

# Monday Nitro – January 25, 1999: Who Are You To Doubt WCW?

## Monday Nitro #173

Date: January 25, 1999

Location: Reunion Arena, Dallas, Texas

Attendance: 15,103

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

Man this month is flying by. The main story last week was WCW actually having a good episode of Nitro for a change. Things are actually looking interesting going into SuperBrawl, but there are still four episodes of Nitro for them to screw things up. We should be getting more on the latest NWO civil war, despite the last one being dropped for reasons that have yet to be and likely never will be explained. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Vincent changing his name to Vince, which is probably some joke about McMahon that most people don't care about at all. He's a member of the Red and Black but is taking over the Black and White. The Red and Black was watching him on a hidden camera and didn't approve of him for reasons of him being Vince. Why a hidden camera was used when there was a camera filming everything all night and the footage was shown on TV all night isn't clear either.

The announcers discuss the events of Thunder because someone has to, before throwing us to a local airport earlier today. Hennig and Stevie Ray formed a secret alliance two feet away from the rest of the Black and White. Stevie is ready to revolt when the Red and Black arrives. Vince, in Black and White again, says they're here.

Flair has Bischoff selling merchandise this week. I guess

we're back to this after a week of serious Ric. Instead of selling at a stand, Bischoff will be out among the people selling.

Nitro Girls.

Opening sequence.

Stevie Ray and his Rock style shirt is ready to meet with the NWO brass.

### Disco Inferno vs. Al Green

Al has a bandage over his left eye and gets clotheslined outside in a surprise power display from Disco. A forearm to the back sends Green into the barricade as Disco is in full control. Green comes back with a back elbow as the fans are actually way into this. Disco's running neckbreaker puts Green down again and the middle rope elbow gets two. The louder these reactions get, the more I think WCW has the really sweet canned stuff going tonight. Green suplexes Disco down but misses a charge into the corner, setting up the Chartbuster to give Disco the pin. Sweetened crowd or not, Disco looked good this time.

The Black and White argue over their cars to get to the arena. The Red and Black are shown watching from the plane and laughing. Now they get off the plane with Hall talking about trimming fat. Hogan is in a Black and White shirt as Stevie runs his mouth about all of the issues. Stevie says it's a \$500 shirt so I guess it's mocking/parodying Rock somehow? Anyway the Red and Black destroys Curt Hennig as Hogan has his arm around Vince. Hogan never did have the best eye for talent. Stevie still doesn't get to leave with the Red and Black.

Hogan and Nash (with matching fanny packs) leads the whole NWO into the building and the camera is actually allowed into the dressing room. Stevie is given a Black and White shirt but

he's not happy.

As this continues to go on, we go split screen to see Bigelow bringing a ladder down to the ring. Now it's Bigelow on the full screen and he's not happy with what Scott Hall did to him with the tazer. Hall may claim to be the king of the ladder match, but Bigelow has been hardcore and extreme in places that Hall would never dare to go. Bigelow wants another tazer ladder match against Hall. We go split screen again and Hall doesn't seem to care one way or another.

Bischoff tries to rip off a customer at the stand but Doug Dillinger intervenes. I'll give them this: yeah these segments are going on too long and are too frequent, but they're actually making it look like Bischoff is being punished, which is the point of the things.

Here's Ric Flair to list off all his catchphrases about his match with Hogan. He calls Horace Hollywood's cousin and nephew and says the Horsemen could have killed him on Thursday but gave him a break instead. As for Bret Hart, he's defending the World Title (Bret is US Champion) against an opponent to be named. Tonight Bret has Booker T. (already announced earlier in the show). Next, Nash isn't allowed to interfere in the tournament match later because it's going to be a lumberjack match. Finally, Hogan can find two partners to face Flair/Mongo/Benoit later tonight.

A very stoic Scott Dickinson is shown in the front row.

We see a clip from Souled Out with Hall shocking Goldberg and Bigelow.

Here are Hall and Disco with a ladder and the tazer. They stand the ladder up in the aisle and pose on top of it for a bit before Hall says the match with Bigelow is on.

