

Monday Nitro – February 22, 1999: They Deserve What They Get

Monday Nitro #177

Date: February 22, 1999

Location: Arco Arena, Sacramento, California

Attendance: 13,921

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

We're FINALLY past SuperBrawl and things couldn't be much lower for WCW if they handed all the wrestlers shovels and told them to dig their own graves. Hogan is still World Champion, Windham and Hennig are Tag Team Champions, Scott Hall is US Champion, Scott Steiner is TV Champion, and Rey Mysterio doesn't have a mask. We've got three weeks before Uncensored, so hopefully things can improve a bit tonight. Let's get to it.

We open with stills of the main event from last night with the Blonde interfering, setting up the masked David Flair to stun Ric and keep the title on Hogan.

The announcers introduce the show with Tony talking about how they've seen the Blonde for the last few weeks. You could have fooled me as they never MENTIONED her but apparently they did see her.

There's an interview room set up in the back for David and Ric to have a sitdown meeting later.

There's a Nitro Party at the University of California Berkeley as part of the countdown to Spring Breakout in five weeks.

Video on the Nitro Girls at Cal Berkeley.

Nitro Girls.

Stills of Goldberg vs. Bigelow.

Jerry Flynn vs. Mike Enos

Are they serious? They air the show they aired last night and now we get to sit through what is likely going to be a Jerry Flynn squash? This show is already getting on my nerves. Who looks at Jerry Flynn and sees someone that wrestling fans want to see winning matches? We're coming off a pay per view with major ramifications and instead of seeing fallout, we get ten minutes of stills and Nitro Party stuff and now a jobber vs. jobber match. This company deserved everything it got in 1999.

Enos shoves him into the corner to start but gets kicked in the face and knocked to the mat. Flynn comes back with more kicks because he's Ernest Miller with a mullet and no charisma. Enos throws Jerry outside and hits a clothesline off the apron followed by a slam. Back in and Jerry puts on an ankle lock but Enos easily gets up. Some kicks in the corner set up a cross armbreaker to make Enos tap out.

Rating: D. A Jerry Flynn match that consisted of a lot of kicking followed by some bad looking submission holds? But now he's winning instead of getting beaten up by Goldberg. The match wasn't horrible but it was just so uninteresting that there was nothing worth paying attention to.

The Blonde makes sure David is ready to talk to his father face to face.

Booker T. is ready and promises a lot of people will get the Harlem Hangover. Tonight he has Bret Hart and Gene says that surely the winner gets a US Title shot. Bret better be ready to go all night long.

Back to Cal Berkeley for more festivities. I have a bad feeling about the next month.

Scott Norton is back from Japan and Vince tells him that he (Vince) is now in charge of the Black and White. Norton doesn't seem impressed but goes along with it.

Video on Mortal Kombat: The Series with Wrath as a guest star.

Video on Page vs. Steiner from last night. Tony tells us that the stipulation of Steiner getting Kimberly for thirty days if he won wasn't official. Of course he tells us this NOW because he was too busy last night.

Van Hammer vs. Bam Bam Bigelow

A loud GOLDBERG chant starts before the match and Hammer actually takes over early on. Bigelow is sent to the floor and Hammer just stands in the ring, probably as bored by the show as the rest of the fans. Back in and Bam Bam hammers away as Tony tells us to watch the replay of Starrcade, and I quote, "To see one of the most disheartening moments in the career of Ric Flair."

We hit the chinlock for a bit before Van Hammer fights up and hits a flying shoulder, though Bigelow doesn't seem to notice and it's back to the chinlock. A headbutt gets two for Bigelow and a small package gets the same for Hammer. Back to the chinlock as this match just keeps going. Bigelow lets go as the announcers talk about Hak, followed by the fourth chinlock in eight minutes. A running clothesline gets two on Hammer and Bigelow avoids a running boot in the corner (Hammer: "BUMMER!"), setting up the Greetings from Asbury Park for the pin.

