

Monday Nitro – January 31, 2000: That's About The Dumbest Thing They Could Do

Monday Nitro #225

Date: January 31, 2000

Location: First Union Arena, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

Attendance: 7,514

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mark Madden, Mike Tenay

We're officially in the Madden era now, meaning things are clearly dying all around us. The big story here is that Sid is World Champion again after winning it back from Nash after having it stripped earlier in the night after an off air referee's decision. Also, Ric Flair is back. Let's get to it.

We get a quick clip of the Nash vs. Sid three day saga from last week.

Nash isn't going to be here tonight but he's named Jeff acting commissioner.

Here's the NWO to get things going complete with their girls. Jeff repeats that Nash isn't going to be here tonight but he's in charge. Well done with already changing the power. Steiner rips on the women here in Wilkes-Barre and offers the Harris Brothers a spot on the team. Well you had to expect that would happen. It's back to Jeff, who says he's going to get the first shot at Sid at SuperBrawl. Tonight it's Jeff/the Twins vs. Sid/two partners of his choosing. Jarrett is open to bribes and that's it. They kept this short and got right to the point so well done.

Sid, Flair and Harlem Heat arrive in order.

Funk asks Arn to go get Flair but Anderson tells him to go find Flair himself.

Cruiserweight Title Tournament First Round: Lash Leroux vs. Evan Karagias

Lash makes the mistake of going after 3 Count to start and walks into a powerslam from Evan. The band takes him to the floor and Evan hits a big dive to take them out again. Back in and Lash knocks him off the ropes and does the Bourbon Street Blues (the punches into the splits) but 3 Count makes another save. Evan's full nelson doesn't work but Lash comes back with a Diamond Cutter Russian legsweep (Whiplash 2000) for the pin. Really, really dull stuff here.

The NWO sends their bad catering to Sid.

Dustin Rhodes tells us not to try this at home. That's not something you often hear in WCW.

David, Crowbar and Daffney are insane and Crowbar talks like Gordon Solie. Now this actually sounds insane instead of some of the other modern CRAZY wrestlers. The Mamalukes attack and the match starts fast.

Tag Team Titles: Mamalukes vs. David Flair/Crowbar

They head outside to start with Vito being backdropped onto a bunch of snow. That's about it for being outside as everyone comes inside with Crowbar carrying a shovel. I'm going out on a limb and guessing this is a street fight. Vito drives a trashcan lid into David's crotch and the other two come inside.

Cue Ms. Hancock to watch from the aisle as Johnny slams Crowbar a few times. Crowbar fights back with a slingshot legdrop onto a chair onto Johnny's face. It's table time but Crowbar, being a bit off, puts the table on top of Johnny instead of the other way around. Disco breaks up a moonsault, allowing Vito to splash Crowbar through the table to retain.

Rating: D. Another ECW style brawl with too many moving parts to have any really stand out. I'm sure we'll get one more pay per view matches out of these teams, even though they've pretty definitively eliminated any chance of the titles changing back. At least Crowbar and Flair are entertaining with how out there they've gotten.

Brian Knobbs has a bribe for Jarrett in exchange for putting Finlay in the ring against Luger later. Jeff promises they'll be in there at the

same time.

Here's Booker T. with something to say but his music stops halfway down the aisle. This brings out J. Biggs who says that music is the property of Harlem Heat, meaning only Stevie Ray and Big T. can listen to it. Instead, Booker can use this song instead. A generic rock song plays and Biggs calls it a meaningless song for a meaningless man.

Now we get to the infamous part of this story: Biggs says that the T, as in of Booker T., is also Harlem Heat property, so Booker can't use it anymore, or the flames on his attire either. So yes, somehow this feud is over Harlem Heat, which is apparently an entity instead of just a tag team, owning the rights to a letter of the alphabet. Harlem Heat leaves and Midnight shows up to go after Biggs, but Harlem Heat comes back out for the save. We're officially in one of the dumbest stories WCW ever did and you know how much ground that covers.

3 Count beats up Norman Smiley.

Jarrett tells Finlay that he'll be in the same ring as Luger, as he referees a match between the Total Package and Brian Knobbs.

Norman gets inside the Demon's casket and the lid closes. Instead of fighting for the US Title, he's inside a coffin to help him fight off a boy band.

Kidman vs. The Wall

Rematch of that Cell match they had a few weeks back. Kidman slugs away to start but gets kicked in the face. A backbreaker sets up some choking from the Wall, before he blocks a sunset flip with even more choking. Well no one ever accused him of being the most versatile guy in the world. Wall plants him with a clothesline but YOU CAN'T PUT KIDMAN ON THE TOP ROPE, as he kicks Wall away and hits a missile dropkick. His high cross body is countered into a powerslam though and Wall grabs him by the throat again. This brings out Vampiro to kick Wall in the back, giving Kidman a roll up win.

Rating: D+. That ends the run of match of the night for Kidman but given

who he was in there with, it's hard to argue against him being the hottest thing in the company at the moment. Kidman is trying really hard lately and was able to carry Wall to a passable match. That alone makes him into a more impressive performer than most.

Here's Flair for his big return speech. He brags about being bigger than the Steelers, Eagles and Pirates and lists off some hockey players who aren't as big a star as he is. Ten years ago there were some people who could run with him, but Space Mountain still has the longest line. A few weeks ago the Powers That Be asked him to be the commissioner, but he turned them down because he's the greatest wrestler alive today. He came up here because the deal was right and now he needs to say something to Terry Funk.