Scott Hall vs. Bam Bam Bigelow

Bigelow punches him down to start but Hall punches him into the corner for the loudest spot call I can remember in a long time. More slugging out ensues until Disco trips Bigelow, earning him an ejection. Hall sends Bigelow into the ladder but Bam Bam drops it over Hall's back, only to be sent face first into it again. They get inside for some ladder shots to Bigelow's ribs but he runs Hall over with some brute force. Hall nails him with the ladder again and stomps it onto Bigelow's back as we take a break.

Back with Bigelow being whipped into the ladder in the corner before a suplex puts him down again. Hall rides the ladder down onto Bigelow ala Shawn in 1994. The ladder is finally set up and Scott goes for a climb but Bigelow makes an easy save. Now Bigelow climbs to drop a headbutt, knocking both guys out for a few seconds. It's Hall up first with a legdrop between Bigelow's legs, setting up an elbow drop off the ladder. Bigelow suplexes Hall off the ladder but Scott gets up and dropkicks the ladder out from under Bam Bam.

Scott crosses himself before going up again but apparently missed a few Hail Marys because Bigelow moves the ladder from underneath him. Bigelow goes up and gets the taser, only to be low blowed immediately. Disco brings Hall another taser and leaves, walking into a spear from Goldberg. Hall and Bigelow circle each other with the tasers until Goldberg nails and shocks them both for the no contest.

**Rating:** C+. This was about a million times better than the Souled Out match because they mixed things up a bit. Instead of just doing the same spot over and over again, we actually got some different things for a change and it made the match so much easier to sit through. Good stuff here.

Scott Norton, Goldberg's opponent later tonight, jumps him from behind so Scott Hall can escape.

Chuck Norris is here.

Gene is in the back with Bret Hart and asks him about his title match at SuperBrawl. Bret says Flair just has it out for him and wants to know what Booker T. has done to deserve to be in the ring with the US Champion. Bret wants to ax (his word) Booker a question: does he want the fans to see him get decimated and ripped to pieces?

Gene asks Bret who he should give a title shot to and Bret says he's had his eye on someone. El Dandy is a heck of a wrestler and deserves a shot at the US Title. Gene doesn't think much of El Dandy, setting up one of the most quoted lines in wrestling history. Bret: "Who are you to doubt El Dandy?"

Bret was going to give Dean Malenko a title shot but he's conveniently injured. Gene and Bret argue about injuries until Bret says he'll deal with Flair and his petty grudge, starting tonight. My favorite part about this whole thing is Gene dismissing the idea of a cruiserweight getting a shot at the US Title like a crazy thought. Little things like that only reenforce a lot of the complaints about WCW.

#### Tag Team Title Tournament First Round: Faces of Fear vs. Fit Finlay/Dave Taylor

Lumberjack match with a lot of lower card guys plus Rey Mysterio Jr. surrounding the ring. Remember that it's a double elimination tournament. Finlay and Barbarian start things off with Finlay nailing an uppercut and putting on an early nerve hold. Barbarian presses out of a cover and sends Finlay to the floor. That goes nowhere so Finlay comes back in for some more uppercuts.

Barbarian slams Finlay down and it's off to Meng for some clubbing. Taylor gets the tag and the Europeans clothesline Meng down. Meng and Taylor chop it out with the monster getting the better of it and bringing Barbarian back in to pick the bones. After a beating from both monsters, Taylor is

allowed to tag Finlay back in for a brawl with Meng. Finlay gets in a few shots to the ribs but makes the mistake of going after Meng's head.

Fit is sent outside again for nothing from the lumberjacks as the crowd still has nothing to care about. The rolling fireman's carry has Barbarian in trouble but Meng breaks up Taylor's butterfly suplex. A double headbutt gets two on Taylor as everything breaks down. Meng backdrops Taylor into a sitout powerbomb from Barbarian (not as smooth as it sounds) gives the Faces of Fear the win.

**Rating:** D+. Not a horrible match but it was really dull stuff. That's the problem with a lot of tournaments: you have to sit through matches like these with teams that people don't care about and only limited chemistry to make the match work at all. It was watchable from a technical standpoint but nothing more than that.

