

Thunder – September 24, 1998: The Man Of 1000 Positions. Wait What?

Thunder

Date: September 24, 1998

Location: Scope, Norfolk, Virginia

Attendance: 8,858

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Bobby Heenan, Tony Schiavone, Lee Marshall

The main story tonight is the Horsemen being back in Horsemen country despite Bischoff ordering them not to show up. Other than that the big deal from Monday is Warrior turning Disciple to his side which is big because it involves Hogan and the lack of the story making sense is just a detail. Let's get to it.

The announcers welcome us to the show and run down the highlights tonight, including Goldberg vs. Kanyon. Bischoff is in Japan tonight. Heenan thinks a WE WANT FLAIR chant is for Goldberg. What exactly is in that cup?

Rick Steiner vs. Hugh Morrus

Morrus has hacked off most of his hair since we last saw him. Steiner quickly slams him down and decks Jimmy Hart for fun. A clothesline puts Hugh on the floor and Hart gets chased because that's what he's around for. Morrus gets in a few shots from behind to take over and scores a slam of his own, only to miss a Macho Elbow. Rick goes straight up and the bulldog is good for the fast pin.

LONG recap of the Hogan vs. Warrior nonsense from Nitro. Nonsense is the right word for it. The story was about a man talking about a revolution and kidnapping and brainwashing a former barber now known as a disciple

through the use of magic smoke that sometimes puts everyone to sleep but sometimes doesn't and babbling incoherently.

Ernest Miller vs. Nick Dinsmore

Miller holds up three fingers and Marshall points out that it's not the sign of the Horsemen. He does the five seconds deal for Dinsmore but Nick fires off forearms and gets two off a northern lights suplex. Miller comes back with a variety of kicks and stomps before the superkick and Feliner are good for the pin.

Psychosis vs. Saturn

Feeling out process to start with Saturn trying to take it to the mat but Psychosis fighting him off with a dropkick and some chops. A cross armbreaker from Saturn doesn't last long and Psychosis drops him with a clothesline, only to walk into a superkick a few seconds later. Cue Lodi with a "Saturn Ruined My Life" sign, triggering a discussion about Saturn's honor. Marshall says the fans in Norfolk must understand what that means due to Saturn being a former Army ranger. I'd hope no one in the arena heard that as Norfolk is a Navy town.

Saturn goes after Lodi and the distraction lets Psychosis hit a nice dive to the floor followed by a missile dropkick back inside for two. A regular dropkick works as well but Saturn comes back by dropping him ribs first on the ropes. Psychosis comes right back and clips the knee before sending Saturn outside again. He tries the guillotine legdrop to the floor but Saturn gets out of the way and throws him back inside. Saturn goes up and hits a frog splash for what didn't seem to be the planned pin but ends the match anyway. Psychosis appeared to kick out but the referee counted the pin and Saturn looked confused.

Rating: C-. Saturn is in a weird place right now as he doesn't have much to do after the Flock broke up but he's on fire with the crowd. The smart thing would be to send him after a midcard title and I have no idea why

he isn't going after Jericho. Saturn vs. Bret would be a very interesting match but it would mean putting someone new near the top of the card and that's just not going to happen in WCW. To be fair though, that would be quite a jump for anyone to make.

Tony brings out Alex Wright for an interview but Alex only speaks German. Schiavone doesn't understand him so Alex throws out "the pig of a man" and insults the crowd. Europeans are far better than Americans but Alex puts all of them to shame. He lists off the other European wrestlers on the roster and rips them apart, particularly focusing on British Bulldog, who is old and lazy after living with Americans for so long.

Video on the Horsemen.

Finlay vs. Barbarian

The bell rings and Scott Hall stumbles out of the entrance and heads over to the announce table. The camera stays on him so there's no match to talk about right now. We switch back to the ring to see the guys pounding on each other with forearms as Hall rants about Nash not being his boss and being mean when he drinks.

Barbarian slams him down and puts on a chinlock as Hall vomits on the announcers' desk. Back in the ring Finlay comes back with some knees to the ribs but walks into a spinebuster followed by a gutbuster for two. Barbarian takes way too much time walking around though and charges into a boot, setting up the tombstone for the pin.

Rating: D-. As you could probably tell, the match was just there for background noise while Hall did his thing. They're making his issues seem very real which is what bothers me the most about the story. At least we didn't have to see what he was doing for the most part. The match was bad even for a power brawling match.

Video on Goldberg vs. Page.

Page comes out for a chat about Halloween Havoc. There's no hatred between he and Goldberg but there is the World Title. Page has been chasing his dream for years and now he has to beat a phenom to achieve that dream. Goldberg may be the odds on favorite and Page wouldn't want it any other way. Goldberg may be unbeatable, but maybe he'll feel the BANG. Very simple but it got the point across.

Raven vs. Villano V

Raven says he's going to hurt Villano (pronounced Villain-0) just like he hurt his brother on Monday. V tries to get in some early offense but Raven shrugs it off and hits a knee lift to put him down. An early attempt to get a chair is stopped by Villano but his bulldog and atomic drop are shrugged off. Raven sets up the chair, hits the drop toehold and the Evenflow is good for the pin.

Even more Hogan vs. Warrior stuff.

Disco Inferno vs. Chavo Guerrero Jr.

Chavo hammers away to start and sends Disco to the floor before playing with Pepe. Disco fires back with his usual stuff including a running knee and a neckbreaker. The announcers ignore the match to talk about Scott Norton winning the IWGP Championship as Chavo hooks a chinlock. Inferno comes back with a hot shot and we take a break.

Back with Disco coming off the top but only hitting mat. Chavo comes back with a nice springboard bulldog for two but takes too much time playing with Pepe, allowing Disco to come back with a slam. Chavo dropkicks him in the back and gets two off a rollup, only to have Disco score a quick piledriver for the pin. Apparently this was for the #1 contendership to the Cruiserweight Title, which the announcers forgot to mention until

now.

Rating: C-. The ending was really abrupt but it was good enough while it lasted. Both guys got to get in the air and jump around which actually works for Disco. Chavo's Pepe thing is getting a bit repetitive but at least he isn't acting as crazy as he was before. Knowing WCW, he'll be even more insane on Nitro.

Post match Juventud Guerrera comes out with a piece of paper, followed by Nick Patrick with a scale. It seems that Disco was over the Cruiserweight limit of 230lbs. He has to weigh in again right now and comes in at 231, meaning he's ineligible, making Chavo the winner by DQ and the #1 contender. Disco blasts Guerrera out of frustration and is the only one standing tall (in boots, which probably weigh more than two pounds). In other words: heavyweights are better than cruiserweights but Chavo is the best loser we can find to challenge Juvy.

Norman Smiley vs. Alex Wright

Norman gets in Alex's face over what was said earlier. Alex gets on one knee and begs for mercy with an offer of a handshake, only to take a swing. Norman will have none of that and clotheslines him, followed by a nice swinging slam. Wright bails to the floor before coming in to crank on the arm, drawing a USA chant.

The fans chant boring so Alex monkey flips Smiley down and nips up into a nice dropkick to calm them down. A backbreaker gets two on Norman and Wright sends him outside. They chop it out for a bit until Wright throws him back in for a stomping. Alex misses a charge and Norman comes back with right hands and an elbow drop for two, only to get caught in a neckbreaker for the pin.

Rating: D+. Pretty dull and slow match here but Norman was smooth in the ring and fun to watch. Alex fighting against the rest of the European wrestlers on the roster is at least something for him to do for awhile

that isn't dancing with Disco Inferno. The match was better than some of the drek we've seen on this show lately at least.

Here's Stevie Ray for a talk. The people here can scream for the Horsemen all night long, but Eric Bischoff has called him up and said to keep the Horsemen out of the building tonight. Stevie is officially the NWO enforcer and the Horsemen won't be here tonight. Flair and the Horsemen are in the back and Doug Dillinger lets them walk past. They come through the entrance and Stevie steps to the side, still talking trash as he leaves. Stevie goes through a curtain and is knocked down to the floor. Arn Anderson walks through the curtain with a tire iron, bringing a smile to the fans' faces.

Anderson gets in the ring and says unless there are 15,000 people missing a thumb, this is a Horsemen town. The Horsemen don't care what Bischoff has to say and last Thursday was his lone free day. They're a thinking man's organization and they pick their spots after calculating. Despite what Bischoff thinks, this company belongs to the Horsemen.

Malenko says he hasn't had the chance to thank Anderson for his faith in him. Anderson put his faith in another man by the name of Curt Hennig but unlike him, Dean is a real Horseman. Benoit says Eric needs to change the first half of his last name. As for Liz, the invitation to ride Space Mountain comes with an invitation to all the other E rides. Just let Benoit be the strong and silent one from now on. Mongo threatens to beat up Bischoff's entire family.

Flair calls Schiavone Antonio and says it's his turn to talk in Norfolk. The Horsemen are reunited and it feels so good. Flair hasn't saved his money over the years and Norfolk is one reason why. The Horsemen are going to play while Bischoff is away and own Norfolk all night long. Liz is back at their hotel, and tonight Malenko is going to get to prove that he's the man of 1000 positions. "I mean holds!"

Video on the Diamond Cutter.

WCW World Title: Kanyon vs. Goldberg

Raven sits in on commentary and asks what about him during the long entrance. Kanyon does his catchphrase and Goldberg spears him down before the bell. The Jackhammer is the only move of the match.

Overall Rating: D+. This wasn't a good show but it was miles better than the mess we had to sit through last week. Tonight took the focus away from Hogan and his nonsense and put it on everything else, which is what we've been needing for a long time now. The wrestling was tolerable tonight and at least some of the bigger names were on the card. I can live with a night of squashes if the winners are guys I actually care about. Far better show this week but it still wasn't great.

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