

Thunder – May 3, 2000: Rules? Where We're Going We Don't Need Rules

Thunder

Date: May 3, 2000

Location: Mid-South Coliseum, Memphis, Tennessee

Attendance: 3,979

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mike Tenay, Bobby Heenan

It's the go home show for Slamboree and David Arquette is still World Champion. They've done a horrible job of setting up the triple cage match as the gimmick has barely been mentioned outside of a video on it early in the buildup. Instead it's all about David Arquette, who wouldn't prove to be the strongest draw. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

The Millionaire's Club and others (including Hugh Morrus) are outside waiting on the New Blood. Another car comes up and the low level New Blood members get jumped.

After a Slamboree ad, Russo and Bischoff yell at the rest of the team for not protecting them. So....this is going to be one of those shows about the two of them.

Here's the New Blood for a chat. Oh yeah it's a one note show. Russo immediately calls out the Millionaire's Club and gets his wish, plus pretty much every other face on the roster. Tonight he wants the Club destroyed so he's going to throw their names in a hat and let each member of the New Blood pull one out. Well it's official: the booking is now pulling names out of a hat.

As for tonight, it's New York Rules: no referees or referees whatsoever. It's Russo's dream show: no wrestling and just all out carnage. It's like he doesn't have to do anything at all! Flair loves the idea and promises

to take it to Russo tonight. A brawl ensues with Russo and Bischoff running off with Liz. Wait wasn't she freed on Monday?

Jeff Jarrett vs. Chris Kanyon

Before the match, Kimberly grabs a mic and says that Bischoff has shown her the light: Page is a bar bouncing bum from nowhere and he's just a wrestling mark. Cue Kanyon to start the brawl in the aisle as the announcers explain that you count your own pins here. Jeff takes over by dropping Kanyon across the barricade and kneeling him in the face. Back in and Jarrett walks into a Russian legsweep, followed by a top rope Fameasser.

They head back outside with Jarrett sending him into the steps and over the barricade. A chair shot to the back staggers Kanyon but he grabs a neckbreaker back inside. Cue DDP's music and what felt like some clipping. Like, his music hit and then he was just in the ring almost instantly. A Diamond Cutter to Jarrett lets Kanyon count his pin.

Rating: D. From what I can find online, the reason for the clipping was due to Page hitting Kimberly with a guitar when she tried to interfere, which also explains why he came out when Kanyon was in control. As for the match, it was pretty much the same thing WCW has been doing for weeks now because referees haven't meant a thing for a long time. They just brawled for a little while and then had interference as always. It's pretty telling that it doesn't seem any different when the rules are thrown out. How screwy has this place been if chaos feels like the norm?

Wall picks out his name.

The Wall vs. Total Package

Tables match because of course it is. Russo comes out with Liz because this show is all about him. It also allows Wall to get in some cheap shots but that's just a nice effect. Cue Ric Flair to sit in on commentary and promise to keep Russo out of things. Luger gets kneed in the ribs and stopped with a backbreaker. That's about it for Wall on offense though as Luger comes back with every single standard Luger move that you've ever seen.

They fight outside with Luger yelling at Russo, allowing Wall to get in a shot from behind. Wall and Luger head back inside as Russo hits Flair with the bat. Now how did he not see that coming? Luger Racks Wall but Russo hits Luger with the back as well, making Luger drop Wall through the table for the win. In the match with no rules but a tables stipulation which I guess you call yourself.

Rating: D. It's a Russo night for sure. Here we have another tables match for Wall and he loses again because that's all he does after weeks of being built up as an unstoppable monster. That's the logical progression right? Unstoppable to loser in the span of a month? In Russo's booking, that's slow motion.

Russo asks Flair if he wants a match now. Flair gets inside and Russo hides behind Liz, only to get kicked low. Flair puts on the Figure Four but Douglas and Bagwell make the save, only to be beaten down by Kronik. This brings out Kidman, who drew Flair's name.

Ric Flair vs. Kidman

This is joined in progress with Flair punching away in the corner. Tony: "If you're keeping score at home and I know that you are." You have to be at this point. Kidman gets in a few shots of his own and superplexes Flair. They fight near a table at ringside but save it for later. A slingshot legdrop keeps Flair in trouble but Kidman's top rope splash completely misses.

Cue Konnan and Mysterio to beat down Flair but here's Nash to probably beat them down and shave their heads with one arm tied behind his back and two broken legs. Kidman runs as Konnan gets Jackknifed, only to have Hogan knock Kidman off the stage. I'm assuming the match is thrown out.

Mike Awesome runs to the ring but gets double teamed by Nash and Hogan. That really shouldn't surprise you as he might make them break a sweat and must be destroyed immediately. Nash Jackknifes Awesome and declares Awesome the winner due to outside interference.

Diamond Dallas Page vs. Vampiro

Sting jumps Vampiro from behind, beats him up, covers him in blood and throws him in for the Diamond Cutter in less than a minute.

The New Blood is all shook up.

The Millionaire's Club on the other hand is rather pleased.

Mike Awesome vs. Sting

Now normally this would be an interesting match. Here I'll be shocked if it goes three minutes before someone interferes. Awesome sells the Jackknife on the way to the ring. Mike is right on Sting when he gets to the ring and slams him down, followed by a splash for two. Sting fights back and knocks Awesome to the floor, where the Misfits In Action jump the barricade and beat him up. Back in and the Stinger Splash and Scorpion make Awesome tap. What a way for a face to get a win.

Scott Steiner is the last New Blood guy to go tonight so Russo tells him to make it work. Steiner says he's doing this for himself.

Scott Steiner vs. Hulk Hogan

Non-title. This should have headlined a pay per view. The announcers are shocked that Steiner is calling Hogan out, even though Hogan is the only Millionaire left. Steiner promises to go see Hogan's wife after the show. Not even Steiner is that crazy. Steiner is on Hogan as he gets in the ring but Hulk comes back with right hands and a clothesline. They fight into the crowd where Hugh Morrus shows up to help Hogan. Back in the ring and Steiner calls in the troops but no one comes to help him and Scott walks for the countout.

Steiner swears a lot in the back and chokes Russo and Bischoff.

A new limo pulls up with FUNB on the license plate.

Kronik vs. Shane Douglas/Buff Bagwell

Wait is this a title match? Also there better not be a single tag in this whole thing. It's a brawl to start with Douglas doing a reverse Hennig neck snap on Adams. Douglas gets caught in something like an F5 but Adams

puts him down in more like a DDT instead of a full body plant. Clark side slams Bagwell in the ring but Buff comes back with the Blockbuster (Tony: "Whatever it is."). Adams makes the save and it's High Times for the pin. Tony: "Are they the champions? We might have to wait until Slamboree to find out!"

Rating: D. I'm going to assume Kronik didn't win the titles here because that would be one of the more logical things WCW could do and logic has no place in WCW these days. Bagwell and Douglas are such lame champions that I often forget they even have the titles. This was one of the more coherent matches of the night so far and it really wasn't very good.

Bischoff says he has an idea.

Here's the New Blood in the ring, all armed with weapons. Bischoff gets right to the point and asks if the fans want guerrilla warfare. Cue Flair and the Millionaire's Club so Bischoff asks if they want an 11 on 11 man war. Flair says the Club has nothing left to prove tonight but if Bischoff wants to make it a battle royal for the World Title shot at the Great American Bash, so be it.

Battle Royal

Ric Flair, Sting, Brian Adams, Bryan Clark, Horace Hogan, Diamond Dallas Page, Hugh Morrus, Kanyon, Total Package, Curt Hennig, Hulk Hogan, Shawn Stasiak, Jeff Jarrett, Vampiro, Mike Awesome, Scott Steiner, Buff Bagwell, Shane Douglas, Chris Candido, Kidman, The Wall, The Cat

It's a huge brawl to start of course and there are no referees so I guess we're going on the honor system. We're nearly three minutes in now and here come Konnan, Bam Bam Bigelow, Disco Inferno, Johnny the Bull, Big Vito, the Harris Twins, Norman Smiley and all three members of Harlem Heat to get us up to thirty two people in the ring at once.

