets two for Saturn and it's off to a Fujiwara Armbar. Saturn fires off kicks in the corner but La Parka comes back with a kind of bulldog for two. The Skeleton guy gets no elevation on a leapfrog and nearly breaks Saturn's neck in a cringe inducing botch.

An enziguri staggers Saturn and La Parka leverages him to the floor. Lodi goes to help Saturn up but La Parka dives onto both of them. Back in and a corkscrew dive takes Saturn down before the chair is brought in. Saturn dropkicks La Parka in the back, sending him face first into the chair. The Rings of Saturn go on and we're done.

Rating: C-. Saturn nearly being crippled aside this wasn't much to see. As is typically the case with WCW, they're handed someone getting themselves over like La Parka and they do nothing with it. Saturn was his usual solid self here but it was just a step above a squash. Lodi continues to have the most heat of the entire Flock.

We get a clip of Page's interview on MTV last night. Raven hijacks the feed on the monitor they're watching and wants to know why he isn't champion. Page says he banged him and gets some looks from the hosts. Raven's video gets some static and he thinks it's a conspiracy. "The Foo Fighters don't get static!" He says he's going to rip Page off and shows up on set with a stop sign to knock Page out. The Even Flow puts Page through a coffee table and Raven takes the belt.

Barry Darsow vs. Ray Traylor

It's like a nightmare from WWF house shows past. Darsow hits a quick knee lift and falls backwards from the impact before getting punched down by Traylor. The slide under the rope into the uppercut puts Darsow down again but he avoids a splash. Barry wraps the arm around the post and stomps at the shoulder a bit. A belly to back suplex gets two but Darsow can't hook an arm hold called Barely Legal. Ray comes back with a one armed slam and a Boss Man Slam for the pin.

Rating: D. To recap, we've had to sit through Kendall Windham and Barry Darsow matches tonight. I'm starting to understand the hatred for this show that so many fans have. As for the match there wasn't much here but at least it was more competitive than I was expecting. Why they needed Barry Darsow here instead of say Vincent is beyond me.

Roddy Piper will be on Nitro to make a challenge. I think we have our topic for the rest of the show.

Yuji Nagata vs. Prince Iaukea

They trade arm holds to start until Nagata grabs a headscissors. Nagata wins a chop off and sends Prince to the apron, only to be caught by a springboard flip attack. Yuji fires off some kicks before cranking on the arm. A cross armbreaker has Prince in trouble but the announcers are still wondering what Piper's announcement will be. Tony thinks it might be about the NWO. There's a fresh idea.

Anyway Iaukea gets to the ropes but a double chop brings him right back down to the mat. Back to the arm followed by some lame ground and pound and more shots into the bad arm from Nagata. Another Prince comeback is stopped by a rake of the eyes and a great looking belly to back from Nagata. Prince comes back again with a dropkick, drawing Sonny Onoo to the apron. He accidentally kicks Yuji in the head, allowing Iaukea to hook a northern lights suplex for the pin.

Rating: D+. This was fine from a technical standpoint but could they have picked two less interesting guys? It was generic Polynesian guy vs. generic Japanese guy and it's going to wind up being the longest match on the show tonight (5:20). We're five matches into this show and a La Parka match is the only thing remotely decent. That can't be a good sign.

We get some clips from Nash s. Giant on Sunday.

Brian Adams vs. Marty Jannetty

This sounds like a reject from a Survivor Series Showdown in 1990. Adams quickly blasts him to the floor before throwing him back inside with ease. Marty avoids a charge in the corner but is quickly caught in a bearhug for a few moments. Jannetty keeps trying to run the ropes but

gets thrown around the ring with ease. A headbutt puts Marty down again but rolls away from a knee drop. Jannetty makes a quick comeback with an atomic drop and missile dropkick for two before hooking a lame sleeper. Adams shrugs him off and hits a very bad looking tilt-a-whirl powerslam for the pin.

Rating: D. Dang those connections must be strong for Adams. The guy just isn't anything of note but he keeps getting TV time and wins like this one here. Scott Norton may be pushed way too strong but he's a lot less generic than Adams. Nothing to see here as this show continues to drag along.

Video of Sting's entrance from Nitro.

