

Thunder – October 22, 1998: This Doesn't Suck!

Thunder

Date: October 22, 1998

Location: Tingley Coliseum, Albuquerque, New Mexico

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

It's the very last show before Halloween Havoc and we're actually coming off a good show on Monday with every major PPV match getting some focus. Nothing has been announced for tonight but that's usually the case coming into Thunder. I'm sure we'll get plenty of videos on the two main events though. Let's get to it.

The announcers talk about Hogan attacking Horace on Monday and call it a horrible act.

We look at Goldberg and Page nearly brawling after Goldberg cost Page a match against Jericho.

Super Calo vs. Rey Mysterio Jr.

Calo takes over with some kicks to the ribs to start and gets two off a shoulder block. A missile dropkick gets the same and Calo hooks a seated abdominal stretch to slow things down. Back up and Calo throws Rey to the apron before sending him to the floor for a big dive. Totally one sided so far. Back in and Rey climbs corner to hit a nice headscissors followed by the yet to be named 619 back inside. Calo gets caught in the ropes and the top rope legdrop to the back of his head gets two. Super gets to his feet and goes up, only to get crotched and taken down with a hurricanrana for the pin.

Rating: C-. Nice fast paced match to start things off here but there

wasn't much to it. It's nice to see Mysterio back and mostly healthy though as no one could keep up with him when he was at even 85-90%. Calo looked better than usual here, but that doesn't really say much as he isn't one of the better luchadores.

Post match Eddie and the LWO comes out to offer Rey a spot but he throws the shirt back at Eddie and leaves. Chavo watches with a smile on his face from the entryway.

Video on Page vs. Goldberg.

Here's Page for a quick chat. Monday was nothing but intensity and it makes him think of Goldberg as even more of a champion. The Diamond Cutter is enough to beat him though because he's next. On Sunday, Goldberg will feel the BANG.

Ad for the Mastercard.

Alex Wright vs. Johnny Swinger

Wright cranks on the arm to start and puts Swinger down with a fireman's carry takeover. Johnny comes back with an armbar of his own and a Russian legsweep has Wright in trouble. A spinwheel kick puts Swinger down and Alex drapes him ribs first over the top rope. Swinger comes back with a hard shot to the chest but gets dropkicked out of the air, setting up a neckbreaker to give Wright the pin.

Rating: D+. Just a squash here with Alex looking good as almost always. I'm still not sure why he never got a huge push but the thick accent might have had something to do with it. Or maybe that this is WCW and it's a good day if they can tie their shoes properly. Swinger never did anything for me but he was fine for something like this.

We look at the Steiners brawling on Monday.

Video on Sting vs. Hart closing Nitro. Tony accuses Heenan of being a snitch for the NWO. Heenan: "I am not!" Tony: "That's true. You're a liar, a traitor, a coward and a snitch."

TV Title: Kanyon vs. Chris Jericho

Jericho is defending and this has some serious potential. Kanyon does his Who Better bit with Jericho putting bunny ears up behind his head. Chris takes the mic and says the real question is Who Better Than Jericho. Kanyon doesn't take kindly to gimmick infringement and the fight is quickly on. Jericho knocks him to the floor with a shoulder and we take an early break.

Back with Jericho getting two off the Lionsault as we see Raven for the first time, looking on from the apron. Jericho does his long stride and Kanyon sends him face first into the buckle to take over. The superplex from the middle of the rope (not the corner) puts Jericho down for two as the fans get distracted by something in the audience. Jericho counters a suplex into a reverse suplex for two but Kanyon comes back with a swinging neckbreaker for the same.

The announcers talk about Raven looking distracted as Jericho scores with a gutbuster but can't get the Liontamer. An electric chair into a flapjack gets two on the champion but Jericho fights out of a superplex. Jericho tries a missile dropkick but hits the referee (Billy Kidman according to Tony and Lee) which draws in Raven. The Even Flow is easily countered into the Liontamer and Raven taps, which is good enough for a submission win for Jericho.

Rating: C+. Good while it lasted but the match was more about Raven than anything else. It's nice to see Jericho get a win for a change, even if he was acting more like a face while doing so. The Raven story is interesting as he's lost his edge without the Flock and could have some good stories as a result.

Clip from the new Kurt Russell movie Soldier.

We see Hogan beating up Horace and Warrior on Monday

Saturn vs. Norman Smiley

A lockup goes nowhere so Norman makes his chest dance to entertain Saturn. Apparently Saturn is more of a song than dance man as he throws Smiley down with a beal before dropping him with a t-bone suplex for two. Norman picks the ankle but Saturn is quickly in the ropes before anything can be done. A neckbreaker sends Smiley to the floor but he comes back in with a nice sunset flip for two.

Since this is a pretty good technical match so far, the announcers are talking about Horace. Saturn slams him down but misses a top rope splash, allowing Norman to take over with some uppercuts. A tiger bomb gets two for Smiley but Saturn drills him with a superkick. There's a belly to belly to Norman followed by the Death Valley Driver for the pin.

Rating: C. The match didn't have time to go anywhere but it was nice while it lasted, much like the previous match. Smiley is a very sound technical guy and could actually keep up with Saturn on the mat. Saturn's superkick always looked good though and it nailed Smiley in the jaw here. Nice little match.

Lex Luger vs. Scotty Riggs

Feeling out process to start until Luger remembers he's fighting Riggs and runs him over with some clotheslines. Riggs snaps Lex's throat across the top rope and chokes away a lot before scoring with a dropkick. Luger quickly breaks out of a chinlock as the announcers say no one anticipated seeing Hogan vs. Warrior again eight and a half years later. A few running knees in the corner have Luger in trouble but he comes back with a suplex. Luger comes back with all of his usual stuff and finishes Riggs

with the Rack.

Rating: D+. Not the worst squash in the world here as Riggs looked decent out there. That's rather surprising as Riggs is usually one of the least interesting wrestlers on the roster. Luger was his usual self here, meaning he was charismatic but used the same moves he's done for ten years now.

We takes yet another look at Bischoff being thrown out of the United Center. It really wasn't that big of a deal.

Juventud Guerrera vs. Prince Iaukea

They trade takedowns to star until Juvy charges into a boot in the corner. Iaukea gets two off a snapmare and breaks up a sunset flip attempt. We hit the early chinlock on Juvy followed by a suplex and chops in the corner. It's Chinlock: The Sequel followed by another suplex attempt but Guerrera counters into a Fameasser. A top rope corkscrew dive puts Prince down and sets up the 450. Disco runs out to break it up but Juvy dives off with the 450 for the pin just in time.

Rating: C. Short but fine as Disco vs. Juvy continues to build. I'm not sure how good of a match that's going to be when we get there but it's nice to see them doing something in the cruiserweight division that doesn't involve the title. Prince wasn't bad here but the bald head doesn't make him more interesting.

Clips from Nitro of Bischoff being thrown out by cops and the mayor of Minneapolis.

Konnan vs. Scott Armstrong

After the usual intro, Konnan hits the rolling clothesline just after the bell. There's the seated dropkick and Scott bails to the floor, holding

his shoulder. Back in and Scott uses his bad arm for a test of strength and rakes Konnan's eyes to take over. A few basic moves later and we're in the chinlock. Konnan fights up with some elbows to the ribs but gets dropped by a clothesline. A bulldog and rollup get two on Scott before Konnan kicks him in the ribs, hits the X-Factor and hooks the Sunrise for the win.

Rating: D. These squashes are getting weaker as we're approaching the end of the show. Konnan was always better on the mic than he was in the ring and this match proved it for the most part. Scott was the least interesting of the Armstrong Family but he wasn't that bad out there.

Clips of Bret and Sting's rivalry.

Horsemen video.

Kendall Windham vs. Dean Malenko

Kendall says he knows the Horsemen and can prove Dean doesn't measure up. Dean hammers away in the corner to start but runs into a big boot. A lariat puts Dean down again but he grabs a sunset flip. Windham punches the mat instead of Dean's head, allowing Malenko to hit a quick kick to the leg, setting up the Cloverleaf for the win in less than 90 seconds.

Dean grabs the mic and says that's why he's a Horseman. The rest of the team comes out and Arn has a mic. He says it's obvious why the Horsemen are here and calls Bischoff a vicious coward. Bischoff has been making fun of Arn's physical shortcomings but he's not even half the man Anderson is. If Bischoff ever makes fun of his family again, Arn will do things to Bischoff that his family should never be allowed to see. Flair says that this is the Horsemen's party and names each individual member. He'll be running this company one day and Bischoff will be working for him.

Sting vs. Giant

Giant misses a charge and Sting hammers away but misses the Stinger Splash. The big man steps on his chest and pounds on him in the corner, only to miss a big elbow. Three straight Stinger Splashes set up a slam but Scott Steiner runs in with a chair to the leg for the DQ before the Deathlock.

The NWO lays out Sting until Rick Steiner and the Wolfpack makes the save to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. It's still good and a different kind of show from Nitro. This is one of the most frustrating things about WCW. It's clear that they can put on entertaining shows but we get the garbage that they put on so often anymore that it's barely worth watching half the time. Good show tonight with some entertaining squashes and small build to the PPV on Sunday.

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