

Monday Nitro – August 23, 1999: Keep It Simple Stupid

Monday Nitro #202

Date: August 23, 1999

Location: MGM Grand Garden Arena, Las Vegas, Nevada

Attendance: 8,940

Commentators: Bobby Heenan, Tony Schiavone

It's the KISS show! Yes indeed. After all this time, it's the most hyped up event WCW has had in months. The band will be performing tonight and this is supposed to be the big weapon to fight back against the fallout from Summerslam 1999. Now to be fair we also have Sting vs. Hulk Hogan for the World Title, which is a major ratings draw. I'm sure that's why they're going it for free with one week's notice instead of at the pay per view. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Sid's path of destruction. He's off to a good start too as he's basically crushed the cruiserweight division in just a few weeks.

KISS video.

There will be a new WCW President announced soon.

Chase Tatum vs. Mikey Whipwreck

Mikey hammers away in the corner but gets his head taken off by a clothesline. Chase...well I can't say hits because only one foot connected and it was nothing resembling a dropkick, so we'll say Chase does a disservice to dropkicks everywhere. Thankfully Mikey hits a decent one...and Sid comes out for the powerbombs.

This time is different though as Sid has a guy with signs, counting up the wins on the streak. He winds up being 68-0 by the end of the segment. The worst part is this could be an interesting story but it's freaking SID doing this stuff.

Kidman runs into Kimberly in the back and apologizes to her for last week's issues. Kimberly says she'll calm Page down.

Goldberg arrives and sees Page attacking Kidman, only to have a staredown with the Triad. I thought he was feuding with Sid.

Here's the Triad for a chat. Page praises Kanyon for helping train him and says Kidman can't breathe the same air as Kimberly. He wants Goldberg tonight though, because why bother hyping up a match like that? Page promises to blow the roof off of Goldberg. I'm not sure what that means but I have a feeling it's going to be a letdown compared to Halloween Havoc from last year.

Sting comes out with something to say. He thanks Hogan for the title shot tonight because he's back in black. Hasn't he been in black for like three years now? Cue Lex Luger for the first time in months after that brief return in the spring or whenever it was. Luger talks about Sting being there for him when he was recovering from a motorcycle wreck and how Sting is the bedrock of WCW. Everyone is clapping that the red and yellow is back but Luger isn't buying Hogan being friends with everyone again. Sting thinks Luger should understand this after 14 years: he's taking Hogan on no matter what. A handshake ends this worthless return.

Tenay is in the parking lot when Bischoff pulls up in a Hummer. Mike asks if Bischoff is going to be the new President but Bischoff laughs him off and asks if Tenay got that rumor off the internet.

Cat vs. Buff Bagwell

Because this needed a rematch. Feeling out process to start with Buff slamming Cat down and dropkicking him to the floor. Back in and Miller kicks him down before hitting his dancing elbow. To really mix things up, Miller tries another dancing elbow but misses this time. See, he's versatile! A low blow puts Bagwell down again and throws him to the floor for some Sonny kicks. This brings out Lex Luger of all people to scare Onoo off, meaning we miss the Blockbuster to give Bagwell the pin. Why can't Sid come out and powerbomb these guys for a change?

Berlyn is coming.

DJ Ran/Nitro Girls.

Goldberg vs. Diamond Dallas Page

This is quite the first hour main event. Bigelow comes out with a trashcan and the Triad starts triple teaming Goldberg early on, only to have Canyon get ripped in half by a spear. Bam Bam eats a spear as well, sending Page running off. Goldberg challenges him for next week and there's no match.

Video for the new West Texas Rednecks song Good Old Boys. It's Jeff Jarrett's 1996 music with lyrics, which makes me wonder why they didn't put Jarrett with the Rednecks when he showed up. If a guy from Minnesota can be from West Texas, why not a guy from Nashville?

Nitro Party video. Those are still a thing?

Cruiserweight Title: Lenny Lane vs. Juventud Guerrera

Lane won the belt last week on Thunder and crawls around on all fours to start, because he's strange you see. Lenny goes behind him to start and thrusts his hips so Juvy kicks him low, because everything for this character has to be related to sex in some way. Some Lodi interference fails so Juvy dives onto him, only to get taken down by a very nice corkscrew dive from the champ. Back in and Lenny...plays with his pigtailed and skips around before covering.

We get the idea already WCW. A pair of shoulder breakers and a powerslam get two for Lenny and it's time for Lodi to get in some shots. The fans think Lenny is gay, which really is the only thing we know about him so what else are they supposed to chant? He plants Juvy with a running Liger Bomb and celebrates with his brother/lover, drawing a much more offensive chant from the fans. Back up and Juvy hits a quick Juvy Driver and loads up the 450, only to have to dive at Sid for the DQ.

