

Monday Nitro – August 10, 1998: You Can See Starrcade From Here

Monday Nitro #149

Date: August 10, 1998

Location: Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, South Dakota

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

It's the show after Road Wild and just like last month, nothing has changed. Goldberg has pinned Giant to wipe him out as a contender and Hogan lost to Jay Leno. Everything kind of resets now as we're coming up on Fall Brawl, meaning someone should be showing up soon to bring Nitro to its final ratings wins, save for a one off show in October. Let's get to it.

We open with the opening sequence for the first time in months.

Nitro Girls get us going in the ring, which now has a huge Nitro logo in the middle. Kimberly isn't here because Page isn't here.

Bischoff has put a gag order on the announcers regarding the main event of Road Wild. However, there will be a WCW executive here later to explain and show us what happened. Ok then.

Barbarian vs. Jim Duggan

Duggan spins the board around as he comes to the ring and accidentally drops both the board and American flag. The brawl is on in the corner with Duggan firing off right hands and a clothesline to send Barbarian out to the floor. The fans chant USA as Jimmy Hart distracts Duggan, allowing Barbarian to clubber Duggan down in the corner.

We hit the chinlock and one of the loudest USA chants I can ever remember starts up. It doesn't help as Barbarian pulls him down by the hair and drops some elbows but it was a nice sentiment. Duggan fights up again but gets kicked in the face and chinlocked again. Another comeback works a bit better with Duggan slugging away in the corner and getting a rollup out of the corner for the pin.

Rating: D. Well this was better than having the Faces of Fear go at it for five minutes. Duggan may be old and hasn't had a good match in years but the fans can get behind him with the USA chants. I'm not sure I'd use him every week on Nitro given how huge the roster is, but there's at least an idea there.

Post match Hugh Morrus comes out to help beat up Duggan but Meng makes another save. Barbarian, Morrus, Hart, Duggan and Doug Dillinger all get Tongan Death Grips. Meng vs. Goldberg for the title later tonight.

We look at what's happened to Lex Luger over the last week, including being attacked on Nitro and calling out Scott Hall as the attacker on Thunder. The battle royal elimination is ignored.

Here's Luger with something to say. He names Bret Hart as another one of the attackers from last week and isn't leaving without a match against Bret. This brings out Hart who calls Luger a liar because he was nowhere near Luger last week. Maybe Luger should say it was four guys or six guys (dig at Shawn's Marines story?) but he's not getting a shot without earning it. Bret says that Luger's real problem is jealousy with Bret's relationship with Sting at the top of the list. Luger says the only thing he's jealous of might be that US Title, so how about a shot tonight? Bret quickly agrees and Gene is thrilled.

We get a quick look at the TV Title match from Saturday.

Eddie Guerrero vs. Tokyo Magnum

That's the scheduled match at least as we get Disco Inferno and Alex Wright. Before Eddie comes out, Alex yells at Tokyo and tells him to commit harikiri, meaning suicide. Disco says Tokyo needs to win if he wants to stay with them or he's out. Eddie takes over quickly to start with a clothesline in the corner and a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker for two. A slam sets up the frog splash for the pin in maybe a minute.

Stills of Kanyon vs. Saturn vs. Raven from Saturday.

Saturn vs. Kanyon

This is the result of Kanyon not showing up for some tag matches. Kanyon charges at Saturn but gets suplexed down with ease. An STO puts Kanyon on the mat again and Saturn fires off kicks in the corner. Kanyon comes back with right hands and gets two off something like a Michinoku Driver. A face first electric chair slam gets two more for Kanyon and an elbow to the jaw puts Saturn down again. Saturn quickly breaks out of a sleeper and puts on one of his own, only to have to counter a belly to back suplex into a cover for two.

Kanyon grabs the sleeper again and takes Saturn down for two arm drops. After breaking the hold, Saturn drops Kanyon throat first on the top rope before catching him in a t-bone suplex. A Russian legsweep from Kanyon puts both guys on the mat but it's Kanyon up first with a neckbreaker out of the corner for two. Saturn doesn't like being in trouble so he crotches Kanyon on top and hooks a top rope head and arms suplex. Here's Lodi for a distraction, allowing Raven to come in and DDT Saturn, giving Kanyon the pin.

