

Monday Nitro – May 29, 2000: The New Normal

Monday Nitro #242

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Commentators: Scott Hudson, Mark Madden, Tony Schiavone

So Kevin Nash is World Champion again after winning a triple threat match over Jeff Jarrett and Scott Steiner last week on Thunder. Jarrett had been awarded/won the title (it's still not clear) two days before after Ric Flair had it vacated earlier tonight after winning it the week before. That's about a fourth of the title changes this year and that's all you need to know about WCW right now. Let's get to it.

Clips from Thunder that led to Nash winning the title in a match announced an hour earlier. Sadly, that's good for WCW.

Ric Flair arrives with his wife and Reid. He tells his family to stay in the limo but Russo and security immediately kidnap them. What is up with Russo's kidnapping fetish? It's like once every show.

Here's Kevin Nash wearing an FUNB shirt to open things up. Before he can say anything though, here's Scott Steiner, who is still US Champion in case you had forgotten. Nash thanks Steiner for helping him out on Thunder because it's been eight weeks since Russo and Bischoff promised to take out the millionaires. That includes Bischoff running Page's personal life, Hogan in a retirement match at the Great American Bash (that's news) and Vampiro wanting to set Sting on fire.

That leaves Nash, who didn't go according to their plans. Everyone wants to strangle Russo right now, including Nash's buddy in Orlando. Nash talks about how hard it is to kill a legend and brings out Ric Flair for a chat. Ric still doesn't seem to realize that his family has been kidnapped, but he's already proven that he cares more about business than his family anyway. Ric yells about David and it seems the match for the Bash is back on. He promises to bury his son in a few weeks but tonight

he's going to beat Russo back to New York.

Nash has a present for Ric: the World Title. That would be title change #17 since the beginning of the year. Cue Jarrett who thinks the three of them are whining like a bunch of women on the View. Russo has made Nash vs. Rick Steiner and Tank Abbott in a handicap match. So was that going to be for the title in the first place or did Russo really not care about what happens to the belt?

Scott is banned from the ring because Russo owns them both. That's fine with Steiner, because he doesn't believe in the idea of talking out his problems. "Even when my freaks get out of line, I gotta slap them." Jeff gets a title shot against Flair as well, which again makes me wonder what the plans were until Nash gave Flair the title. Ric says no anyway. This brings out Russo in a sleeveless shirt to show off his MANLY arms (manly here would mean arms the size of a thirteen year old) to bring out the kidnapped Flairs. The Millionaires clean house but Russo gets away with Flair's wife.

So to recap: Nash AGAIN isn't interested in being World Champion and just hands someone the title, Flair turns down a title defense because he doesn't feel like it and Russo gets away again. That's another item on the long list of problems with Russo: he never got what was coming to him. Bischoff and McMahon would at least take a beating once in awhile, but Russo never actually lost a match in WCW. Russo is some untouchable god though and always gets away with everything he's doing. It gets old fast but it's another example of Russo making it all about himself and ruining the company in the process.

Vampiro arrives in a gasoline truck.

Ric is looking for his family. This is a B movie plot.

Apparently the title match is on as Flair had no choice. In other words: Russo gets what he wants and Flair is broken one more time.

Lieutenant Loco vs. Disco Inferno

Disco tries to imitate the Filthy Animals by asking where his dogs are at

and declaring it all swell. Konnan wants the Misfits to “pop their collars and get their mash on.” While we’re at it, let’s make this a lumberjack match. It’s a brawl to start with the Misfits throwing Disco back inside but he grabs Chavo for a hot shot.

Now it’s the Animals stomping Guerrero down to keep Disco, in a Scottie Pippen jersey, in control. Disco and Rection fight on the floor so Rey loads up a Bronco Buster on Chavo, only to have Major Gunns intercept him. He’s dumb enough to spread his legs in the corner, earning himself that low blow. Chavo tornado DDT’s Disco for the fast pin.

Post match it’s Tygress of the Nitro Girls coming in for a catfight. Madden breaks the news that she’s Mysterio’s girlfriend. Makes more sense now, though I feel dirty learning it from Mark Madden.

Vampiro says only the sinners will burn and there’s going to be a fire tonight. As Vampiro is talking to Pamela Paulshock, Kronik knock Horace Hogan across the room. This brings in Stasiak and Palumbo to beat up Kronik.

Here’s Miss Hancock with something to say. She wants to show us that she can have fun and it’s time to dance but here’s Chris Candido to break it up. We cut to the Russo locker room where David panics and runs off, leaving Russo to yell at the Flairs even more. Candido yells at Hancock and grabs her by the hair but David comes in for the save. This brings in Ric to brawl with David, though shouldn’t he be trying to save his kidnapped family?

Kimberly (homina homina homina) arrives and is mobbed by paparazzi. So that’s where Melina got the idea.

We get a clip of Kimberly on the phone with Bischoff as she gets rid of all of Page’s stuff.

