

Thunder – August 26, 1999: WCW's Daniel Bryan

Thunder

Date: August 26, 1999

Location: Municipal Coliseum, Lubbock, Texas

Attendance: 6,928

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Larry Zbyszko

The date might ring a bell for you because Smackdown is making its debut (other than the pilot) at the same time this show aired. WCW feigned interest in this show by booking two big matches: Harlem Heat vs. Brian Knobbs/Hugh Morrus and Chris Benoit/Perry Saturn vs. Sid Vicious/Rick Steiner. In other words, yes, WCW thought Rick Steiner and Sid Vicious were real draws. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Public Enemy vs. Sid Vicious

Yes, Sid is doing a double shot tonight. Rocco bails into the corner to start, leaving Grunge to go after Sid on his own. A big boot drops Johnny and clotheslines drop both he and his partner. Sid takes his time chopping and choking both guys before ramming their heads together. This show needs Heenan to make the joke about how that wouldn't hurt Public Enemy. Sid isn't phased by a double clothesline and a double chokeslam ends this quick.

Same Coach Buzz Stern clip from last week.

West Texas Rednecks vs. Filthy Animals

Six man tag with Konnan and Hennig on the floor. The Rednecks don't have the title belts here because this is taped in advance and WCW just needed to have this match here to mess up continuity. Rey and Kendall get things going with Windham raking the eyes and snapmaring Mysterio down.

Back up and Rey turns on the speed, sliding under the ropes and hitting a

nice springboard Thesz press. He hammers away in the corner but Kendall catches him in an atomic drop and tags in Barry. I still can't get over that Barry Windham is in his second title reign in 1999. Kidman comes in as well for some dropkicks until Barry sends him to the floor instead of, you know, wrestling him. Eddie distracts the referee by mistake and the Rednecks triple team Kidman.

Barry slams Kidman him a few times and it's off to Duncum for a clothesline, a shoulder breaker, and another clothesline. I'm starting to see why he never went anywhere. Off to Kendall for a big boot before it's back to Barry, who walks into a Bodog as we take a break. Back with Barry taking Eddie down with a jawbreaker, setting up a belly to back superplex from Kendall. Duncum throws Eddie to the floor for a beating as this match is somehow dragging about seven minutes in.

Barry hits the superplex that used to have Ric Flair in major trouble but only gets two here. Back up and Eddie grabs a quick headscissors, allowing the hot tag to Mysterio. Rey speeds things up with a sunset flip and Kidman adds a cross body to put Duncum down for two. Not a bad spot actually. Everything breaks down and Hennig pulls Rey outside, only to eat a baseball slide from Kidman. Eddie kicks Barry low, setting up the springboard hurricanrana from Mysterio for the pin.

Rating: D+. The ending was better, but the Rednecks are the least interesting group of heels I've seen in years. They're working the old southern style which can work well against high fliers, but the Windhams and Duncum are just not very good. Kendall and Duncum never went anywhere and Barry hasn't been worth watching in at least eight years. Boring match here that could have been a lot better with more talented heels.

The Rednecks beat on the Animals until Harlem Heat makes the save.

Call the Hotline!

In case two matches weren't enough, here are Sid and Steiner for a chat. The now 74-0 Sid says he and Steiner are the pioneers of WCW. Indeed they were about ten years ago. They've been hearing a bunch of midgets talking about starting a revolution. The two of them are going to enforce their policies, and the first one is to not let the revolution get started.

They've already taken out Hogan, Sting and Goldberg so the Revolution should be no problem.

Berlyn is still coming.

Cat vs. Prince Iaukea

Miller is in a cowboy hat and says he's the sheriff around here. Oh geez there's a bad comedy sketch in there somewhere. Cue Prince, but Miller wants the singer. After some Purple Rain references, Miller says he can beat Iaukea in less than three minutes. The Prince starts fast and knocks Miller to the floor, where Cat threatens to walk out.

