

Thunder – February 11, 1999: The Devil Is In This Show

Thunder

Date: February 11, 1999

Location: Providence Civic Center, Providence, Rhode Island

Attendance: 10,319

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mike Tenay, Bobby Heenan

The slow build towards SuperBrawl continues with another taped Thunder. Things are starting to get messy as well with a lot of the stories losing some of the sense they've been making. Odds are tonight will focus on the tag team tournament which should see some teams being eliminated soon. Let's get to it.

We open with the Blonde in the pool hall video from Nitro.

The announcers welcome us to the show and do their usual.

Tag Team Title Tournament: Mike Enos/Bobby Duncum Jr. vs. Faces of Fear

The losers are eliminated. Meng and Enos get things going and they actually do some technical stuff at first. Mike takes him into the corner but offers a clean break so they can stare at each other. Meng does the same and this has the makings of a long match. They trade shots to the ribs until Meng nails him with a clothesline. Enos takes him down with an armdrag and it's off to Duncum who gets wristlocked. Barbarian comes in as this match isn't exactly thrilling the fans. Bobby hits a bad dropkick to send Barbarian to the floor.

We take a break and come back with Meng getting choked in the corner to keep Enos in control. A piledriver has almost no effect on Meng and it's off to Barbarian who gets powerslammed for two. Meng comes back in with a piledriver of his own for two on Bobby. A double diving headbutt gets the same before

Barbarian drops an elbow on Duncum's back. We hit the chinlock before Meng comes in to choke.

The match just keeps going as Meng bites Bobby's nose. Barbarian's side slam gets two and Meng, I'm assuming out of boredom, dances before kicking Duncum in the head. A powerslam gets another near fall on Bobby...and Barbarian turns on Meng with some kicks to the head to give Duncum the pin.

Rating: D-. This tournament is officially the work of the devil. There is no other possible explanation for making me watch these teams fight three times in a month, including this which went nearly fifteen minutes. I have no idea who thinks Mike Enos and Bobby Duncum Jr. should be given this much TV time but they should be dragged out into the street and shot.

A happy Jimmy Hart leaves with Barbarian.

We see Kanyon going to Raven's house from Monday. Why do I have a feeling we're going to see every single clip from this story?

Video on Goldberg vs. Bigelow.

Clip from Nitro of Scott Steiner throwing Kimberly out of the car.

Video on the hair vs. mask match.

Raven and Kanyon get money out of the bank.

Super Calo vs. Lash Leroux

Calo quickly takes him down but Lash comes back with a clothesline. A backdrop puts Leroux on the floor and a dropkick puts him down. Calo hits a flip dive that the camera misses and gets two back inside. Lash nails a springboard cross body and drops Calo with a clothesline. They slug it out until Calo puts on a modified abdominal stretch. That goes nowhere either so Leroux suplexes him for two. An atomic drop

gets the same for Super and he sends Lash into the buckle a few times. Calo gets two off a missile dropkick but gets caught in a fireman's carry into a Michinoku Driver for the pin.

Rating: D. Oh my goodness this show is horrible. This was a dull match as neither guy is really very good in the ring and no one cares about either of them. Lash's finisher looked good and the match wasn't even six minutes long so it wasn't so much torture as much as it was really uninteresting.

The Blonde is in the limo. Again, it's the exact same clip from Nitro. Again, why am I complaining about having to look at her?

Video on the tournament, also from Nitro.

Glacier comes up to Sonny Onoo and the Cat. He has an offer for Sonny: he'll sell Miller his entrance.

Tag Team Title Tournament: Dave Taylor/Fit Finlay vs. Chavo Guerrero Jr./Kidman

This has to be more interesting than the first one. I mean, it HAS TO BE. Kidman and Chavo come in with one loss and face elimination if they lose again. Chavo and Finlay get things going until they finally lock up after a minute of circling. Finlay hammers away with uppercuts before putting on a cravate. Chavo comes back with a clothesline and tags in Kidman for a double back elbow.

We take a break and come back with Chavo dropkicking Finlay down and making a tag to Kidman. A high cross body gets two on Finlay but he drops Kidman throat first across the top rope to take over again. The rolling fireman's carry gets two as the announcers talk about Piper winning the US Title on Monday. Back up and Kidman misses a charge over the top and is holding his ankle. Finlay's chop hits the post but it really doesn't change anything.

They head inside again with Finlay putting on an STF. Finlay lets go and poses so Kidman can crawl to the corner but Chavo is chasing Taylor on the floor. Taylor comes in and cranks on the arm instead of going after the leg injury. Finlay misses a charge into the post and Chavo comes in without a tag. The referee throws him out, allowing Taylor to crotch Kidman on the top. Finlay brings in a chair but Chavo dropkicks him in the back, sending the chair into Kidman's head. A tombstone from Finlay is enough for the pin and the elimination.

