

Monday Nitro – March 30, 1998: 1004 Ways To Bore An Audience

Monday Nitro #133

Date: March 30, 1998

Location: United Center, Chicago, Illinois

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

The NWO continues to dominate the stories in this company as we're rolling towards Spring Stampede. On Thunder the NWO got into another argument with Hogan and Nash yelling at each other this time. There isn't much else going on in WCW at the moment other than the title feuds. WCW needs to step things up as last night, Steve Austin won the WWF Title, meaning the heat is on. Let's get to it.

The Nitro Girls open us up. I've heard of worse ideas.

We look at the brawl at the end of Thunder.

Wayne Bloom/Mike Enos vs. High Voltage

Enos starts with Rage but High Voltage is quickly double teaming to take over. Mike is beaten down but Bloom comes in off the top to take over. Bloom comes in legally and suplexes Rage down for two before it's back to Enos. Something like a fallaway slam off the middle rope gets two on Rage and here's the Giant with chokeslams all around for the DQ.

Rating: D. This was long enough to rate but there's nothing to talk about here. Neither team was anything of note and the fans didn't care about them due to how low they were on the card. At least the fans popped when the Giant came out there as they were almost silent for the match.

Everyone is laid out so Giant grabs the mic and says if Piper wants mean, that's what he's getting.

Here are Piper and Giant with something to say. Piper is in a Cubs hat for an odd visual. He talks about having Giant dating Sweaty Betty and eating villagers. Piper says that Hogan and Nash are lovers but tonight they can't team together. It's going to be Nash/a partner of his choice vs. Sting/Luger but the partner can't be Hogan. Now it's time to focus on Hogan and Disciple. Piper says Disciple used to be Brutus Beefcake and the fans sound surprised. He says Disciple's real name is E. Harrison Leslie and tonight it's Piper vs. Hogan in the main event. Oh yeah they're feeling the pressure from Raw all right.

Perry Saturn vs. Fit Finlay

This could be interesting. Saturn is flanked by the entire Flock. Saturn chops him in the chest to start but Finlay takes him straight to the mat and puts on a hard chinlock. Back up and Saturn fires off kicks in the corner but charges into a boot. This is more hard hitting than any match in months already.

Finlay drives in knees in the corner and works on Saturn's knee on the mat. Back up and Saturn grabs a quick suplex for two but Finlay hits another hard clothesline to take over. I'm saying hard a lot because it's the only way to describe most of these shots. A rolling senton gets two for Finlay but he gets caught in a head and arms suplex and the Rings of Saturn are good for the submission.

Rating: C. This was short but they beat the tar out of each other out there. Finlay is the kind of guy that can work well with almost anyone which makes him an interesting guy to watch. It's rare to see heels going at it but it made for a good match. That's something WWE should do more often: mix things up a bit instead of doing the same stuff over and over again.

CALL THE HOTLINE!

Here's the NWO led by Hogan and Bischoff. Hogan talks about being 4 Life and if Piper wants a fight he can come get one right now. The fans say he sucks but Hogan says that just means they worship him. He calls the Disciple up and names him as the leader of his worshippers. That brings him to the family business and the only thing people remember right now is Nash's big foot going into Hogan's face.

If Nash wants to get a partner tonight, the NWO wants to see what he's made of because none of this is allowed to team up with him. Cue Nash to a face pop. He quotes Savage by saying there could be more than one person ready to stab him in the back. Hogan says at Spring Stampede they can watch each others' backs and then deal with their own issues. Nash says he has a partner but won't say who it is.....brother. To clarify, the story of this show is who will be the partner of one half of the World Tag Team Champions.

More Nitro Girls.

There is no Thunder this weekend as there's going to be an internet Pay Per Listen called Malice in the Palace.

Cruiserweight Title: Chris Jericho vs. Marty Jannetty

Jericho dedicates the match to the memory of Dean Malenko who has quit because he can't handle the heat. He quotes Hanson to say that in an MMBop, Dean's career is gone. Only Jericho could make that line work. Marty gets a quick clothesline to take over and a powerslam is good for two. A faceplant puts Jericho down but the Rocker Dropper is countered into a belly to back suplex and the Liontamer retains the title.

