

Thunder – April 12, 2000 (2015 Redo): A Clip From Earlier In The Future

Thunder

Date: April 12, 2000

Location: World Arena, Colorado Springs, Colorado

Attendance: 3,118

Commentators: Bobby Heenan, Mike Tenay, Tony Schiavone

Now this is the interesting show for me as Monday was all about setting up this new world. This show is the first time where we get to see how things are going to work under the Russo and Bischoff regime. I thought Monday's show was a disaster so maybe things can pick up tonight. Let's get to it.

We open with a long recap of Monday, which still doesn't explain why the Hummer is now white.

Russo and Bischoff arrived in a Porsche earlier today.

Opening sequence.

There's a new set, which is just a big video screen instead of the old Thunder logo.

Tony welcomes us to the second show of the Russo/Bischoff Era. Something else about this: Russo and Bischoff are billed as writers, which would mean that there is probably a group of bosses above them. Instead though, all you hear about is how they're running things now. As usual, the more you think about this story, the less sense it makes.

Here are Russo/Bischoff and the New Blood with Bischoff saying what a great night "last night" was. Bischoff gets right to the destruction of Hollywood Hogan with Kidman being very pleased with Monday's results. Russo, with Flair's watch around his neck on a chain, says the crowd is so loud that it reminds him of New York, but this town sucks. He keeps up

the “last night was awesome” trend and proclaims himself the bat man of WCW due to knocking out Flair.

Shane says he’s been calling Flair out for years and now Ric has finally taken the bait. That right there is a better explanation than anything we got on Monday. Bischoff promises new champions across the board on Sunday. As for tonight, Jeff Jarrett and Diamond Dallas Page have the night off. Kimberly on the other hand is going to be in action against Madusa.

This brings out Page, who says he can deal with whatever problem Bischoff has with him anytime. Kimberly isn’t a part of it though and Page would love to fight Bischoff instead. Eric says not so fast because he’s more interested in seeing what Kimberly wears to the ring tonight. Page goes after him but Bam Bam Bigelow attacks from behind because Bam Bam Bigelow is New World Order. Yeah I know they’re calling it the New Blood but it’s the NWO. And not the Harris Twins version. The Millionaires Club comes in and it’s a huge fight until security breaks it up.

Tony actually tells us about some of Sunday’s card with a suicide six man elimination tag. What is suicidal about it? Nothing of course but alliteration is good. As for the Tag Team Titles, we’re having a tournament including the Mamalukes, Harlem Heat, Buff Bagwell/Shane Douglas and Team Package.

There’s also going to be a tournament for the US Title. There are six unnamed men in the tournament so far with Sid and Sting facing three men in individual handicap matches for the final two spots. The Hardcore Title match will be determined later tonight. You can now say that WCW threw a pay per view card together in two and a half minutes, save for the World Title match, which was determined in about ten minutes of “action” on Monday.

Chris Candido/Juventud Guerrera/The Artist vs. Shannon Moore/Crowbar/Lash Leroux

These are the six men in the Cruiserweight Title match on Sunday. Shannon dives through the falling confetti to dropkick Artist and everyone comes into the ring, plus a beach ball thrown in by a fan. Candido powerbombs

Lash down but we need to look at David Flair dancing in front of Paisley. Daffney literally gives him the hook (between the legs) to drag him away.

It's off to Juvy for some right hands to Shannon as this is more coherent than I was expecting. Shannon comes back with a big Fameasser and brings in Crowbar, who drops himself on the mat a few times. A very spinning headscissors puts Crowbar on the floor where he has a quick fight with David due to reasons of insanity. Candido dives onto both of them as Tony admits there was no wrestling on Monday. Lash and Juvy follow with dives of their own until Shannon busts out a top rope Asai moonsault to put all of them down.

Shannon and Crowbar get in a fight (they're teammates, but can you blame them for forgetting that in a match like this?), followed by Daffney taking Helms (not in the match) down with a hurricanrana. The Juvy Driver gets two on Crowbar and a double DDT puts him down again. Artist breaks up Candido's (his partner) cover though, followed by Artist giving Candido the jumping DDT. Crowbar's sitout gordbuster is enough to pin Candido.

Rating: B. Enjoy this one, as I don't think you're going to see anything close to this entertaining all night long. Or all month long more than likely. This was the kind of insanity that the division was lacking for so long with the Artist on top and it was nice to have a throwback to the good old days.

Page says Kimberly vs. Madusa isn't happening but he'd love to bang Bigelow.

Russo and Bischoff come in to see Harlem Heat and ask them to take Sid out tonight. Why don't they just write Sid out if the writers are all powerful? I guess this is supposed to be a real beatdown?

Ready to Rumble premiere video?

Curt Hennig jumps Shawn Stasiak.