Rating: C-. Stop it, please. I mean that on both counts if that's not clear. Stop the ridiculous gay story with these two and stop having Sid destroy the cruiserweights because they're nothing more than target practice. We get the idea, but does he have to beat up former and current

champions? You can't have him beat up jobbers or really low level guys instead? Of course not, because this is WCW where ONLY old heavyweights matter.

Sid is the man, powerbombs a go-go, 71-0, thousands of remotes change the channel.

Here are the Rednecks to perform Good Old Boys live. Hennig takes a few shots at KISS, because they're trying to turn their stupid musical performances and guests into a story.

Nitro Girls.

Dean Malenko/Perry Saturn/Shane Douglas vs. Hugh Morrus/Barbarian/Brian Knobbs

Malenko dropkicks Morrus to start, followed by Shane coming in for a double back elbow. It's quickly off to Barbarian, who charges into a boot in the corner and eats a middle rope clothesline. Since no one can stay in this match for more than thirty seconds, here are Knobbs and Malenko to keep the slow pace going.

We actually stick with Dean getting beaten up for a bit with everyone hitting some clubbing, yes CLUBBING I SAY, forearms to the back. Knobbs dives into a raised boot and the hot tag brings in Saturn. It's a superkick and t-bone for Knobbs, but Rick Steiner comes in, walks RIGHT IN FRONT OF THE REFEREE, and bulldogs Saturn to give Knobbs the pin.

Rating: D. So now Steiner is costing the Revolution a match against the First Family. As in the low level stable that should be cannon fodder for Goldberg. I know WCW's answer is that they gave Benoit the US Title, but do they really need to give the Barbarian and Brian Knobbs a TV win over a team like the Revolution? Again, I'd pay so much to hear them validate this stuff.

Benoit runs out and challenges Steiner for later tonight.

Berlyn is still coming.

Insane Clown Posse vs. Billy Kidman/Rey Mysterio Jr.

Shaggy hammers on Kidman to start but eats a dropkick to put him to the floor. A whip into the barricade keeps 2 Dope (I feel so stupid for having to type that) in trouble and it's off to J. vs. Mysterio. Rey destroys him with ease and hits a quick Bronco Buster on Shaggy, only to get jumped by J. Shaggy gets two off a guillotine legdrop with Kidman making the save. J. heads outside and Rey tries a big flip dive, only to have J. be WAY out of position, leaving Rey to mostly crash. Vampiro breaks up the Shooting Star but Kidman sends Shaggy into Vampiro for the pin.

Rating: D+. Not bad for the most part here and thankfully they didn't have the Clowns go over the former World Tag Team Champions. This was every major complaint I've had about the Clowns wrestling since they debuted and I don't see it getting better any time soon. Thankfully they kept it short though, which is the best thing you can say about one of these matches.

Eddie comes out for the save.

Here's Hogan for the big push towards his match with Sting. He doesn't know why Luger doesn't trust him and promises to never swerve his family, including Nitro Nick. This was a waste of time.

US Title: Rick Steiner vs. Chris Benoit

Benoit is defending, likely because Steiner isn't even carrying his belt. Well to be fair, it is worthless remember. Rick slugs him down to start but eats a German suplex to put him down. Serves him right for disgracing a title like that. Benoit dives right into another suplex though and Rick starts his choking/raking the face offense.

The champ (as in the guy who actually wears a belt) is sent ribs first into the buckle but gets his boots up in the corner, setting up some Rolling Germans. He heads up top but Steiner pulls him in the way of the Swan Dive, drawing in Saturn to go after Rick. This brings out Sid to lay out Saturn, because cruiserweights just aren't enough for him anymore. Benoit chases them off and I guess the match is thrown out.

Rating: C. I'm happy whenever I get to see Steiner dropped on his head

over and over as I keep hoping it might beat some sense into him. Thank goodness they didn't make him a double champion here, which was an actual worry I had during this match. Oh and thank goodness Sid is now involved in I think a fourth story because we just weren't getting enough of him.

Benoit challenges Sid and Steiner to a match against himself and Saturn for Thunder. Two things:

1. That match was already set up on Thunder.
2. That match will be going head to head with the debut of Smackdown, featuring HHH vs. the Rock for the WWF World Title. Therefore, yes, WCW does think that Sid and Steiner are big enough draws to compete with the WWF's main event guys. I didn't want to believe it but somehow, that seems to be the case.

Tag Team Titles: Harlem Heat vs. Barry Windham/Kendall Windham

Stevie reiterates his hatred for fruit booties. Harlem Heat is defending and Booker cranks on Kendall's arm to start. It's quickly off to Stevie who gets taken into the Windham corner as Heenan seems to think Barry is Bobby Duncum Jr. Booker comes back in for some double team punching to Barry's head. There is no energy to this match, likely because the Windhams are such heatless challengers.