Post match Jericho grabs a cup of water and a bunch of papers. See, Dean claims to be the man of 1000 holds but Jericho has only counted about 60.

Jericho however knows 1004 and is going to list them off for us.

1. Armdrag
2. Armbar
3. Moss Covered Three Handled Gradunzel (Jericho's pronunciation)
4. Armbar
5. Saskatchewan Spinning Nerve Hold
6. Armbar

9. Shooting Star Staple Press

10. Right handed punch

We take a break.

712. Armbar

713. Gibberish

714. Canadian....something

Hour #2 begins.

723. Jericho Screwdriver

As Jericho talks about a Whizzer, Prince Iaukea cuts him off. Dean's dad trained the Prince as well and he's not going to stand for this disrespect. This holds up incredibly well and Jericho is still hilarious to this day.

Prince Iaukea vs. Glacier

Glacier runs him over to start and hits a quick belly to back suplex. He poses on the ropes instead of following up though and Prince comes back with a fallaway slam. A pair of dropkicks sets up a Samoan Drop for two but Glacier comes back with a powerslam. Glacier goes up but jumps into a northern lights suplex for the pin. Nothing to see here.

Some high school students win the Nitro Party Pack. Good to know.

Juventud Guerrera vs. El Dandy

Dandy hits a hard knee to the chest to start but gets caught in a hurricanrana to take him down. Juvy tries a baseball slide to the floor but Dandy slides back in at the same time. Dandy drops him on the top rope but Juvy comes right back with a rollup for two. Juvy is slammed down but slips out of an attempt at a second slam before hooking a Juvy Driver for a quick pin.

We get a clip of the new movie Lost In Space.

Chavo Guerrero Jr. vs. Kaz Hayashi

Heenan has joined commentary. Chavo is in a professionally made Eddie Guerrero is My Favorite Wrestler shirt. Feeling out process to start with Guerrero charging into an armdrag and armbar. I guess Hayashi is a Chris Jericho fan. Back up and Chavo gets two off a quick dropkick before stomping on Kaz.

A belly to back suplex sets up a chinlock from Guerrero as a guy with a huge backpack walks through the front row. They botch a spot where Chavo tries to powerbomb out of a hurricanrana but falls down, basically turning it into a running seated senton. A missile dropkick puts Chavo down and a German suplex gets two, but Chavo pops up and hits the tornado DDT for the pin.

Rating: C-. This was short but it was decent while it lasted. Kaz never really did much in WCW though they did say Ultimo Dragon had taken him under his wing so maybe he's in for a small push. Botch aside, Chavo continues to look smooth in the ring most of the time and the story is what he's been missing to get things going.

Post match Chavo helps Kaz up.

Before his match Raven says he'll dumb this down for us. He talks about hating his father and being unpopular in high school. It was Page who picked Raven up from the hospital when he got out of rehab. Four years ago when Page was released it was Raven who gave him a shoulder to cry on. Now Page is the US Champion and Raven had to spend three years in Barbed Wire City. Why didn't Page call in a favor and get him a job years ago? The Snake told him that Page wasn't a true friend and he was right. Quoth the US Champion forevermore.

Buff Bagwell vs. Raven

The announcers hope they beat each other into the hospital. Why would WCW announcers not like the Flock? Bagwell laughs at Raven to start before hiptossing him down. Raven charges into a boot in the corner and Bagwell runs him down. Posing ensues but here's DDP so Raven grabs the US Title and bails for the countout.

Page comes up to commentary and says he wants to put this in context. Yes he and Raven knew each other before, but Raven has selective memory. Poor little Scotty. Poor little us as he now joins Norton, Hall, Steiner and Riggs as Scottys in this company. Page talks about Raven being born with a silver spoon in his mouth and having a very privileged childhood.

On the other hand there's Page who came from a broken home but turned out just fine. It wasn't Page who caused all of Raven's hardships because Raven doesn't know what hardships are. Page goes into something resembling Hard Times before saying Raven has nothing to complain about.