Here’s G.I. Bro with something to say to yell about Shawn Stasiak attacking him after their match on Thunder. Therefore, it’s a Boot Camp match at the pay per view. Next up it’s the awesome Mike Awesome who didn’t get the job done a few weeks ago. Since we haven’t had one in long enough, let’s have an ambulance match right now.

Mike Awesome vs. G.I. Bro

They brawl on the ramp to start and Awesome slingshots into the ring to take Bro down. A powerbomb does the same but Awesome dives into a dropkick. This is another one of those matches where they have to get in everything they can because it's probably only getting a few minutes due to all the Russo segments we need to get to. Booker messes up a leapfrog but comes back with a jumping clothesline and the ax kick.

They head up the ramp but Awesome hits him with Canyon's halo. You remember WWF War Zone where the audience would throw in stuff like TVs and camera as weapons? Well on this show people pull out medical halos to use in matches where you're supposed to put your opponent in an ambulance. Somehow a TV doesn't sound like that big of a stretch. Cue Diamond Dallas Page to help chokeslam Awesome off the ramp and through a table before tossing Mike into the ambulance for the win. Another under three minute match with ten minutes of stuff packed in.

Palumbo and Stasiak are sitting in the back with Liz next to them. A note comes underneath their door. "It's 4:19. Got a minute?" Somehow they can't get the idea (they're built, not smart) and Kronik comes in to return the beating from earlier. Liz gets in a shot on Palumbo and runs off. Yeah I'm sure.

Hulk Hogan arrives and says it's going to take more man than Bischoff to rip the red and yellow off his back. He's in all black here so I'm assuming he's already met that man.

Goldberg's monster truck drives up and Goldberg himself is actually here.

Here's Bischoff's subgroup for a chat. Cat is now imitating Bischoff's statements to give Eric a tribute character. Thankfully Bischoff cuts him off pretty quickly before making Horace the guest referee for Kidman vs. Hogan. Hulk comes out to say the red and yellow won't die before going after Eric and company. We cut to the back where Goldberg is coming in and that's time for a commercial.

Kevin Nash vs. Rick Steiner/Tank Abbott

Nash gets jumped on the stage to start and Rick knocks him out with a wrench. Since WCW isn't a wrestling company these days, the referee starts the match with Nash unconscious. Cue Goldberg and the fans are more alive than they've been in probably a year. Steiner takes a spear and a Jackhammer and I guess Nash loses by DQ. I love WCW trying to make sense of things.

Goldberg helps Nash up and Hudson says it's a new day (YES IT IS!). Goldberg is sick of hearing from Tank Abbott so the slaughter begins tonight. The challenge is issued for a match next week in Atlanta.

Goldberg leaves.

Bischoff freaks out that Goldberg is here. Why he didn't know that Goldberg was here when he was shown on screen before the previous segment isn't clear.

Hardcore Title: Terry Funk vs. Vampiro

Funk is defending and Vampiro is a mystery opponent. A piledriver on the ramp gets two about ten seconds after the bell but Vampiro doesn't bother to sell it anyway. Vampiro gives him the Nail in the Coffin but does the same thing to the referee instead of covering. Vampiro demands his pyro go off so he can burn Funk.

That goes nowhere so they head backstage with Funk hitting him in the head with a trashcan. A coffee machine to the face misses Vampiro and they fight to the production truck. Funk is knocked through the table and it's off to the gas truck but Sting saves Funk after he's covered in gasoline. Vampiro fights him off and grabs a blowtorch but security breaks it up and we've got a no contest in a hardcore match.

Rating: F. It's stupid, it's lame, it's straight out of a bunch of Undertaker/Kane/Austin segments from a year earlier. I'm sick of Terry Funk holding this joke of a title for weeks on end (somehow it hasn't even been months yet) and of Vampiro trying to be all violent for the sake of being violent. It's not interesting and it just keeps going no matter how long ago people stopped caring. The fire stuff is stupid too as it's like teasing the Divas back in the day. Russo would tease it over

and over again but never got there, which eventually took away any of the appeal.

Ric is still looking for his family.

Russo yells at the Flairs when Shane Douglas comes in. Shane is given Scott Steiner tonight which rightfully freaks him out. Russo makes it a US Title match though and Shane calms down. That right there is the best job they've done at building a title since Russo and Bischoff showed up. Yeah Shane is scared of Steiner but the potential of being US Champion is enough to entice him. Totally unintentional I'm sure but well done.

We go back to last week with Page arriving at his house and finding his stuff on the lawn. Page: "This ain't a rib." The locks have been changed too. Kimberly opens the door and Page tells her to get out but the cops are waiting on him. We get the obvious restraining order and one of the cops is nice enough to tell Page that his kids are fans.

Awesome is with Kimberly, who doesn't care to help him with his match against Page at the pay per view. Mike says if she does it would mean more camera time. Kimberly: "Come on Mr. sweaty man."

