

Monday Nitro – November 16, 1998: Preparing For War

Monday Nitro #163

Date: November 16, 1998

Location: Wichita Coliseum, Wichita, Kansas

Attendance: 13,981

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

It's the go home show for World War 3 and most of the card isn't known yet. We'll get the battle royal and Mysterio vs. Guerrero for the Cruiserweight Title...and that's about it. My guess is we'll get a bunch of rematches from Halloween Havoc, but thankfully Hogan vs. Warrior III isn't going to be one of them. Let's get to it.

The announcers welcome us to the show and run down the card.

We see a motorcade coming up, meaning it's time for more Hogan For President stuff later on. I'll give them this: it's something different.

More from the announcers.

Cruiserweight Title: Billy Kidman vs. Juventud Guerrera

Apparently Judy Bagwell is in the hospital and has sent in a tape which we'll look at later. Juvy takes him down with some headscissors to start but Kidman nips up and grabs a headlock. Juvy counters into one of his own before rolling Kidman up for two. The short powerbomb (Sky High) puts Guerrero down for two and he rolls out to the floor for a breather. A suplex back inside sets up a slingshot legdrop to give the champion a near fall.

We hit the chinlock on Juvy for a few moments before Guerrero pops up and grabs a hurricanrana out of the corner. A nice looking headscissors puts Kidman down again and Juvy rains down right hands in the corner. The crowd is WAY behind Juvy here. Kidman sends him to the apron but gets caught with a Stunner across the top rope. A high cross body gets two for

Guerrera but Kidman dropkicks him out to the floor to get a breather.

Kidman follows him out with a plancha and we hit the chinlock back inside. Juvy fights up and rolls Kidman to the floor, setting up a dive off the top. Back in and Juvy hits a springboard legdrop but hurts his back, allowing Kidman to kick out at two. A sitout bulldog gets two more for the challenger but he tries a powerbomb like a dolt.

The faceplant gets two for Kidman and he counters another sitout bulldog into a wheelbarrow slam for two more. Juvy nails the Juvy Driver out of nowhere for two and takes him up top but Kidman hits an uncharacteristic low blow. A sitout spinebuster off the top gets a VERY close two but Juvy breaks up the Shooting Star. The 450 (mostly hitting knees) is enough for the pin and the title.

Rating: B+. This was AWESOME with both guys doing everything they could with Kidman even cheating a bit near the end. Juvy has been tearing the house down lately so there's nothing wrong with him getting the title here. If nothing else it sets up Mysterio vs. Guerrera again on Sunday and that's never a bad thing.

Kidman teases hitting him with the belt post match but just hands it to Juvy and raises his hand.

Opening sequence.

We look back at Judy Bagwell in the Tag Team Title match last week.

Wrath vs. Raven

Before the match Raven says that WCW isn't his mother and can't tell him what to do so he's not wrestling tonight. Kanyon begs him to change his mind and offers to take his spot. He does the usual stuff with the crowd, only to be laid out by Wrath. The Meltdown destroys Kanyon, whose scheduled match is next.

Kanyon vs. Glacier

Glacier comes out to go after a downed Kanyon but Wrath doesn't think that's fair. There's a Meltdown for Glacier as well and we go to a

commercial. Back with both guys down and the referee counting until Kanyon covers Glacier for two. They're selling the heck out of those Meltdowns.

They head outside with Glacier nailing a suplex but takes too long to follow up, allowing Kanyon to hit a Fameasser onto the steps. Somehow that only gets two so Kanyon goes up, only to jump into the Cryonic Kick for another two count. This time it's Kanyon kicking Glacier down but coming off the top into a northern lights suplex. Not that it matters as Glacier walks into the Flatliner for the pin. It wasn't long enough to rate but it was more about Wrath than either guy.

Nitro Party winner.

We look at the Hogan For President stuff from last week.

Hogan, Bischoff and company were on Imus in the Morning for a charity thing.

Sonny Onoo vs. El Gringo

Let's get this over with. It's fairly obvious that Gringo is Kaz Hayashi under a mask. Gringo blocks a Sonny kick and Onoo says this isn't what they planned. Sonny gets shoved down as Gringo unmask as Kaz Hayashi. Not that it matters as Ernest Miller comes out to kick Hayashi in the head, giving Onoo a pin with his foot on Kaz's chest. Amazingly enough, NO ONE CARES ABOUT THIS STORY.

Nitro Girls.

Horace/Stevie Ray vs. Dean Malenko/Steve McMichael

Horace takes Dean into the corner to start and chokes for a bit before being dropped by a belly to back suplex. After a bit of leg work it's off to Mongo who tries to fight both guys at once with the results going as badly as you would expect. Ray comes in but charges into an elbow followed by a kind of suplex from McMichael.

Dean gets the tag but can't hook the Cloverleaf. The NWO beats Malenko down until a hot tag brings in Mongo and everything breaks down. Vincent

breaks up the tombstone on Horace and gets destroyed by Arn as a result. Stevie nails McMichael with the slapjack but Arn pulls out the trusty tire iron and knocks out every NWO member in sight for the DQ.

Rating: D+. Malenko tried but he can't carry three other guys on his own. Horace wasn't even terrible but he's just so uninteresting that there's nothing to him. McMichael really should be better by this point and Stevie Ray was Stevie Ray. I can always go for some old AA bludgeoning though.

Doug Dillinger comes out to take the tire iron but Arn says no.

Back from a break with Arn being taken away by security and Mongo going to the hospital.

Gene brings out Ric Flair for a chat. It's true that Arn is going to jail and Mongo is hurt but Flair doesn't seem too shaken up by these developments. He rants about tradition for a bit before saying he wants Bischoff in the ring, so he can "chop him so hard he'll be on Ripley's Believe It Or Not as the man with four nipples."

As for tonight, Flair has a surprise for us so here's Barry Windham of all people. Barry and Flair hug before Barry talks about how right it is to have the Horsemen back in WCW. Bischoff comes out to say Barry doesn't have a job here and Flair has no authority. Flair says that's true, but Barry can tear up Bischoff's girlfriend tonight.

Eddie Guerrero vs. Rey Mysterio Jr.

Again if Rey loses he has to join the LWO but Eddie will leave him alone if Rey wins. Eddie has an unnamed enforcer with him who has been seen in recent LWO attacks. A headscissors and hurricanrana put Guerrero down and a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker send him crawling to the referee. Back up and a nice armdrag takedown puts Eddie on the mat and we hit the armbar. They go to a test of strength but Mysterio climbs the ropes and moonsaults into a DDT in an AWESOME counter.

Rey tries something resembling a Whisper in the Wind but complete misses and comes up favoring his knee. Not that it matters as he's able to

backdrop Eddie to the floor and hit an Asai Moonsault. A dropkick to the back of the head drops Eddie again but the bodyguard trips Rey down. Guerrero nails a powerbomb but Juventud runs out to even things up. His springboard legdrop hits Rey by mistake though and Eddie adds the Frog Splash for the pin.

Rating: C. This didn't have time to reach their usual level but it's still an entertaining match. Juvy adds a new wrinkle to the story and having Eddie get what he wants through these means is a smarter move than giving him a clean win. These two getting time in the ring together is never a bad thing.

The LWO puts a shirt on the unconscious Rey.

The announcers talk about Judy Bagwell for a bit before taking us to a video of her in the hospital. She can't believe Buff would let this happen and makes it her mission to bring Marcus back where he belongs. Only in WCW people.

Scott Putski vs. Chavo Guerrero Jr.

They pose at each other to start until Putski takes over with a nice slam. He throws Chavo into the air and lets him crash down to the mat. Chavo comes back with some forearm in the corner but gets caught in a suplex. Now for something a bit more interesting as we go split screen to see Gene watching a Cadillac arrive. Bam Bam Bigelow of all people gets out and goes through security, screaming for Goldberg to come fight him. Gene tries to talk to him as we're on a single screen now. Bigelow comes to the arena and destroys both guys with a powerbomb to Putski and a gorilla press to Guerrero.

Bigelow demands that Goldberg get out here right now but Eric Bischoff, JJ Dillon and an army of security come out instead. Bischoff and Dillon say get out of here but Bigelow doesn't go. Instead here's Goldberg and A LOT more security to try to keep them apart. Bischoff yells at JJ and wants to see him in the back.

After a break Eric yells at JJ and fires him. JJ says no way because he quits.

We look at the brawl again.

World War 3 ad.

Konnan vs. Saturn

This is due to Konnan coming out last week to save Saturn from an LWO attack. Saturn didn't want the help and wants revenge. Konnan does his usual stuff but Saturn jumps him in what is becoming a tradition in WCW. Saturn fires off some kicks in the corner and hits a jumping clothesline. A rolling clothesline misses Saturn but he misses the superkick as well, allowing Konnan to nail a clothesline of his own. The LWO comes out as Konnan hits the seated dropkick and puts on a chickenwing.

We cut to the back and see Bischoff saying Bigelow will not be at World War 3. Goldberg comes up to Bischoff, grabs his face and demands Bigelow tonight. Back in the ring with Saturn nailing a superkick but walking into a spinebuster for two. The announcers have given up any pretense of talking about the match to hype Goldberg vs. Bigelow.

Splash Mountain (Razor's Edge into a sitout powerbomb) gets two on Saturn but he comes back with a northern lights suplex. A double clothesline puts both guys down until La Parka gets up on the apron and holds Saturn. Konnan will have none of that and lays out La Parka instead. The LWO beats up Saturn as a result and that's a DQ.

Rating: C+. I'm glad the backstage stuff only went on for a few moments as this was an entertaining match for the most part. It was always nice to see two different styles work together out there and the match worked fairly well. The LWO isn't doing much for me but it's nice to see them doing something.

Konnan goes to help Saturn but Saturn will have none of that. The LWO leaves them alone to fight.

Hour #3 begins.

Nitro Girls.

We look at Hall vs. Nash.

Here are Scott Steiner, Buff Bagwell and their own referee. By referee, I mean a guy with a whistle and hat running all over the place. Buff talks about how WCW won't give them a referee right now so the NWO has their own. He has the referee demonstrate how to do a very over the top three count before Scott insults the women here in Kansas. He talks about the NWO being stronger than blood, which is why it's ok for Scott to go attack Buff's mother.

Scott says Buff can return the favor, so here's an old "lady" called Mrs. Steiner. Buff beats her up and the referee counts the pin until Rick Steiner runs in to clear the ring. He rips the wig off to reveal a man and says that's not his mother. Thanks for that Rick. Scott Norton sneaks up on Rick and lays him out so Buff and Scott can come back in to beat Rick down. The referee counts a pin with all three guys covering Rick.

TV Title: Chris Jericho vs. Bobby Duncum Jr.

Jericho is defending. Duncum is a tall guy who looks like a cowboy and is making his WCW debut. He's wrestled for a few years elsewhere though. Jericho grabs something like a surfboard before letting it go for a senton backplash. Heenan: "A senton?" Tenay: "Yes a senton." Heenan: "Senton? SENTON? A senton? It's a senton." Jericho hits a nice belly to back (Heenan: "THE SUPER SENTON!") but Duncum grabs the boot to block the Arrogant cover.

A hard clothesline puts Jericho on the floor and another one off the apron sends Chris into the barricade. Back in and Jericho nails a dropkick as Heenan says this match has been going for twenty minutes. I know Heenan can embellish time once in awhile but stretching a four minute match to twenty minute be a new record. Duncum grabs his bullrope and chases Jericho off for the countout.

Rating: C-. Duncum looked good and could move well for a bigger guy but much like Kaos, there's not much interest there. The annoying thing is Jericho vs. Goldberg was built up for over a month now and it seems like Jericho getting speared last week is the end of their story. As Jericho has mentioned before, I see no reason why Jericho couldn't get squashed on PPV or even Nitro.

Here comes the Secret Service and it's time for Hogan. He comes out to Hail to the Chief and the announcers swear that Hogan is serious about this. Hogan is by himself here with the white feather boa around his neck. A huge American flag comes down in front of the entrance as red, white and blue balloons fall.

Hogan gets in the ring as confetti falls as well. He talks about what a great week this has been due to the fans embracing his vision for the country. Tonight he's introducing his official intern and of course it's a woman that looks like Monica Lewinsky complete with a blue dress and hat. She congratulates him and makes a cigar joke before giving her a long hug.

Hogan invites the NWO out here because the campaign trail is just as solid as the NWO. Eric comes out and looks ticked off but sucks up to Hogan a bit anyway. Hogan makes light of Eric being worried about Goldberg and the wrestlers' safety due to Bigelow. Scott Hall comes out and says they're NWO for life. He wants to know where Bischoff's head is at though. Eric says that's ironic coming from Hall and says they'll take care of this later on. Hall decks Eric so Hogan goes after Hall until Nash makes the save. Scott leaves and Nash says he'll see him in Detroit. There's another match for the PPV.

Bret Hart vs. Chris Benoit

Non-title. Benoit nails a hard elbow to start before firing off chops in the corner. A snap suplex gets two and Benoit stomps away in the corner. Bret comes back with a shot to the throat before stomping down on Benoit for good measure. The backbreaker and middle rope elbow are good for two and Bret catapults him throat first into the bottom rope.

Chris charges into a boot to the face but comes back with a great looking superplex. The Swan Dive connects for two and Benoit clotheslines him out to the floor. Bret grabs a chair but runs away for some reason, allowing Benoit to punch it into his face back in the ring. Hart hits him low and crushes Benoit's arm with the chair for the DQ.

Rating: C. This was more about setting up the angle than the match itself and that's fine. Heenan saying that Hart just didn't care anymore is very

accurate. It's clear that there's no fire in him anymore and he's just out there because his contract says he has to be. Also did we really need another face to be taken out?

Post match Malenko makes the save but Bret sneaks up on him and hammers away. DDP makes the real save and taunts Bret with the US Title. He'll keep getting back up and will defend the title against Hart at World War 3.

Bam Bam Bigelow vs. Goldberg

Bigelow jumps Goldberg in the aisle and they fight by the entrance way until security breaks it up to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. This was a better show as it felt like there was an actual effort being put into things this week. As stupid as it sounds, I can actually go with the Hogan For President stuff. Yeah it's totally stupid, but I'd much rather watch something over the top and goofy than something deadly serious and horrible. The rest of the show was fine and bringing in Bigelow to put over Goldberg isn't the worst idea in the world. It's still not a good show but it was a nice change of pace.

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