The announcers recap the NWO events. This is in addition to constantly talking about them during the matches.

Disco Inferno vs. Billy Kidman

Disco throws him into the air and gets two off a clothesline to start. He stomps a mudhole in Kidman in the corner and throws him out tot he floor. Kidman comes back in with a slingshot headscissors and the announcers finally stop talking about how awesome Randy Savage is and wondering who Nash's partner will be.

A slingshot legdrop gets two for Kidman and Disco gets a near fall of his own off a sunset flip. Kidman dropkicks him down and hits a quick backbreaker, only to miss a top rope splash. Disco gets two off an elbow drop and a neckbreaker but charges into a sitout spinebuster for two. Kidman makes the mistake of lowering his head though and Disco hits a great piledriver for the pin.

Rating: C+. Much better match than I was expecting here with Disco actually going move for move with Kidman. I don't remember him using the piledriver that often but it's a good finishing move for him, especially if the Chartbuster is being taken by Disciple. Really nice match here with both guys looking good.

Hour #3 begins.

Curt Hennig vs. Jim Neidhart

Can this feud just end already? Rude jumps in on commentary and dodges a question about being Nash's partner tonight. Neidhart quickly pulls him to the floor and sends Hennig into the barricade before going back inside. Jim keeps asking Rude to come down to the ring for a beating but pounds Hennig down with ease. Hennig gets in some shots but Neidhart rakes him in the eyes to put him down. Off to a bearhug on Curt and Rude

runs in for the DQ, only to get caught in a quick bearhug as well.

Neidhart gets beaten down and handcuffed to the rope. Bulldog comes in for the save but Bryan Adams hits the ring for a piledriver on Davey. Rude takes off his belt and chokes Neidhart, making Anvil's eyes bug out in an unintentionally funny bit. Bret comes out for the real save, again calling the no association rule into question. Hart says this isn't happening anymore and he's tearing the NWO down brick by brick until he gets to Hogan.

TV Title: Chris Benoit vs. Booker T

Booker is defending in this rematch of a draw from last week. During the entrances we're told Iaukea vs. Jericho for the Cruiserweight Title is set for the PPV. They fight over a lockup to start with neither guy able to gain an advantage. Benoit pulls him down to the mat but Booker does half a Spinarooni to get up before anything else can be done. Booker gets spun over into a sunset flip for two and we have a standoff. A HARD chop sends Booker into the ropes as we're told it's Bulldog vs. Hennig at Spring Stampede. Dang how will the cable company handle all the people wanting to buy the show now?

Benoit stomps him down in the corner but gets caught in a spinebuster for a close two. A hard elbow to the face puts Benoit down again and the champion stomps away a bit. Benoit is quickly back up and snaps off a release German suplex to put both guys down. The Canadian gets two off a snap suplex as we get news that Nash has switched dressing rooms. So much for talking about the title match. Booker gets a boot up in the corner but walks into a drop toehold for two.

A backbreaker gets two for Benoit and it's off to surfboard hold with a knee in Booker's back. Chris suplexes him down for two and it's time to roll some Germans. Booker fights out of the third and hits the ropes but both guys try cross bodies to put them both down. Booker spins up and hits the side kick but gets crotched on top. Benoit is knocked away but

still sidesteps the missile dropkick. The Crossface is quickly broken up as Booker grabs the rope. Back up and they slug it out as the bell rings for the time limit.

Rating: B-. Another good match here with both guys looking great. The idea of having Benoit hang with Booker is a good idea but it would help if he'd actually win the title. It's the same thing that happened to him in the US Title feud: the good matches are getting Benoit more noticed, but a title win would mean so much more.

More Nitro Girls.

Psychosis vs. Ultimo Dragon

Dragon has the awesome red white and green attire on tonight. Psychosis takes him down before catching the handspring elbow in a takedown. A quick rollup gets two on Dragon and Psychosis goes up, only to have to block the spinning hurricanrana. Dragon is sent to the floor by a spinwheel kick and Psychosis hits a big dive over the top to take him down. While on the floor the Flock attacks Psychosis for recently injuring Lodi.

Dragon helps Psychosis fight off the Flock. Luchadores vs. Flock could be an interesting story.

Goldberg vs. Ray Traylor

The fans go NUTS for Goldberg and Traylor is taken aback by them. Goldberg runs him over and they slug it out with no one getting an advantage. They ram shoulders and no one moves so Traylor offers to let Goldberg hit the ropes for another try. Goldberg heads towards the ropes but snaps back with a clothesline to take Traylor down in a nice move. A leg trip puts Ray down again but Goldberg walks into a big spinebuster. He's on his feet before Traylor though and it's spear/Jackhammer to make

him 67-0.

Saturn jumps the barricade but the Flock holds him back.

Kevin Nash/??? vs. Lex Luger/Sting

To the shock of no one with a brain, Randy Savage is the mystery partner as he jumps Sting from behind during the entrances. A piledriver (popular move tonight) lays Sting out on the floor and we start with Savage vs. Luger. Savage kicks Sting to the floor as Nash comes in to beat up Luger. Sting is laid out in the aisle as Savage comes back in to choke Luger. Nash is back in again as Savage goes out to beat on the champion again. Sting finally gets his coat off but Savage posts him. Now it's a chair to Sting's ribs.

This has been going almost five minutes and we've seen about 20 seconds of the in ring portion. Nash goes to the floor to beat on Sting as Luger misses a charge into the corner. Sting finally makes a comeback as whatever part of this was a match breaks down. Sting backdrops Savage to the floor and Luger clotheslines Nash down. Hogan hits the floor to go after Sting but gets posted as well. Luger Racks Nash but Disciple comes in behind the referee's back to Stun Luger, giving Nash the pin.

Rating: C. This is a hard one to grade as it wasn't supposed to be a normal wrestling match. It was designed to get us to the main event and continue the chaos of the NWO which it did, but at the same time it was just a wild brawl. That being said, it was entertaining and did its job so I'll go right in the middle instead of taking a side on it.

Post match Piper comes out to drag Hogan back to the ring but Disciple gets in a cheap shot to start the double teaming. They fight to the back and we go to a break before the match actually started.

Hollywood Hogan vs. Roddy Piper

Back from a break and Hogan's music plays for a bit but there's no one in sight. Piper and Hogan show up at the entrance with Piper punching him down the aisle. Disciple follows them out but gets beaten up as well. They get in the ring and slug it out though I never heard a bell. Piper pounds away and pokes him in the eyes before they head outside again so Hogan can be sent into Disciple.

Back in and Piper pounds away in the corner with his 1984 offense. Hogan gets in a low blow but Piper hits one of his own. They slug it out from their knees with Hogan choking away. Back up and they slug it out again until Disciple pulls Piper to the floor. Piper gets back in and ducks a clothesline to put on a sleeper but Disciple comes in for the DQ. After everything else that happened, that's the DQ?

Rating: D. Unlike the previous brawl disguised as a match, this one didn't have nearly the action or fun involved included. This was the usual dull stuff when these two get in the ring but they're the draws so it's ok or something. You know you're in trouble when the best thing you can say about a match is it's short.

Post match Nash comes out and holds up Piper but Hogan hits Nash by mistake. This brings out Giant to clear the ring. Hogan tells Nash to be ready for the PPV but Disciple holds him back to end the show.

Remember no Thunder this week.

Overall Rating: D+. They were trying here but the NWO stuff dragged it down. It's becoming more and more like the Alliance every day: meaningless matches with no real end goal in sight. Savage has his first world title shot in over a year and it's a subplot in the three way battle for control of the NWO. The rest of the show had its moments but there's too much dullness on here dragging it down. Make sure you check out Jericho's 1004 holds bit though in case you've somehow never seen it.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of Complete 2001 Monday Night Raw Reviews at Amazon for just \$4 at:

And check out my Amazon author page with wrestling books for just \$4 at: