

Monday Nitro – September 20, 1999: The Great Divide

Monday Nitro #206

Date: September 20, 1999

Location: Firststar Center, Cincinnati, Ohio

Attendance: 11,634

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Bobby Heenan

The question in WCW is now “how bad can it get”. After last week’s mess, the main event makes me feel like pounding my head in with a hammer, but the midcard scene only makes me want to carve hieroglyphics into my stomach with a branding iron. Russo can’t get here soon enough, and I’m sure that’s going to be followed with a “what the heck was I thinking”. Let’s get to it.

We open with a recap of last week’s show and the theory that Sting has been having a master plan for the last three years.

Juventud Guerrera/Psychosis vs. Kidman/Rey Mysterio Jr.

Kidman dropkicks Psychosis down to start but Juvy offers a distraction to let the masked man take over. Juvy doesn’t like cheating and comes in legally with a headscissors before some double stomping has Kidman in even more trouble. Kidman flips out of a German (apparently you can’t suplex him either. Unless you’re Lenny Lane) and tags in Rey, setting up a Doomsday Device with Mysterio hitting a springboard seated senton instead of a clothesline.

A Lionsault from Rey gets two but Juvy grabs a quick suplex to take over again. Psychosis comes back in for half of a double top rope guillotine legdrop (that was awesome) for two with Kidman making the save. Rey makes a quick tag so Kidman can hit a top rope cross body to take down both guys as everything breaks down. Psychosis, not being Lenny Lane, can’t powerbomb Kidman but Juvy shoves Kidman into a dropkick for the pin by Psychosis in a big surprise.

Rating: C+. Take four talented guys and let them fly around the ring for five minutes to open the show. That's standard, common sense booking and it's something that is going to work every time. Well, except when it ends with Sid powerbombing or chokeslamming all of them to continue a stupid angle but at least they're trying.

Cue Eddie and Konnan for a beatdown with Kidman going for Psychosis' mask. So the Animals are heels? It's not really clear most of the time. Chavo Guerrero Jr. comes out for the save and argues with Eddie, but Psychosis starts ranting in Spanish. Chavo says that was a challenge to Kidman for a mask vs. hair match next week but Psychosis doesn't seem to agree. Since everyone in this company has match making powers, it's on for next week.

Quick video on Sid vs. Goldberg.

Brian Knobbs vs. Goldberg

This is actually fallout from Goldberg beating up Jerry Flynn last week. Goldberg knocks him to the floor to start so Knobbs hits him with five straight chair shots. As usual, the referee doesn't seem to mind. Goldberg blocks a ram into the post and hits a big boot back inside. Jimmy Hart comes in and gives Knobbs the megaphone for a cheap shot, but it's the spear and Jackhammer for the easy pin.

Video on the Revolution.

Clip of Benoit vs. Malenko from last week.

Here's Flair for a chat. He wants Sting out here right now because he's free at last. From Bischoff I presume? Benoit comes out instead and says the two of them have unfinished business, so after he wins the title tonight, Flair can have Sting. Despite already having a guaranteed title shot tonight, Benoit challenges Sting. Flair ignores this and yells about Sting as Benoit talks about it being his time after all of Flair's lies. Ric runs off, looking for Sting. As usual, the young guys mean nothing on this show.

Nitro Girls video.

Nitro Girls competition. Still waiting on Stacy.

WCW World Title: Sting vs. Chris Benoit

Benoit's TV Title isn't on the line and all references to the champ will be about Sting. The Revolution isn't out here so it's one on one. During the entrances, Tony announces Sting/Luger/Page vs. Hogan/Hart/Flair for next week. Good to see Benoit getting this shot in the first hour instead of the main event where the World Title should be. Feeling out process to start with Benoit missing an enziguri and getting dropkicked outside.

Back in and a clothesline sends Benoit outside again as they seem to have a lot of time for this match. Another dropkick puts Chris down on the floor for the third time in two minutes. He seems to be more frustrated than outmatched so far. Benoit scores with a dragon screw leg whip and dropkick to the knee. Sting is already a million miles ahead of Sid by actually selling the injury. A bridging Indian deathlock with Benoit's hands around the face have Sting in even more trouble but Benoit has to let it go.

The champ gets caught in the Tree of Woe for a baseball slide dropkick but the second one misses, crotching the Canadian against the post. There's an atomic drop from Sting as the knee is fine far too fast. Sting totally botches what looked to be an attempt at a reverse Tree of Woe, nearly dropping Benoit on his head in the process.

More atomic drops have Benoit in trouble so he clotheslines Sting down. That earns him a chinlock for a bit and a knee to the ribs to stop his comeback attempt. A reverse suplex drops Benoit again and it's back to the chinlock. Back up again and Sting avoids a dropkick but gets small packaged out of nowhere for two.

Sting's top rope splash hits knees and Benoit has an opening. The Stinger Splash misses as well and Benoit nails the Swan Dive for a close two. The Crossface goes on but Sting is right next to the ropes. Benoit puts on a sleeper instead but the counter takes out the referee. A piledriver has Sting in even more trouble but there's no referee to count the cover. Benoit's German suplex gets the same result until Luger runs in with a bat shot to the ribs for the pin to retain Sting's title.

Rating: C+. This actually wasn't as good as you would think it would be. Sting didn't really sell much until the end, but it was nowhere near a squash. Benoit looked like a decent challenge to Sting but he clearly wasn't a real threat to win the title. The interesting thing here though was Sting's offense. Other than some atomic drops after Benoit crotched himself, which is more intelligence than anything else, there was nothing here that would make you think Sting was a heel. Is it any shock that the fans aren't booing him?

Flair comes in to punch Lex down and earns him a Diamond Cutter from an invading Page. Hogan comes in for the save as Benoit is totally forgotten.

Berlyn video.

Berlyn vs. Scott Armstrong

Armstrong gets run over to start and Berlyn poses on the ropes. He spits on Armstrong and drapes him over the top rope, knocking him out to the floor. The bodyguard doesn't get to fire off a right hand so Berlyn hits a European uppercut back inside. The match just keeps going for no apparent reason until the bodyguard gets in a cheap shot, setting up the neckbreaker for the pin on Armstrong.

Rating: D. I'll give them points for trying to push someone new but that Duggan match has just crippled Berlyn right out of the gate. Well that and the bad vignettes, bad interpreter, bad look that doesn't at all hide the fact that he's Alex Wright, bad matches, bad finishing move, bodyguard who already outshines him, the simplicity of the evil foreigner gimmick and no one caring about him. Other than all that, the guy is great.

Earlier today, Vampiro and the Clowns argued over which one should get the Cruiserweight Title shot but it's eventually Shaggy getting the shot. You know, the guy who pinned the champ last week. I apologize for making you think about that again. Gay jokes abound to make it even worse.

We see Flair getting beaten up last week.

Here's Diamond Dallas Page to rip on Pete Rose for cheap heat. I'd much rather watch Rose's WWF appearances as they're actually entertaining, but cheap heat is better than no heat. Anyway, he's facing Flair in the main event tonight and is going to retire Ric because Flair won't retire like he should have years ago.

Clip of Saturn vs. Guerrero from last week.

Evan Karagias vs. Blitzkrieg

So why did we see Saturn vs. Guerrero just now? The winner gets a Cruiserweight Title shot on Thursday. They fight over wrist control to start until Evan hits an uncharacteristic press slam. A more likely dropkick sends Blitzkrieg to the floor for a big dive as Tony and Bobby talk about the West Hollywood Blonds, dropping that name for the first time. Back in and Blitzkrieg hides behind the referee for a distraction, allowing him to elbow Evan in the face. A big flip dive misses though and a top rope cross body gets two for Evan. Cue Sid as Evan hits a spinning top rope splash for the pin and the title shot.

Rating: C. This is actually a better step as they're at least letting the matches end before they get to the Sid interference. That really isn't too much to ask in theory, but for WCW it comes off like a miracle. Not much to see here due to time, but at least they're pushing Evan as the next challenger.

Sid beats them both up and challenges Goldberg for Halloween Havoc, as long as Goldberg doesn't touch him first. Well at least there's a focus now.

Revolution video.

Perry Saturn vs. Eddie Guerrero

Saturn knocks Eddie into the ropes to start so he comes back with a hurricanrana and tilt-a-whirl backbreaker to put Saturn down. The Revolution pulls Eddie outside for a beating and we take an early break. Of course that somehow doesn't end the match via disqualification but why would that happen? Back with Guerrero armdragging out of a chinlock and

nailing a sweet springboard tornado DDT. That was just awesome looking.

Eddie walks the top rope into a hurricanrana to take Saturn down again but Perry pops back up with a belly to belly. A huge top rope elbow drop gets two for Saturn and it's Death Valley Driver time. Eddie rolls into a victory roll for two, perhaps because Saturn took time to signal for his finisher move. Saturn loads up a superplex but gets hurricanranaed down, only to avoid the Frog Splash. Eddie ducks a charge and sends him outside to trigger a huge brawl with the Animals. In the melee, Shane nails Eddie with a chain which Saturn sees and doesn't like. After a staredown with Shane, Saturn covers for the pin.

