

Thunder – December 3, 1998: Raven Was A Psychiatrist's Dream

Thunder

Date: December 3, 1998

Location: Mid-South Coliseum, Memphis, Tennessee

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

It's the last month of 1998 and things are starting to pick up for Starrcade. The main story coming out of Nitro is kind of hard to pin down. Hall seems to be going to war against the NWO while Goldberg vs. Nash is just kind of happening in the background despite being allegedly the biggest match of the year. Let's get to it.

Tony recaps some of the NWO stuff from Nitro and calls Dusty a great man for swerving Bischoff. Flair vs. Easy E is set for Starrcade.

Since Hogan has "officially retired", we get a retrospective on his WCW career. Looking back...Hogan wasn't all that good around this time.

We see Scott Steiner challenging Scott Hall from Nitro.

Here's Scott Steiner with something to say. Steiner talks about going to Graceland and says he's getting more women than Elvis could ever dream of now that he's the head of the NWO. After insulting the fans, Steiner brags about Hogan passing the torch because they both have big arms. This brings him to Scott Hall because Steiner wants to hurt him. I'm assuming that's the main event tonight.

Eddie Guerrero vs. Ciclope

Eddie takes out the knee to start and nails the slingshot hilo before sitting on the ropes to yell at the fans. Ciclope slides through the legs to the floor before coming back in with a mostly missing missile dropkick for two. Not that it matters as Eddie hits the brainbuster...and asks for the match to be stopped. The bell rings and we're done with I think a no contest.

The LWO comes out and Eddie offers Ciclope a shirt, giving us a new member of the LWO.

We see Konnan winning the TV Title on Monday.

We see Page losing the US Title back to Bret Hart.

Renegade vs. Giant

Giant shrugs him off, shrugs him off again and then chokeslams Renegade off the top for the pin in a minute.

Post match Giant talks about beating up two imposters in one week. This brings DDP out through the crowd with a chair to lay out Giant. If the Giant Scum wants some, come get some. I guess that's another Starrcade match.

Mike Enos vs. Chavo Guerrero Jr.

Chavo has an early chat with Pepe before dodging a charging Enos and nailing him with a dropkick. A gorilla press goes as badly as the charge and Chavo dropkicks Enos to the floor, followed by a baseball slide and plancha. Enos shrugs it off and whips him into the barricade though before yelling at a fan about Goldberg. Back in and Mike works over the arm for a bit but gets caught by yet another dropkick.

Guerrero takes him to top for a hurricanrana, only to have Enos counter into a SWEET top rope powerbomb. That's not enough for a cover though so Enos takes him up top again for a top rope fall away slam as Chavo is in big trouble. Since Mike isn't that bright though, he picks Chavo up at two. Enos goes

over and grabs Pepe for no apparent reason and lays him on the mat. He sets up a powerbomb onto the horse but Guerrero rolls him up for the pin out of nowhere.

Rating: C. Well this was a surprise. Enos was a good choice for a power guy that throws small people all over the place and then gets pinned because he's not all that bright. Chavo actually looked like the weaker worker in the match which isn't something you often have to say about him.

Konnan music video.

Rey Mysterio Jr. vs. Villano V

Rey is sent into the corner to start but avoids a charge so Villano slaps him in the mask. A dropkick sends Villano out to the floor, setting up a great looking flip dive to take him down again. It works so well that Rey tries another one, only to be slammed down onto the concrete. Back in and Villano hammers away with a knee to the head and a backbreaker before slapping him in the face again. Rey reverses a whip into the corner but charges into the post. Villano's top rope splash misses and it's the Bronco Buster into the West Coast Pop for the pin for Rey.

Rating: C. Take Rey and any other high flier and let them fly around the ring for awhile. It's one of those ideas that is always going to get a nice reaction and this one worked almost as well as anything else. It's nice to have a match without the LWO stuff getting in the way too.

Post match Eddie comes out and says he's tired of Rey wanting the title. It's Juvy that should be going after the Cruiserweight Title and that's what the LWO is going to do, but Tony says it's Rey vs. Juvy next week for a shot at Starrcade. Eddie freaks out of course. I still have no idea what the idea of this story is supposed to be. Eddie forces Rey into the group he formed to keep Eric from controlling them and now Eric (or WCW in general) is giving Rey what Eddie

doesn't want. What does Eddie get out of keeping Rey on the team here?

We look at the contract signing from Nitro.