Rating: C+. Kanyon continues to entertain, which makes me all the more curious as to how they'll screw him up. At least it seems like we're getting somewhere with this story as it's been going on for months now. These two work well together which doesn't surprise me given how similar their styles were at times.

Meng beats up more security. They're doing a decent job at building him up as a one off challenger.

More Nitro Girls.

We see the new grand prize Nitro Party winners. The Nitro Girls and Gene will be at their high school in three weeks.

Sick Boy vs. Steve McMichael

McMichael goes after Sick Boy before the bell but Lodi gets in some cheap shots to let Sick Boy take over. The match starts without a bell as Sick Boy hits a springboard dropkick and back elbow for two each. Sick Boy is a good sized guy so those are some impressive moves. Mongo comes back with clotheslines and a tilt-a-whirl slam but hits his head while trying a three point charge. The Cure (Pedigree) is countered and Mongo tombstones him down for the pin.

Hour #2 begins so here's the Black and White. As always, Hogan is all smiles because nothing bad ever happens to him. That's one of the major problems with WCW around this time: Hogan doesn't care if he wins or loses and just goes on to whatever his next feud was. If he never gets his comeuppance, why should I care about what he does next?

Hogan says that Leno is done so now he wants the world title back. He's beaten everyone in the world and there's no one that can beat him, so he wants his title shot sooner than later. Eric says that since Meng has destroyed so many security guards, the NWO will provide security in the title match tonight.

For all of you people wondering if you should change over to Raw, the announcers have a three minute chat about the world title match tonight. Around this time on Raw, Mankind was confronting Vince and Kane about a massive conspiracy involving Undertaker. WCW counters with an

announcement: the Wolfpack will also provide security, because apparently they have that authority. That's enough talking though and it's time for a commercial. My goodness this company makes me shake my head.

TV Title: Chavo Guerrero Jr. vs. Stevie Ray

Chavo is worried because he can't find Pepe. Jericho pops up on stage with Pepe so Chavo runs after him and follows Jericho into the back. We can hear sounds of a beating and Jericho walks out with a broken Pepe. We have a change of schedule.

TV Title: Stevie Ray vs. Chris Jericho

Stevie easily shoves Jericho down to start and hits some big right hands, only to have Jericho dropkick the knee. A crucifix gets two on the champion so he kicks Jericho in the face to take over again. Jericho gets draped ribs first over the top rope but he low bridges Stevie out to the floor.

A plancha takes Stevie out but Jericho bangs himself up in the dive. Back in and Stevie catches Jericho coming off the top in a powerslam. Chris comes right back with a running dropkick in the corner but the referee takes an elbow to the face. Stevie runs Jericho over but the Giant of all people breaks up a Slap Jack and chokeslams Stevie to give Jericho the easy Liontamer for the title.

Rating: C. The match was shockingly decent but both guys were wrestling like faces for a good chunk of the match. The ending is confusing but it's very nice to see a guy like Jericho get even a little taste of the big story. He's been the most awesome thing in this company for a long time now and it's nice to see him get away from the cruiserweight ranks.

Heenan joins us at the halfway point and here are Eric and Liz with something to say. He's the WCW executive that is going to show us what

happened in the main event. We get some selected stills and Eric says they won. Also don't watch the Tonight Show because Leno is a liar. Again, why should I buy the show if Eric and Hogan are just going to laugh and act like the losses mean nothing? Would it be too much for them to be ticked off one time?

Lizmark Jr. vs. Psychosis vs. Rey Mysterio Jr.

No real reason for this. Psychosis takes over to start with a front suplex to Rey and a lariat to Lizmark. He follows it up with a nice missile dropkick to Rey with a top rope backsplash to the lesser known masked guy at the same time. A flapjack into a spinebuster puts Rey down and then onto the floor but Psychosis misses a running dropkick at Lizmark to finally change momentum. Lizmark pounds away in the corner and scores with a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker.

Psychosis is sent to the floor where we see Rey limping. Lizmark hits a suicide dive to take out Psychosis and Rey follows up with a running flip dive. So much for the limp. Rey stays on the apron for a springboard seated senton to a lifted up Psychosis (think a Hart Attack) but Lizmark and Rey get in an argument over who should get the pin. They make up and try a Doomsday Device with Rey swapping out the clothesline for a cross body but Psychosis victory rolls Lizmark for two, sending Rey crashing to the mat.

Lizmark stomps on both guys but gets kicked in the face by Rey. A split legged moonsault gets two for Mysterio but Psychosis gets back up, only to get caught in something like a swinging Fameasser. Lizmark goes up but dives into Psychosis' feet, only to have Rey get monkey flipped into a quick hurricanrana on Lizmark for the pin.

Rating: C+. This was a different kind of match but it still worked well. I'm surprised by how strong Psychosis was pushed out there. He controlled the opening of the match and was destroying both Lizmark and Mysterio for good portions. Mysterio's knee is always an issue but hopefully it's not

serious.

Nitro Girls.

US Title: Lex Luger vs. Bret Hart

Bret is defending in another match that should have been at the PPV. Luger shoves Bret to the floor to start before accepting a test of strength for some reason. A hammerlock gets the champion nowhere so Luger elbows him out to the floor. Bret grabs the belt and starts to walk away but Luger will have none of that. Luger actually armdrags him into an armbar but Bret takes him into the corner and stomps away.

We take a break and come back with Bret sending him into the barricade and slamming Luger down on the concrete. Back in and Bret does the Hogan hand to the ear but Luger jacks his jaw with right hands. A low blow puts Luger down again but the referee doesn't seem to care. Hart puts him down with a Russian legsweep and the headbutt to the abdomen.

A snap suplex gets two and Bret takes a breather to yell at the referee. The champ loads up the Five Moves but Luger gets a boot up to stop the elbow. Luger comes back with his clotheslines and the forearm for two before putting on a sleeper. The referee gets taken down and Bret pulls out a foreign object. Before it can be used though, Lex picks him up in the Torture Rack for the submission and the title.

Rating: C-. Pretty basic match here but it was nice to see something get some time on this show. I continue to shake my head whenever Bret comes on screen though as he's now lost his title in his first defense after being wasted for about nine months. The match wasn't bad and the Wolfpack did need to win something so I don't have much to complain about here.

Hour #3 begins.

Stills of the Cruiserweight Title match. The announcers talk about Dean being a fair referee, even though he helped Guerrero winning the title. That's a quote, not pointing out a flaw.

Cruiserweight Title: Juventud Guerrera vs. Kidman

Kidman is cleaned up here but Juvy catches him with a spinwheel kick right after the bell. A springboard missile dropkick to the back puts Kidman down on the floor. Kidman takes over with a dropkick of his own before sending Juvy back inside for a slingshot legdrop. The champ avoids a charge in the corner and takes Kidman down with a running lariat. Kidman comes back with a short powerbomb as the announcers talk about Bret's rematch on Thunder. Juvy takes Kidman down with a hurricanrana and the 450 is enough to retain the title.

Rating: D+. This is a match where they could have done something special if they had actual time but you can't get very far in three and a half minutes. Kidman works better in the clean clothes as he picks up the pace a bit. Juvy's 450 still looks great, but the announcers didn't even acknowledge it to hype the rematch.

The announcers talk about Bret vs. Luger again.

We see the real stills from the Leno match.

Here are Raven and the Flock so the boss can beat up Riggs and Lodi for costing him the match on Saturday. Raven goes to hit Horace but he blocks the shot and we get a bell.

Raven vs. Horace

Raven beats on Horace to start and knocks him to the floor. A Russian legsweep sends Horace into the barricade but he comes back with a stop sign shot to the head, knocking Raven back to the floor. Horace hits a

nice suicide dive before throwing Raven through the sign. The big man misses a top rope splash and Raven asks for a chair, setting up the drop toehold. The Flock has to stop an invading Kanyon, allowing Saturn to come in with a Death Valley Driver on Raven to give Horace the pin.

Rating: D+. The more I see of Horace the more I like him. He's a big guy but moves well in the ring and has a good look to him. He'll never go anywhere but it's cool to see people like this who had some potential. The three way feud of course continues because we have to go months before getting any real development.

The Nitro Girls dance some more. Of note (for me at least) is Tony announcing a Thunder taping at Rupp Arena in Lexington, Kentucky. There's a chance I was at that show.

Konnan vs. Curt Hennig

Curt cranks on the arm to start but Konnan comes back with the rolling clothesline to send Hennig to the floor. The fans chant Wolfpack while Konnan pulls on his pants. Back in and Hennig pounds Konnan down in the corner before shouting that he's rowdy rowdy. A belly to back suplex gets two for Hennig but Konnan comes back with an X Factor. Curt finds a chain from somewhere but Konnan takes it away from him and chokes Hennig for a DQ.

Rating: D. This hasn't been the best night for in ring action. It was another boring match with a lot of walking around by Hennig to fill in time. You would think on a show with five title matches (think they were desperate for something to pop a rating?) that there wouldn't be a need to waste time but it's been a staple tonight.

Tag Titles: Kevin Nash/Sting vs. Scott Hall/Giant

Kevin and Sting are challenging. The Survey says this is Wolfpack

territory, causing Tony to refer to the Wolfpack as the good guys. Giant holds the belt above his head so the referee can't get it in a funny bit. Nash punches Hall in the face to start but Scott gets away from an early Jackknife attempt. Back in and Hall drives in the shoulders, only to be clotheslined down again. Time for the battle of the giants with Nash firing off some knees to the ribs.

It's back to Hall for more knees to the ribs but a Giant distraction lets Hall get in a low blow. For once in his career Tony makes a good point: shouldn't the referee wonder why Nash is keeled over in pain when he turns around? Hall punches Nash down again and brings Giant back in, only to have Nash come back with a big boot. The hot tag brings in Sting for three straight Splashes on Hall but Giant chokeslams the referee for the DQ.

Rating: D. These matches are getting annoying. This was another match that could have been on the PPV but instead they just threw it on Nitro to fill in about ten minutes. It wasn't entertaining due to the pure formula and cheap ending but the fans reacted to Sting as they always will. One other note: Tony said the powerbomb was banned for a few months, which is as close as we're going to get to an official ending to the story.

Both NWOs come out to do security on the main event. Why the four guys in the previous match needed to go to the back and come out again is beyond me. There are only six guys in total: those four plus Luger and Hogan.

WCW World Title: Goldberg vs. Meng

Meng pounds away to start but Goldberg hits a kind of flying tackle. A superkick puts Meng on the floor but the Black and White leave Meng alone. Back in and Goldberg puts on a quickly broken leg bar before getting kicked to the floor on the Black and White side. The Wolfpack makes the save but Meng puts him in the Tongan Death Grip, only to let go early. Spear, Jackhammer, we're done. Too short to rate but they actually

did a good job of making Goldberg seem vulnerable. Given the opponent, that's very impressive.

Hogan comes in with a chair shot to Goldberg's back but Nash takes it away. Goldberg thinks it was Nash and Big Sexy gets speared.

Overall Rating: D+. It's the usual WCW mantra: there's good stuff in there but all the bad stuff is too much to overcome. The NWO feud continues to go nowhere and is starting to remind me of the Alliance. If there's nowhere to go with these stories, what's the point in sitting through them?

I mentioned the other problem several times: so many of these matches should have been on the pay per view. The US and Tag Title matches easily could have been done on Saturday to fill in time and make the card feel more complete. Instead they just threw everyone into one battle royal and gave us McMichael vs. Adams. Disappointing show tonight.

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