

Thunder – November 5, 1998: Scott Steiner Is Nuts

Thunder

Date: November 5, 1998

Location: Roanoke Civic Center, Roanoke, Virginia

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

World War 3 is a few corners away and things aren't all that interesting at the moment. Monday wasn't the best show in the world but it was nice to have a breather from the Hogan vs. Warrior nonsense. Bret vs. Luger seems to be building up soon but we still have to deal with all the people Bret has injured recently. Let's get to it.

Tony and the gang welcome us to the show before congratulating Jesse Ventura for being elected Governor of Minnesota. This of course transitions to Hogan wanting to be President and officially announcing his candidacy on upcoming Nitro.

Kanyon vs. Barry Horowitz

The usual Who Better schtick gets the usual reaction so Kanyon takes out his frustration on Barry with some shots to the head and a choke. Barry's sunset flip is countered by a right hand to the head but he avoids an elbow drop. We hit the chinlock on Kanyon for a few moments before he fights up and runs Horowitz over with a shoulder.

Barry comes back and rams him into the corner, only to be thrown into the air for a crash down onto the mat. A Rocker Dropper gets three straight two counts but Barry gets a near fall of his own while Kanyon yells at the referee. Horowitz scores with a powerbomb and some clotheslines for two, only to miss a third and get Flatlined for the pin.

Rating: C-. Shockingly decent squash here with Barry putting up a better fight than you usually see in a match like this. Kanyon was a bit lower than his usual standard here but the match was still entertaining anyway. At least the focus wasn't on Raven being depressed the entire time as usual.

Back from a break with Scott Steiner and Buff Bagwell coming to the ring. Scott says the two of them have gone from the penthouse in LA to the outhouse here in Roanoke. The women here are stuck next to their redneck boyfriends and Steiner is the way out, but the crowd doesn't seem interested in him being their hookup. JJ can fine them all he wants but there's no stopping Scott Steiner. The Red and Black is nothing but a bunch of copycats and Scott will take all of them out on his own, starting with Lex Luger tonight. There's your main event.

Wolfpack shirt ad.

Savage/Sting video ads.

Alex Wright vs. Raven

Raven sits in the corner to start so Alex yells at him in German before calling Raven an uneducated American. Alex talks about how great and clean shaven he is for over a minute until Raven hits him low to start. Wright bails outside so Raven sits in the corner again. That's the opening Wright needs and he stomps away before stopping to dance. Raven fires back with right hands but Wright nails him with a jumping kick to the face. Wright misses a charge into the ropes to put both guys down.

Lodi comes out but Disco Inferno, in bright green, runs out and nails him in the face. Kanyon appears as well to punch Disco but gets suplexed by Wright. Raven heads outside for the brawl but gets rammed into the barricade and apron (Marshall, as Raven's hands are on the ring apron: "We're back to two people but they're nowhere near the ring!"). Back in and Raven goes up top, shoves Wright down...and walks away for the

countout.

Rating: D+. This was much more story development than wrestling. Normally that's fine but this story is getting overly complicated in a hurry. To be fair that's what happened with Raven and Saturn earlier this year and things worked out pretty well. This was barely a match but a fired up Raven was interesting.

Tony brings out Jericho for another chat. Jericho names his personal security guard as Ralphus and says he's the most dangerous man alive. Tony has accused him of disrespecting Greenberg, but he's just a better champion than Goldberg. He's the TV Champion and a lot of people watch TV, making him the better champion. Jericho claims a 4-0 record against Goldberg and challenges Goldberg to break that streak. Again, this is as easy of a payoff as you can ask for.

Fit Finlay vs. Booker T

They circle each other for a good while before Booker takes over with a headlock. He takes Finlay down with a shoulder block but gets taken down into a reverse chinlock. Some European uppercuts from the European give him control and he hammers on Booker's chest for a bit. Off to a chinlock until Booker fights up and hits the forearm and kick to the face for two. A spinwheel kick followed by a belly to back suplex set up the Harlem Sidekick but Finlay breaks up the missile dropkick. Fit sends him into the corner but gets caught in a spinning sunset flip for the pin out of nowhere.

Rating: D+. Not much here but it keeps Booker back on the screen after his return on Monday. A win over Finlay doesn't mean all that much but it's better than beating a jobber. Booker is in a weird place here as he's too big for the TV Title again but the US Title is firmly in NWO/main event land and there's no way he's getting there anytime soon.

The announcers preview the rest of the show and introduce Konnan's music

video.

The Cat comes out for an open challenge and is answered but Kaz Hayashi but Glacier returns to answer it instead. Actually scratch that as Glacier says he's here because he has Miller's back. No one in WCW is going to take them seriously because they're karate guys, but he takes Miller seriously. Oh joy indeed.

Horace vs. Norman Smiley

Smiley doesn't even get an entrance. Horace pounds on him in the corner to start before nailing a hard shoulder and elbow drop. Another shoulder puts Norman on the floor so Vincent can get in a few shots. Back in and a belly to back suplex sets up a brainbuster to squash Norman.

Eddie Guerrero vs. Rey Mysterio Jr.

Before the match Eddie offers Rey a spot in the LWO for a third time but Mysterio still isn't interested. However Rey is forced to join if he loses tonight for no specified reason. Heenan brings up a good question: what good is it to have a man in your organization if they don't want to be there? Rey speeds things up to start and hits a nice headscissors followed by an armdrag. Eddie backdrops him to the apron but gets sent into the corner by another headscissors.

Mysterio rams him into three buckles but gets caught in an atomic drop, allowing Eddie to dropkick the knee out. He puts on a leg lock as we take a break. Back with the hold still on as it looks like nothing has changed at all. Eddie ties Mysterio in the Tree of Woe but misses a charge to crotch himself against the post Curt Hennig style.

Rey pulls himself to the top and hits a seated senton off the top to the floor. He comes up limping even more but is still able to hit a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker. Rey heads to the top again for a top rope

hurricanrana, only to injure the knee again. Guerrero takes Rey's knee brace off and puts on a leg hold as the LWO walks to the ring. Not that it matters though as the time limit expires at about seven minutes.

Rating: C+. It's not quite Halloween Havoc 1997 but it's still Guerrero vs. Mysterio. These two had a natural chemistry together and the matches were almost always a success. This worked quite well with Rey trying to fly but the knee just not holding up well enough. Eddie having a hold on before the time limit ran out was a nice touch as well.

The LWO wants to attack Rey but Eddie holds them back.

Ad for World War 3.

TV Title: Prince Iaukea vs. Chris Jericho

Jericho is defending of course. The announcers ignore Iaukea taking over with a clothesline to talk about the Hogan For President stuff, which to be fair is more interesting for a change. They trade quick takedowns until Iaukea nails a palm strike to the chest. The referee isn't cool with that for some reason and the argument allows Jericho to take over with a hot shot. A suplex sets up the Arrogant two count and we hit the chinlock.

Jericho nails a seated dropkick but charges into a foot in the corner. The announcers actually acknowledge the match for a bit before talking about anything else. A superkick drops Jericho again but Iaukea misses a dropkick. Jericho loads up the Lionsault but hits knees and gives the Prince two. Back up and Iaukea nails a Samoan drop and a slingshot hilo, only to have a victory roll countered into the Liontamer to retain the title.

Rating: C. Better match than I was expecting here with both guys looking good for the most part. Iaukea certainly wasn't bad in the ring most of

the time but he just wasn't interesting at all. Even when Jericho was going after him with the Prince Makamakey stuff it only worked to a degree. Nice match here though.

Scott Hall vs. Disco Inferno

For once in his life, Disco shows some intelligence by running from the five NWO members around the ring. Giant stops him from running though and Disco panicking is rather amusing. The big man sends Disco back into the ring and Hall just destroys him with his signature stuff. He hooks the abdominal stretch and messes with Disco's hair, which is actually enough to fire Disco up. Inferno comes back with a running neckbreaker but Norton trips him up, setting up the Outsider's Edge for the pin.

Tony brings out the Horsemen for a chat to really wake the crowd up. No Mongo in sight however. Anderson sums up the NWO in a nutshell: it just took six of them to beat the Disco Inferno. He lists off some of the NWO members and all of their talents, but it makes him wonder why Bischoff is being silent. Let's stop the waiting and have the NWO vs. the Horsemen in the fight everyone wants to see.

Dean says he hasn't been in Roanoke in twenty years but he remembers watching his father wrestle in this building. Right now the Horsemen need to make Chris Benoit healthy again so he can get back in the ring. Benoit says Roanoke is a great Horsemen town and tells Bischoff to quit prolonging reality. He needs to wake up from the dream world of this, meaning the NWO hand signal, when it's about to wake up to the reality of the four fingers (it looked far cooler when you can see the hand signals).

Flair goes on a rant about Jesse Ventura becoming Governor and how Jesse is all about respect. If Flair has to waltz around the ring with Aretha Franklin, she'll sing Respect to Bischoff. Flair tells Bischoff to look at his girlfriend and makes some suggestions involving pelvic thrusts. It's another awesome Horsemen promo, but it needs to lead to something

soon.

Scott Steiner vs. Lex Luger

It's after 10pm so this isn't going to last long. Before the match, Scott gets in Nick Patrick's face and yells at Nick for what he did at Halloween Havoc. Patrick says he was just doing his job and gets beaten up for his efforts. Scott wraps Nick's leg around the post but Luger runs out for the save. They brawl for a bit as the medical staff comes out with a stretcher. Scott sees what's going on and heads outside to beat on Patrick even more.

Luger gets sent into the barricade and Buff chokes Luger with his own shirt. Steiner stays on Lex with various choking techniques but Lex finally makes a comeback. He hits his usual stuff before Racking Steiner, drawing out Mickey Jay as a replacement referee. Not that it matters as Buff breaks things up, allowing Scott to beat up Mickey as well. Rick Steiner runs out for the save to end this mess as well as the show. It wasn't really a match if that wasn't clear.

Overall Rating: C. I've seen worse episodes but this didn't do much for me. We'll go with right in the middle as this was such a middle of the road show. There were good and bad matches, but nothing was really advanced. Much like most episodes of Thunder, there's no need to watch this at all.

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