Horace is the first man eliminated and there are now referees on the floor because WCW can't keep its rules straight for a whole night. Tank Abbott slowly comes to the ring as Flair is on the floor hitting Shane with a pipe. You would think they would eliminate a few people here but that's too complicated around here. Kanyon gets backdropped out and

there's still no way to do any play by play with thirty people in the ring. Stasiak dumps Hennig and the ring is still so full that almost no one can move.

Kronik is eliminated at the same time off camera and we take a break. Back with the ring still crowded but a little bit better. I'm not even going to try to figure out who was eliminated during the break as most of these guys have no chance anyway. Some of the bigger names have weapons to make it even more complicated. Luger, Bagwell, Sting and Vampiro go out but keep brawling on the floor.

Chavo Guerrero Jr. and Lash Leroux came in at some point and eliminate Vito. Big T. and Van Hammer go out but Asya and Madusa come out to take their places. Mona comes in to join them as the people are starting to get tired. Cue Jim Duggan of all people as the women and a man we couldn't see are put out. Duggan eliminates Bigelow and the Cat with the 2x4. Smiley and Tank are knocked out as well but Duggan eliminates himself due to high levels of stupid.

So we have Flair, Awesome, Stasiak, Candido, Kidman, Hogan, Jarrett, Douglas, Wall and Page in the ring. That's not enough though as we cut to the FUNB limo and see a pair of boots get out. Naturally the camera just shows boots and we go to a wide shot to show the boots walking on the video screen. The boots make it to the entrance and it's....RANDY SAVAGE. He fires ax handles to the New Blood and puts out Stasiak, Wall and Awesome in about ten seconds.

Candido is tossed a few seconds later but Savage drops to the floor to go after him. I guess that's an elimination. Page Cactus Clotheslines Jarrett to the floor to leave us with Hogan, Flair, Douglas and Kidman. They pair off and here's Bret Hart with a chair to blast Hogan, knocking him through the ropes to the floor. So through the ropes counts? Then why are Flair and Douglas still in? Could it be because the script didn't call for them to be eliminated earlier and rules can be twisted to suit Russo's grand vision?

Bret walks out so it's Flair and Douglas as Kidman is backdropped out. Flair puts Shane in the Figure Four but here's Russo with the ball

bat...and he accidentally hits Douglas. I guess being the manliest man that ever lived doesn't include hand eye coordination. Flair uses the bat to knock Shane out for the win and the title shot.

Rating: D. You know what this had me thinking of? The South Park episode where it wound up in a massive lawsuit with everyone vs. everyone. It's total anarchy and you lose track of what's going on. The match started with 22 people and that had nearly doubled with all the people coming in. How am I supposed to care about any of this or let it have any kind of an impact, especially with most of the match consisting of people not being able to move due to the ring being crowded? This is Russo's deal: take away any form of storytelling and just throw them all out there. Such great writing. The big surprises helped but it was too late.

Post match Hogan gets on the steps to suplex Kidman through the announcers' table but Bischoff hits the knee with a ball bat to knock Hogan through it instead. Bischoff counts a three and raises Kidman's hand because that's supposed to mean something. Yeah it's symbolism or something but it's still stupid.

We're STILL not done though as Jarrett and Page climb up the scaffold. The camera cuts to Savage helping Hogan up and they do the handshake. We cut back to Page, who apparently was knocked off the scaffold and through a table. Tony, in a totally calm and rational voice: "Page has been knocked off the scaffolding. We'll see what this means at Slamboree." Just like that. No emotion, no worry, nothing.

The worst part is that wasn't even the original planned ending. From what I've found, Arquette was supposed to hit Jarrett with the guitar and knock him through the stage. However, Asya accidentally stepped through the gimmicked part of the stage and Arquette fell in later, leaving Page to take an unscripted bump through a table. Only in WCW. I mean ONLY in WCW. Who else could screw up something that badly?

Overall Rating: F+. It's another night of non-wrestling with a bunch of short matches that they drew out of a hat. If that's not enough, the last half hour of the show was just taking almost the entire roster and throwing them into one match with no build. As I've said, Russo is the

laziest writer I've ever seen as his stories revolve around the idea that everything is all over the place with no structure or build to anything. This didn't make me want to see Sunday's show and felt like something you put on when you forgot you had a show to put on. Bad wrestling, bad writing, bad execution, bad everything this week.

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