With Prince's back turn, Miller tries to dive back in but lands at Prince's feet in a funny bit. Normally that would be a problem but Iaukea is so horrible on offense that Cat kicks him down twice and drops the dancing elbow. The sequence works so well that he tries it again but the elbow misses this time. A dropkick and Samoan drop are good for two but Onoo puts Miller's foot on the ropes. Prince, ever the nitwit, yells at Sonny and gets kicked with the ruby slipper for the pin at 2:59.

Harlem Heat vs. Hugh Morrus/Brian Knobbs

This was supposed to be for the titles but Harlem Heat lost them on Monday, so the entrances are edited out and everyone is in the ring for a big brawl to start. Things settle down to Brian clubberin on Booker until Booker realizes that he actually has talent and kicks Knobbs in the face. It's off to Stevie vs. Morrus with Ray getting stomped down in the corner. Stevie elbows everyone in sight and tags out to Booker before he has to actually do something.

Booker won't stand for that though as he fires off a few kicks before handing it back off to Stevie. A cheap shot from Knobbs lets the villains take over and Booker dealing with Jerry Flynn makes it even worse. Knobbs splashes Stevie in the corner and it's off to Morrus for a chinlock. After two and a half arm drops, Stevie fights up but charges into a knee in the corner. Brian comes in for a double shoulder block but charges into a boot in the corner. There's still no tag though as Morrus comes in and decks Booker like a good partner.

More double teaming ensues with Hugh tripping Stevie so Knobbs can drop an elbow. We hit a chinlock before more double teaming goes badly for the First Family as Knobbs misses a charge. Booker comes in off the hot tag and cleans house with a bunch of kicks as everything breaks down. With the referee losing track of everything, Flynn low bridges Booker to the floor, just as Stevie sends Knobbs outside. Flynn kicks Morruss by mistake, setting up Booker's missile dropkick for the pin.

Rating: D-. I know I said the Rednecks were dull in the ring but they're Lou Thesz and Kurt Angle compared to Morruss and Knobbs. The match was dull with everyone waiting on Booker to get the hot tag. I don't know what Booker is supposed to get out of pinning Hugh Morruss, but I guess since he's associated with Jimmy Hart and Brian Knobbs it makes him the second coming of Jerry Sags? I'm not sure if that's an insult to Morruss or not.

This Week in WCW Motorsports.

More Coach Sawyer, this time with him making his students lift weights.

Disorderly Conduct vs. Dean Malenko/Shane Douglas

Another freaking tag match. Shane gets taken down by Mean Mike's wristlock to start but nips up and takes Mike into the corner. Much like Stevie, Shane wants his partner to do most of the actual wrestling, though he does help with a double suplex. Malenko stomps on Mike in the corner before drop toeholding him down, setting up a Douglas elbow. Di...did the Revolution just lift a spot from Knobbs and Morruss???

Tom gets in a cheap shot from the apron and a double hot shot puts Shane down. Disorderly Conduct basically does the same things the First Family did in the previous match because seeing it once just wasn't enough. A front facelock doesn't go anywhere so Tom heads up, only to get pulled down into an atomic drop and the belly to belly suplex. Malenko comes in and cleans house, setting up a quick leg lariat and the Cloverleaf makes Tom tap.

Rating: D. Well at least it was shorter than the previous match. This show is bordering on a disaster with all the lame tag matches and nothing

interesting happening. Shane and Dean are a decent tag team, but I'd like to see them do something of note. I mean, we can't have them fight the cowboys and win the titles of course because that might be good for them, but there has to be something out there.

Insane Clown Posse video.

Clip of Saturn vs. Steiner from last week.

DDP comes out and says he wants to beat up Goldberg, Hogan and Sting to get the title back. This took three minutes.

Diamond Dallas Page vs. Chavo Guerrero Jr.

Haven't seen Chavo in awhile. Page makes a Free Willy joke about Chavo's mom, but Chavo says Page's mom freed Free Willy. So Page's mom is a 10 year old boy? It must make sense to Page as he lunges at Chavo in the corner and catches him with a tilt-a-whirl slam. Chavo gets sent to the floor and into then over the barricade. Page changes his mind and throws Chavo back inside and we take a break. We couldn't take a break in the tag matches?

