

Thunder – October 29, 1998: Taped Doesn't Mean Bad

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Date: October 29, 1998

Location: Tingley Coliseum, Albuquerque, New Mexico

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Bobby Heenan, Mike Tenay

Halloween Havoc is over and the main story coming out of Monday is Bret Hart losing the US Title to Diamond Dallas Page. Unfortunately this is one of those taped Thunders so we're not going to get much of anything as far as high level storyline development. God bless the midcard I guess. Let's get to it.

The announcers talk about how great Nitro was and tell us of two title matches tonight.

Wrath vs. Van Hammer

It's strange to see Wrath in there with someone his own size. Wrath shoves him into the corner and hammers away with various strikes. Hammer blocks a whip into the corner by putting his boot up to stop himself. An elbow to the jaw drops Hammer and they head to the floor with Wrath sending him into the barricade. Back in and Wrath hits a top rope forearm but Hammer comes back with chops and punches in the corner. A powerslam gets two on Wrath but he Hulks Up and hits the Meltdown for the pin.

Rating: D. I guess Van Hammer is an upgrade for his size but Wrath is still just squashing jobbers. Why he got one shot at Jericho and never did anything else with him is beyond me but the Meltdown looked good. Wrath is getting stronger and stronger reactions from the crowd so points for WCW for making something work.

Clips of Alex Wright vs. Finlay.

Finlay vs. Alex Wright

Because the world was waiting on the third match in this series. Wright hides in the ropes until Finlay goes over and gives him a clean break. Finlay cranks on the arm but Alex comes back with some uppercuts and a slingshot belly to back suplex. Some dancing allows Finlay to take over with his own European uppercuts before working on the legs as this is already dragging. The announcers pick things up a bit by talking about Finlay breaking Alex's father's leg back in the day.

Alex tries to run but Finlay easily catches him and wraps the leg around the post. Back up and Wright falls down so we hit the leg lock again. A knee drop and kick to the leg in the corner have Wright in trouble but he cartwheels away from a whip. Why don't more people use that instead of getting whipped across the ring? Alex bails outside but snaps Finlay across the top rope and scores with a missile dropkick. Since this match hasn't gone on long enough, Finlay is knocked into the referee...but he grabs Wright for a tombstone and Nick Patrick counts the pin.

Rating: C-. The leg work was good as the announcers pushed the idea that Finlay was trying to do the same thing to Alex that he did to the father. Unfortunately at the end of the day this is the third match these two have had in two and a half weeks and any interest in that story is long gone.

We look at JJ getting beaten up on Nitro.

Tuff Tom vs. Disciple

Oh yeah they're not even trying tonight. Disciple throws him to the floor to start but has to deal with Mean Mark. Shame it's not Mean Mark Callous to make this the slightest bit interesting. Back in and Tom hits a

neckbreaker on Disciple for no effect. After a slam it's the world's slowest Stunner to pin Tom.

Eddie Guerrero vs. Dean Malenko

Feeling out process to start despite these two knowing each other so well. Eddie grabs the arm before switching to the leg and taking Dean to the mat. We get the always cool lightning fast technical exchange with both guys getting near falls and trading quickly broken holds. That leads us to a stalemate and we take a break.

Back with Eddie escaping a monkey flip but getting slammed down and chinlocked. Guerrero fights up and scores with a headscissors and dropkick to the side of the head. Dean pops back up and suplexes Eddie down and right into the chinlock again. Guerrero fights up just as easily as he did the first time and hits a belly to back suplex of his own. The control doesn't last long again as Dean just throws Eddie into the air for a big crash down to the mat. A Cloverleaf attempt sends Guerrero running outside and the match takes a breather.

Dean hammers on Eddie in the corner but gets sent into the corner to change control again. A brainbuster puts Dean down but Eddie spends too much time yelling at the crowd and gets superplexed down to put both guys on the mat. Eddie is up first and sends Malenko to the floor. They trade whips into the barricade before heading back inside for a quick surfboard from Eddie. That goes nowhere so we hit the quick rollups again. Dean hammers away in the corner but here's the LWO for the DQ.

Rating: B. This was getting awesome at the end but the stupid ending hurts it. At least we got a solid match with some length here, even though we had to miss three and a half minutes of it for the commercial. Van Hammer, Finlay and Disciple get full matches, but these two get their cut. Naturally.

The Horsemen come out for the save.