Hugh Morrus gets in the ring to celebrate as the newest member of the First Family.

We look at the other tournament match from Thunder.

Nitro Girls.

#### Norman Smiley vs. Perry Saturn

Saturn, still in a dress, on the way to the ring: "Smiley, you're not getting jiggy with me." Heenan: "Once again, he's braless." Norman gets headlocked to start before a double arm suplex sends him out to the floor. The announcers get into their usual argument over how to pronounce Smiley's name as he stomps away at Saturn back inside. It's not quite Big Wiggle time yet and Tenay says he's a fan of the dance.

Both guys miss some strikes before Smiley gets two off a powerslam. We hit the chinlock on Perry and take a break. Back with Norman suplexing out of a headlock and hitting the

spinning slam. Saturn gets two of his own off a rollup but Norman decks him with a clothesline. Saturn legsweeps him down, only to hit knees off a springboard Vader Bomb.

There's the Big Wiggle to another good reaction but Norman isn't done. In what might be a bit too far, Saturn is draped throat first over the middle rope and Norman lifts up the back of the dress for another Big Wiggle. After that disturbing image, Saturn freaks out and kicks Norman in the head, followed by a top knee elbow. Saturn does a dance of his own and hits the Death Valley Driver for the pin.

**Rating:** C+. Smiley is getting over despite being treated like a goon and losing every bigger match that he has. That's usually a reason to push someone but given that this is WCW, it's probably grounds for being off TV very soon. The dress was at least used for some more stuff than it was on Thursday so that's an improvement.....maybe?

Gene goes to talk to Scott Dickinson, who claims the suspension is unfair because he had no due process. JJ Dillon has a double standard and only wants to get over with Ric Flair. Scott storms off because referees are treated badly. They're really wasting time on this story?

Herschel Walker is here.

We look at Flair's speech again.

### Booker T. vs. Bret Hart

Non-title. Thankfully Tenay brings up Bret injuring Booker's knee last summer to give us some continuity. Bret bails to the floor to start, comes in to get nailed in the face, then leaves again. More stalling ensues until Bret comes back in for a test of strength. Hart goes down but pokes Booker in the eyes to take over for the first time. A double arm DDT of all things drops Booker and Bret rakes his eyes across the ropes.

They head outside with Booker being sent into the barricade. Hart gives Booker a long time to recover for some reason before taking him back inside where Booker gets two off a small package. Booker nails the spinning kick to the face for two more but Bret nails the Russian legsweep to take control again. It's time to go after T.'s knee with a cannonball and a wrap around the ropes. There's a Figure Four but Booker finally turns it over as we take a break.

Back with Bret holding the Figure Four again but having to go to the ropes when Booker turns it. Bret stays on the leg but Booker nails a forearm out of nowhere. The series of kicks looks to set up the Harlem Hangover but Hart is out of the way. Bret goes outside and gets the title belt for a shot from the middle rope.

Booker is ready for him though and knocks Bret out of the air before superkicking him down. Back to the floor for a hot shot to send Bret into the barricade, followed by some choking with the camera cable. Booker throws him back inside and brings the cable with him. Randy Anderson takes awhile getting it out, allowing Bret to nail Booker with the belt for the pin.

**Rating:** B. Star making performance by Booker here as he easily hung in there with Bret for nearly fifteen minutes. The ending was a bit cheap but it plays up Bret being a champion that will do whatever he wants to win anymore instead of being the hero that he was for years. It's nice to see him actually wrestle for a change.

Clips of Scott Steiner harassing the Nitro Girls last week.

Bischoff is selling foam fingers and seems to have a toupee on under his hat.

### Scott Norton vs. Goldberg

Norton fires off chops to start but gets caught in something resembling an AA. A cross armbreaker doesn't do much for



Goldberg but a powerslam has some more success. Norton grabs a powerslam of his own and it's completely no sold. Goldberg kicks Scott out to the floor but gets sent into the apron and barricade.