Harlem Heat vs. Sid Vicious

This is Sid's qualifying match. So did Russo and Bischoff think Harlem

Heat was going to lay down for him when they wanted Sid taken out? Sid fights off Big T. and Stevie at first but stops to go after J. Biggs, allowing the two of them to totally miss a double bicycle kick. A double flapjack drops Sid again and Cash adds a splash for two. Tony: "THAT'S INCREDIBLE!" Booker comes in and attacks Harlem Heat, meaning him acting as a heel on Monday is already forgotten. The Millennium Bomb ends Stevie.

The Wall comes in with a chair and knocks out Sid. We cut to an annoyed Russo and Bischoff, with the latter coming out and giving the win to Harlem Heat via DQ. Therefore, Sid isn't in the tournament. The announcers now tell us that it was a No DQ match, which really should have been mentioned earlier but I doubt they knew when the match started.

Jimmy Hart is looking for Bischoff.

Bischoff could be found in the New Blood locker room yelling at Booker.

Total Package vs. Shane Douglas

Luger has his music back and Shane fails at jumping him during the entrances. Page vs. Bigelow is confirmed for tonight as we continue the booking on the fly idea. Luger stomps him down but Shane grabs the belly to belly. In ECW it wins World Titles but here it's a transitional move so Shane can get slammed off the top. They head outside with Luger hitting his clothesline (I'll put the over under at four in this match) Back in and the referee gets bumped, allowing Shane to kick Luger low. Cue Flair to chop Shane and hit him low as well, setting up the Torture Rack for the win.

Rating: D+. So two weeks ago Luger and Flair were heels but now a story wide angle has turned them face. That comes off as lazy writing to me as I'm really having issues wanting to cheer for Luger for being an old rich guy who is putting in the same effort he has for years now. But at least he has his music back.

Bischoff blows Jimmy Hart off.

Later tonight it's Flair vs. Buff Bagwell. If Luger interferes, Team

Package is suspended for six months.

The announcer jabber for a bit before giving us a camera angle from inside Hogan's limo when it was crushed by the Hummer. Thankfully they point out that it was a security camera, but unfortunately they don't explain why it was pointed out the window. Hogan is going to be hospitalized for two weeks, meaning he gets to miss another major pay per view. That's probably a good thing actually.

Jimmy Hart calls Bischoff out for an explanation of what he did to Hogan. Instead Kidman charges to the ring and beats Hart up. Jimmy gets a red NB spray painted on him for good measure.

Kimberly tells Page that she's fighting tonight. Kimberly: "Be positive."
Page: "OF WHAT???"

Scott Steiner vs. Booker vs. The Wall vs. Vampiro vs. Kidman vs. The Cat

This is a Colorado Collision match between the six men already in the US Title tournament. Two men start and another is added every minute with pins or submissions for eliminations. Ignore the fact that these people are all stable mates, save for maybe Booker. Booker and Wall get things going with the big man getting kicked in the face a few times. The Book End sets up the ax kick and a Spinarooni but Wall pops up.

Cat comes in at about 55 seconds to kick Booker over the top, allowing Wall to chokeslam him through a table. Cat wants both guys counted out....and that's exactly what happens. With nothing left to do, Cat dances to fill in time. The camera goes wide to show the next entrant running down to the ring before realizing that it's a medic to check on Booker.

Why Wall is down from chokeslamming someone isn't clear but Steiner comes in to beat down the Cat. He actually fights back and drops Steiner as Kidman and Torrie come out, but Kidman doesn't want to get in. Steiner suplexes Cat out of his shoes so Kidman can slide in and steal a pin. That's fine with Steiner who drops him across the top rope. A belly to belly superplex eliminates Kidman and it's Vampiro to complete the field. Sting runs in and gives Vampiro the Death Drop though, setting up the

Recliner and the win for Steiner.

Rating: D. As usual, what started with an interesting idea gets bogged down by overbooking and allegedly cute ideas instead of letting them wrestle. You really shouldn't have five people eliminated in less than six minutes, at least not if you want these guys to be taken seriously.

Team Package isn't worried and Flair is still dressed in top fashion.

Kimberly vs. Madusa

Kimberly looks GREAT here, rocking some DX colors in what is probably an inside joke that no one but Bischoff and Russo get or find funny. Madusa shoves her down in the corner to start and asks why Kimberly wants to do this. Page quickly comes in and saves his wife before giving Madusa a pretty unnecessary Diamond Cutter. This was a thinly veiled excuse to have Kimberly in a tiny outfit.

This Week in WCW Motorsports.

Brian Knobbs/Fit Finlay vs. Meng/Hugh Morrus vs. Terry Funk/Norman Smiley

Hardcore three way tag with the winning team facing off for the Hardcore Title on Sunday. I've heard worse ideas. Meng and Knobbs fight to the floor as Tony tries to keep track of the teams. There are three separate fights going on here and I'm not even going to try to call anything outside of high spots.

Morrus puts Smiley on a table near the stage but misses a dive and crashes instead. Meng and Knobbs go to the concession area for the normal food spots but Meng stops to spear a Goldberg cardboard cutout. Why a cardboard cutout was there isn't clear but whatever. They fight outside with Knobbs being thrown over a balcony of unknown height. After a quick look at Funk and Finlay fighting at ringside, we see Smiley vs. Morrus in the back with Norman being slammed on concrete.