Flair can't believe that Funk has been implying that Flair would support him, because there's a big difference between Ric Flair and Terry Funk. This brings out Funk, who is loudly booed. He calls Flair banana nosed and horse toothed but praises him for all those World Titles. However, Funk senses some jealousy in Ric's voice. Maybe it comes from Mick Foley saying Flair isn't in Funk's league in his book? STOP PROMOTING OTHER COMPANY'S STUFF!

Anyway, Flair needs to grow up and help in the fight against the NWO, but then tells him to go be Governor of North Carolina and leave the fight to himself and Arn Anderson. Flair wants to fight, even though he's head to toe in Armani. Funk comes in, punches him down, and puts on the spinning toe hold until security comes out for the save. So yeah, they're fighting over who is a bigger legend and Flair seems to be a heel, even though the fans booed Funk. This is one of the top stories in the company at the moment.

Jarrett thinks Funk and Flair will be Sid's partners.

Sting is in some movie.

Sid isn't worried about the NWO.

Ms. Hancock wants to know why Lenny and Lodi haven't been wearing their suits but they say they're done. That's not cool with Hancock, who

reminds them of the West Hollywood Blonds stunt that almost got them fired. Lenny, and I quote: "Oh yeah, we're REAL lucky to have a job in WCW." They're sick of this stupid "gimmick" and tell Hancock to come find them when the bun is out of her hair. So much for the fourth wall.

Total Package vs. Brian Knobbs

Liz and Luger have the Sting stuff with them. Fit Finlay is guest referee here for no apparent reason. Knobbs jumps Luger to start and elbows him in the face. The Pit Stop is loaded up but Finlay pushes Brian's arm down for some reason. Knobbs responds by...doing it anyway. They head outside with Knobbs whipping him into the barricade, only to have Finlay blast Knobbs from behind.

Back in and Brian, apparently not hurt by a shot to the head, fires off clotheslines and drops some elbows as this is the most motivated he's been in years. Brian goes up for a splash but Finlay stands in front of him, allowing Liz to hit Knobbs with a bat. That's it for Finlay as he leaves, allowing Luger to Pillmanize Brian's arm. We get some smack talk about Hogan and I'm assuming it's a no contest.

Rating: D-. So we have Finlay vs. Knobbs in an actually interesting feud (gah that's hard to say) and then Luger wanting to fight Hogan for no reason other than the script says so. Knobbs now has a broken arm, so maybe he'll be off screen for a bit? Somehow this was better than I was expecting.

Norman Smiley comes out of a coffin dressed as the Demon. Egads.

Dale Torborg is mad that someone has stolen his outfit. So much for staying in character.

Shane Helms vs. Norman Smiley

Norman is the Demon because he's the original Santino Marella. Helms starts fast with a Russian legsweep but Norman pops up like a skilled guy stuck in a horrible comedy gimmick and slams Shane down. In the middle of this match of all things, we hear that Hogan will be on Thunder this week. That doesn't get a big segment of its own? Well of course it

doesn't. Helms busts out an airplane spin but Norman comes back with a giant swing. It's time to dance but the other 3 Count members have to be dispatched. The Norman's Conquest is good for the quick submission.

Cue Torborg with the cops to chase Norman off.

Page and Kimberly are in the back when the Mamalukes come up. Vito gets a quick feel of her but Kimberly thinks it was Disco, who calls her a bimbo for accusing him. Page beats Disco up out of principle.

Diamond Dallas Page vs. Disco Inferno

Page drags Inferno into the arena and they get all up in DJ Ran's area. DJ Ran still had a job in 2000??? They fight through the crowd with Page in control and the bell finally rings once they're inside. A top rope clothesline and Rock Bottom knock Disco even sillier (yet doesn't mess with that perfect hair) but he comes back with, what else, a low blow. Disco's usual neckbreaker and middle rope elbow set up the dancing, only to have Page plant him with a helicopter bomb. The Diamond Cutter ends this in a hurry, as it should have. I guess Page is a full on face again.

Jeff Jarrett/Harris Twins vs. Terry Funk/Sid Vicious/Ric Flair

And there's no Flair. It's a brawl in the aisle to start with Sid fighting the Twins and Funk not being able to keep up. Sid takes we'll say Ron inside and Funk throws in a chair, which the Twins quickly throw back out. You can hear a fan complaining about his eye hurting because the fans are that silent. Ron gets backdropped to the floor but Don breaks up a powerbomb on Jarrett. So the powerbomb is legal again?

Things settle down with Funk working on Ron's leg, only to get chaired in the back by Don. Off to Jarrett to hammer away in the corner, only to have Funk grab a quick piledriver for a breather. It's off to Sid to clean house and here comes Flair to go after Funk as we flash back to 1989. Actually that's a great thing. Security drags him away and Ron gets chokeslammed with Don making a save. That earns Don a powerbomb but Jeff comes in with the guitar to knock Sid cold for the pin.

Rating: D. So is Flair a heel? Because that would be about the dumbest

thing they could do right now. Therefore, we'll go with the idea that Flair is a heel at the moment. The match was there so Flair could come out and attack Funk to set up their match down the road, even though I'm not sure how much interest there is in the two of them fighting, as they're a combined 106 years old at this point.

Overall Rating: D-. So they bring Flair back and turn him heel, again leaving Sid and Funk as the top faces in this company. At this point, I really can't bother getting annoyed anymore. Between that and Finlay and Knobbs having one of the most developed stories on the roster, this company really is just melting before our eyes. On top of all that, it's becoming clearer and clearer that Jarrett is just going to hold the US Title without frequently, or even occasionally, defending it, meaning a big chunk of the roster is just running around fighting for no reason. It's such a waste but it's what we're stuck with.

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