Rating: D+. Why does WCW think eliminating all the teams that might be interesting is a good idea? Most of these teams have been thrown together and we're getting more of a team like Mike Enos and Bobby Duncum Jr. instead of what could be a good cruiserweight team? This tournament has been a disaster so far and only seems to be getting worse.

Glacier tries to sell Miller and Onoo his armor but they're not interested. Kaz Hayashi pops up and buys it (in subtitles) for \$25,000.

The Blonde goes into her hotel room.

This Week in WCW Motorsports.

Raven and Kanyon buy clothes.

Disco Inferno vs. Chris Adams

Disco gets in a chop then hides in the corner. Some armdrags put Disco down in the corner but he bails to the floor to avoid the superkick. Disco gets posted but manages to whip Adams into the barricade. Back in and the dancing elbow drop gets two and it's off to the chinlock. Apparently the directors are as bored as I am because we cut to the back where Hayashi is putting on the rest of his armor. Miller buys the helmet and blue eye for himself and gets a complimentary bottle of saline. For some reason I remember this from when it aired.

Back to the match with Adams getting two off a sunset flip. Disco gets caught in a backslide for two as Tony sounds bored out of his mind. Adams fights back with a belly to back suplex and they head to the floor. That goes nowhere so Adams comes back in with a powerbomb but has to stop the superkick because the referee is in the way. The Chartbuster ends this.

Rating: D. The match wasn't even that bad. The problem here is there's no reason to want to watch Disco Inferno beating up a jobber for eight minutes. Even the director seemed to get bored and go to something else. It's so clear that there's nothing important happening on these shows but WCW had to air them anyway. Nitro getting cut back to two hours might help things, if I can survive getting there.

The Blonde goes into her hotel room with whoever is holding the camera.

Kidman says it was just miscommunication with Chavo. A frustrated Chavo comes up and rants before laying Kidman out with a clothesline.

Another video on Goldberg vs. Bigelow.

We see Raven and Kanyon get back home where Raven's mom says WCW called and wants him back at work.

Here's most of Piper vs. Hart from Nitro to fill in time.

We see Hogan telling all of the Black and White members other than Norton to be the leader, again from Nitro.

Tag Team Title Tournament: Kaz Hayashi/Van Hammer vs. Chris Benoit/Dean Malenko

Hayashi has the armor on. It doesn't seem to mean anything but he does have it on. I don't think Hammer and Kaz have competed yet, unless Kaz is replacing Wrath who was to be Hammer's partner before the NWO attacked them a few weeks back. Hammer takes Benoit into the corner to start before they head to the

mat for a surprisingly nice technical sequence. A dragon screw leg whip takes Hammer down and it's off to Benoit vs. Hayashi.

Dean takes him down into something resembling an STF but Kaz makes the ropes. An armdrag brings Kaz off the top as the announcers talk about screwdrivers. We take a break and come back with Benoit getting the tag to face Hammer. Chavo vs. Kidman is announced for SuperBrawl. Kaz armdrags out of a powerbomb but Benoit avoids a dropkick. Hammer comes back in and works on the leg as the match slows down a lot.

An enziguri drops Van Hammer and it's back to Dean with the leg lariat for two. Kaz gets in a knee to the back to slow Malenko down and Hammer throws him to the floor. A baseball slide drops Dean as the announcers have pretty much given up on paying attention to the match. Back in and Dean rolls over to tag Benoit who sends Hammer outside as well.

Another baseball slide has Hammer in trouble and a short powerbomb from Malenko gets two on Kaz. The Horsemen elbow Hayashi down and Benoit's backbreaker gets two. Malenko superplexes Kaz down for no cover and everything breaks down. A nice powerbomb/clothesline combination crushes Kaz and the Crossface gets the submission.

Rating: D+. Again, the match wasn't bad but it needed to be shorter. That's the problem with running matches that are longer: they only work if the match is good in the first place. Benoit and Malenko are good, but when you put them against a team like Kaz Hayashi and Van Hammer, it feels like an extended waiting period before one of them gets a submission. You need some suspension of disbelief and these aren't the opponents to provide that.

Overall Rating: D-. This is a hard one to give such a low grade to as the wrestling really wasn't horrible for the most part. However, it was just so uninteresting and dull that I stopped caring about half an hour in. The tournament is

thankfully wrapping up so we could get some interesting matches, but this stuff was a chore to survive.

The other interesting thing about this show was all the stuff they aired from Nitro, including most of a whole match. There were only five new matches on this show and they had to air that much filler. It's clear that Thunder really doesn't need to exist every week, but that's the danger of going five hours every week when the company is already repeating stories. Really uninteresting show this week but there effort from the guys. They just needed better material to work with.

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