

Required Viewing #12: I Want Violence

WarGames.

Because I have a taste for some blood. For those of you young people that haven't gotten to see this, it's the ultimate team violence match. There are two rings side by side and they're both surrounded by cage, save for the space between the rings. There are two teams of five men (later four) each and one man will start from both teams. They fight for five minutes and then there's a coin toss. The winning team (the heels literally always won) would get to send in a second man for a 2-1 advantage, lasting two minutes. After those two minutes are up, the team that lost the toss sends in its second man to tie it up for two minutes. You alternate until all ten men are in and then it's first submission wins.

This match almost always had a ton of blood and are easily the most violent matches you would find this side of Hell in a Cell. WCW started these in 1987 and ran them through 1997 (screw that mess in 1998. That wasn't WarGames). We're going to be looking at the two best, though almost all of them are worth checking out.

First up is the inaugural edition, held on July 4, 1987 on the Great American Bash tour. This is the mother of all wars as we have Dusty Rhodes/Magnum TA/Road Warriors/Paul Ellering vs. the Four Horsemen/JJ Dillon. I really don't think this needs a huge explanation.

Dusty Rhodes/Road Warriors/Nikita Koloff/Paul Ellering vs. Four Horsemen/JJ Dillon

The Horsemen in this case are Flair, Anderson, Blanchard, Luger and JJ Dillon. Flair's music is epic as they crank the music WAY up. This is the Atlanta main event and it's the debut of WarGames. For those of you uninitiated, WarGames is the mother of all gimmick matches. You have two teams of five and each team sends in a member. Those two fight for five minutes and there's a coin toss.

The winning team gets to send in the third man to have a 2-1 advantage. That lasts two minutes and then the team that lost the toss gets to send in its second man to tie it at 2-2. That lasts two minutes then the team that won the toss sends in its third man. You alternate like that every two minutes until it's 5-5 and then it's first submission. No pins allowed.

Arn and Dusty start us off and remember this can't end until all ten are in. There are two rings side by side with one huge cage over them if I didn't mention that. They feel each other out a lot as they're not entirely sure what to do here. Dusty walks on the second rope and then swings across the top of the cage to kick him in the ribs. Now they're going and Dusty pounds away including a low blow which is perfectly legal.

There's a DDT by Dusty and the crowd is red hot. Arn is cut open about two and a half minutes in so Dusty rakes it across the cage wall. Everyone hates everyone on the other team so this is a huge blood feud all around. Dusty sends him into the cage and has dominated the entire time. After a quick comeback by Arn Dusty gets his bad Figure Four on and then lets go of it because...well just because I guess.

The Horsemen win the toss (the faces literally never won the thing) and it's Tully in next. The Horsemen beat him down but Dusty is booking so he knocks them both down with elbows. And scratch that as Tully gets in a knee shot and the double teaming begins. Tully puts on a Figure Four as they work over the knee. The clock seems to skip ahead a bit (no sign of clipping though) and Animal comes in to tie it up.

He starts launching Horsemen everywhere and sets Tully up for a slingshot which he rams three straight times. Shoulder block takes Tully down and Dusty destroys Anderson. I think Blanchard is busted and he gets double teamed a bit. Anderson looks dead. Animal is like screw that and rams him into the cage a few times. Flair is in to make it 3-2 and chops at Animal which doesn't work. The number catch up with him as Anderson is back up quickly.

Sorry for a lot of play by play here but it's the only thing you can do in matches like this one. Animal is busted. Dusty tries to fight back but he's almost on his own. The fans are so loud that you can't hear Tony and Jim. Dusty is bleeding and here comes Nikita. Flair grabs him as he comes in but the power of RUSSIA breaks up the Horsemen. The double ring thing here is very nice as they have room to move around. Animal sends Flair into the cage and he's bleeding now. Dusty is gushing blood.