Back with Chavo trying to speed things up but walking into a spinebuster. A wicked spinning Rock Bottom gets two as Page picks him up off the mat. Page chokes a lot and nails Chavo with a right hand to block a sunset flip. The fireman's carry into a Diamond Cutter ends this massacre.

Rating: C-. Yeah that's high but Chavo took some good bumps and I'm a fan of the TKO. I'm assuming they're building Page up for a match at Fall Brawl, even though he's been a tag guy for months now. This wasn't anything interesting but I'll take an extended squash over another dull midcard tag match.

Sid Vicious/Rick Steiner vs. Chris Benoit/Perry Saturn

Sid threatens to leave if the crowd isn't completely quiet. Right. The brawl starts on the floor until Benoit takes Sid up to the apron. Steiner breaks up Chris' suplex attempt to give the old guys control, only to have Benoit counter a clothesline into the Crossface on Sid. You know Sid isn't going to tap out so Steiner makes the save and we're already in the

chinlock.

Back up and for once, the good guys actually cheat from the apron with Saturn kicking Rick in the back of the head before coming in off the tag. I can't quite say it's a hot tag this early in the match. Sid tries to save his dog faced buddy, only allowing Benoit and Saturn to destroy Steiner even more. Benoit grabs an armbar but Sid copies Saturn and nails Chris from the apron. Steiner does his face grab and we take a break.

Back with the villains taking turns choking until Sid puts on a camel clutch. Steiner comes back in and takes Benoit down with a nice amateur move (I'm as shocked as you are) before putting on an ankle lock. He sends Benoit outside for a beating from Sid before the big man puts on a chinlock. Chris fights to his feet and makes his comeback by actually slamming Sid.

Benoit runs to the top for the Swan Dive but Sid rolls away to put both guys down. It's a double tag to Saturn and Steiner with Perry taking over and hitting his nice springboard clothesline on Sid. Steiner gets tired of not beating people up though and decks Saturn, only to get caught in the Crossface. Sid powerbombs Saturn at the same time though and kicks the referee in the head. Charles Robinson runs in and counts the pin on Saturn.

Rating: C-. The comeback was good but WHY ARE SID AND RICK STEINER BEATING THE REVOLUTION??? We sat through Sid beating former World Tag Team Champions on his own and then he and Steiner team up to beat the US Champion and Saturn? While HHH is defending the WWF World Title against the Rock no less. I keep looking at these matches and wondering how they can validate these decisions and I can't fathom that they just keep going with it.

Sid powerbombs Benoit to make sure you know he's better than the US Champion too. Malenko and Douglas run out and for some reason Sid doesn't get to destroy them as well.

Overall Rating: S. For shaking my head, which I was actually doing after watching this show. Sid Vicious had two wins and a promo in the span of two hours and for what? To build him up to get beaten by Goldberg in the

second biggest match on a pay per view? That's why we're sitting through this Sid mega push? WCW is willing to crush its Cruiserweight division and probably the midcard for the sake of building up an opponent for Goldberg. I've heard of cutting off your nose to spite your face, but this is ridiculous.

Speaking of Goldberg, where was he tonight? Or Hogan or Sting for that matter? They certainly weren't here, because why would WCW need the three most popular guys in the company on a night when the WWF, who has beaten them eight months in a row now, is debuting its version of Thunder with a World Title match in the main event?

To put this in perspective, when Smackdown moved back to Thursday nights and wanted to put on something special, Daniel Bryan opened and closed the show. When WCW was putting out its big guns to draw a good rating (which you could tell was happening since they had matches announced in advance), not only did they screw one of them up by having the defending champions lose the belts early (because they clearly couldn't have lost them here), they put Sid on to open and close the show. Therefore, WCW in 1999 views Sid Vicious as their Daniel Bryan. I never thought I would say that, but it seems to be the case.

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