The announcers say this is about impressing Russo and Bischoff because titles mean nothing at this point. Norman gets thrown into the mouth of a tiger helmet, which I believe is a prop for the hockey team. Back in the arena, Finlay DDTs Funk on the exposed concrete. Funk shrugs it off and

throws Fit through a table in the corner before piledriving him onto the broken wood. Cue Dustin Rhodes for Shattered Dreams on Funk. Dustin and Fit go outside to set up a table but here's Norman Smiley to steal the pin on his own partner. Sure why not.

Rating: C+. As insane as this was and as dumb as the ending was (and as repetitive as this show has been with all the wild brawls and multi-man matches), this was actually entertaining. They made it feel like a wild fight instead of something calm and structured which is always appreciated. Good stuff here and I like the stipulation instead of just another tournament or six way match on Sunday.

The bosses tell the Villanos to destroy Sting.

We see a clip of Jeff Jarrett pretending to be a Villano and guitarring Sting from earlier in the future. Oh you don't remember that happening? That's because WCW screwed up the production and aired part of the show out of order. I thought I had a bad copy of the show but I looked up live reports from 2000 and it aired out of order on the original broadcast.

For all of the people who say it was a shame WCW went out of business (and I agree on some levels, especially for the wrestlers who worked hard but were stuck under a glass ceiling), this is the kind of thing its detractors point to. With all the money they had, no one could watch a two hour show and make sure it was in the right order? A college intern could do that and point out this kind of a mistake, but here it is on national TV, two days into their big reboot. There's bad wrestling and writing, but this is pure incompetence.

So anyway, Jarrett is in the back with Gene and threatens to slap the liver spots off of him before he wins the title on Sunday.

David Arquette is here.

Ric Flair vs. Buff Bagwell

Flair is in street clothes. Bagwell hammers him down to start but Flair fires off chops in the corner. Tony talks about which teams the fans have aligned themselves with, which makes me wonder who I'm supposed to be

cheering for. The old guys who hold down talent should be villains but the New Blood keep cheating and work for the evil bosses. Oh right: shades of gray. They fight to the floor and a fan dressed as Sting jumps the barricade and beats on Flair with a ball bat for the DQ.

Rating: D-. Yay for Russo getting a major spot instead of Vampiro, who was the one feuding with Flair before the reboot. That's the power of writing the shows I guess, because we really don't know much about Russo other than he's few New York and likes the young guys. Why he's going after Flair isn't really clear but why let that stop him?

Sting vs. Los Villanos

Gee I wonder what's going to happen. Nothing probably, because WCW just lets that kind of nonsense happen. Sting has to beat all three, unlike Sid earlier. He cleans house to start and pins two Villanos in about thirty seconds with a double Scorpion Death Drop. There goes the referee, allowing the remaining Villano to hit Sting low a few times. It's guitar time and Villano unmask as Jeff Jarrett. I'm not going to bother with the mock shock and awe because it's too pathetic to make fun of. Cue Page with a Diamond Cutter, giving Sting the pin.

Rating: D. You could see Russo as Sting during this match, meaning they edited the show out of order. Why? The two matches airing in either order doesn't change anything so why mess with it? My guess is someone meddling in something they had no business being involved in and causing this kind of screwup.

Bam Bam Bigelow vs. Diamond Dallas Page

Bigelow stomps him down to start but Page throws him into the corner for rights and lefts. The discus lariat gets two on Bam Bam but he comes back with a Samoan drop for two. We hit the reverse chinlock before the top rope headbutt to the back gets two. An attempt at a Diamond Cutter is countered into a ref bump but Page avoids another headbutt. The Diamond Cutter connects on the second attempt but Bischoff comes out and stops his count at two. Cue Jarrett with the guitar to knock Page out. Tony: "This is not good for Page."

Rating: D+. Yeah whatever. The psychology made sense as Bigelow (you know, the nearly fifteen year veteran who is now New Blood. I'd love to hear about him being held down) went after Page's eternally injured ribs and back but the ending was very predictable, as always in this era.

Speaking of not good, David Arquette jumps the barricade and gets beaten up with security nowhere in sight. The Stroke puts Arquette down and here's Kanyon to beat Jarrett up but Bischoff chairs him down. Page gets spray painted to end the show. They're not even trying to hide the NWO stuff at this point.

Oh and no word on if Brian Knobbs died when he was backdropped off a balcony, possibly dropping thirty feet onto concrete. Bischoff's run-in was more important.

Overall Rating: C+. If you ignore the horrible production error, the constant run-in finishes and all the sucking up to Russo and Bischoff, this was actually a heck of a show and the best Thunder in a long time. The wrestling was good to quite good and they basically put together the entire card for Sunday in one night. That's quite the task but they pulled it off here. Not bad.

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