

Monday Nitro – December 7, 1998: Their Survival Astounds Me

Monday Nitro #166

Date: December 7, 1998

Location: Astrodome, Houston, Texas

Attendance: 32,067

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

We're less than three weeks away from Starrcade and Nash vs. Goldberg hasn't really started to heat up yet. If I didn't know better I would think Goldberg would be squashing Bam Bam Bigelow at the PPV based on what we've seen in recent weeks. Other than that we're getting ready for Flair vs. Bischoff which I'm sure will be a classic. Let's get to it.

Goldberg vs. Bigelow in a non-title match tonight. The guy isn't signed but he can wrestle in a match against the champion?

We look at a clip from earlier today of Scott Steiner attacking the Wildcat mascot due to reasons of insanity.

The Hogan retirement video from last week airs again to show him beating up Ric Flair.

Nitro Girls.

Scott Steiner comes out to say the only things that come out of Texas are steers and something censored that rhymes with steers. He demands that we give Hogan a standing ovation before demanding another match with Scott Hall tonight.

Nitro Party winner.

Nitro Girls.

Kendall Windham vs. Diamond Dallas Page

We're nearly half an hour into this show counting commercials at this point. Page gets slammed down to start but trips Kendall to the mat just as easily. A swinging neckbreaker does the same but Windham comes back with a low blow. Not that it matters as Page comes back with punches and a big clothesline followed by the Diamond Cutter for the pin. This wasn't much but the fans are awake now.

Profile on a Nitro Girl.

Goldberg vs. Bigelow package.

Norman Smiley vs. Prince Iaukea

The dancing non-Islander takes over to start with a slap to the face and a nice shoulder block followed by that spinning slam of his. A delayed double underhook suplex gets two on the Prince and it's time for more dancing. Iaukea's kick to the ribs is caught but Smiley stops to dance some more, allowing Prince to kick him in the face. A Samoan drop and top rope splash get two for Prince but Norman calmly puts on a cross face chicken wing for the submission. This was a fairly packed match for under three minutes.

We see the interview from Thunder where Mysterio vs. Guerrero was announced for next week's Thunder for a future shot at the Cruiserweight Title. Eddie Guerrero comes out to and says Silver King will deal with the selfish Mysterio tonight.

Silver King vs. Rey Mysterio Jr.

Rey takes him down with a headscissors to start and they trade what would evolve into the 619. They wind up on the apron and Rey snaps off a hurricanrana to send him to the floor. Back in

and King counters the sitout bulldog before hitting what would become the Eye of the Storm for two. Rey sends him into the corner before going up himself and TOTALLY botching a hurricanrana. It wound up looking more like a spinebuster from Silver King than anything else. Mysterio sends him to the floor and hits a great looking flip dive to make up for it before a top rope bulldog is enough for the pin.

Rating: C-. This was Mysterio bouncing around the ring for about four minutes which is all you need most of the time. The botch in the middle really hurt it though as there was no way to cover up something like that. Thankfully they went home almost immediately after that so it wasn't a crippling spot in the middle of the match.

Hour #2.

Goldberg and the championship committee arrive but Nash comes up to meet them. Nash says the match against Bigelow isn't happening tonight because Goldberg isn't supposed to fight before Starrcade. Goldberg says he dreams of taking Nash apart.

Wrath vs. Renegade

Renegade comes out to what would have been Marvelous Marc Mero's music around this time. Must be public domain. Wrath takes him into the corner for some knees to the ribs as the announcers talk about Goldberg vs. Bigelow. A side slam puts Renegade down but he comes back with some kicks to the ribs. Wrath easily shrugs them off and drives in some elbows. Renegade's handspring elbow is just shoved away and a clothesline to the back of his head leads to the Meltdown for the pin.

Rating: D. I hate to say it, but it's over for Wrath. Yeah the Meltdown still looks cool, but it was clear that there was nothing more for him after he got beat in his one time moving up the ladder. Just a few weeks ago the announcers were making

him out to be the hottest thing in the world and now he's squashing jobbers again. This is Renegade's final appearance with the company. How in the world did he survive this long?

Roger Clemens of baseball fame is here.

Chavo Guerrero Jr./Disco Inferno vs. Horace/Stevie Ray

Before the match, Disco asks Konnan com come out for a surprise. Apparently Kevin Nash has approved Disco as the newest member of the Wolfpack. Konnan just rolls his eyes and walks away so the squash can begin. Horace pounds on Chavo to start with the usual power brawling style of his, only to walk into a dropkick followed by a rope climbing bulldog for two. Disco and Stevie come in with Ray easily winning a slugout, only to walk into a swinging neckbreaker.

Disco gets two off a top rope ax handle but is easily thrown outside for a beating from Horace. The announcers at least changes things up a bit here by talking about Hogan's retirement. Horace comes in legally and misses an elbow drop, allowing Chavo to come in and clean house. The tornado DDT gets two on Horace as everything breaks down. A spike piledriver catches Chavo out of nowhere and Stevie gets an easy pin.

Rating: D. Nothing match here for the most part and I'm not seeing a reason why Chavo and Disco were paired together. Disco wanting to join the Red and Black simply can't end well but that's the case for a lot of stuff involving the NWO. It's also not a good sign that the yet to be christened B-Team is now getting squashes on Nitro.

Nash comes out and says that tonight it's a three way between him, Goldberg and Bigelow.

Nitro Girls again.

Glacier vs. Saturn

This is supposed to be Miller vs. Saturn but he's claiming an ankle injury. Glacier hits a quick Kryonic Kick to start and stomps away in the corner instead of covering. Another kick stops a Saturn comeback and a tilt-a-whirl slam sets up even more kicks. Aside from all the other reasons, it's becoming clear why Glacier never went anywhere. Glacier tries to spice things up a bit with a legdrop but misses an ax handle.

Saturn grabs a quick atomic drop followed by a cross body. He hits his VERY high top rope elbow drop but Sonny Onoo distracts the referee because someone has to try and make this horrible angle interesting. The fact that Sonny is one of the reasons it's awful doesn't make things much better though. Anyway, Miller hits Glacier by mistake and of course the referee sees that because Saturn needs to lose to another horrible guy.

Rating: F. I think that's my official rating for every time Saturn jobs to some waste like Glacier or Miller.

Saturn beats up Glacier and the referee.

Lex Luger vs. Emery Hale

Hale is a big muscular guy that ran around WCW forever but never got over due to not being very talented. They circle each other for awhile to start with no one going anywhere off a shoulder. A harder shoulder puts Hale down and he heads outside to yell at some fans. Back in and Hale takes over with a hard lariat and a big legdrop gets two. Hale pounds on Luger's back for no effect but a suplex puts Lex on the mat. Hale misses a good looking top rope splash and it's the forearm into the Rack to give Luger the submission.

Rating: D. Hale had a very good look and could have been a solid midcard monster with some more seasoning and a gimmick. The match was nothing terrible but it's hard to get excited about Luger doing the same match we've seen him do with far more talented people. Not much to see here but Hale didn't

embarrass himself.

Ad for Starrcade.

Chris Jericho vs. Bobby Duncum Jr.

Here's a match we've seen far too many times now. Before the match Jericho makes fun of cowboys, causing Duncum to jump him from behind to start. A hard shoulder and clothesline put Jericho down as Bobby is all ticked off about the cowboy stuff. For the life of me I will never understand so many grown men being obsessed with looking and acting like cowboys.

Anyway Jericho comes back with a quick belly to back but is thrown to the floor for his efforts. After a whip into the barricade, Duncum throws Jericho back inside but gets his throat snapped across the top rope. The missile dropkick has little effect as Bobby nails a bulldog and another lariat (as all good cowboys should do). Jericho crotches him on the top and scores with a superplex before grabbing a rollup and the rope for a cheating pin.

Rating: D+. Did I mention I'm not a fan of the generic cowboy characters? Jericho is another talent being wasted in meaningless feuds like this one after dropping the title to Konnan so it can be used in the endless NWO war. Nothing to see here for the most part, even though Duncum is another big guy with a good look that could be something in a better gimmick.

Hour #3 begins.

Giant vs. Scott Putski

Chokeslam, pin.

Post match Giant challenges Page for Starrcade because Page's fans are all rednecks.

Konnan wants a piece of the NWO Referee.

Chris Benoit/Dean Malenko vs. Kanyon/Raven

And there's no heel team as Kanyon is looking for Raven in the back. Raven refuses to go wrestle because Kanyon is a geek. Kanyon points out that Raven has driven away everyone that has tried to help him, including Piper, and blames his recent losing streak on Raven. In the arena, Kanyon refuses to wrestle because he has no partner. For some reason he pushes Arn Anderson and has to run away from a crowbar. Benoit dropkicks him to the floor and Kanyon runs off with no match.

Video on Bischoff/Flair.

After a break the Horsemen are still in the ring and here's their leader. Ric tells Bischoff to get off his girlfriend and listen to what he has to say. He says the dictatorship is about to end and rants about the history of Texas wrestling while dropping his usual names. Flair is going to choke Bischoff and rip his throat out at Starrcade. He's looking redder than usual here and runs around the ring looking for something to chop. At Starrcade, Flair promises to chop Bischoff until he says he respects Flair before taking his job, his girlfriend and his dignity. Totally insane Flair here but it worked for the most part.

Konnan video.

TV Title: Konnan vs. Booker T.

They shove each other to start with Booker taking over via some forearms and kicks. Konnan comes back with a rolling clothesline and dropkick of his own before they head outside. Back in and Konnan scores with a bulldog but gets caught by an ax kick. Stevie Ray comes strolling down as Booker dances to his feet. The side kick connects but Stevie comes in and jumps Konnan for the DQ.

Booker yells at Stevie post match but Stevie says Booker should be going after Konnan.

Scott Steiner vs. Scott Hall

There's no referee and Steiner blames Hall for him missing. Hall hammers on Steiner and we see the NWO Referee wrapped up in tape (Konnan threatened to do that earlier). Mickie Jay runs down, shoves the NWO Referee down, and comes in to count two off Hall's fall away slam. Steiner yells at the referee and Hall gets two off a rollup as the NWO runs in to end the match.

Luger and Konnan run in but Giant comes in to take them out. Page hits the ring and nails Giant with a chair to get rid of the NWO. Well the Black and White that is. In an amusing visual, the NWO Referee is still down at the entrance.

Bret Hart comes out and says Page is a coward. He's proven himself and that's about it. Gene says people should go see Wrestling with Shadows.

Goldberg vs. Kevin Nash vs. Bam Bam Bigelow

Bigelow comes out with no music. Nash hits the ring to go after him before Goldberg arrives. Here comes the champ and the brawl is on. All three guys slug it out until security comes out to break it up as the fans pelt the ring with garbage to end the show.

Overall Rating: D-. This was one of the worst Nitros in a long time as almost nothing happened. We've got two episodes before Starrcade and Bigelow is still deeply involved in the main event scene. There are some matches set for the card, but the TV Title, US Title and Tag Team Titles aren't being mentioned, guys like Luger, Jericho, Saturn, the Horsemen and Raven/Kanyon have no matches yet, and the main story has a third guy added who probably won't be on the PPV either. Sadly enough, this is going to be their last coherent PPV for a very long time.

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