TV Title: Chris Jericho vs. Disco Inferno

Disco is challenging and grabs the mic before the match. He reminds Jericho that he's a former two time TV Champion and Jericho needs to respect that. Therefore, Jericho should just wrap the title around Disco's waist right now and be done with this. Jericho pulls the belt back to hit Disco in the face but winds up putting it around his waist instead. He raises Inferno's hand and then clotheslines him down to get things going.

The referee takes the belt away from Jericho and Disco grabs a neckbreaker and rollup for two each. Jericho comes back with a hot shot and suplex for an Arrogant two. We hit the chinlock on Disco as the announcers talk about Chavo Guerrero challenging Kidman tonight. Disco gets up a boot in the corner but Jericho does the exact same thing a few moments later. The champion goes up but dives into a boot, giving Disco one more chance. A middle rope clothesline gets two on Jericho but he counters the piledriver into the Liontamer to retain.

Rating: C. Both guys looked decent out there and they were able to get the crowd going with their various antics. Disco still isn't much to see but he was amusing enough. Jericho is still acting a bit more like a face out there and he's still working as well as you would expect him to.

Cruiserweight Title: Kidman vs. Chavo Guerrero Jr.

Chavo is challenging. After Chavo spends a good deal of time talking with Pepe, he asks the referee to check Kidman for foreign objects. Chavo gets checked as well and doesn't seem to mind before we're ready to go. Feeling out process to start until Chavo dropkicks Kidman out to the floor and celebrates with the horse. Back in and Kidman takes over with a headscissors and stomps away in the corner. Things are picking up so the announcers start talking about Horace turning on Warrior.

A running clothesline out of the corner gets two for the champion and a

springboard legdrop gets the same. We hit the headlock on the challenger for a few moments but Kidman charges into a boot in the corner. Chavo nails a good looking spinwheel kick and gets two off a German suplex, only get caught in the lifting powerbomb. Back up and Chavo dropkicks Kidman into the ropes before hitting a middle rope bulldog for two. They trade forearms to the jaw and Guerrero goes up for a sunset flip but Kidman escapes into a rollup for the pin to retain.

Rating: C+. Another nice match here with both guys looking crisp out there. Chavo was good at balancing the insanity with the in ring work to make for an entertaining match. He would be even better once he dropped the horse nonsense but it wasn't bad for the most part. Kidman was great as always.

Post match the LWO runs in and destroys Chavo until Eddie says his nephew has to earn his LWO colors. The LWO leaves and Chavo wants to start the PWO.

We look at Warrior talking about the pinfall meaning nothing at Halloween Havoc.

Villano V vs. The Cat

Miller does the five seconds thing and gets dropkicked at the count of five. The control lasts all of a few seconds until Miller superkicks him down. Villano gets choked and sidekicked again but comes back with a knee to the ribs. A quick backsplash gets two on Miller but he comes back with the Feliner for the pin.

Scott Hall vs. Steve Armstrong

No Survey tonight but we do get the toothpick toss. Steve takes him down to the mat with a nice leg trip and grabs a headlock. Armstrong escapes a hammerlock and slaps Hall in the face. Hall takes him into the corner for

choking and stomping as the match becomes what you would expect. Two straight Outsider's Edges are enough for the pin.

Rating: D. Not much for this one here as you would expect. Hall wasn't playing drunk here so it wasn't as uncomfortable as usual. I'm not sure how much there is to this, but one report I read on this show says Armstrong actually won the match and then this ending was filmed. I'd assume it was just something special for the live crowd and the editing covered up any changes they made.

Clips of Page taking the US Title from Bret.

Giant vs. Raven

Kanyon doesn't want Raven to do this but Raven isn't listening. Giant throws Raven around with ease but misses a charge in the corner. Not that it matters as he kicks Raven out to the floor. The average sized guy gets Giant to chase him and scores with a baseball slide but his plancha is caught in midair. Raven manages to escape and send Giant into the post before blasting him in the back with a chair. Kanyon slides in a table and Raven kicks Giant low as he gets in the ring. Giant shrugs it off and chokeslams Raven through the table for the easy pin.

Overall Rating: C+. This was a much better show than usual as the wrestling easily carried the night. It's not a great show or anything and there was no storyline advancement but that's ok for a change. When you get so much stuff on Nitro, it's nice to have a basic and well done wrestling show instead.

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