Rating: D. They managed to fit four chinlocks into an eight minute match. You would think Bigelow would squash someone to get back on the winning streak after losing to Goldberg, but that would make too much sense and might be entertaining so we got this match instead. Again, who thought this stuff was going to make me want to stick around? Yeah the Flair sitdown interview sounds interesting and some of the fallout from last

night might be good, but sitting through these matches isn't worth it.

We go back to California where Scott Steiner and Buff Bagwell are getting off a Nitro bus. They go to a gym and see some decent looking women working out. One offers them to come see her later and gives Buff her address. They go and find a drag club where they're given a note saying "race you to Raleigh", which is near next week's Nitro. This took all of thirty seconds and came off like a comedy bit.

In the arena, Scott Steiner yells at Goldberg during a photo shoot. These were separate segments.

Stills of Piper vs. Hall last night. Tony says Piper used a lot of great moves to get the advantage, "such as the atomic drop." Is it 1973 all of a sudden?

Bret Hart vs. Booker T.

Winner gets a US Title shot at some point in the future. This makes me wonder: why is Bret wrestling on this show but not on pay per view? Feeling out process to start as this might actually get some significant time. Booker cranks on a wristlock to start but Bret nips up off the mat, only to be elbowed out to the floor. Back in and Booker grabs a headlock before an armdrag puts Bret on the floor again.

Hart comes back in and stomps away in the corner for his first advantage. We hit the chinlock on Booker but he fights up with some clotheslines in the corner. The ax kick connects for two and the fans are WAY into this all of a sudden. Booker puts on an armbar and we go to the back to see Disco messing with a guy in the satellite truck. At about 11pm, the NWO is going to take over the satellite feed and offers to triple the guy's pay to take over the feed.

Back with Bret in control. How did he do it? Well he might have put on a grass skirt and done a rain dance as a sacrifice

to the wombat god to make Booker fall over in a pool of orange juice. I know that sounds unlikely, but for all we know it happened because we were watching Disco talk to a satellite guy. Why couldn't they do this before the match or if it's SO important, do it during Bret's chinlock or on a split screen?

Anyway, Bret drops an ax handle on Booker's back and starts the Five Moves of Doom but sends Booker to the floor after the middle rope elbow. Booker tries to fight back but gets hit in the ribs with a chair. Back in and Bret stomps at the ribs but an elbow to the jaw stops Bret and a clothesline puts him down. Tony leaves to go moderate the Flair meeting as Bret suplexes Booker down and drops some legs. A belly to back suplex drops Booker but he rolls Hart up to escape a Sharpshooter attempt.

Instead Bret puts on the Figure Four but Booker survives for over a minute before making it to the rope. Back up and the flying forearm out of nowhere puts Bret down. There's the spinning kick to the head as Booker's leg is perfectly fine. He spins up and heads to the top but gets superplexed down. Bret gets the Sharpshooter on but Booker is right next to the ropes. Back up and Hart tries a sunset flip but Booker channels his inner Davey Boy Smith and falls down on Bret for the pin.

Rating: B. Booker's lack of leg selling aside, this is one of the best WCW matches in a long time. It makes Booker look WAY more important and shows that maybe he's getting a push for a change. The wrestling was good and more than that, Booker won completely clean with a nice counter. You can't ask for more than that, except for maybe less Disco.

As we come back from a break, we get an ad for WCW Magazine. One of the featured articles is about the most mysterious man in wrestling, whose eyes are blacked out. You can see long curly hair though and the phrase WHAT ABOUT ME underneath the picture. This sort of thing never ceases to amaze me.

Stills of Mysterio/Konnan vs. the Outsiders from last night.

Kaz Hayashi vs. Disco Inferno

Tony is back on commentary. Hayashi comes out in the Glacier attire he purchased on Thunder a few weeks back. Before the match Disco says that this match has an international competitor so he wants to sing the National Anthem. He gets most of the way through before his mic is cut off. Disco isn't pleased and attacks Hayashi for a fast two. Kaz is quickly thrown to the floor but comes back with a kick to the head.