Chip Minton vs. Wrath

Minton was an Olympic bobsledder and wrestled a bit as well. Wrath easily throws him into the corner and stomps away before throwing Minton out to the floor. A suplex onto the concrete keeps Chip in trouble and a slingshot clothesline gets two. Minton comes back with a weak looking sunset flip for two and that's about the extent of his offense. Wrath hammers away in the corner even more and the Meltdown (BIG pop) is good for the pin.

Rating: D. This was WAY longer than it needed to be and most of it was spent talking about Minton's Olympic background (nothing wrong with that) and Wrath bouncing back from his loss. The whole appeal of Wrath was the undefeated streak and that just went away a few days ago. There isn't much left to him now and going back to the squashes isn't going to do much good.

We recap the Flair/Bischoff/Malenko stuff from Nitro.

Chris Benoit/Steve McMichael vs. Raven/Kanyon

Before the match Raven sits in the corner while Kanyon grabs a mic. Kanyon yells at him for putting his head through a window tonight and talks about Raven's mother. The fans actually get tricked as Kanyon asks who is NOT better than Kanyon before we go to Arn Anderson leading the Horsemen to the ring. Benoit runs Kanyon over to start but gets caught in a sweet rollup for twp. They trade wristlocks until Kanyon takes him down and chokes away out of anger at Raven.

Kanyon stops to call the depressed Raven an idiot, allowing Mongo to run him over out of a three point stance. Steve

misses a boot in the corner though and gets caught in something like a neckbreaker. The Horsemen take over with Benoit chopping the skin off Kanyon's chest before stomping him down for good measure. Raven doesn't do much so Benoit goes over to yell at him before Kanyon gets double teamed some more.

A backbreaker gets two for Chris but he charges into a boot in the corner. Not that it really matters as he takes Kanyon down with a dragon screw leg whip, only to miss the Swan Dive. Raven still won't tag so Kanyon hits a powerbomb into a faceplant for two as Raven walks away after being tagged. That's a countout as Benoit puts Kanyon in the Crossface.

Rating: C+. The idea here worked pretty well with Raven's downward spiral into depression continues with him walking away from his only friend. Other than that the Benoit stuff was very good, but Mongo just wasn't working out there for the most part. Thankfully he won't be around much anymore.

We see Konnan winning the title again for some reason.

TV Title: Konnan vs. Disco Inferno

Before Konnan comes out, Disco says tha the and Konnan should hook up to make a music video of their own. Konnan comes out and does his catchphrases in retaliation. Feeling out process to start with neither guy being able to get the advantage. A fsuplex gets two for Konnan and the seated dropkick sets up a pull of the champion's pants.

Disco gets back up and hammers away before getting knocked out of the air. A DDT sends Disco to the floor but he snaps Konnan's throat across the top rope. Back in and the piledriver is easily countered with a backdrop, setting up the 1-8-7 for two on Disco. Konnan blocks the Chartbuster and an X-Factor sets up the Tequila Sunrise to retain the title.

Rating: D+. The ending was never in doubt but Disco was his

usual decent self. Konnan was there for little more than to give the Wolfpack some popularity but he was only ok at best in the ring. The match wasn't terrible but it was nothing I'm going to remember in about five minutes.

Scott Steiner vs. Scott Hall

The NWO Referee is calling this one. Hall jumps Steiner during the entrances to send him out to the floor. Back in and Hall stays on offense but the NWO Referee grabs the leg to give Steiner control. A takedown gives Steiner a few fast near falls before he just hammers away on Hall in the corner. Hall takes a pumphandle slam for two and the NWO Referee keeps up with the fast counts.

Steiner plants him with a tiger bomb for two with his foot on Hall's chest before throwing on a sleeper. As expected Hall fights out of it and grabs a sleeper of his own but gets countered into a belly to back suplex. Both guys are down but it's Hall up first and hammering away. The top rope bulldog gets a very slow two and it's Outsider's Edge time. Not that it matters though as the referee makes the save and takes the Edge in Steiner's place. Steiner pops up and lays Hall out before putting on the Recliner as we go off the air with no winner.

Rating: D. This was more of a "we're out of time so here's something we promised without either guy having to do a televised job" thing than a main event. You knew something was up as soon as you saw the NWO Referee out there so it wasn't like the ending came as a big shock or anything.

Overall Rating: C-. This was one of the decent episodes but it means next week is probably going to be horrible. The tag match was actually solid as they let the good workers run the match and just had Mongo in there to do basic power stuff and then leave. Not much to see here but it's a pretty weak time for WCW.

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