

Thunder – January 26, 2000: Seven In Nine

Thunder

Date: January 26, 2000

Location: MGM Grand Garden Arena, Las Vegas, Nevada

Attendance: 6,323

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Scott Hudson, Mike Tenay

We have a new World Champion in Sid Vicious but something tells me we're in for some shenanigans. In other news tonight, Terry Funk has promised to bring in reinforcements against Kevin Nash. I'm sure this has nothing to do with Arn Anderson talking to some guy named Champ who needed to be told to put on his pants. Let's get to it.

In case you were wondering, of the 6,323 in attendance, 2,510 were paid.

Quick recap of Nitro's World Title situation.

Gene calls out Sid for a chat to start. Sid must be on top of the world and talks about standing up for WCW on Monday. Well no one did for almost all of the NWO civil war (including Schiavone) so better late than never I guess. The NWO tried to block the powerbomb and he was still able to win anyway because it wasn't meant for the NWO to win every single match. That kind of thinking would get you fired back in 1997.

Cue Nash and the NWO with the boss saying this is one of the things he hates about being commissioner. As commissioner, he has to abide by the stipulations and the one from Monday was that Sid had to beat Ron Harris. He shows us a clip of Sid using the powerbomb, which hadn't been banned at that point in the show, and pinning the wrong Harris brother. Now we get to the stupid part: the clip continues to show Sid being counted out of the ring because the match against Ron never actually ended because Sid didn't pin him. Therefore, Sid didn't win.

So on Monday, the referee counted Sid out and had the decision announced, and THE SAME ANNOUNCE TEAM DIDN'T SEE THE NEED TO BRING THIS UP??? I get

that some things have to be done differently in wrestling and you have to suspend some disbelief, but this goes into "there is no way someone could possibly be this stupid" territory. Anyway, since Sid didn't win on Monday, the World Champion is....Kevin Nash.

However, tonight Sid will have a chance to get the title back inside Caged Heat against Ron Harris and Nash himself. However, the powerbomb is still banned and Sid has to pin Nash. Why Nash would do that isn't clear, but then again this is two title changes, Hell in a Cell and another World Title match in two days so I really shouldn't be surprised.

Gene reminds Maestro that he has never performed here at the MGM Grand. Maestro is offended and Symphony actually says "how rude". Ok then.

The NWO has slot machines delivered to their locker room.

Maestro vs. Norman Smiley

Maestro comes out with his usual piano....and Norman brings out a team of Las Vegas showgirls. The girls dance to the ring with Norman, who of course is wearing a white tuxedo and top hat because he's awesome like that, and do the spanking dance. Maestro jumps him from behind because he's a cultural swine. Smiley gets in a chair shot and it's already time for a ladder, which fits so well here for some reason.

The whip is reversed though and Maestro sends Norman face first into the ladder and it's time to go backstage. I'm going on a limb and assuming this is hardcore. Just thinking out loud of course. Norman is whipped into a bunch of things and then through a table as they find a sarcophagus. Well of course they do. Inside is....the Kiss Demon, because demons live in coffins right? Norman is terrified and passes out so the Maestro covers him for the pin. It's not long enough to rate, but that may have been the most insane match I've seen this year and it didn't even run two minutes. That says a lot.

The NWO gambles a lot.

Liz and Luger have Sting memorabilia

Cruiserweight Title Tournament First Round: The Artist Formerly Known As

Prince Iaukea vs. Kid Romeo

Just like on Nitro, Romeo starts fast and hits a quick Thesz press and sends Prince over the corner and out to the floor for a meeting with Paisley. They slug it out on the floor as Standards and Practices, in street clothes this week, are here with Ms. Hancock, who certainly isn't in street clothes. Well maybe on certain streets but not the most common ones.

Back inside and they slug it out as Hancock sits on the announcers' table. Romeo hits a spinwheel kick followed by an enziguri and a missile dropkick for two with Paisley offering a distraction. Romeo goes after her and gets nailed in the back, setting up a reverse suplex to send Prince to the second round. Can we see a bracket to this thing?

Jeff Jarrett hits on 18 and gets a 3 for 21.

Terry Funk vs. Kiss Demon

Yes, this is a thing that is happening. They slug it out to start (did you expect anything less?) and Funk takes over with some very lame headbutts. Some boot choking in the corner leads to Funk being thrown outside but he whips Demon into the barricade, because Terry Funk is the second biggest face in this company after Sid Vicious. Back in and Funk gets annoyed that his neckbreaker only gets two, so he takes a swing at the yellow bellied varmint Nick Patrick. Again, your hero in this match.

A low blow and butterfly suplex get two for Demon, because when you think of a demon, you think of butterflies and suplexes. Funk ducks a right hand and busts out the Tumbleweed, which you may know as Kiwi Roll. Basically it's a rolling sunset flip with Funk literally rolling him around in a circle before stopping for the pin.

Rating: D. Terry Funk, the second biggest face in this company, just had a match with the Kiss Demon. I want to hate this idea, but at least he's interacting with the younger guys. For some reason I can't imagine Nash actually knowing that the Demon wrestles for this company or that he's a character that actually exists. Points to Funk for that at least. And I do mean least.

Kidman vs. Vampiro

Rematch from Nitro where Kidman won a good match. Vampiro starts fast with a headlock and shoulder, followed by a pair of suplexes. This would seem to be your fast paced wrestling match of the night. I'm as shocked as you are that Kidman is in this role yet again. Kidman's right hands in the corner don't work that well and Vampiro sends him outside and then into the barricade. So Vampiro is a face but acting heelish here. Got it.

Back in and Vampiro's top rope spinwheel kick (a face move) gets two, followed by Kidman's hurricanrana for the same. More kicks from Vampiro look to set up an electric chair but Kidman victory rolls him for not a victory. YOU CAN'T POWERBOMB KIDMAN but he can bulldog you, only to have Vampiro crotch him on top for a super Nail in the Coffin for the pin.

Rating: C+. This has been another show where Kidman has the match of the night and I'm sure it's going to continue to get him nowhere. Well other than with Torrie but that's a different story. He's still fun to watch but you can add him to the list of people in WCW whose talents are being wasted while we get more Sid vs. Nash.

Some cops investigate gambling allegations against the NWO and there's a Wayne Newton look a like. This goes nowhere.

Total Package vs. Buff Bagwell

My levels of apathy towards Bagwell continue to reach new bounds. Buff takes over with a slam to start and we're already on the posing. I'm surprised they even bothered with a move to start. Luger knees him in the ribs but eats right hands in the corner, only to come back with an atomic drop.

Two Lex clotheslines lead to more posing and it's time to choke a lot. An elbow gets two and an elbow gets two and then Luger charges into an elbow. I've heard of someone being all elbows but a match being one? A low blow stops Buff's comeback but Buff is up first and does his usual generic offense. The Blockbuster connects but Liz comes in with the ball bat for the DQ.

Rating: D-. Good grief fire both of them. Luger somehow has even less of an offense than when he wasn't trying and Bagwell is getting even less entertaining than he already was. I guess it's time for Luger to start breaking everyone's arm in an attempt to make him an interesting killer but for some reason I don't see it working. These two fought WAY too many times over the years.

Post match Luger gets in more bat shots and goes to Pillmanize the arm but referees make the save.

3 Count had an autograph signing at the Nitro Grill when the Mamalukes came up and started a fight. Music haters.

3 Count vs. Mamalukes/Disco Inferno

We start with a performance but the band has to dropkick the Mamalukes off the apron. Some big dives take the Italians out again and Shane covers Vito for two to start. Shane hammers away in the corner but gets powerbombed out and kicked in the face for his efforts. Off to Johnny for several lifts on a military press, followed by Disco coming in to stomp away in the corner.

The middle rope elbow misses though and it's off to Evan. I'm not sure what to think about four dancers being in the same match. Fandango must have been watching this show. Evan speeds things up and cleans the bottom half of the house before it's off to Shannon as everything breaks down. The double hiptoss into a powerbomb plants Moore though, setting up the Last Dance from Disco for the pin.

Rating: D+. Nothing to see here and it's nice to see the champions get another win, even if it's at the expense of 3 Count. Yes they're stupid but they were so goofily entertaining that I can't help but like them. Disco is starting to find his groove as the manager/occasional partner too, which is good for him as he deserves a little something.

Post match Vito sings some Sinatra as the other two dance. This brings out David Flair, Crowbar and Daffney to clean house, allowing Crowbar to play air guitar as the others.....dance?

Funk and Anderson are looking for Sid. I really hope this isn't revenge for London back in 1993.

This Week in WCW Motorsports.

Nash gives the roster a pep talk. Quote: "Let's go out there and put the old guys over!"

Booker T. vs. Jerry Flynn

Booker has to be able to win this right? Like, he has to. Jerry jumps him from behind to start and knocks Booker over the barricade. Please don't make Booker a hardcore guy. Jerry fires off a bunch of kicks inside but misses another one in the corner. Booker hits his signature kicks and the forearm, followed by the 110th Street Slam (whipping spinebuster) for the quick pin. Thank goodness.

Anderson and Funk have a meeting with Sid.

Ernest Miller reminds us that he's here and talks about loving Vegas to get the fans on his side...but then says he hates the people here. After some old school calling out a fat boy fan, it's time to dance. Disco, 3 Count, Ernest Miller. The money in this company is a dance team gimmick.

Kimberly says she's still friends with Buff even though she counted him down last week.

Nash has a meeting with the Harris Brothers in the back.

Finlay and Knobbs hug for some reason, allowing Knobbs to steal a wrench from Finlay's pocket. You would think Finlay would notice it missing.

Bam Bam Bigelow vs. Fit Finlay

Winner gets a shot at Knobbs for the Hardcore Title, which shows Knobbs to be a coward by stealing the wrench. My goodness why does the Hardcore Title have a better story than the US Title? Finlay grabs a headlock to start but his shoulder block has no effect. Back up and Bigelow splashes him in the corner as we see Knobbs watching from the back. Finlay gets tired of selling and rolls outside to set up a table.

An attempt at a suplex over the ropes and through the table is easily countered, allowing Bigelow to go up, only to miss the headbutt. It should be wrench times but Knobbs is a thief (maybe he can get a job in the criminal field once the wrestling thing stops working for him), Bigelow hits Greetings From Asbury Park (pretend Finlay's head hit the mat) for the pin.

The cage is lowered.

WCW World Title: Sid Vicious vs. Ron Harris vs. Kevin Nash

Inside Caged Heat, meaning the Cell and anyone can win but Sid must beat Nash. Also the powerbomb is banned. Nash is defending and Ron is in a suit. We again see the clip from Nitro which no one bothered to reference because WCW announcers are off having ham sandwiches and finger painting during commercials. The cage is chained shut as Harris and Nash double team Sid like you would expect them to do.

They head to the floor with Sid being knocked around the ring and Nash driving him into the cage wall. It works so well that Nash does it again twice in a row as this is total domination, as you would expect. For no apparent reason, Nash and Harris go inside for a few seconds before coming back outside to choke with a TV cable. They go inside again and, as in every triple threat ever, the two in control argue over who gets to cover.

Sid fights back for a bit until Nash gets in a shot to the ribs to take over. They head outside again with Sid going into the cage for I think the fifth time. We get some blood from the arm but Sid finally blocks a ram into the steel and takes over again. Harris is thrown inside for a chokeslam (with Ron landing on his arm) and Sid pulls Nash down into a Crossface of all things for the win and his second World Title in three days and the seventh World Title change in nine days.

Rating: D-. I don't know if that's meant as a knock on Benoit or just WCW trying to be cute, but I can't help but shake the idea that Nash would have never tapped to Benoit in a million years. This was just a step ahead of Kidman vs. the Wall inside the Cell, though it still ranks as probably the second worst Cell match of all time. There was no need for

this to be in the cage, especially not two days after the first match. Also, odds on the submission not counting because Nash said Sid had to pin him?

Ric Flair of all people comes out to applaud Sid, which is called a passing of the torch.

Overall Rating: D. This company has gone from slow as molasses one week to WOULD YOU PLEASE SLOW DOWN the next week. Things are going way too fast in the World Title scene and it's getting harder and harder to keep up and/or care at this point. Flair is a welcome sight as you know he'll be at least solid if not very good. There's good stuff on the show but the gap between the main event and midcard isn't going anywhere. Welcome back to 1998.

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