Norton can't post him though and is sent face first in instead. They keep brawling on the floor with Norton nailing a hard clothesline to take over. Back in and a shoulder gets one on Goldberg followed by another clothesline. The powerbomb is countered and it's the spear and Jackhammer to give Goldberg the win.

**Rating:** C+. Take two monsters and let them beat on each other for five minutes until one hits their finishers for the pin. This is what Norton should have been built up for several months ago and that's what they did...with several months of inactivity in between. Fun match even though there was nothing to it.

The NWO runs in and gets beaten up post match. The celebrities mentioned earlier plus Brett Hull of the NHL and Jean-Claude Van Damme get in to celebrate with Goldberg. Not exactly Mike Tyson but that's a good visual.

Nitro Girls. Scott Steiner takes over the broadcast booth to ogle them during their routine.

### Hollywood Hogan/Scott Steiner/Kevin Nash vs. Horsemen

This has A LOT of time, as in nearly half an hour. Hogan is still listed as a Presidential candidate. Before the match, Nash gets a cheap pop and Steiner says that Kimberly has been flirting with him out back. If she wants to tease him, she better be ready to please him. Hogan is glad that there aren't any WCW or Ric Flair fans out here because they stink very badly. He'll take care of Ric at SuperBrawl because Flair is the first one being hunted by the Pack.

After a break we get the Horsemen's entrance and the opening

bell. It's a brawl to start of course and Benoit gets to beat up Hogan in one of the only times they ever had contact. Flair goes after Hogan but Nash makes the save. The NWO clears the ring to start as the announcers bring up Sting for the second or third time tonight. It'll be nice to have him back. This turns into a discussion of Alex Wright no showing the show tonight.

Benoit and Steiner get things going with the power man running him over and kicking Benoit in the head. Scott runs into a boot in the corner though and Benoit fires off more right hands. A dropkick sends Steiner outside and Benoit holds up the fingers to Nash and Hogan. Kevin comes in for a knee to the ribs but Benoit runs him into the corner and chops away.

Off to McMichael for a slam, setting up the Swan Dive but Hogan makes a save. Steiner gets in a shot from the apron and Nash hits the big boot to take over. Hogan comes in and man alive is it strange to see him in there against Benoit. It doesn't last long though as Hogan clotheslines Benoit down and suckers Flair in before hiding behind Steiner. A non-existent tag brings in Steiner for a belly to belly and two on Chris. Nash comes back in for the side slam and it's back to Hogan with a belly to back suplex.

We take a break and come back with Hogan still on Benoit. Again he suckers Flair in but tags Scott to get in a few shots on the Canadian. The fans want Flair as Nash slams Benoit and elbows Ric in the face. Everything breaks down and Benoit gets caught in the Tree of Woe for some choking by Nash. Hogan whips Benoit with the weightlifting belt and suplexes him for another two count.

Choking ensues and it's back to Nash for the foot choke in the corner. Nash misses a big boot in the corner but Steiner breaks up a hot tag attempt. We hit the bearhug on Benoit and he seems to pass out. Hogan wants the pin but can only get two. An elbow gets the same but the legdrop misses, allowing

Benoit to FINALLY tag Flair. Everything breaks down and Bischoff comes in with a foam finger wrapped around a 2×4. Flair gets Hogan in the Figure Four but Nash nails him with the board for the DQ.

**Rating:** B-. This was the six man formula done very well and the match was very good as a result. Benoit is an excellent face in peril and he had the crowd going nuts for the tag to Flair. I'm fine with a messy finish here as you don't want to have a champion do a job before a pay per view. If WWE could get that through their heads, a lot of my headaches would go away.

Bischoff pulls out some clippers but the lumberjacks from earlier make the save, for the 459th show of unity that WCW has needed against the NWO. The NWO bails but runs into Goldberg who cleans house to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** B. This was the best Nitro in probably a year at least. They actually slowed down and took their time for once while delivering some pretty good matches. Flair vs. Hogan has a good story to it and the other feuds aren't bad at all. Unfortunately this was one of the shows where if you don't like the main story you're not going to like the show. Luckily they got it right for once and had a fast moving and entertaining show. Good stuff.

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