

Monday Nitro – February 28, 2000: The Will To Fight Is Gone

Monday Nitro #229

Date: February 28, 2000

Location: Target Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Attendance: 4,638

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mark Madden

The big story coming out of Thunder is that the old guys are actually starting to mix it up with the younger guys in the form of Dustin Rhodes vs. Terry Funk and Vampiro vs. Ric Flair. I fully expect WCW to screw this up as only they can, but it's nice to dream for a little while. I'm sure Luger and Hogan will be here tonight to explain how things really work in wrestling. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the last week, with Kevin Nash thinking he's Commissioner Gordon (yes of Batman) and Luger/Flair taking over the shows by beating up Hogan and anyone else who get in their way.

Sid arrived earlier today. Yes, he actually CAME TO WORK. Tonight he defends against Tank Abbott. Oh how this company continues to fail. Can't we get some Greg Valentine title shots again?

Jarrett doesn't care if Abbott wins because he has a guaranteed title shot. At least they're wearing NWO gear now and Jeff has his US Title. They must be listening to me.

Opening sequence.

Tag Team Titles: Mamalukes vs. 2XS

The Italians are defending and the challengers tell Miss Hancock to stay in the back because she's messing up their rat chasing. Lane and Idol start things fast but here's Hancock for commentary as the champions take over. A kick to the head and neckbreaker drop Lane. Disco: "Why are you

being so nice to her?" Madden: "SHUT UP DISCO!!!" The camera is smart enough to stay on Hancock instead of the match which sees both guys on the mat.

Idol comes in and cleans house as everything breaks down. Hancock gets on the table to dance (and keeps having to pull her skirt, if you can even call it that, down). Everyone but Vito (down) is distracted, allowing Vito to get up and plant Idol with the DDT for the pin. Tony: "Finally something happens in the match." The match was short and we missed way too much of it looking at Hancock, making this one of the more entertaining matches in a long time.

Vito wants more dancing and Hancock is happy to oblige, only to have the Harris Twins come in to clean house. Thankfully it doesn't seem that Hancock is with the Twins. They want a title shot.

We run down the card.

The KidCam sees Bagwell hitting on Liz. This is totally and completely different than GTV. This was also taped earlier as Luger, Liz and Flair are watching. Ric wants to take Bagwell out for this.

Bigelow picks Sid to beat Abbott tonight.

The Nitro Girls are at Ohio State as we're getting ready for Spring Breakout.

Hogan, with his weightlifting belt back, wants a Yappapai strap match with Flair at Uncensored. You can hear the fans boo when he calls himself the greatest of all time.

Here are Flair (with another weightlifting belt), Luger and Liz with something to say. Flair yells about Hogan like the good old days when he was a psycho. Luger calls Sting a no-show (true actually) and says tonight the Stuff gets snuffed. Lex keeps going by ripping down Minnesota so here's Curt Hennig of all people to challenge Flair to a match tonight. I haven't heard Hennig this fired up in years. Flair says it's on and Hennig promises to streak down the streets of Minneapolis if he loses.

Booker blames the tag team loss on Thunder on Kidman being on the floor with Torrie.

Torrie and Kidman want the KidCam back.

Nitro Girls.

Madden talks while Tony is on the phone. The results of the call: Sting will be here tonight. They needed a call to confirm that?

Jarrett promises to win the title at Uncensored and doesn't know who Vampiro is. For some reason he specifies that it's Uncensored 2000, as opposed to Uncensored 45.

Booker vs. Kidman

Imagine that: taking two young, talented people and having them fight each other in a meaningless match instead of building them up. Booker elbows him down for two but gets caught in a victory roll for the same. The ax kick plants Booker but here come the Harris Twins for the DQ.

Both guys take H Bombs and Torrie gets knocked off the apron.

Gene calls Cassius the mystery man. I know he isn't a dirty old man now but I'd prefer that over stupid. Harlem Heat thinks you should have someone watching your back.

Lash Leroux thinks Sid wins tonight.

Here's a clip of a guy with 28 inch arms at the Arnold Classic. Good for him.

Norman Smiley is going to beat up Dustin Rhodes for Dustin hurting Terry Funk. Anything new for Norman is an upgrade.

Hardcore Title: 3 Count vs. Brian Knobbs

Knobbs is defending after Finlay beat 3 Count on Wednesday. Brian fights all three of them off using the cast and everyone uses weapons. There's a Pit Stop for Shannon and Knobbs throws him out to the floor. Tony mentions that this is a Night of Champions. Thanks for telling us that

nearly halfway through the show. Moore gets powerbombed through a table but a trashcan lid shot and a dog pile is enough to pin Knobbs and give us a triple champion.

Vampiro wants to show Jeff Jarrett some pain tonight.

Knobbs wants a rematch. Finlay thinks it's time to make 3 Count's lives miserable, starting with a six man tag on Thunder with a surprise partner. It's time to bring out the dog. Oh dear.

Norman Smiley vs. Dustin Rhodes

Dustin comes out to an instrumental version of his old "Well they call him the natural" theme. Norman is wearing full football pads and puts on a bearhug of all things to start. A cross body puts Dustin down but for some reason doesn't cause him any major pain. Some dancing sends Dustin to the floor before the swinging slam sets up the Big Wiggle. Dustin will have none of this fun and the beating is on. He drops Norman chest first onto the barricade, which should have no effect due to the pads but WCW in 2000 is stupid enough to defy science. Back in and a top rope clothesline is enough to give Dustin the pin.

Nick Patrick picks Tank Abbott. I'll give them this: at least they're trying to make this feel important.

US Title: Vampiro vs. Jeff Jarrett

Jeff is defending and has a bunch of women with him but quickly sends them to the back. Before we get to the match, we get a quick recap of Jeff guitaring everyone, which now cost him \$10,000 apiece. They start fast with headlocks into headscissors but Vampiro starts firing off the kicks. That goes nowhere so they head outside with Jarrett dropping him on the barricade to take over.

Back inside and it's Jarrett in control but Vampiro catches himself off a monkey flip. That earns him a clothesline as this has been almost all Jarrett so far. A quick Rock Bottom gets two for Vampiro and some small packages get the same, but here are the Twins for a distraction. Sid comes out to chase them off but the referee doesn't see the cover off

Vampiro's Nail in the Coffin. Jarrett hits a quick belt shot for two (with the bell ringing anyway), avoids the guillotine legdrop, and hits a quick Stroke to retain.

Rating: D+. Notice the difference between this and Flair vs. Vampiro on Thunder: here Vampiro got in almost nothing until a bunch of interference screwed Jarrett up. On top of that, Jarrett pinned him clean. That's not a good way to make Vampiro look good, but this was about setting up Sid vs. Jarrett instead of doing anything for anyone else.

The Mamalukes pay a guy to give the Harris Twins a package.

Ricki Rachman, an annoying tattooed guy who does promotional stuff, talks to Disco Inferno about 3 Count while sitting at a restaurant at Ohio State. Seriously.

Fit Finlay attacked Vampiro during the break. Why you ask? Not answered, just like when he did it on Wednesday.

David Flair dances with the Nitro Girls but Daffney catches him. I'd make a "well maybe he didn't think she was watching like everyone else" but it was too easy. Everything is cool after a few seconds.

Cruiserweight Title: The Artist Formerly Known As Prince Iaukea vs. David Flair

David is challenging and Crowbar is on commentary. Prince licks his own finger and points at David so David points back at him. Crowbar does an actually funny Gordon Solie imitation, getting in every catchphrase he can. Prince takes him down with some right hands but Crowbar shoves him off the ropes. David covers for two but the girls get in a fight, allowing Prince to hit his middle rope DDT to retain.

Sid has been attacked and a guitar is seen nearby.

The NWO leaves but the guy from earlier delivers the package to the Twins. It's a dead fish. Eh I've seen worse.

Sid has been banned from strenuous physical activity. Well Sid hasn't been strenuous in the ring for years so that should be fine. Sid comes up

and says he's fighting tonight, even though he's dizzy.

The Cat vs. The Maestro

Cat insults some fat fans before Maestro comes out. Symphony carries out a boom box with the music Stro has to listen to as part of the bet. The boom box plays what sounds like 3 Count, Maestro freaks out and hits Cat with the boom box and gets the pin.

Liz and Luger have lost the bat.

Kidman picks Tank Abbott.

Ric Flair vs. Curt Hennig

Hennig slugs away in the corner to start and nails a backdrop, followed by some chops in the corner. Flair gets slammed off the top as this has literally been all Hennig so far. We get a ref bump because wrestling has gotten too complicated around here. The PerfectPlex has Flair in trouble but Luger comes in for the save. A low blow gives Ric the pin.

Rating: D+. This is a hard pairing to screw up but they came close with less than four minutes, a ref bump and interference. Either give them more time and cut out stuff like Cat vs. Maestro or....actually just cut that match and give this match the time. There's no real reason to not be able to give more than one match seven minutes or so, but they're cramming so much stuff in here and it's screwing up the rest of the card.

Meng, who can suddenly speak English, can't decide who wins the main event.

More stuff from Ohio State.

Total Package vs. Buff Bagwell

Again. These two have fought more than maybe any other pair in Nitro history. So is Buff officially a face, even when he's trying to steal someone's woman? Some quick dropkicks have Luger in early trouble but they head outside with Luger choking away on the table. We hit a reverse chinlock back inside and Buff slaps the mat but the referee doesn't care.

How stupid does Bagwell have to be to not even blink when Bagwell taps the mat while in a submission? Bagwell gets his knees up to crotch Luger and makes his comeback, including a Vader Bomb for two. Buff goes after Liz but Flair comes in for the DQ.

Rating: D. I'm sick of these two fighting, even when you set something up earlier in the night. The fact that it's there to set up another Luger match because he's still getting pushed for whatever reason doesn't help either. Flair is the highlight of this team though and at least he's willing to help build up some stars.

They load up the Pillmanizing but Sting returns for the save. Returns after being gone for a week that is.

WCW World Title: Sid Vicious vs. Tank Abbott

Tank is challenging and comes in on a motorcycle. Sid is wobbly with glazed over eyes. I'm going to assume he's fine. His taped up ribs seem a bit more serious. Tank grabs a front facelock and shouts GO TO SLEEP. That goes nowhere so Tank punches him in the ribs, amazingly showing some psychology. We hit a reverse chinlock before a bunch of body punches put Sid down again. Back up and Sid grabs a sleeper which he turns into the Crossface to make Tank tap.

Rating: D. Well, they tried some psychology but it wound up being a bunch of punching and chinlocks until Sid grabbed a hold to retain. This could have been far worse, but I could have gone for them sacrificing Tank to someone who needs the win instead of the World Champion. At least it was short and made sense though.

Overall Rating: D. The shows have had a bit more energy in recent weeks, but that might just be due to me giving up on fighting. It is however nice to see the younger guys at least being moved up the card, though unfortunately they haven't actually won anything yet. This week was better, but they need to keep pushing forward and get away from these horrible main events already.

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