Rating: B-. This is your token good match of the week but it still doesn't seem to be leading anywhere. I'm hoping this leads to the end of Douglas in the group as he just doesn't fit with the idea. If nothing else, he just showed up one day and was suddenly part of a team who was tired of being held down by WCW after being with the company for all of a week.

Here's Hogan to ignore his history with Flair (as in history dating back about six months at this point) and say how much he and Hart care about him as they head into the six man tag. I mean, Flair is totally cool with Hogan after the NWO kidnapped him into a field and beat the living tar out of him or broke up the Flair family? This is just a hard sell for the six man.

Recap of Shaggy pinning Lane in the tag match last week.

Insane Clown Posse music video. YOU WILL CARE ABOUT THEM!

Cruiserweight Title: Shaggy 2 Dope vs. Lenny Lane

A quick ICP chant breaks out which I'm sure is enough to validate this horrible idea. Tony Mamaluke runs in again but gets punched in the jaw by Lodi, allowing security to handcuff him. As he's being taken away, Tony shouts about his brother coming soon. Back to the comedy match, Lenny jumps into the referee's arms but gets dropped on his back, allowing Shaggy to slam him down for two.

The guillotine legdrop misses and a gutwrench sitout powerbomb gets two for the champ. Lenny does the slow, crawling cover so Shaggy comes out of the corner with a bad looking running Liger Bomb for two more. Lodi trips Shaggy to the floor (not a DQ of course. The more interesting question is what does it actually take to get a DQ in this company?) but Shaggy knocks him onto J. and Vampiro, which somehow knocks him out, allowing Lenny to get the pin.

Rating: D-. And that's IT. Just stop with the stupid Clown matches and get them out of this company so we can see some real wrestlers for a change. I can't believe I'm saying this but Lenny and Lodi deserve better than this. I really shouldn't be nervous that someone is going to get maimed because a Clown is trying to drop a top rope legdrop and has no idea what he's doing and no one should have to take the move. Bad match and the ending made no sense.

Here's Rick Steiner to brag about how awesome his brother and Sid both are. This brings out a HUGE Scott Steiner to brag about how he's been chasing Wilt Chamberlain's record. Apparently he just found out that the NWO is done, meaning someone who seems to be a top heel hasn't been paying attention in four months. Speaking of those months, he doesn't tell us where he's been, nor has WCW told us anything about his whereabouts. He wants to fight Hogan, which could be such a disaster that it's one of the most entertaining messes in history.

Kanyon vs. Booker T.

Feeling out process to start with Booker nailing an early dropkick to take over. Kanyon bails to the floor, nearly falls over laughing at Stevie's intimidating face, and rolls back inside. Mr. T. scores with his usual stuff and knocks Kanyon back outside, only to be sent into the barricade for his efforts. A suplex brings Booker back in and a middle rope Fameasser gets two. We continue stealing popular WWF moves with a Rock Bottom to Kanyon (not yet named the Book End) and the usual kicks, followed by the missile dropkick to pin Kanyon.

Rating: C-. This was fine with both guys getting to show off in a short match. I mean, it's not like they could have given any more time to this

because we needed to hear from the old guys all night instead. As usual, the talented guys give us a reprieve from the boring nature of the old guard, but this didn't have the time to get anywhere.

Ric Flair vs. Diamond Dallas Page

Flair jumps him in the aisle and the fight starts fast. They head into the crowd with Page trying to stagger away but eating more right hands to the jaw. Page finally gets inside and nails Flair in the ribs to take over. The backdrop sends Flair onto his shoulder as always and sets up a pelvic thrust elbow, which is totally not like the Rock's big move whatsoever. We hit the chinlock for some very loud spot calling before they slug it out. A lot blow sets up the Figure Four but Sting comes in to break it up, only to miss that big elbow. Some things never change. Sting gets put in the Figure Four but Luger comes in with the bat for the DQ.

Rating: D. You know, some people might want to see the World Title match closing the show instead of this mess but we can't have Benoit closing the show. This was angle advancement instead of a match to set up the six man next week. Page is nothing at this point and it's getting more and more clear every week.

Hogan comes in and takes a bat shot to the knee so Flair dives on top of Hogan to protect him. If Flair has ever done something more out of character, I've never seen it.

Overall Rating: C. The wrestling was significantly better this week but it was still nothing great. That being said, you can still see that the younger guys and the harder workers are locked in one part of the roster while the rest of the company is firmly in the other half. Benoit's title shot was little more than a plot device to set up the next week's main event, which is just another six man tag. The lack of continuity with the stories is frustrating, but at least we're finally getting somewhere with Sid vs. Goldberg. It won't be any good, but at least Sid isn't destroying my soul anymore.

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the History of Saturday Night's Main Event at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

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