Nikita and Dusty work on the knee of Anderson but Nikita goes to get Tully stuck between the two rings and hits him between the ropes in a slingshot thing. Flair begs off Nikita and that doesn't end well for the champ. A double dropkick puts Anderson down and here's Lex. This is literally non-stop. Powerslam plants Koloff and Lex is dominating. There's a spike piledriver to Nikita and then a second one just to kill him deader than dead. The Horsemen are in control but they're starting to fall from exhaustion and blood loss.

Here's Hawk and the fans erupt all over again. He destroys everything in sight and if you're not bleeding already you will be now. Nikita's neck is messed up and he can barely stand. JR is in Heaven with this much carnage. Flair gets a Figure Four on Dusty but it doesn't count yet. The Horsemen only have JJ Dillon left and he's a manger. He goes after Hawk and that's just dumb.

Flair saves JJ's life and they're getting tired. Flair is

bleeding a ton as if you expected anything else. JJ is taking a beating but Animal is getting triple teamed. Here's Ellering to get us all tied up and now the match can end. Ellering has an LOD spiked pad on his arm. Dillon is bleeding BAD so Ellering JAMS THE SPIKE INTO HIS EYE. The LOD circles in on Dillon as the rest of the team runs interference. The Warriors spear his head into the cage and load up the Doomsday Device. JJ lands on his shoulder, legitimately hurting it. With Animal running interference, Hawk beats him half to death until he gives up to finally end this.

Rating: A+. This runs 26 minutes and there is literally no stopping in the whole thing. There isn't some period where they chill because they've done enough. This is about brutality and violence and it works very well. There's a ton of blood and JJ looks like he fell out of a building (for some reason in wrestling attire) at the end of it. It's well worth seeing and still works today. Great match.

Next up might be the greatest WCW match of all time. This is the blowoff to the awesome Dangerous Alliance story as Sting and his buddies are finally getting to go against the Alliance in one huge, bloody match with an all-star lineup. From WrestleWar 1992.

War Games: Sting's Squadron vs. Dangerous Alliance

Sting, Ricky Steamboat, Dustin Rhodes, Barry Windham, Nikita Koloff

Rick Rude, Steve Austin, Larry Zbyszko, Bobby Eaton, Arn Anderson

Sweet goodness there is some talent in this match.

Ok so there isn't much of a backstory here. Back in 1992 the

storyline pretty much went like this: Sting fights everybody. He feuded with about 5 people at once, most of which are in this match. At Halloween Havoc and the Clash of the Champions that came just after it, Rude showed up and stole the US Title from Sting, forming this team. Sting won the world title at SuperBrawl and the Alliance wanted it off of him, no matter who did it (it would be Vader eventually but we'll get to that later).

Larry and Arn were a tag team and feuded with Barry and Dustin over the tag titles. Barry had also just gotten the TV Title off Austin. Ricky wanted to be US Champion, which was Rude at the moment. Anderson and Eaton had taken them from Rhodes and Windham before losing them to the Steiners two weeks before this. In short, everyone hates everyone and they don't care who they're fighting. Koloff is there...just because Sting needed a fifth guy more or less. He would go after Rude after this PPV.

For those of you new to War Games, the rules are pretty basic. You start with a man each and they fight for five minutes. After that five minutes we flip a coin and the winning team gets to send in their second man for a 2-1 advantage that lasts two minutes. After two minutes, the team that lost gets to even it up at 2-2 for two minutes. After that two minutes the team that won the toss sends in it's third man for two minutes. You alternate like that until it's 5-5, then first submission wins. No pinfalls at all. It's a double cage over both rings and there is nothing separating the two rings, so both cages only have three walls in essence, but it's really just one big cage.

This is the first time I've seen this match since I got into the IWC and since I started reviewing, so this is going to be a fresh look at it. Let's get to it.

