

Slamboree 2000 (2015 Redo): Yes, This Is An Improvement

Slamboree 2000

Date: May 7, 2000

Location: Kemper Arena, Kansas City, Missouri

Attendance: 7,165

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mark Madden, Scott Hudson

It's time for the David Arquette pay per view with the triple cage match which has only been vaguely described on TV. Coming off this week's Nitro and Thunder where there was barely any build for most of the matches, it's really hard to get into this show. Maybe there will be some actual effort this time, though I have a feeling I'm going to be disappointed. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Thunder, which set up Great American Bash next month. Notice that: they don't even have anything to build up for this month's show so they're already talking about June. That's a really bad sign.

The Millionaire's Club arrives on a bus. I'm sure their promos in the arena on the pre-show were a figment of my imagination.

We go to the opening video, which starts by talking about Flair vs. Douglas. Is that really the most important thing to talk about? The other big matches get some time too in the best video they've done on the show so far. They're actually talking about some matches for a change.

There's a long entrance ramp back. I've always been a fan of those.

Cruiserweight Title: Chris Candido vs. The Artist

Candido is defending and Artist hasn't won a match on TV since March. Tammy offers to show the fans hers in the Show Me State. A quick rollup gets two for the champ but a second attempt is countered into a German suplex for two for the Artist. They pick things up a bit with Artist

backdropping Candido to the floor, only to be whipped into the barricade. Candido goes up but Artist kind of clotheslines him out of the air. It looked like a spear with no impact so we'll call it a clothesline.

Back in and a hurricanrana gets two for Artist but The champ comes back with chops in the corner. Artist gets knocked to the apron and suplexes Candido over the top in the only good spot of the match so far. Chris gives him a low blow (there are referees tonight but they're as worthless as ever) but Artist comes back with a bad powerbomb.

Candido's hurricanrana off the top is blocked and Artist hits a middle rope Samoan drop. Tammy tries to interfere and triggers a catfight, only to have Tammy chair Artist for a close two. They even played Candido's music but the referee says keep going. Candido piledrives Artist and drops the top rope headbutt to retain.

Rating: D. Artist is dull and boring most of the time but here he was adding in blowing spots. To be fair though, Candido wasn't really helping here as he kept blowing things left and right as well. This was such a boring time for the title as 3 Count and the Jung Dragons, as in the guys who could actually be entertaining with the title, have been forgotten for this company wide story. It felt like an old NWA Junior Heavyweight Title match where smaller guys who didn't wrestle a different style had dull matches and no one cared but it was its own division and therefore supposed to be special.

Paisley rips off Tammy's dress and crawls over to Artist.

The announcers explain the cage for the first time.

Video of Terry Funk getting beaten up a lot. Now you get to see him defend a title.

Hardcore Title: Terry Funk vs. Norman Smiley/???

Funk is defending and Norman has a mystery partner who is obviously Ralpus. Norman hides in the bathroom to start because it worked so well last month. Funk finds the mystery partner (wearing a catcher's mask) instead, allowing Norman to blast Funk with a fire extinguisher. Why he

doesn't hit him with the extinguisher itself isn't clear but Norman isn't the brightest guy in the world.

Funk gets rammed into a Coke machine until the light goes out and some trashcan lid shots get two. They brawl through the back until Terry throws Norman through Gene's interview set. The mystery partner gets on a pile of carpet and throws boxes at Terry, allowing Madden to make pitcher and catcher jokes. Some trashcan shots get two on Norman as the mystery partner just stands around letting Norman get destroyed.

Funk hits him with a chair for two as the partner doesn't even break up the cover. They fight to the go position (Tony: "HOW WILL WE KNOW HOW TO GET TO THE RING???" I would say listen for the cheering but that's not happening at a WCW show.) and then into the arena with Funk dragging the partner to the ring. Madden think it's Bubba the Love Sponge. The mask comes off and of course it's Ralphus.

Funk accidentally pulls Ralphus' pants down as Norman attacks with a ladder. Madden: "Not since I was attacked by Tank Abbott have we seen.....wait what am I saying?" Ok that was kind of funny. A chair to Funk's head sets up the Big Wiggle but Ralphus, who has lost his shirt, wants to join in. Funk comes back with some chair shots and rolls Norman up to retain.