Stevie clotheslines both rednecks and everything breaks down. The Windhams nail their stable mates by mistake and Booker ax kicks Kendall, followed by the missile dropkick. There's no referee though Curt comes in with that stupid cowbell and knocks Booker silly to give Kendall the pin and the titles.

Rating: D-. I'm not sure if I hated the match or the booking more. The match was really dull stuff because Barry doesn't care and Kendall is Kendall. That being said, who thinks this is a good idea? You reform Harlem Heat and have them drop the belts just a few weeks later, of course with Booker taking the pin because we can't have Stevie get pinned right?

Vampiro vs. Eddie Guerrero

Tony mentions an upcoming search for a new Nitro Girl which will give us a pretty well known blonde. Eddie gets hammered into the corner to start and thrown across the ring with a good looking release belly to belly suplex. Back up and Guerrero just explodes in the corner with chops and punches away. I'm still trying to figure out why these two are fighting. I know they've been fighting for weeks now but I have no idea why and commentary is busy hyping up whatever they can think of to talk about instead of talking about the match.

A spinning kick to the chest drops Eddie again but he comes back with a superplex. He loads up the Frog Splash but we've got Clowns. Insane ones at that, and Eddie is so annoyed at them being on the show that he slips off the top instead of diving at them. With J. offering a distraction, Vampiro sends Eddie head first into Shaggy for the pin.

Rating: D+. Can you blame Eddie for leaving soon? He comes back from a major car crash that put him out for months and gets to job to Vampiro for the sake of appeasing some niche celebrities like the Insane Clown Posse? The match wasn't bad with Vampiro, as in the wrestler instead of the wrestling imitators, getting to show his skills, only to have a lame ending with Eddie going down thanks to Shaggy. Yeah, all those years and the classics with Mysterio but he gets to lose to a guy named after a Scooby-Doo character.

Kidman and Mysterio come out for the save.

Nitro Girls.

WCW World Title: Hulk Hogan vs. Sting

Hogan is defending of course and this means KISS will be main eventing the show. They shake hands to start because these two have never had a single issue ever. Neither guy can get an advantage off a lockup but they shove each other away and start jawing with each other. Hulk (still called Hollywood by Tony) grabs a wristlock but Sting counters into one of his own. They're mirroring each other very well so far.

A test of strength gives Hogan control but Sting small packages him for two. Sting fires off right hands in the corner but misses the big elbow

that always misses. Both guys head outside for a brawl with Hogan being sent onto the announcers' table. Sting is being way more aggressive here than usual, which would seem like plans for a heel turn. I can't help but laugh at this, because turning Sting heel would be like trying to make fans boo the Easter Bunny.

They take it back inside and Sting gets two off a Vader Bomb. Somehow Hogan sells it more than he ever did when Vader himself did it back in 1995. We hit the chinlock for a bit until Hogan Hulks Up, only to miss the big leg. The Stinger Splash connects but a second hits boot. The third hits buckle and Hogan is ready to go, only to have Sid and Steiner come in for the DQ.

Rating: C. The worst part of all this is the match was actually getting good (well as good as these two can get in 1999) until the ending. It wasn't like the match was over and they ran in to prevent the obvious. In theory this sets up a tag match next week, because we haven't seen enough of those lately.

This brings up the problem at the moment: Goldberg is feuding with Sid (and apparently the Triad), Steiner is feuding with the Revolution and Hogan doesn't have a big challenger. In theory it would be Sting challenging at the PPV, but that's what we just saw here. The non-conclusive ending leaves an opening for a rematch, but I've never liked a TV match setting up a major pay per view rematch.

Goldberg and Luger come out for the save, because you need four former World Champions to deal with Sid and RICK STEINER. Hogan offers Sting one more title shot, likely at Fall Brawl.

It's time for the real main event and Tony promises a brand new KISS inspired wrestler debuting before the end of the show. Schiavone is apparently a huge KISS fan and gets to do their introduction, right around the time that HHH is pinning Mankind to become WWF World Champion. They perform God of Thunder and a spiked coffin is brought out on stage. It opens up to reveal....Brian Adams in KISS attire. I've heard this is the lowest drawing segment in Nitro history and the lowest overall rating for the show since a one hour episode in May 1998.

Overall Rating: D. More Sid, more offensive booking, more referees not needing to be there, more focus on celebrities and not wrestling, more hot shotting of big matches, more young guys getting beaten up by old guys that should be jobbers. In other words, it's everything wrong with WCW rolled up into one show.

Good Old Boys is a really appropriate name for the entire show. It's all about pushing the guys that used to be big names because screw anyone that wants to get a push around here. I mean, BARRY WINDHAM as a two time champion in 1999? There are a few interesting things here and there, but I have zero desire to sit through all these horrible things to get the glimmer of hope that WCW won't destroy them all. I know the destruction is coming, but it's nice to believe that there's a chance something might get better.

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