Everyone is at ringside for this, so I'd expect a fight out there too. There are tops on the cages too. Crowd is just

insane for Sting. Good grief that face team is STACKED. In a Dangerous Alliance huddle, we hear that Austin is starting for his team. He starts against Windham and it is ON immediately. Heyman keeps running strategy and it's cool because what he's saying is actual strategy and makes sense.

Both guys are really stiff in there and are just pounding on each other. Austin DIVES over both ropes and hits a clothesline. For those of you that haven't seen him before he hurt his neck and his knees became made of jelly, go find some of his stuff. He's a totally different but still very good worker. Windham rubs Austin's face into the cage to bust him open. There's a minute left before the next guy comes in. Windham bites the cut to open it up more. If you can't tell, this is a very violent match.

The Alliance wins the coin toss (check the coin) and they send their big man, Rick Rude, in to make it 2-1. Also, that's three world champions (Rude won the Big Gold Belt which is kind of a world title) in there I believe? The heels take over and Windham is in trouble. Rude's tights look like the Comi-Con logo. Steamboat ties it up and goes straight for Austin. Ticked off Steamboat is AWESOME. Dang it's nice to hear this without Tony Schiavone making bad war puns.

Windham is busted open. Steamboat and Windham are dominating here but Anderson, the best wrestler to never win a world title (arguably) comes in and cleans house. Rude and Anderson both hook a crab on Steamboat. This has been non-stop the whole time which is a major perk of it. For some reason they're all staying in the same ring. Well with five guys it's ok. And there goes Steamboat and Rude so scratch that theory.

Dustin Rhodes comes in to balance it out. If my math is right, he's the least successful guy in here? That's saying a lot. Steamboat gets Rude in a figure four, more or less making it 2-2. Zbyszko, another former world champion, is in to make it 4-3. He's been in trouble lately for being a screw-up and

Rhodes beats the tar out of him as soon as he comes in. Madusa goes up the cage and slips Arn the phone but she and Sting have a standoff on the roof.

There is blood EVERYWHERE. The mat looks like an abstract painting. Sting, who has bad ribs thanks to Vader, evens things up and press slams Rude up into the air so that his back slams into the cage five times. Sting is just whipping it here and we have two more guys left to come in. Arn gets the cage rake again and is bleeding too. Everyone is in one ring which is kind of cluttering but there they go. At least it didn't last long.

Eaton comes in as the last man for the Dangerous Alliance. Rhodes is bleeding a ton. Windham looks quite dead. Larry is messing with the turnbuckle. Keep that in mind as it'll come into play later. The ropes are clearly loose thanks to Larry and Rude doing whatever they were doing. Koloff comes in to FINALLY start the match beyond. No submissions could have counted until now.

Koloff is a wild card because a year or so earlier he had nailed Sting but claimed it had been meant for Luger so no one is sure if you can trust him. He pushes Sting out of the way to let Austin and Anderson hit him in a GREAT bit of continuity since Sting pushed Luger out of the way to start their whole issue. This is just pure insanity and never stopping at all.

Sting gets the Scorpion on Anderson but Eaton makes the save. They completely get the turnbuckle unhooked so there is no top rope and the buckle is just laying in the ring. Austin is bleeding like crazy. Rhodes' tights are polka dot now from blood on them. Larry tells Bobby to hold up Sting so he can hit him with the steel bar that came off the buckle. Sting ducks and Eaton takes it to the arm. Steamboat takes Larry out and Sting throws on an armbar for the submission and to blow the roof off the place. Heyman LOSES IT and everyone gets mad

at Larry as the show ends. This broke up the Dangerous Alliance because they lost this and it kind of wound up turning Larry face but more or less he just retired.

Rating: A+. This right here is the best gimmick match blowoff to a feud ever. This match was about VIOLENCE and it worked incredibly well. The ending was great, the violence was great, most people bled, there is not a single dead spot in the nearly 25 minutes that this match ran, the crowd was white hot, and the feud ended here. This was it and everyone knew it so they left everything they had in the ring. Perfection for what it was supposed to be.

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