

Thunder – March 4, 1999: As Bad As It's Been Yet

Thunder

Date: March 4, 1999

Location: Lawrence Joel Memorial Coliseum, Winston-Salem, North Carolina

Attendance: 4,198

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Tony Schiavone, Bobby Heenan

We're coming off a good Nitro (I'm as shocked as you are) and have ten days before Uncensored. The main stories seem to be a bunch of rematches from SuperBrawl, which isn't the worst idea as the matches weren't bad but the decisions were all wrong. Hopefully things are a bit better this time, though granted that would only make the show horrible. Let's get to it.

We open with a clip from Nitro where Arn Anderson yelled at David Flair and the Blonde.

Ric and Arn are in the back and Arn doesn't know what to do about David. Ric recaps the story with his son and says it leads to the rematch with Hogan at Uncensored. He isn't changing a thing because David has to grow up on his own. Arn blames the Blonde and says Ric would have done the same thing when he was nineteen years old. Ric says when he was David's age, he wasn't stealing money out of his dad's pocket or stabbing him with a stun gun.

Anderson hopes that this is just a game face because Ric isn't this cold. Flair brings up the latest NWO parody and says he'll be World Champion again. He'll love David forever, but if David wants to run around with the NWO, he isn't going to worry about it. Arn says if that was his son, there's no way he could be out there in front of a crowd. Flair says he's doing this to prove he's still the man and that Hogan and the

NWO haven't changed anything. This was a lengthy chat but it helps clarify a few things.

The announcers do their welcome and recap.

We go back to Nitro to see Flair announce the cage match. This video takes us up to fifteen minutes into the show.

Video of Monday's main event.

Rick Steiner vs. Hugh Morrus

Rick quickly sends him to the floor and bites the ropes. Back in and Morrus pounds away but gets caught in a powerslam. Jimmy Hart gets in a few cheap shots from the floor but it has almost no effect as Morrus is still in trouble. Another assist from Jimmy lets Morrus hit some running splashes in the corner but he takes too long going up for No Laughing Matter, allowing Rick to catch him in an electric chair. The Steiner Bulldog is good for the pin.

Rating: D+. This was nothing and it's not a good sign for the rest of the show. I just waited twenty four minutes to get to a three and a half minute Rick Steiner squash. Why does this make me think that the next hour and a half is going to be a REALLY long sit? The match wasn't long enough to be horrible but it was just a squash.

There was a commercial for Monday Nitro. In the video we saw Wrath, Randy Savage (where has he been since the night after Starrcade? He showed up there and hasn't been seen since) and Syxx. As in the guy that showed up on Raw after Wrestlemania LAST YEAR. This is worse than the Steiner Brothers being in the Nitro intro seven months after they split up.

Here are Benoit and Malenko with something to say. Benoit congratulates the new Tag Team Champions and says they have no problem with losing to a better team. They do however have a problem with losing the way they lost. There will be vengeance

Horsemen style. Malenko talks about Benoit's Swan Dive off the top of the cage and pulls off his belt. He promises that Windham and Hennig will not leave Louisville with the Tag Team Titles. The rematch is going to be a lumberjack strap match.

Back from a break and we get an ad for Saturday Night. These air every week but two of the matches advertised are Juventud Guerrera vs. Rey Mysterio Jr. and Barbarian vs. Meng. Remember those before you read the next match on this show.

Al Greene vs. Sonny Onoo/Ernest Miller

Yes, REALLY. I know Meng vs. Barbarian would be a mess, but it would be a fun mess. On the other hand, this is the preferred method of torture in 19 countries. Announced for Uncensored, Sonny Onoo/Ernest Miller vs. Jerry Flynn. My jaw is hanging open after hearing that. I mean.....wow I've got nothing. Miller does the whole warning thing to Greene but Al jumps him from behind.

What appeared to be a botched gorilla press sets up a headlock on Miller but he sends Greene to the floor. Sonny offers a distraction so Miller can take over as Tony talks about stipulations for the World Title match that you can only find out about at WCW.com. Back in and Miller drops Al with a superkick before tagging in Sonny. Greene is out cold and Sonny gets an easy pin.

Rating: D-. It could have been Mysterio vs. Guerrera but instead it's being used to set up a Jerry Flynn match on pay per view. That's all I need to say.

Gene brings out Perry Saturn, now in a dog collar with chains around his neck, for a chat. Saturn refers to himself as the Bald Bombshell because chicks dig a guy in a dress. Saturn says if Jericho has a chain fetish, let's have a dog collar match at Uncensored. Jericho comes out and says he wants to keep this company rated G (there are SO many jokes) and get rid of all the R Rated freaks. If he has to tie a collar

around his neck to get rid of Saturn, that's what he'll do. Saturn promises to wear an outfit so freaky that it's going to shock Marilyn Manson.

Prince Iaukea vs. Bam Bam Bigelow

Iaukea scores with some early kicks but his cross body has no effect at all. Bigelow sends him to the floor and hits some slow motion forearms to the back. Inside again and we hit the chinlock as Tony talks about March being perfect for Uncensored because it's such an unpredictable month. Right. Anyway, more choking gets Bigelow two and we hit an armbar to kill more time. Iaukea's offense of course has no effect and Greetings From Asbury Park finally ends this.