We recap Page spanking Kimberly on Thunder but I'm sure Russo has the full version on a continuous loop.

Here are Kimberly, Awesome and Palumbo to call out Elizabeth for what happened last week. Elizabeth, who is finally free, ACTUALLY COMES OUT ON HER OWN! She deserves to be kidnapped over and over again. Kimberly has them kidnap Elizabeth again and yells a lot as this is pretty clearly another Russo fantasy on screen.

Cue Page to clean house but Bischoff sends out the cops to arrest Page for violating the restraining order. Palumbo attacks THE COPS with the exercise bar before hitting Page, only to have Luger come out in a face mask to beat up Palumbo. Luger and Liz leave but Awesome gets up to beat on Page even more. This brings KARL MALONE out of the crowd to Diamond Cut Awesome in a call back to the good old days. Yet another Russo fantasy/illogical segment which accomplished very little and got Karl Malone over instead of the two pay per view matches.

Ric shouts that he'll get Russo tonight.

US Title: Scott Steiner vs. Shane Douglas

Steiner is defending and this is in the Asylum cage because everyone has to have their own signature gimmick match. Steiner says he's a freak in heat. He's ready for Tank at the pay per view and isn't worried about Douglas or Russo. Of course he has to get Russo in there too. The champ hammers away to start and drops him with the gorilla press. A low blow gets Shane out of trouble and there's a reverse Hennig neck snap to work on Steiner's back. Tony reiterates the relaxed rules in WCW as Steiner rams Shane back first into the cage a few times. There's a belly to belly and the Recliner retains the title, again in less than 3:00.

Hogan is in the yellow and red.

Sting vs. Kidman

A quick Bodog drops Sting early but Kidman is too busy doing the Hogan hand to the ear. Sting rolls to the ramp and gets a big start for a dive over the top to take Kidman down. Why is Sting more athletic and high flying than any Cruiserweight Champion has been in the better part of a year? There's the Stinger Splash but Torrie distracts the referee, allowing Vampiro to hit Sting with a blowtorch, giving Kidman the pin. Another meaningless win after Sting was basically squashing him, but then again Russo never understood the difference.

Vampiro loads up some gasoline but Hogan makes the save. Bischoff comes out with the chair but Hogan takes it away and holds the chair up so Cat can kick it into his face. Kidman rips off Hulk's shirt and burns it in a trashcan. Cool moment but Kidman still has no chance at the Bash. Vampiro tries to burn Sting but Kronik makes the save.

WCW World Title: Ric Flair vs. Jeff Jarrett

Ric is defending and David Flair is the surprise guest referee. Tony recaps the title situation by saying Nash gave Ric the title in segment one. Not EARLIER IN THE NIGHT or in the first hour, but segment one. We're maybe thirty seconds into the match and here are Russo and the

kidnapped Flairs. For once in his life Flair cares about something more than the title (not David of course, further proving that David is right in all his insanity) but Jeff gets in some chair shots to the ribs to take over.

Remember when a single chair shot would knock someone out and end a match? Well here two of them don't even knock Ric down. Back in and Jeff hammers at Ric's busted head. Ric comes back and hits David with the Statue of Liberty but Russo pulls him to the floor and hits him with the bat. There's the Figure Four from Jeff but Ric makes the ropes. Charles Robinson comes out to take over and Flair gets two off the same small package that won him the title two weeks ago.

The Flair Flip sends Ric to the apron but he actually gets in a clothesline of his own. Ric punches Russo in the jaw (in one of the only times he ever gets touched) but Jeff kicks Ric into Robinson. The security gets beaten up but Russo takes over as referee, allowing Jarrett to guitar Flair for the pin and the title. Sure Russo took a punch and some chops, but it's RUSSO getting to take the title off Flair. How MANLY he must feel, because of course Vince Russo is a man.

Rating: F. Another non-match that never has a chance to go build anything up because there's another plot point to get to. As usual, this is almost all about Russo's issues with Flair and Jarrett, who has gone from a zero time World Champion on April 15 to a four time World Champion on May 29. Flair isn't immune from this either as his sixteen time record is nicely padded with two title reigns that combine for less than eight days. People talk today about the Intercontinental Title being treated as nothing or a joke, but it's the NWA World Title in its prime compared to this mess.

Fans throw trash in the ring as the Flairs are taken away by security to end the show.

Overall Rating: F+. More bad, more non-wrestling, more people doing things that make no sense, more B-movie plots, more Russo more awful. I keep hoping that we'll get back to normal someday but this is the new normal. This show has become a big dumping ground for whatever lame movie

plots Russo isn't smart enough to sell to a low rent direct to video company. There's still no main event for the pay per view and I doubt Russo has any idea what it's supposed to be because he's too busy figuring out all of his ideas for TV that only he understands. Horrible show, as is normal these days.

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