A headscissors puts Disco on the apron, only to have him suplex Hayashi over the top and out to the floor. Disco heads outside but Kaz slides back in for a suicide dive. Back in and we hit the chinlock on Inferno, but he avoids a dropkick to take over again. The middle rope elbow gets two for Disco and he hooks a chinlock. Back up and a powerbomb is countered by a Kaz spinebuster but he misses a backsplash. The Chartbuster gives Disco the pin.

Rating: C-. Not a great match but FAR better than you would have expected. The Glacier stuff comes off more like a joke than anything else as it's literally just for the entrance and then it's the same Kaz Hayashi. Disco is getting somewhere but he's still presented as the same goof that he's always been.

Brian Adams tells Norton that HE is the new leader of the Black and White. Norton's confusion continues. Again, DOES NO ONE WATCH THE SHOW???

Nitro Girls in the arena.

Nitro Girls at Cal Berkeley.

Bobby Heenan has been named WCW Announcer of the Year by WCW Magazine.

Here are Buff Bagwell and Scott Steiner, with the TV Champion continuing his Rick Rude bit (he even calls the fans

Sacramento scumbags) by bringing in a girl to fawn all over him. Page isn't here tonight because of the beating Steiner gave to him last night. Steiner brings up the 30 days stipulation which doesn't exist, though to the best of my knowledge the live fans have no way of knowing that isn't true. The music starts but Steiner isn't done yet. He's hurt everyone else and tonight there's someone else he wants to go after: Goldberg.

Stills from Benoit/Malenko vs. Hennig/Windham last night. If you look at the frozen images, you can see how stupid it is step by step.

Chris Jericho vs. Hugh Morrus

Ralphus is now in a blue dress with a bit lower neckline. Before the match, Jericho implies that Saturn is gay because he wears the dress despite not having to anymore. They hit the floor for a chase right after the bell before Morrus slams Jericho down. A delayed gorilla press puts Jericho on the mat again as Steiner vs. Goldberg is official for later.

Morrus misses a top rope elbow and goes outside, allowing Jericho to nail a top rope cross body to take out Hugh and Jimmy Hart. Some flowers to Morrus' back put him down and we hit the chinlock inside. A slap to Morrus' chest wakes him up and Heenan is in full comedy mode about Ralphus. Morrus does the Jericho strut but Chris kicks the leg out.

Back up and Morrus counters a hurricanrana with a powerbomb before nailing a running splash in the corner. Jericho avoids a charge in the corner and rolls him up for two with his feet on the ropes. Ralphus tries Morrus but Saturn comes out and strips the dress off the toothless wonder. Saturn goes in and hits Jericho with a Death Valley Driver, allowing No Laughing Matter to give Morrus the pin.

Rating: D+. This is a recent change to WCW and it's getting annoying: long matches to set up a quick finish. I like long

wrestling matches when they're entertaining, but I can do without nine minutes of Chris Jericho vs. Hugh Morrus when we know Saturn is coming out due to Jericho's earlier comments. The same thing was true of Kaz vs. Disco. It wasn't entertaining but we had to sit through it forever anyway. I shouldn't be able to make a sandwich during a Kaz Hayashi match.

Morrus gets in Saturn's face post match and is shoved away. Saturn gets in the ring and tells Morrus to bring it. Referees break it up.

Hennig and Windham talk about how great they are until Benoit and Malenko show up and whip them with belts.

Kevin Nash vs. Rey Mysterio Jr.

Before the match, Nash says Hall might have cheated a little bit last night and the NWO is always standing for fair play. If Mysterio wants a match with Big Kev, come down and get one. Rey comes out and says that's exactly what he wants. The bell rings and Nash offers a test of strength.

Instead it's a knee to Rey's ribs but he comes back with kicks the knee and a spinwheel kick puts Nash down. The Bronco Buster connects and the fans are going nuts...until Rey jumps into Snake Eyes. Nash throws him around the ring and loads up the Jackknife but Rey hammers on Nash's head to knock him down and gets the huge upset. The look on Nash's face is amazing.

Here's Konnan's new music video.

Horace, Norton, you know the deal.

Hennig and Windham come out and say the belts are the difference between being good and being great. Windham doesn't think the Horsemen should get a title rematch and Hennig calls them sore losers.

Norton finally goes to Hollywood and asks what's going on.

Hogan says they're looking for a leader and declares Norton the boss.

Nitro Girls.

Here's Ernest Miller, who has bought Glacier's entrance which starts halfway down the aisle. Before the match, Miller complains about the music and wants his James Brown song. As is now the norm, we got to the Black and White's locker room where Disco tells Norton that Miller called him out again. Miller actually does it this time and we've got a match.

Ernest Miller vs. Scott Norton

Miller accidentally kicks Norton down to start and puts on a quickly broken cobra clutch. Scott hammers away but gets kicked in the chest. Another kick drops Norton but he pops up and powerbombs Miller for a fast pin with his fingertip.

Goldberg vs. Scott Steiner

Non-title. Bagwell ensures us that there's no Goldberg and Steiner talks trash before Goldberg's music hits. They stare each other down until Steiner pounds on his back but Goldberg no sells a ram into the buckle. A superkick drops Steiner and Goldberg hammers away. Steiner is lifted into the air for some gorilla press repetitions as we take a break. Back with Steiner asking for timeout but Bagwell offers a distraction so Steiner can clothesline Goldberg down.

Steiner sends him into the steps and then back into the ring for trash talk and pounding. The elbow drop gets two and a belly to belly suplex plants Goldberg. Bagwell cuts the turnbuckle pad off again and dumps the referee. Goldberg reverses a whip to send Steiner back first into the exposed buckle before spearing Bagwell down. Steiner and Bagwell walk out but Rick Steiner returns to nail them both. Goldberg wins by DQ.

Rating: C. This was a decent power brawl and I like that they had a DQ instead of a champion getting pinned. Steiner vs. Goldberg would be a great power brawl once Scott had actually gotten over. The fact that Goldberg was actually on defense for awhile here made things much better.

The Black and White comes out and are easily dispatched.

Here's a minute long video on the Nitro Girls' swimsuit calendar.

Disco yells at the satellite guy who isn't ready to hijack the feed.

Tony is in the meeting room (which looks like a living room, complete with couches, a coffee table and a large TV) where David and the Blonde are already on the couch. We cut to the back where Ric arrives. Hogan and Nash are shown watching on a monitor.

We cut to an NWO produced video parody of the sitdown meeting. David tells Disco Okerlund that he's the new Space Mountain. Nash reprises his Arn Anderson impression to talk about spots as Vince is dressed as a bear (Mingo) in the background. Scott Hall comes in dressed as Piper but doesn't try an accent. Hogan is Flair (complete with a fake nose) and takes off his clothes while ranting about how amazing Hogan is and how expensive his clothes are. Hogan fakes a heart attack and Disco says call the Hotline for more. Disco was great, but I thought he was Schiavone at first.

Overall Rating: D. As usual, a few good matches are dragged down by the stupid overdoing it of the rest. The Flair interview was hyped all night long and then they do the false advertising again which is going to tick off fans. The best part about it: they did this to their highest rating in a week where both Raw and Nitro aired in six months. Next week's rating dropped over 10%. It's the same stupid stuff where WCW tries to be cute and winds up shooting themselves in the foot.

There is good stuff on this show though, with Booker FINALLY getting a serious win over a big name and Mysterio pinning Nash clean. However there was a lot of bad going on as well, with long dull matches that are there to fill time and the really bad ending. The Black and White stuff is really growing on me though, as it's clearly building to something. Having the segments be thirty seconds instead of three minutes like they were on Thunder a few weeks back makes all the difference in the world.

Overall this show felt like a modern day Raw: if it was an hour shorter and cut out so much of the pointless filler, it's FAR more entertaining and easier to sit through. Also it would be nice if they didn't hype something up for three hours then do a parody. That kind of stuff could work when they were way out front but now it's going to catch up with them.