Rating: D. This was long and dull with the announcers ignoring almost everything in the whole match. Bigelow getting a push is fine but could we find someone more interesting than dryer lint for him to fight? I'm glad he's moving down into the midcard scene where he belongs though as the top level push didn't have much staying power.

This Week in WCW Motorsports.

Vince/Horace vs. Curt Hennig/Barry Windham

This match sounds interesting at this point. Let that sink in for a minute. Non-title of course as a title match might be too interesting. Horace grabs a headlock on Hennig to start but Curt nails him with a clothesline. Stevie Ray comes out to brawl with Vince, leaving Horace alone two on one. Cue the Horsemen to attack the champions and it's a fast DQ.

The champions bail before too much happens.

Here's Hacksaw Jim Duggan, who hasn't been seen in months since announcing that he has cancer. Duggan thanks God for letting him get back here and of course some fans boo. He thanks the fans and WCW for supporting him throughout this

whole ordeal. Duggan says he's proud to be part of World Championship Wrestling and thanks the doctor for removing his kidney to prevent the cancer from spreading. He tells us that if something looks or feels wrong, get to the doctor and get it checked out because early detection saves lives.

Duggan isn't sure if he's coming back to the ring, but he promises that he won't be making any obscene gestures or saying any foul words. All he needs are his board and the American flag. If he gets a second chance, the last twenty years will be nothing compared to what he'll do in the next few years. He says to remember that we are one nation under God and leads a USA chant before leaving. This was a very cool moment and brought a smile to my face. I got to meet Duggan at Axxess earlier this year and he couldn't have been a nicer guy so it's cool to hear stuff like this.

Cruiserweight Title: Chavo Guerrero Jr. vs. Kidman

Kidman is defending. Feeling out process to start and Chavo actually gives him a clean break. Chavo is sent to the floor and taken down with a big dive, followed by a slingshot legdrop back inside. Kidman misses a charge into the corner and a springboard bulldog drops the champion.

Back up and Kidman sends him into the buckle and nails a clothesline. The announcers talk about Mysterio becoming a legend for his victories over Nash and Bigelow, earning him a rematch with Nash at Uncensored. A Gory Bomb gets two for Chavo and we hit a chinlock on the champion. Back up and Kidman misses a charge, sending him out to the floor.

Guerrero sends him into the barricade and then back inside for another chinlock. Kidman sends him to the floor before bringing him back inside for two off a high cross body. Chavo avoids a charge in the corner and gets the pin but Kidman's feet are on the ropes. Guerrero goes up top but gets powerbombed down, setting up the Shooting Star to retain

Kidman's title.

Rating: C+. This was nowhere near as good as the Psychosis match on Monday but it was still far better than everything I've sat through on this show. Kidman is becoming an ace at this point and is one of the most consistently entertaining guys on the roster. Chavo is very good in his own right and has gotten far better after losing Pepe.

We get a sitdown interview from Hogan with Hollywood talking about everyone hating him, even his family. He did the Hulk Hogan thing for the money, unlike Flair who is out there because he loves wrestling and wants to be cheered one more time. That makes him worse than Hogan could ever be because Hogan has a grip on reality.

Hogan loves that David Flair gave up everything his father did for him for a good looking woman. Ric Flair is the rottenest human being on this planet and all he wants is control of this business. Flair can have one more chance, but Hogan wants Flair to quit if he loses. He goes on and on about how much he hates Flair and how much it's driven him as this somehow takes over six minutes.

Buff Bagwell vs. Booker T.

Before the match, Buff says he'd rather be paralyzed again than be in Winston-Salem. Feeling out process to start with Bagwell taking him down with an armdrag before dancing around a bit. Booker comes back with a slam and quick vertical suplex to send Buff out to the floor. Back in and Buff hammers away before nailing a dropkick. Mr. T. grabs an armbar before kicking Bagwell in the face. Buff sends him outside and poses a lot. A chinlock goes nowhere and Booker comes back with his usual stuff. The referee gets kicked down and Scott Steiner comes in with a chair to Booker's back, setting up Buff's Blockbuster for the pin.

Rating: D-. If you want to know what it means when the

wrestlers phone in a match, this is a perfect example. Neither guy had any energy or emotion out there, which is usually something you can depend on from Booker. Speaking of Booker, did we REALLY need to have Buff Bagwell pin him, cheating or not? The guy is getting a US Title shot in nine days (against Scott Hall, who hasn't been seen in awhile) and he loses to Buff Bagwell? Really?

Overall Rating: F. The best part of this show was a tie between the Duggan promo and a pretty good Chavo vs. Kidman match. Everything else was a waste of time a textbook example of why Thunder didn't need to exist. It feels like nothing has happened on the show in months and this was as dull as it's gotten yet. This was absolutely awful and makes me want to watch Uncensored even less than I did before.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of on the History of ECW Pay Per Views at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

And check out my Amazon author page with wrestling books for under \$4 at: