

Wrestler of the Day – October 8: Jim Neidhart

Today we're looking at the Anvil Jim Neidhart.

No Hart Foundation as you would expect.

Neidhart got started in 1979 and we'll pick things up in Mid-South on January 13, 1984.

Jim Neidhart vs. Tom Lentz

Neidhart goes right after Lentz and the dominance begins. A Samoan drop ends this quick.

Here's a bit longer match from the WWF on September 14, 1985.

Davey Boy Smith vs. Jim Neidhart

From the same building in September of 85 and I'd guess maybe the same show. Neither guy can get a power advantage so Davey rethinks his attacking method. Both teams are chasing the less talented Dream Team at this point. We get a Stu Hart sex joke of all things. Gorilla wonders how he had time to teach any wrestling since he had thirteen kids. I'll be over here trying to clean that image from my mind if you need me.

Bulldog takes him to the mat and outworks him. As you may have guessed, Anvil isn't the best technician in the world. Anvil uses power but gets caught by a dropkick as we stop things again. Off to a top wristlock here but Anvil drills him in the ribs to take care of that. The fans think this is boring so Neidhart stops the wrestling stuff to yell at them a bit. He never was the smartest guy in the world.

Smith is sent to the floor so Anvil follows him out. Into the railing goes the Bulldog and Smith is in trouble. Back in now and it's all Anvil. Smith fights back and hits a back elbow to

take Neidhart down. Hayes is either drunk or really bad at his job. It's so hard to tell. We hit the chinlock again and Anvil is like screw that and breaks it up. Anvil gets something like a slingshot into the buckle and puts his feet on the ropes for the cheap pin.

Rating: D. Boring match here with no chemistry at all between these two. The power vs. power rarely works which is why both guys had a speed/technical guy as his partner. Also, why in the world are we seeing Anvil get the win here? Was that really the best thing to do on a British Bulldogs' tape? I don't get it.

We'll move on to Boston on March 8, 1986.

Scott McGee vs. Jim Neidhart

How in the world are we over 45 minutes into this show? Alfred, the Englishman, gets Scotland and England confused. Egads to say the least. Jimmy has a new Megaphone it seems. McGee grabs a rollup for two to surprise Neidhart. Test of strength goes well for Anvil as he bites away. McGee gets sent to the announce table as this is another boring semi-squash.

Jimmy says the Harts are splitting into singles matches at the moment because there's no challenge for them at the moment because they have to beat the Bulldogs first. The match more or less stops for a bit as Gorilla and Jimmy chat. Jimmy has managed to get a siren sound effect on the Megaphone. Neidhart drops McGee throat first to the railing to really take over.

Hayes might be a guest referee for some reason and he says he'll suck. Ok then. All Anvil here as we're firmly into the squash territory. Since the match is dull, let's talk about Piper vs. Mr. T. McGee blocks a suplex into one of his own and down goes Anvil. Some European uppercuts by McGee but a powerslam ends this rather quickly. Guess who won.

Rating: D. Just a squash here as Anvil dominates again. We're

over 50 minutes into this match and they really need to get to something good already. I mean dude, the big match so far has been Sivi Afi vs. Rene Goulet. I'm not sure why the fans haven't rioted yet but it seems to me like it's because they're very patient. Get to something of note, I beg of you.

Here's a match on the biggest show ever, from Wrestlemania III.

Hart Foundation/Danny Davis vs. British Bulldogs/Tito Santana

Davis is a crooked referee that cost both the Bulldogs and Santana their titles. Apparently this is Davis' debut as a wrestler. Mary Hart (no relation) is on commentary along with Uecker here as well. Tito beats up Danny before the match before we get going with Bret and Santana. Jesse steals the Bulldogs' mascot Matilda as he leaves. Off to Davey vs. Anvil and Smith pulls him by the beard. That's a bit rough even for Neidhart.

Tito comes back in to work on the arm but gets sent to the heel corner for some high quality choking. That goes nowhere so here's Smith vs. Neidhart again. Jim takes him down with a suplex but Bret misses a middle rope elbow. Dynamite comes in for the chest to buckle bump from Bret but Hart comes back with some punches. Tito tries to break up some interference but only allows even more cheating by Neidhart.

Jim hooks a modified camel clutch on Dynamite before it's back to Bret. I don't think we've seen Davis in yet but before I can finish that sentence he's in for a few stomps. That's the extent of his offense as it's already back to Bret for some actual skill. The sun is starting to go down so the arena looks dark now. Back to Danny for one kick before it's time for the Hitman again.

The Harts slingshot Davis right onto Dynamite's knees and it's off to Santana for the beating on Davis that the fans have been waiting for. Tito destroys Danny and hits the forearm but Neidhart breaks up the Figure Four. Off to Smith who rams Davis' head into Dynamite's. A jumping tombstone (not yet named) kills Davis even more but Smith doesn't want the cover. There's the delayed vertical followed by the powerslam but everything breaks down. Davis pops up and hits Smith with the megaphone for the pin in the melee.

Rating: C-. As fun as the beating Davis took was, the ending is really stupid as he popped up like nothing and was able to knock out a power guy with a single shot? The guy was a referee a few months ago but he's able to do that with one shot? Bad ending aside, this was fun stuff and the fans were WAY into it.

Back to the singles action at Wrestlefest 1988.

Jim Neidhart vs. Lanny Poffo

This was when Poffo was still a leaper and threw out Frisbees with his poetry on them. He was the king of jobbers at this point though so if nothing else he's not bad. I think his brother would be up next. He uses a moonsault which misses but was a big spot back then as he was the first WWF guy to use it I believe. I think Jim is a heel here but it's not entirely clear. The crowd is totally dead here. After just beating the tar out of Poffo a powerslam ends it.

Rating: N/A. Total squash here. I think they were toying with splitting up the Harts but that wouldn't happen for nearly three more years, resulting in Bret breaking out on his own and then Neidhart kind of fading away, although doing so in a positive way. Thankfully they didn't pull the trigger on him instead of Bret.

Off to a higher profile match on SNME XXI.

Jim Neidhart vs. Randy Savage

Ok seriously, who is Savage fighting tonight? This joke has gone on long enough. Who is Savage really fighting? Nothing against Anvil as he's fine, but dude, this is RANDY SAVAGE and it's less than 2 months since his year long title reign ended at Wrestlemania. Why is Anvil out there for this? It just doesn't make anything resembling sense at all.

They're making this out to be Savage vs. Bret circa 1992. When

did Anvil and Hogan become buddies? Sherri grabs the leg of course and it does nothing of note. Neidhart hooks a bearhug as I'm not even sure what I'm watching. Again, it's not bad. It's just odd. We get a great piece of insight from Vince: Sherri is a different human being than Liz.

You mean, they don't just put different wigs and outfits on them and hope we don't notice? THANK YOU OWNER OF THE COMPANY! Sweet goodness she's freaky looking. Anvil gets a BIG kick out, likely throwing Savage high enough in the air that he could have hit the top rope. That's borderline Yokozuna levels. Anvil gets a slingshot shoulder block which would freaking HURT.

Notice the cameras always getting shots of Sherri's back. It's clear Vince was running the company back then given what we know now. This is more or less ALL Anvil here. Sherri unhooks Anvil when his arms are tied up and it lets Savage reset the universe to its natural order as he takes over. Wow that was a long sentence. The elbow finishes soon after.

Rating: B-. This was WAY better than it had any right to be. I don't think anyone was idiotic enough to think that Anvil was going to win, but still it was nice to see him get in such a long stretch of offense and have time being in control. This was a decent enough match and it got Sherri over as a threat to Savage's opponents, which was the point here. Not bad at all.

Jim would be in back to back Survivor Series matches starting in 1989.

Ultimate Warriors vs. Heenan Family

Ultimate Warrior, Jim Neidhart, Rockers

Andre the Giant, Arn Anderson, Haku, Bobby Heenan

Andre can barely move and it's sad to see. Neidhart and the Rockers start before anything happens and Jim is in trouble early. Here's Warrior

without any music (he's IC Champion here) and a big clothesline puts Andre on the floor, which draws a countout because when the bell rang, Andre was the only Heenan Family member in the ring. We've already got the same problem the Hogan match had.

Warrior and Haku get things started for all intents and purposes but it's quickly off to Anvil vs. Arn. Andre (in blue instead of black) yells incoherently at the Warrior as he leaves. It's Haku vs. Anvil now with Haku in control. A superkick puts Neidhart down and eliminates him like it's a squash match. Off to Shawn to make Haku miss him and now it's off to Jannetty.

Haku tries a double clothesline but only hits Shawn. He picks up Marty but Shawn dropkicks Marty down onto Haku for a near fall. Off to Arn who tries a double suplex with Haku on Jannetty, but Shawn catches his partner in a nice move. Double superkicks put the wrestlers on the other team down and it's off to Marty vs. Haku. Warrior gets a tag in a few seconds later and Haku immediately goes for the eyes.

Haku backs Warrior into the corner and Heenan points to Arn for the tag in a funny bit. Arn immediately gets taken down and Marty hooks an armbar. Anderson brings Marty to the corner and brings in Heenan for a single punch before it's back to Haku. Arn knees Marty in the back and Haku superkicks him down so Heenan can drop a knee on Jannetty for the pin. You could loudly hear them calling spots on that sequence for some reason.

Warrior comes in so here's Anderson again. There's a bearhug by the Champ and Haku gets one as well. Off to Shawn who gets knocked to the floor with a few shots. Shawn moonsaults out of the corner over Arn and Anderson is in trouble. Warrior and Michaels both punch Anderson at the same time and Arn backs away from Warrior. A splash from Shawn gets two and it's off to Haku.

That doesn't last long at all as a cross body eliminates Haku to get us down to Warrior/Shawn vs. Heenan/Anderson. Heenan tries to get in some cheap shots on Shawn which draws in Warrior. Why? Was he that afraid for Shawn's safety? Arn dumps Shawn to the floor and Heenan goes up....and then

regains his sanity and climbs back down. Arn keeps asking for help from Heenan because he's getting tired so it's finally back to Bobby who runs at the first sign of trouble.

Shawn rams his head into the back of Arn's head and both guys are down. They slug it out but Shawn walks into the spinebuster (called the Anderson Drop) for the elimination. Warrior fires off some shoulders but Arn ducks and sends him to the floor. Heenan goes up again but thinks better of it again. Off to Heenan but Warrior quickly Hulks up so we see some more Anderson. Warrior fights him off as well and whips Arn into Heenan to knock Bobby to the floor. The gorilla press and splash get us down to one on one. Warrior sneaks up on Heenan and what do you think happens here? A shoulder block and splash ends this.

Rating: C-. I think it was watching the whole show before this but this was another dull match. Warrior was never in any danger and I think everyone knew it. To be fair, this would have been better with Tully out there and you can't fault the guys for that. Heenan being in there had to turn it into a comedy match and I can't hold that against them. Still though, another dull match in a series of them tonight.

And again at Survivor Series 1990.

Million Dollar Team vs. Dream Team

Ted DiBiase, Rhythm and Blues, ???

Dusty Rhodes, Koko B. Ware, Hart Foundation

Rhythm and Blues are Honky Tonk Man and Greg Valentine and the Harts are the tag champions. Dusty and DiBiase are feuding for obvious character reasons. Now we get to the legendary part of the match: the mystery partner. DiBiase gets on the mic and introduces for the first time ever....THE UNDERTAKER. Who on the planet would have imagined what this guy would become over the next twenty two years? Unreal indeed. The look on Taker's face is eerie and he stands there like a zombie which makes it even better.

Quick sidebar: the Undertaker is probably the greatest example ever of

someone being the only person that could pull off his character. Mark Calaway is PERFECT as the Undertaker with the look and the size and the dead looking eyes and the tattoos and everything like that. Before this he was just Mean Mark Callous in WCW and was a generic big villain. Sometimes it's about finding what works and Taker has worked for a very long time. Also a bit of trivia: he debuted at a Superstars taping three days before this under the name Kane the Undertaker.

Undertaker and Bret start with Taker pounding the tar out of him. Well if you want to make someone look like a killer, call Bret Hart. Bret hits the ropes and charges at Taker, only to get caught by the throat and slammed down. It was more like a clothesline that Taker went to the mat with than the usual chokeslam here but he did have Bret by the throat.

Off to Neidhart who can't move Taker at all and gets slammed for trying. Jim looked TERRIFIED and tags out to Koko, who is too stupid to be afraid. Koko misses a charge and clotheslines himself on the top. The Tombstone (I believed named by Gorilla on the spot here) debuts but isn't exactly the famous version yet, as Taker has both of Koko's legs on one side of his head and covers with the folded arms but from the sides. It looked and sounded great though.

Bret comes in and hammers on Undertaker who just stares at him. Taker tags in Valentine and gives one of the most evil glares you'll ever see at Bret. Off to Big Dust who starts gyrating. They chop it out in the corner and it's off to Anvil. The Harts take their turns working over Valentine's arm but Greg gets a knee up in the corner. Off to Honky who is rapidly on his way out of the company. Bret makes a blind tag to Neidhart who sneaks in and powerslams Honky out.

DiBiase comes in to jump Neidhart but it's quickly off to Dusty for the big showdown. It's back to Neidhart quickly but Virgil trips Jim up and DiBiase clotheslines him down for the pin. Here's Bret again who pounds away and it's back to Dream for more of the same. Back to Undertaker who gets some HEIGHT on a jumping stomp to the back of Dusty's head.

Bret comes in again and chokes Bret in the corner and somehow shows no emotion while at the same time looking angrier than any wrestler I've

ever seen. Bret fights off DiBiase out of the corner and it's off to Dusty. Taker comes in, goes up, walks (a little way) down the rope with no one to hold onto, and hits a double ax to eliminate Dusty. Brother Love stomps on Dusty a bit so Dusty chases him off. Undertaker stalks Dusty to the back to get counted out, which is the only thing they could have done with him here.

Back in the ring Bret rolls up Valentine very quickly and it's DiBiase vs. Hart. Bret pounds on DiBiase and atomic drops him to the floor, followed by a pescado to take Ted out again. DiBiase's shoulder goes into the post and his head goes into the steps and they head back inside. They slug it out but DiBiase sends him chest first into the buckle to take over.

A quick backslide gets two for Hart and now it's time for a classic: Bret trips over DiBiase and fakes a knee injury, resulting in a small package for two. Virgil interference messes up and another rollup gets two for Bret. The backbreaker and middle rope elbow get two for Hart but DiBiase rolls through a cross body for the pin.

Rating: C+. This is a very interesting match as you could see stars being made and stars going away. DiBiase clearly didn't mean as much as he used to and would shift into a tag team run soon after this. Dusty would be gone in January as would Honky. On the other hand you can see the rise of Bret Hart on the horizon as the crowd was LOSING IT over those near falls at the end. Oh and the Undertaker. That's kind of a big deal.

Here's Neidhart in a singles match on Superstars, November 9, 1991.

Ric Flair vs. Jim Neidhart

Neidhart, in the big blue pants, runs Flair over with a shoulder to start and no sells some shots in the corner. A backdrop and some clotheslines have the same effect on Flair but he avoids a running knee in the corner. The leg gets wrapped around the post a few times and Flair gets two off a cross body. The Figure Four goes on and the match is stopped pretty fast.

Neidhart would hook up with Owen Hart in a short lived tag team, including this match at Royal Rumble 1992.

Orient Express vs. New Foundation

It's Owen/Neidhart as the Foundation here. Owen and Kato start thing off here. All four guys look like they're in pajamas here. Owen takes him down to the mat by the arm before climbing up the ropes (not in the corner mind you but just the ropes) to backflip into the ring for an armdrag. A rana puts Kato down and it's off to Neidhart vs. Tanaka. Tanaka gets run over as well, so here's Owen to beat him up.

Tanaka gets caught by an enziguri and it's back to Neidhart. The Express gets clotheslined down by Jim and Owen adds a double cross body for two. A spinwheel kick gets the same for Hart so Kato tries to come in sans tag. The distraction lets Fuji hit Owen with the cane to finally give the Express control. Tanaka hooks a chinlock as this isn't exactly as fast paced as last year's opener.

Owen gets to do Bret's chest to the buckle bump before charging into a superkick in the other corner for two. After Kato comes in and does nothing, here's Tanaka again for a headbutt to the abdomen. A chinlock goes nowhere but a headbutt gets two on Owen. Neidhart gets the tag but the referee doesn't see it of course. The distraction allows Fuji to put the cane on the corner and Owen's shoulder goes through it in a loud crunch.

It only gets two though as Owen gets a leg over the rope. Kato channels his inner Anderson with a hammerlock slam before it's back to Tanaka. Owen finally escapes and things break down for a bit, resulting in a double clothesline for two on Hart. A superkick to the chest doesn't put Owen down, but Tanaka jumping over Kato to land on Hart's back does. Hart comes back with a dropkick to take out both members of the Express at once. There's the hot tag to Neidhart and house is cleaned. Owen dives onto Kato before a Rocket Launcher gets the pin on Tanaka.

Rating: B-. Decent match here but it felt like they were trying to do the same match that worked so well in 1991. The problem was the Express wasn't anything that good anymore and the team was gone almost immediately after this. Either way, the match wasn't bad and it's fine for an opener. The New Foundation never quite did anything until 1994

when Owen was a heel.

Neidhart actually did a few shows with WCW, including on Saturday Night on May 1, 1993.

Jim Neidhart/Junkyard Dog vs. Rip Rogers/Chick Donovan

The jobbers are rather, shall we say, effeminate. Dog's rival Dick Slater comes out to watch as JYD hiptosses Rogers down to start. A headbutt sends Rip out to the floor and it's off to Anvil for hiptosses to both guys. We hit the armbar on Donovan before it's back to Dog for a slam. An atomic drop sends Donovan into another slam and there's a headbutt onto the arm. The Big Thump powerslam sets up a cobra clutch from Anvil for the submission.

Rating: D. Believe it or not, Dog was actually in something resembling shape here and far better than he looked years earlier. Now that being said, I wouldn't want him on my screen any more than this, but it's better than what we had to put up with in 1991 or so. Neidhart in WCW never felt right and this is a good example.

Neidhart would head back to the WWF as a heel for some Hart Family matches, including this one on October 19, 1994.

Bret Hart/British Bulldog vs. Owen Hart/Jim Neidhart

Ok, this HAS to be good right? Bret is world champion here so this is probably around August of 94 as that was the top feud around that time. Still in Albany and likely at the same show. Apparently this was October 19, 1994. I've always wondered which shows they picked to film and how they were chosen. Bret and Owen start so we're guaranteed a good start at least. Granted after that last match anything sounds great.

I love Owen celebrating while doing absolutely nothing. Lots of chain wrestling to start as you would expect. Bret works on the arm and gets a crucifix for two. They speed it up a bit and Bret gets a clothesline to put Owen on the floor. Back in and Bret taunts Neidhart, saying he wants the Anvil.

Now here's a match I don't think I've ever seen. Bret tries his usual stuff but Anvil catches him in a bear hug. Hart bites Anvil's head to escape and it's time for power vs. power. Ok never mind as it's time for Owen vs. Bulldog. They're getting in and out of there rather fast. Stan Lane continues to be underrated at the announce table. Owen gets caught in the semi-delayed vertical for two.

We hit the chinlock again even though I thought we had hit the quota of chinlocks in the first match. Spinwheel kick puts Bulldog down for two and it's back to Anvil who puts on a chinlock of his own. The fans are chanting for Owen actually. Owen comes in again and drills Bulldog with some European uppercuts in a nice bit of irony. Shawn Killer Kick makes Smith flip forward and the double teaming commences.

Neidhart back in there now as the heels are working well together here. Bret chases Owen but the referee stops him. This stopping though allows the New Foundation (Owen and Neidhart of course) to hit a Hart Attack on Bulldog for two. Neckbreaker by Owen gets two and we hit the chinlock one more time. This is very much a stop and go kind of match as they'll get going and then stop for a chinlock etc.

Bulldog fights up and they hit head to head. There's a tag to Hart but Neidhart had the referee distracted. Heel miscommunication puts Anvil down and there's the tag to the champion. He beats up both guys while Bulldog just watches on. What a nice partner he is. Russian Leg Sweep gets two on Owen and it's Five Moves of Doom time. He actually gets the Sharpshooter but Neidhart makes the save. Off to the Bulldog again and everything breaks down. Bulldog gets a small package, Neidhart turns it over, Bret turns it over again and Bulldog pins Owen to end it.

Rating: B-. If you cut out a lot of the rest holds and give it a bit better ending then this would be a much better match. Still though not a bad match at all and I thought it was

pretty good. With these four it's hard not to have a good match. Neidhart was the worst of these four but he's certainly watchable in the ring. Decent match but could have been much better.

Here's a sequel ten days later in MSG, for the only time ever.

WWF World Title: Bret Hart vs. Jim Neidhart

This is fan cam footage so the quality is really low. The place just erupts for Bret. Anvil shoves him to the ropes a few times but gets cross bodied for two. The champ takes a thumb to the eye and bails outside, only to have Jim forearm the post by mistake. Bret sunset flips back in for two but takes his chest bump to give Neidhart control. We hit the chinlock for a bit before Neidhart hammers on Bret's back and poses. Bret fights out of the corner but charges into a bearhug to slow things down again.

A knee to the ribs gets two for Jim and he whips Hart hard into the corner. There's a powerslam for two more and they head outside. Bret gets slammed into the steps as Neidhart looks very confident. Hart slingshots him back in though and hammers away before getting two off a small package. We hit the Five Moves of Doom but Neidhart gets a boot up to stop the elbow. Bret gets slammed off the top but avoids a splash, setting up the Sharpshooter to retain.

Rating: D+. This was watchable but I see why it never was a full on program. At the end of the day, Neidhart just didn't have anything special to throw at Bret besides basic power stuff. The match wasn't bad due to not even making it nine minutes, but it's much more of an historical footnote than anything else.

We'll skip the Who phase (his name was Who. You can figure out the jokes) and get to Jim as part of the Hart Foundation stable at King of the Ring 1997.

Hart Foundation vs. Sid/Legion of Doom

The Harts here are Owen, Jim and Davey, giving us a total of

one Hart in the entire Foundation for this match. I love stupid things like that. Why do I have a feeling the heels are going to win and win easily here? This is being written about 3 days after Bret signed with WWE again, so this is very interesting indeed. There's a sign in the crowd about cheese for no apparent reason.

The faces come out separately which is rather pointless. The LOD get a decent pop but you could tell their time was about over. This takes FOREVER to get going as we get an LOD chant. It's Owen and Animal to start us up. Hey, call the Superstar line and run up the phone bill to hear bad promos! More or less all we have here is random power matches as five guys in this match are power guys, and no one saw anything wrong with this.

Also, no one saw a problem with putting THE FREAKING LOD AND SID together as a three man team against two good wrestlers and a generic power guy in Anvil, and yet they had the NERVE to wonder why they were having their heads handed to them. Anvil was a political science major at UCLA. All of a sudden my future seems far more bleak. Seriously, who in the WORLD thought Anvil vs. Hawk was a good idea?

You have two guys that have made a career out of not getting hurt. Just as I type that, Hawk takes a piledriver and of course is up before anyone else. Owen comes in and goes insane. Dang how good could he have been as a veteran? Imagine him vs. Angle or Jericho in 2000-2001. Owen would have been in his late 30s then and definitely capable of working well. He's two and a half months older than Shawn, so it's completely realistic that he could still be wrestling and having very good matches today.

He EASILY would have won the world title in there somewhere given the absolute awfulness of some of the champions since then. I mean seriously, who would have been better as champion: Owen or Khali? Anyway, this match is just BAD. Yeah,

the match ends and I've got nothing at all. Owen wins with a top rope sunset flip. Sid would be gone either the next night or in 8 days.

Rating: F. Seriously, WHO THOUGHT THIS WAS A GOOD IDEA??? This fails for reasons that I've already given. Owen and Animal were ok, but that's it. This was just pathetic.

Since we've covered the Canadian Stampede match so many times in this series, here's an elimination match at Survivor Series 1997.

Team USA vs. Team Canada

Vader, Steve Blackman, Marc Mero, Goldust

British Bulldog, Jim Neidhart, Doug Furnas, Phillip Lafon

If this is the best America can do, I need to learn to speak Canadian. Team America comes out to Angle's music. Naturally the Americans are booed out of the building. The Canadians come out to Bret's music to make sure the idea is hammered home. Furnas is from Oklahoma and Neidhart is from Nevada, but he had dual citizenship so it's not as insane. I think Furnas has the long hair but I can never remember which is which.

Mero, wearing a hat, starts with Bulldog. Mero takes off the hat and Bulldog wipes himself with it, making him a hero in America. Bulldog knocks Mero to the floor and makes fun of Blackman's martial arts in a funny bit. Vader comes in sans tag and works on Smith's arm but jumps into a slam. Bulldog EASILY suplexes Vader and it's off to Lafon. I was right about Furnas having the long hair. Good to know.

Back to Mero who hits a knee lift but gets his head kicked off by Lafon, followed by a clothesline for two. Off to Neidhart and then right back to Lafon. Blackman comes in and JR points out that Steve isn't a wrestler. Lafon DDTs him for two and gets a crucifix for the same. Blackman fights off Team Canada on his own but gets caught on the floor in a fight with Furnas and Lafon, resulting in a countout elimination.

It's Mero vs. Neidhart now with Jim missing a middle rope splash. Vader comes in and is immediately knocked down twice by Neidhart. Vader comes

back with the running body attack and a splash for the pin. Lafon comes in again with some kicks to send Vader to the floor. Back in and Lafon is sent rolling to the corner and a big belly to belly puts him down. A middle rope splash is enough to put Lafon out, leaving Bulldog and Furnas vs. Vader, Mero and Goldust.

Furnas comes in to pound away but misses a dropkick, allowing the tag in to Mero. Has Goldie been in there yet? Mero pounds Furnas down and goes up for a moonsault press and it looks AWFUL, with Furnas going down like he was trying to powerslam Mero out of the air but Mero hitting the move like usual. Either way it gets two and it's off to Bulldog because Furnas doesn't seem to be sure what planet he's on.

Mero escapes the Bulldog powerslam and blasts Smith with a right hand. Back to Furnas who fires off the rights and lefts. Furnas does the exact same thing, but Mero is a legitimate former amateur boxing champion so that's not really a fair contest. Mero tries a rollup but gets reversed into one by Furnas who grabs a handful of tights to get us down to 2-2.

Vader pounds on Furnas as the King laments Sable having to leave with Mero. Furnas clotheslines Vader down and it's off to Bulldog again. Goldust, who apparently has a broken hand, STILL doesn't want to come in. Vader suplexes Furnas down but Furnas hits Vader low. When Vader gets another break from Bulldog, Goldie hides on the floor from a tag. Furnas suplexes Vader down but doesn't tag. A Frankensteiner takes Vader down for two but Vader no sells it.

Vader slugs Goldust in the face and pulls him into the ring. This is when Goldust walked out on Marlana when she was pregnant because he didn't want the responsibility or the lack of attention. Goldust walks out for a countout but Vader slams Furnas down and hits the Vader Bomb for the elimination. Vader turns around and is knocked silly with the ring bell from Bulldog for the final elimination.

Rating: C-. This was a better match by miles and miles than the first two, mainly due to people with actual talent being in there. On top of that, the people CARED about the match and it makes the match a lot better by result. The result was never in doubt given how worthless Team

America was, but it was cool to see Vader getting to be like his old self, even for one night. The match still wasn't great but after the first two matches tonight, this was a masterpiece by comparison.

Due to what happened later in the night, Neidhart would head over to WCW for a bit. Here he is on Nitro, March 30, 1998.

Curt Hennig vs. Jim Neidhart

Can this feud just end already? Rude jumps in on commentary and dodges a question about being Nash's partner tonight. Neidhart quickly pulls him to the floor and sends Hennig into the barricade before going back inside. Jim keeps asking Rude to come down to the ring for a beating but pounds Hennig down with ease. Hennig gets in some shots but Neidhart rakes him in the eyes to put him down. Off to a bearhug on Curt and Rude runs in for the DQ, only to get caught in a quick bearhug as well.

Here's a title match on Thunder, June 18, 1998.

IWGP Tag Titles: Tenzan/Masahiro Chono vs. British Bulldog/Jim Neidhart

The champions jump the brothers in law to start and throw Neidhart out to the floor. Smith gets double teamed but comes back with a nice double clothesline to put the champions down. Things settle down with Chono going after Neidhart's knee to get us going. Some hard kicks to the knee and a quick leg lock take the Anvil down and it's off to Tenzan for some solid right hands to the head. So much for the technical stuff.

Chono comes back in and goes after Davey, allowing the champions to double team Neidhart a bit. Jim comes back with a hard forearm to Chono and makes the hot tag to bulldog. House is cleaned and the powerslam puts Tenzan down, but Chono hits Davey with the belt for the DQ.

Rating: D+. Somehow this quick, nothing match is probably the best thing we've seen so far tonight. The titles being on the line made this a bit better than Monday's match, but it doesn't make the fans care about the Japanese guys at all. Granted no one cared about Neidhart and Bulldog at this point either, so it's not Chono and Tenzan's fault.

One of Neidhart's few WCW PPV matches, from Fall Brawl 1998.

Dancing Fools vs. Jim Neidhart/British Bulldog

Why in the world Neidhart was hired is beyond me but whatever. The Dancing Fools are Disco Inferno and Alex Wright. Wright vs. Bulldog to start. The Hart relatives are the faces here I guess. The stalling begins and Bulldog backs him into the corner. Gorilla press slam puts Wright down and it's a double tag. Disco dances around a lot and Neidhart makes fun of him for it.

Disco actually takes him down and Tony is STUNNED. Off to Wright and Bulldog again with the dancers taking over. The announcers talk about WarGames mostly because the match isn't that interesting. I mean seriously, Jim Neidhart is on PPV in 1998. Why in the world is that happening? Disco hits an atomic drop but is sent over the top with ease. It's not a DQ so hopefully they got rid of that idiotic rule.

Apparently Bret has been teasing turning...still heel I guess as he screwed Hogan over on Nitro kind of. The Hart dudes take over as Heenan picks Piper for the main event. The fans want Flair again. Slingshot shoulder block misses for Jim though and here's the tag to Wright, who is apparently popular now. Wright cleans up a bit and double teaming breaks up the powerslam. Double clothesline puts down Bulldog. The referee goes down for a bit and the powerslam ends Disco clean.

Rating: D+. Just a tag match here but it had Jim Neidhart in it in 1998. Again, I don't think that requires much more of an explanation. The announcers were bored with it because this belonged on WCW Saturday Night or something like that. Not a fan of this one at all but it wasn't horrible I guess.

I'm going to cut it there so we don't have to go through Heroes of Wrestling anymore. Jim Neidhart was fine for a power guy with a cool beard and an awesome laugh. He never was much more than that but his time with Bret caused one of the best tag teams you'll ever find. Neidhart is fondly remembered because of his time in a tag team and there's nothing wrong with that.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of 1997 WCW Monday Nitro Reviews at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00NPPH0WI>

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

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>