

Souled Out 2000 (2015 Redo): A Different Kind Of Bad

Souled Out 2000

Date: January 16, 2000

Location: Firststar Center, Cincinnati, Ohio

Attendance: 14,132

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mike Tenay, Bobby Heenan

And then everything changed. The big matches for this show were scheduled to be Chris Benoit vs. Jeff Jarrett in a 2/3 falls match for the US Title and Bret Hart defending his WCW World Title against Goldberg. Then Goldberg, Hart and Jarrett all got hurt so we're going to get Sid Vicious vs. Benoit for the World Title, which is being announced the night of the show. Other than that, Russo is GONE (pause for the parade) due to his solutions to the gaping holes caused by these injuries, which I'll get to later. Let's get to it.

The announcers immediately talk about the changes to the World Title match and show us clips of the injuries occurring, including the Goldberg superkick to Hart and Benoit's Swan Dive off the top of the cage this past week on Nitro to knock Jarrett out. It's interesting that the headbutt hit the arm but still rattled Jeff that much.

We look at the Revolution attacking Konnan during the pre-game show, which somehow leads to the new Triple Threat Theater. Instead of Jarrett vs. Benoit in a 2/3 falls match, Kidman of all people will be running a Revolution gauntlet in the three gimmick matches, including against Revolution's mystery partner.

We run down the card to fill in even more time. Apparently Page vs. Bagwell is last man standing.

Also earlier tonight, David Flair and Crowbar have attacked Vampiro, meaning it's no longer Flair vs. Vampiro but instead it's a three way dance with Crowbar added.

After six and a half minutes of recaps and explaining the card, we're ready to go.

Kidman vs. Dean Malenko

This is Catch As Catch Can, which was originally the Dungeon Match and means you win by pin, submission or your opponent leaving the ring. You know, because Kidman vs. Malenko needs a wacky stipulation. Dean takes him into the corner to start but Kidman drives him in just as quickly.

That goes nowhere as Malenko takes him down into a headscissors, only to bail into the corner when Kidman comes up swinging. A jackknife cover gets two for Dean but Kidman rolls away and fires off right hands, sending Dean rolling to the floor....to give Kidman the win. Either Dean screwed up on a pretty unique rule or he wanted out as fast as he could. That's it for Dean in WCW.

Clip of Vampiro powerbombing Crowbar for a pin on Thunder. The post match stuff that set up the match tonight isn't included but why bother with something like that?

We recap Daffney being all psycho and hooking up with David Flair, who then joined forces with Crowbar. This somehow tied into David's godfather Arn Anderson, who helped them win the Tag Team Titles. Vampiro and the Misfits hit on Daffney so she kneed them in the groin, setting up tonight's match. In theory this was going to be Vampiro and someone against the champs, but it was changed to a three way on the pre-show for no logical reason.

Vampiro is about to address what's going on but Masahiro Chono of all people interrupts and yells in Japanese.

David, Crowbar and Daffney promise to break Vampiro's bones and rip off his flesh.

Vampiro vs. David Flair vs. Crowbar

It's a big brawl to start but Vampiro faceplants both of them to take over early on. There's no reason for Flair and Crowbar to fight each other aside from general insanity so this should be a tag match like it

was supposed to be. Vampiro's suplex is countered into a northern lights suplex for two but a spinning kick puts Crowbar down as well. There's a suicide dive for Crowbar as Daffney bounces up and down on the bottom rope.

David's chops have no effect as the announcers talk about Ric Flair being on some house shows but not appearing on TV. Vampiro chops David a few times and throws him onto Crowbar. The Rock Bottom on the floor is broken up by Crowbar's flip dive for a huge crash. A big splash from the apron crushes Vampiro again as the Tag Team Champions are only kind of working together.

Back in and Crowbar plants him with a German suplex, continuing to make me wonder why he's stuck in this story. Vampiro one ups him with a release superplex, prompting about forty seconds of replays of the match's big spots. David remembers he's in the match and gets two off a vertical suplex as this becomes the handicap match it was supposed to be. That goes nowhere as Vampiro superkicks both of them down and plants Crowbar with a Rock Bottom for two.

More double teaming gives the champs control and a top rope splash gets two for Crowbar. David slaps on a figure four that makes Dusty Rhodes look like Ric himself but Crowbar goes for a cover, starting a brawl between the champs. Back up again and Vampiro cleans house, sidesteps a charging David to send him into Daffney and the Nail in the Coffin gives Vampiro the pin.

Rating: D+. Total mess here but it was fun at times. Like I said though, the booking was all over the place and it was just a spotfest, but the bigger problem is the Tag Team Champions just lost a glorified handicap match in ten minutes. Why this wasn't a tag match isn't clear, especially when you have all those people on the roster not doing a thing. David continues to be completely worthless.

Buff Bagwell arrives.

The Mamalukes are ready for the Harris Brothers in a bonus match.

Harris Brothers vs. Mamalukes

Ron shoves Johnny the Bull into the corner to start but eats a spinning kick to the face which sounded like it made some solid contact. Back in and Ron runs over Vito (in his sleeveless, shiny neon green shirt) but Johnny comes in with some right hands to the ribs to take over. Vito drops an elbow low, only to have Ron take Johnny out to the floor and whip him into the barricade.

A big side slam plants Johnny back inside and it's off to Don for a lame chinlock. The Twins maintain control and hit Johnny low as I'm trying to figure out who to cheer for in this match. Vito gets goaded into the ring so Ron can choke in the corner before throwing the Bull to the floor. This match just keeps going and the fans chant DOA. Vito breaks up a cover off a DDT and crotches Don, only to have Disco shoves him off by mistake, helping Vito with a top rope clothesline to Ron for the pin.

Rating: D-. This is one of those matches that just kept going for no reason other than they needed to fill in some more time. On top of that it's a bonus match so there isn't even a story going on until the ending where Disco didn't mean to help the Mafia guys win. Really dull stuff here but either team would be an upgrade for the Tag Team Titles.

Madusa rants to Spice about Oklahoma.

Cruiserweight Title: Madusa vs. Oklahoma

Madusa is defending but Oklahoma has the Cruiserweight Title belt because this story is stupid. Oklahoma vows to prove that men are the dominant sex and runs down all the horrible housewives here in Cincinnati.

"Madusa, get those silicone balls out here so I can bounce them back to the kitchen." Madusa comes out in a bikini with a loincloth as she fires off kicks to start.

Some hair drags put Madusa down but Oklahoma (wearing a singlet with his name on it in the WWF Attitude logo style) avoids a charge, only to have Madusa fall onto his crotch. A pair of middle rope missile dropkicks drop Oklahoma but he comes right back with a DDT because he's somehow better than the best American female wrestler of this era. Spice takes the barbecue sauce away from Oklahoma and here's Asya to help out.

Not that it matters as Oklahoma pulls the loincloth down and rolls Madusa up for the pin and the Cruiserweight (Ferrara weighed about 300lbs) Title. Too short to rate, but the man that said he was better than all women just pinned the female champion despite her having two people to help her. Somehow, this is supposed to be entertaining rather than, you know, horrible and disgusting.

The girls pour the sauce down his singlet post match. That's an appropriate response after being cheated out of a title by a chauvinist announcer whose entire character was originally built around mocking an announcer. All hail the Powers That Be!

Hardcore Champion Brian Knobbs credits Fit Finlay for giving him back the Eye of the Tiger. He'll beat up Meng and Smiley tonight and then take out Finlay to become the new master.

Hardcore Title: Brian Knobbs vs. Fit Finlay vs. Meng vs. Norman Smiley

Knobbs is defending. This is called Four The Hard Way and I'm sure it's going to be the hard way as opposed to something easy like gum surgery. Norman comes out in riot gear. Brian takes over with a bunch of trashcan lid shots before double teaming Meng with Finlay's help. Meng shrugs it off and knocks Norman down (Heenan: "RUN!") before everyone goes to the floor. Norman does a kind of leg sweep to put Brian down but Finlay blasts him in the head with a trashcan.

A headbutt with the riot helmet puts Norman down again and it's table time. Knobbs and Finlay hit Meng with the trashcan and it's time to split up because this match needs to be doubled. Thankfully it doesn't last long as Norman and Finlay come back to ringside with Smiley being dropped face first onto a chair. Meng's cover on Brian is broken up and Norman is left alone with the champ. Instead of covering though he stops to dance, allowing Knobbs to hit him with the riot shield to retain. Tenay says Knobbs is a force to be reckoned with a mere four days after winning the title.

Rating: D-. You can see the problem with this division in this match alone: they're not doing anything. This is just the weapons title with people who have nothing else to do filling in the spots. At least with

the WWF version, the hardcore guys were entertaining and had enough charisma to carry the division. This is everyone but Norman treating it seriously and making it a very dull sit every time they're out there.

Meng cleans house post match.

Kidman vs. Perry Saturn

Bunkhouse Brawl, which means hardcore (that sounds familiar), even though I don't think either of these two have ever been in a bunkhouse in their entire lives because most people aren't cowboys. Saturn headbutts him down to start and plants Kidman with a gorilla press for two. He crotches Kidman on top and hits a springboard clothesline (kind of at least) to drive Kidman to the floor for a big crash right on his side.

Thankfully with Kidman's hip still in one piece, Saturn knocks his head off with a clothesline and gets two off a legdrop. Saturn rips the shirt apart and starts cranking on the arm. A beat with the torn shirt sends Kidman down again before Saturn remember this is a hardcore match and pulls out a table. Kidman finally scores with a dive as Tony and Heenan plan starting a table business. There's a comedy gimmick in there somewhere.

Back in and Saturn takes over again with a top rope elbow getting two. Saturn busts out a layout powerbomb (yes he can!) for two but misses a moonsault. The BK Bomb gets two but Saturn launches him over the top and out through the table for two on the floor. They head up top with Saturn loading up a superbomb, only to get backdropped down. It's time to go back to the drawing board with another powerbomb but Kidman faceplants him down (maybe he can't) for the pin. That's it for Saturn in WCW.

Rating: D+. This was a glorified Saturn squash until the ending came out of nowhere. Kidman took a good beating and it came off like the Jeff Hardy formula, which isn't the worst idea, but Saturn destroying him for ten minutes with the hardcore rules barely meaning anything.

And now, Stevie Ray goes back to the hood. Heenan's words. Stevie talks to some old friends and says this is where he and Booker come from. He says a pile of cardboard boxes is home to someone and this is where

they're from. Some people Stevie knows asks where Booker has been but Stevie says they just forgot about this place. I can't believe I'm saying this, but this was actually really well done.

Stevie says it's done tonight.

Booker T. vs. Stevie Ray

Before the match Booker, wearing a red vest with sleeves so skinny they look like suspenders, says he's going to give Stevie the whipping he deserves for saying Booker has forgotten where he came from. Stevie tries to get in a cheap shot but Booker ducks underneath and nails a spinning kick to the face. A big clothesline drops Booker and the match slows way down.

They head outside with Stevie slowly walking around the ring until Booker fires off some right hands. Back in and Stevie gets in a thumb to the eyes and hooks on a chinlock. A backdrop puts Booker down and we cut to the crowd for no apparent reason. Booker escapes the Slapjack and scores with the Book End, but Ahmed Johnson runs in for the DQ.

Rating: D. Booker is good, but carrying Stevie Ray is almost impossible. There's only so much you can do when you're in a story this lame and we passed that point as soon as the bell rang. Really dull match but I was a huge fan of Ahmed Johnson so somehow I can live with this.

Stevie names him Big T. Unfortunately, I remember where this is leading and it's going to get even worse.

Sid is ready to fight his friend for the World Title.

Tank Abbott vs. Jerry Flynn

Here's Tenay's recap: "This past Monday, they were put inside the same jail cell and even that couldn't keep them apart." Abbott punches, Flynn kicks, they trade some lame submission holds and Tank punches him out for the pin in less than 100 seconds.

We recap Page vs. Bagwell, which is over accusations that Bagwell slept with Page's wife Kimberly and Buff implying that Kimberly has been with

the entire locker room. In other words, it's over whether or not Kimberly is a sl**.

Diamond Dallas Page vs. Buff Bagwell

Last man standing. Buff punches him out to the floor and they're quickly in the crowd with Buff punching him over what appear to be hockey boards. Back to ringside with Bagwell still in control but Page comes back with a neckbreaker. The Diamond Cutter is broken up and Bagwell goes outside for a dive from Page. They both go down off a single right hand and fight near the WCW.com station.

Both guys throw a monitor and Tony thinks it's hilarious. A keyboard shot to the head puts Bagwell down but Buff comes back with an elbow off the set through the table. It's Page's turn to no sell and they head back to the ring as there hasn't been a count yet. Page, bleeding from the side, crotches Bagwell against the post. Even more no selling ensues as Bagwell shrugs off a Diamond Cutter and hits a Vader Bomb for eight.

Buff DDT's Page for seven and it's Blockbuster time. The fans react, so is Buff supposed to be the good guy here? Page eats Blockbuster but gets up at nine. Bagwell pulls a police baton out to beat on Page for nine, only to walk into a Diamond Cutter. It's actually Bagwell up first with Page not being able to answer the count. So yeah, Page lost by hitting his finisher. That's certainly different.

Rating: D+. That ending is really confusing stuff as you would think Buff could have just hit the Blockbuster for the win. They were trying to play up the idea that Buff blocked the move but he went down like anyone else would have. Really weird ending to a boring but not horrible match.

Kimberly comes out and watches as Page beats Buff down.

Kidman vs. ???

This is in Caged Heat, which means Hell in a Cell. Shane Douglas comes out to introduce the mystery opponent: the Wall. Yeah it's Kidman vs. the Wall in an unannounced match inside Hell in a Cell. They fight over a chair on the floor to start with Wall getting the better of it. Kidman is

tossed into the cage a few times as the crowd is just gone. They head inside with Wall getting two off a clothesline. A sunset bomb out of the corner gets the same for Kidman and he counters a suplex into a DDT for the same. Kidman goes up top and dives right into a chokeslam for the pin.

Rating: F. This is another instance where I can sum up the problem in one sentence: a Hell in a Cell match that lasted five minutes That's ignoring the fact that these two have no personal issues and Wall is just there because Shane is still injured and you can't put Asya out there.

Kevin Nash vs. Terry Funk

Hardcore. Again. If Nash wins he's the Commissioner but if Funk wins, the NWO is gone. Nash jumps him in the aisle and throws in some big right hands, followed by a chair to the back. There's the Jackknife through the table but Nash goes inside to talk trash instead of covering. He tells Funk that he can keep his job as Commissioner if he can get back in, but as soon as Terry gets back in, Nash says he's a liar.

Another clothesline puts Funk on the floor and he crashes on his head to make it look even more effective. Terry nails him with a chair a few times to limited avail so Nash chairs him down again. A DDT plants Nash and Funk slowly slugs away before setting up some more chairs. That earns Funk a low blow and a powerbomb through the opened chairs to give Nash the power.

Rating: D. So Nash is the Commissioner after spending weeks beating up the lame duck Commissioner. I'm so glad we got to sit through this, though at least Nash is somewhat relevant to the product and has been around longer than a few weeks. I can also see why Flair wasn't interested in coming back for something like that.

Nash officially takes over at midnight.

Arn Anderson, guest referee for the main event, basically says none of this matters as it's all about getting Nash out of power. He stumbles over his lines here which is something you never see from him.

WCW World Title: Chris Benoit vs. Sid Vicious

Feeling out process to start with Sid shoving Benoit into the corner but being nice enough to help him up. Some of the roster comes out to watch at the arena entrance. Sid shoves Benoit to the floor by the throat and it's time to regroup. Back in and Benoit gets smart by going after the knee by dropkicking the leg our bringing Sid down.

With almost the entire locker room watching (and looking like they're at a funeral), Benoit takes it to the floor and crushing the leg between the post and the steps. A Figure Four has Sid in even more trouble but he turns it over, sending Benoit to the ropes for a break. Sid is wrestling as the face here but Benoit is only the heel by default.

Benoit snap suplexes him for one and then puts on the bridging Indian Deathlock to make Sid scream. The hold has to be broken because of the pressure it puts on Benoit's neck so Sid can try a quick comeback, only to eat another dropkick to the knee. The rolling Germans are countered with a powerslam for two and the fans actually show some signs of life.

A long leg lock has Sid in even more trouble and a release German sets up the Swan Dive but Sid powers out at one. The chokeslam gets two due to Benoit's foot being under the rope. There's the Crossface for an immediate tap to give Benoit the title. Anderson wasn't a factor in the entire match.

Rating: C. Watchable match here with Sid getting in almost nothing.

That's the big key here: Benoit took him apart and then made Sid submit (unlike Goldberg in an interesting bit). Unfortunately there was almost no emotion or drama here as it was just about who was going to win and there was no reason to be upset with either guy as champion.

Replays show that Sid's foot was under the rope, which was their out to take the title off Benoit once he quit.

Benoit praises Sid for a great fight and talks about seeing the Dynamite Kid when he was eleven years old. Anderson comes in and shakes Benoit's hand. Cue Nash to say he's going to make Benoit's life a nightmare starting at midnight.

Overall Rating: D. Let's get the important part out of the way first: this was a big, big improvement over the Russo shows. It may not have been good or even decent, but there's a huge difference between a show making me scream at the screen fifteen years later and just being pretty lame. There's only one decent match on the show and only one moment that matters, but at least it's a nice feel good moment.

The interesting thing here is that you might like the show better without seeing the build. It's a totally different show than they set up due to the injuries and changes to the card, but that doesn't mean it's anything good. The new version of WCW starting tomorrow night is going to be....I guess the word is interesting, but the roster being depleted all at once is one of the final nails in the coffin, which we'll get to on Monday. Bad show, but a boring bad instead of infuriating.

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