Rating: C. It's stupid, it's goofy, and it's probably the most entertaining thing on this show. Ralphus is one of those ideas where they knew exactly what they had and didn't try to make it anything more than that. This was good fun and Norman continues to be the most underrated thing in WCW.

David Arquette arrives half an hour into the show and says he's got his own money so he's not with the Millionaire's Club. Don't let the smile fool you: he's scared. They're actually trying to treat this seriously and that's even dumber than putting Arquette in the story in the first place.

Shawn Stasiak vs. Curt Hennig

Feeling out process to start as the announcers debate what they can call

either guy without getting in trouble for gimmick infringement. A hiptoss puts Stasiak on the floor and he comes back in to fight over a top wristlock. Shawn gets two off a sunset flip as the Misfits in Action are in the front row in different color fatigues. Out to the floor now with Stasiak choking over the announcers' table before they head to the ramp.

Hennig throws his back out while trying a slam and Shawn puts on a sleeper back inside. As usual, Stasiak is really dull in the ring. Totally adequate and not bad by any stretch, but dull. Hennig breaks it up after two arm drops and punches Shawn out of the air to take over. Not that it matters as Stasiak catapults him into the post and puts on the HennigPlex for the pin.

Rating: D+. Totally watchable match and probably the most technically sound things are going to get all night but I really didn't need to watch eight minutes of Stasiak being dull before getting the pin. I guess Stasiak is supposed to be the new Mr. Perfect. It would be nice if we had heard a promo from Stasiak where he said that, but that's probably asking too much from WCW.

Russo tells Steiner to keep the New Blood roll going. Steiner doesn't seem pleased.

US Title: Scott Steiner vs. Hugh Morrus

Steiner is defending. First up though, Morrus renames himself Hugh G. Rection or Captain Rection for short. Well of course he did. Steiner hammers him down in the corner but Rection comes back with enough right hands to put Scott on the floor for a breather. Back in and a spinwheel kick of all things gets two on the champ and there's Rection's top rope elbow. The girls break up No Laughing Matter though and put Rection in the Tree of Woe, allowing Madden to get in some easy jokes. The t-bone suplex sets up the pushups and the spinning belly to belly gets two.

We hit the bearhug (and Madden misses the squeezing jokes) for a bit before a belly to belly knocks Rection even sillier. Steiner stops to pose, giving us some of the only unique heel work of the night. Rection makes his comeback with splashes in the corner and an Owen Hart-style tombstone, only to mostly miss the moonsault. His feet smack Steiner in

the head but the Recliner retains the title a few seconds later.

Rating: D. Another bad match here but the stupid name was really messing this up. It's really difficult to stay in a match when there's a stupid joke every 18 seconds. As usual Russo would rather make himself laugh than advance the story in any meaningful way because Russo is a hack. A creative hack but still a hack.

Booker T. comes out to save Rection from the Recliner.

Kanyon says he'll win tonight.

Mike Awesome vs. Chris Kanyon

Kanyon starts with a clothesline as the fans look at something in the crowd. Instead of going to a hold, Awesome sends Kanyon outside for a big dive over the top, drawing an ECW chant. Kanyon wraps Awesome's ribs around the post and drives in a baseball slide for good measure. There's a flip dive off the apron as the fans are trying to get into this show. Back in and Awesome comes back with the top rope clothesline, followed by some chair shots to take over again.

Some choking on the floor is followed by a hard clothesline for Awesome as this is the good match these two are capable of having when there's nothing screwy going on. Mike chairs Kanyon in the back but gets crotched on the top, allowing Kanyon to pull him down with a nice neckbreaker. Awesome rolls through a high cross body for two but Kanyon's fireman's carry pancake gets the same. An Alabama Slam (which Tony calls a version of a powerbomb) knocks Kanyon silly before powerbombing Kanyon on the back of his head in a scary landing.

Mike peels back the mats at ringside but opts for a slingshot shoulder instead. He can't Awesome Bomb Kanyon over the top rope so it's a release German suplex across the ring instead. Awesome loads up the powerbomb onto the concrete and here's Nash to interrupt. Cue the New Blood and the match is thrown out, presumably due to Nash's jealousy shining through.

Rating: B-. Match of the night by a mile and I'd be surprised if anything besides the main event comes anywhere close to it. This is what happens

when you let two talented guys beat each other up and do impressive looking moves to each other for ten minutes. Now of course there had to be a screwy ending because the fans were getting into it and WCW doesn't know how to handle that, but I'll take what good stuff I can get when I can get it.

The Millionaire's Club comes down for the save, just like they have on every TV show for two weeks.

We recap Bagwell vs. Luger which is happening again for reasons I'll never comprehend. This time Russo has stolen Liz (and let her go on Nitro, only to have her back two days later for reasons that were never explained) and Bagwell is doing Russo's fighting. As has been explained: this is an excuse for Russo to look manly and have Liz on his arm.

Russo tells Liz to change out of her dress (which looks quite good already) and put on something he's picked out for her.

Total Package vs. Buff Bagwell

Bagwell doesn't have a title so Tony isn't sure if he and Douglas are still champions. We start with the posing because that's what they've done for years now. Luger drives him into the corner to start but Buff pounds him down with ease. We're already in the chinlock but Luger fights out with a suplex. Dang he's working hard tonight. The right hands and clotheslines knock Bagwell to the floor, which I think has happened in every match tonight.

Luger gets in a few shots and throws Bagwell back in by the ear. That's certainly a new one. Bagwell gets two of his own off a double arm DDT and we're back in the chinlock. This might be the laziest pairing in wrestling history but they keep getting paired together for years on end. After they stay on the mat with the chinlock it's a double clothesline to put both guys down again. Buff drops a splash for two and it's off to a reverse chinlock.

Luger looks mildly annoyed, realizes there's a camera on him, and starts wincing. We cut to the back where Russo tells Liz to come watch, only to have Liz come out and hit him with the ball bat. Luger starts his

comeback but Buff hits him in the ribs. Cue Bagwell with the bat but Buff takes it away from her and hits Luger in the stomach. Liz picks the bat up though and breaks up the Blockbuster, setting up the Rack for the submission.

Rating: D. Luger and Bagwell laying around instead of trying to have a good match? Who would have ever seen that one coming? This was your standard match between the two and it's still nothing that anyone would want to see again, hence why I'm sure they'll be best friends again by the end of the year. Can we just have Liz fall for Russo already? You know it's coming soon.

Post match Chuck Palumbo comes in and blasts Luger in the back with an exercise bar. He's wearing gear identical to Luger, so Russo is already repeating his own storyline from the Stasiak vs. Hennig story. Palumbo Racks Luger and Bagwell kidnaps Liz again. April O'Neil wasn't this helpless.

Shane Douglas is happy to finally get his hands on Flair. As usual, if you didn't watch ECW or read the internet, this story makes no sense to you.

Ric Flair vs. Shane Douglas

Douglas says he's awesome and is going to destroy Flair. Ric comes out and has the referee hold the ropes for a former World Champion. Flair: "Not that you would know anything about that buddy." Ric even mentions ECW when promising to take Shane out tonight like it's 1981. They actually wrestle to start until Shane elbows him in the face to take over.

The chop it out until Flair gets slammed off the top, followed by a Figure Four from Douglas. Hudson: "THAT'S THE MOVE HE WON SO MANY WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS WITH!" Your factoid of the day: Flair never actually won a World Title with the Figure Four by traditional submission. Every time he won with the Figure Four, it was due to his opponent passing out in the hold. Flair grabs a rope and hits one heck of a low blow to knock Shane to the floor. Shane gets whipped into the barricade but manages a kick to the bad leg to get a breather.

Now we get to the issue with WCW as a whole right now: Douglas pulls out a chain and tries to hide it from the referee, just like wrestlers have been doing for years. However, why should he try to hide the chain? It's clear that WCW referees aren't going to call DQ's unless it's something major, so why would a chain be anything different? Some suplexes have Flair in trouble but he pops right back up for a pair of low blows. It's time for the Figure Four but Bagwell and "Sting" come out with "Sting" ball batting Flair to give Shane the pin.

Rating: C-. The match was pretty decent until the end but the story isn't there. I still don't know why I'm supposed to be interested in some big challenges that Douglas made back in ECW, but I'm guessing a fan talked about it online somewhere and Russo decided that it was the hottest story in wrestling.

Bagwell and Douglas lay out Flair but he calls out "Russo" (clearly too tall to be under the Sting mask) for their five minute fight. Luger comes out to drag "Sting" to the ring but Russo pops up behind them and nails Luger with the bat. Back inside and "Sting" hits Ric with a miniature Statue of Liberty and it's....David Flair. A few bat shots knock Ric silly as Russo does the crotch chop like A MAN would. Nash casually walks down the ramp for the save but Daffney hits him low, allowing David Flair and Russo to stand tall. Yeah we're supposed to be intimidated by those two and Daffney. She's the scariest of them all.

We recap Vampiro vs. Sting, which is about both of them being creepy and Vampiro wanting to be what he thinks Sting should be. This would be the third iteration of the exact same idea on this show alone.

Vampiro vs. Sting

They start fighting on the ramp with Sting grabbing a suplex and sending Vampiro into the ring for a missile dropkick. Vampiro falls to the floor and Sting knocks him outside with a plancha. Where has this Sting been for the last three and a half years? A DDT on the floor knocks Vampiro even sillier but he comes back with a low blow. It's lead pipe time (I feel like I'm watching Clue tonight) and Sting gets knocked up the ramp.

That goes nowhere so they come back in the ring for another pipe shot to

Sting's back. Sting hits him low to break up a hurricanrana and powerbombs Vampiro off the top. A pipe shot to the head doesn't have much of an effect on Vampiro (this is so goofy at this point) so Sting hits two straight Splashes and Deathdrops for the pin.

Rating: D+. A lead pipe to the head was sold like a right hand to the jaw. That really should be all you need to know on this match. In case you're keeping track, Vampiro has still only won one time under the new regime and that included Hogan attacking Kidman for two minutes straight. As usual, the old guys get to be superhuman but the young guys are getting a story and that's supposed to mean something.

Sting hits Vampiro in the head with the pipe again.

David Arquette, dressed as Elvis for a reference from the movie, and Page are ready for the main event. Page tells him to stay away from Jarrett and play defense on the top of the cage near the belt. Don't grab it though.

Nash is looking for Russo. Again, this should be on a TV show.

Kidman and Bischoff are ready for Hogan. Again, Bischoff went from being terrified of Hogan to volunteering to be guest referee for their match.

You can get a BUFF BAGWELL pennant for purchasing this show. Who thought that was a piece of merchandise that needed to be made?

Kidman vs. Hulk Hogan

At least Kimberly and Torrie are looking great here. Hogan brings out Horace with him for reinforcement. Kidman small packages Hogan on a slam attempt to start but Hogan picks him up by the throat for a crotching on top. Hogan gets a chair and drops Kidman onto it face first, only to have Kidman come back with a hurricanrana.

Hogan really isn't someone you picture taking hurricanranas that often. A quick beating on the floor goes nowhere so Hogan comes back in for a whipping with the weightlifting belt. Bischoff takes it away as Hudson tries to make sense of the relaxed rules jazz. Kidman whips away with the belt until Hogan wraps it around Kidman's neck and throws him out to the

floor. Hogan whips him into the barricade and Bischoff won't count. We're firmly in the old standard book of evil referee tropes.

Kidman comes back with a few shots to take over so Hogan sends him out to the floor again. The brawling by the announcers' tables goes nowhere so Hogan hits the big boot but Bischoff walks in front of the legdrop. Bischoff gets sent to the floor and Hogan drops the leg. It's chair time but Hogan tries to bring in a table, which breaks upon contact. Kidman saves Bischoff from going through the table and gets two of his own off a chair shot.

Hogan kicks the chair into Kidman's face, kicks Bischoff low and powerbombs him through the table. That's STILL not enough though as Hogan brings in another table, only to get kicked low. Kidman misses a splash through the table and Horace comes in to grab Bischoff's hand and force the count to give Hulk the pin. There are so many broken tables that you can barely see the ring.

Rating: F+. Well to be fair, Hogan did let Kidman get some totally worthless pinfalls on him (which weren't really pins) on TV that fewer and fewer people were watching so the completely over the top PPV win was completely justified. Bad match here of course as it was just another brawl in a long series of them since Bischoff and Russo took over.

Russo and Liz run away from Nash.

We recap the World Title match, which resulted in a lot of short title reigns, capped off by David Arquette coming out as champion. I'm moving on before I get even more annoyed.

WCW World Title: David Arquette vs. Diamond Dallas Page vs. Jeff Jarrett

Arquette is defending and this is in the triple cage. It's three cages on top of each other with the Hell in a Cell on the bottom, then a cage full of weapons on top of that and a small cage called the Guitar Room on top. You have to get on top of the Guitar Room to reach the belt. First person to get to the top and pull the belt down wins.

The cage is lowered and to its credit, it looks amazing. Jarrett chases

Arquette to start but Page makes the save instead of going after the belt. Well to be fair he wasn't that upset when Arquette won it from him last week anyway. A clothesline puts Jarrett down as Arquette stands on the part of the ramp inside the cage. Jeff baseball slides a ladder into Page's face but Page catapults Jarrett into Arquette.

Page gets pulled face first into the post but comes back by crotching Jeff against it instead. The ladder is set up but Jarrett suplexes Page down. Jarrett is already busted open. Page shoves him off the ladder and is the first man to the hardcore cage, where he has to use bolt cutters to open the door. This is more like an obstacle course than a match. Jarrett follows him up and they're quickly outside the hardcore cage and on top of the big cage. That's quite the dangerous spot to be in considering they have all of five feet to fight on.

Back in the hardcore cage and they break the wall down in what I guess is the big spot of the match. Arquette watches from the bottom cage as Page powerslams Jarrett through a table in the hardcore cage. They go back out to the edge and Page elbows him in the jaw to break up an Irish whip. Arquette climbs into the hardcore cage and goes up to the Guitar Room but here's Mike Awesome out of nowhere to break up a Diamond Cutter.

Arquette grabs a guitar as Page Diamond Cuts Mike. They both head up and Arquette misses a guitar shot, only to have both of them fall down to the roof of the hardcore cage. Both guys get back up and, say it with me, Arquette turns on Page to give Jarrett the title back.

Rating: C+. This wasn't the worst match in the world actually, stupid ending aside. That last part is where it falls apart though: the Arquette stuff in here really didn't need to exist. Let him be a second or a cheerleader or something but there's no need to have him in the match itself. When you can eliminate something from a match and have it be the exact same thing, you can tell it's a bad idea. The match itself was fun and unfortunately they never went back to this idea again (at least not in this form) because the company never had the chance again, which is kind of a shame as it's a cool idea.

Post match here's Canyon to save Page from an Awesome Bomb, only to be

thrown off the top of the Cell and through the ramp. The announcers scream that he's broken his back in the shock value moment of the show, which of course is being held in the same arena where Owen Hart fell. Russo: "BUT PEOPLE TALKED ABOUT IT!" Yes they did Russo, just like when you get fired because people stopped watching your garbage.

Overall Rating: D. Let's get the good out of the way first: this was a major improvement over the mess of Spring Stampede. It's so much better to have ten matches spaced over two hours and fifty minutes instead of fourteen matches over about two hour and a half hours. It's a big upgrade and the show had a much better structure overall.

Now that being said, the show still sucked because Russo has overbooked the heck out of it. Almost every match had a brawl on the floor or interference or cheating. It's fine to have something like that a few times a match but when you have it every single time, it gets old fast. There comes a point where you stop watching the match and start waiting for the interference or cheating, which defeats the purpose of the match itself.

Overall though, this company is drowning under the one major idea. This system has almost never worked but for some reason wrestling companies keep running with them. It boils down to one problem: if you don't like the one idea, there's no point to watching the show. You can have one dominant story, but mix in a few other things that are disconnected to it as it keeps the fans around to see that instead of waiting on the major story to be over. This isn't the worst show ever, but they still need to make a lot of tweaks to get this company to work again.

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