Eddie Guerrero vs. Psychosis

Mike Tenay has replaced Lee Marshall. Eddie grabs the arm to start and clotheslines him down. Psychosis comes back with a quick snapmare as things speed up, only to be stopped with a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker from Guerrero. Eddie is taken down by a quick armdrag as the pace picks up again. Guerrero showboats too much though and gets dropkicked in the back, setting up the guillotine legdrop in the ropes.

Instead of covering though Psychosis kicks him to the floor and hits a Whisper in the Wind off the top. Psychosis slingshots back in with an elbow drop for two and a tilt-a-whirl slam looks to set up another Whisper but Eddie sidesteps him. Eddie shoves Psychosis off the top and lays him out with the frog splash for the pin.

Rating: C. After the string of bad matches tonight I'd take anything decent right now. These two were moving well out there and the high spots looked good. Eddie continues to be one of the top guys who never gets a title but that's what you have to expect in WCW. Entertaining little match here.

Raven vs. Brad Armstrong

Raven has the US Title here with him and Tony makes sure to tell us that he is NOT the champion. Hammer and Reese come in before the bell and beat Armstrong down which is legal anyway as it's Raven's Rules. Raven says this is Armstrong's second chance but Page doesn't deserve one. Last night on MTV it was Matthew McConaughey, the Foo Fighters and Page. It should have been Raven as the star of that show, so he crushed Page's head with a stop sign. Raven will grow stronger and Page will grow weaker. There's the Even Flow to Armstrong and a bell so I guess this was a match.

Video on Bret Hart.

Scott Norton vs. Chris Benoit

Benoit fires off chops in the corner to start but Norton takes him into the other corner across the ring before clotheslining him down. Now it's Norton with chops of his own to knock Benoit off his feet. It's time for the generic power offense from Norton, such as forearms to the back, a headbutt and more clotheslines. A hard clothesline puts Benoit down and a powerslam gets two.

Norton hits something resembling a Samoan drop for two more as this is one sided so far. Back up and Benoit avoids a charge in the corner and takes Norton down with a German suplex before going up top for the Swan Dive. He hooks on the Crossface but Vincent gets on the apron, making Benoit break the hold after a LONG time. The distraction lets Norton pop up, not sell the hold at all, and lay out Benoit with the shoulder breaker for the pin.

Rating: D. SERIOUSLY? You take Benoit out of the hottest feud of the year so you can have SCOTT NORTON squash him in five minutes? Norton was in the Crossface for a good ten seconds and didn't even have his arm raised, then he gets to pin Benoit clean after his finisher? What in the world

does Norton have on the people that run this company? It makes even less sense as Norton never went anywhere in WCW, so was this match only there to bring Benoit down? It certainly seems that way.

Goldberg vs. Wayne Bloom

The place EXPLODES for Goldberg and you can actually see them all on their feet. For the first time ever, we get a number for Goldberg's wins. He's 55-0 coming into this match which is higher than I expected. A full nelson has Bloom in early trouble and there's a pumphandle slam for good measure. Bloom fires off some right hands but gets caught by the spear. There's the Jackhammer to make it 56-0. This is one of Goldberg's longer matches, going a full eighty seconds.

Saturn jumps the railing but just stares at Goldberg.

Rick Steiner vs. Curt Hennig

That's not much of a main event. Rick easily runs Hennig over and hiptosses him down, sending Curt to the floor for a Rude conference. Rick will have none of that and pulls Curt back in by the hair. A quick powerslam looks to set up the Steiner Bulldog but Rude pulls Steiner's leg and it's thrown out after less than a minute and a half.

Steiner fights them off for as long as he can but the B-Tea comes in to help Curt and Rude. Ray Traylor comes out and is beaten down as well until GOLDBERG makes the save, blowing the roof off the place. A double spear takes out Hennig and Adams and there's one for Norton as well. Goldberg walks out, leaving Steiner and Traylor to clean house. The announcers are THRILLED to end the show.

Overall Rating: D. This show SUCKED until the end with nothing to see and a lot of stupid matches. The Norton vs. Benoit match continues to make me shake my head but that's life in WCW. Goldberg coming in was a breath of

fresh air for this show and the crowd went nuts for him. Good ending to a horrible show.

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