

Thunder – June 14, 2000: The Original John Cena

Thunder

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Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mike Tenay, Mark Madden

Welcome to your second weekly installment of Russo Theater featuring the Eric Bischoff Players. The big story at the moment is the departures of a lot of big names as Page, Sting and Flair are all gone, leaving us with Hogan/Nash/Steiner to fight off the forces of evil because we're just lucky like that. Let's get to it.

The traditional Nitro recap opens things up.

Cat, Russo, Jarrett and David arrive, flanked by security (one of whom I believe is Mike Rapada, who would win the NWA World Title twice by the end of the year). Rapada (not named) tells Russo that the cops won't be here tonight because they don't want to deal with his games. They must have watched the show earlier.

Nash arrives. Can we please stop having to show people arriving with no story development? It's their job to be here. Why am I supposed to be surprised or interested in their cars arriving?

Here are Russo/Cat/Jarrett/David to open things up. David has a lock of Ric's hair around his neck (that's creepy) and Russo has a 3-0 shirt with the back saying "with two shaved heads." Jarrett gets to talk first for once and promises to take care of Kidman for what he did on Monday. He beat Hogan and Nash on consecutive nights and that proves he's the real World Champion.

Russo shows us clips from Nitro (for the second time in five minutes) and says he'll bring Ric back tonight, so he pulls out a Mr. Potato Head. On to Nash, Russo asks what type of man would torture someone in front of their eight year old nephew. Nash pops up and says a dead man (but a

MANLY dead man of course). Various threats are made with Russo saying Goldberg is coming. Nash cleans house with the bat but Russo gets away because he always does. Did I miss something or did this accomplish absolutely nothing?

Post break Russo calls Bischoff, who is on the way with Goldberg. Everyone leaves Russo alone for various reasons and Nash can be heard outside. This would be your weekly thriller movie plot.

Here's Kronik with something to say. Adams calls it ridiculous that they lost the titles by DQ. They want a title match right now but get Chris Candido instead.

Kronik vs. Bam Bam Bigelow/Chris Candido

I had forgotten Bigelow was still around. Kronik pulls Candido into the ring to start with Clark. A release Rock Bottom plants Chris and Adams tosses him into the air for a crash. The F5 gets two as Bigelow comes in to make the save. High Times ends Candido fast. Total squash.

Security has to break up Bigelow and Kronik.

Russo tries to call for help and then runs to his car. The tires are slashed though because this really is a stalker movie.

Here are the Mamalukes with the Hardcore Title. Vito brags about being the man that retired Terry Funk because he's the real hardcore legend. Johnny says he could have beaten Funk if he hadn't been in the bathroom. Vito agrees and hands him the belt, then hits him with a kendo stick. A table is set up but Johnny comes back with a jumping DDT to drive Vito through it instead. This brings out Nash with his bat to take Johnny out because he hasn't been on TV enough yet tonight. He's just looking for Russo though and that's it. Thanks for wiping out a champion (maybe?) before you left Kev.

Russo is panicking like the 20 something year old woman when some psycho is chasing her in a direct to video movie. Of course most of those people don't have WORKING PHONES they could use to call a cab.

David and Miss Hancock are having a moment.

Here's Shane Douglas to address knocking Bagwell out on Monday. Bagwell must be wondering what happened to make Shane hit him in the head with brass knuckles. A month ago, Bagwell decided to fight against WCW and left Shane all on his own. Have we ever heard why Buff was suspended in the first place? Anyway Buff comes out for some revenge but Candido and Bigelow jump him before he can do much. Kronik runs out as well and it's a big brawl.

Rick Steiner and Tank Abbott arrive. We cut to Palumbo and Stasiak who make fun of them for no apparent reason, only to have Rick and Tank appear behind them. Tank says that was recorded two hours ago and the beatdown is on. I'm not sure off the top of my head, but that might be the most contrived segment I've ever seen.

Cat comes in to see Russo (scaring him half to death) and promises to stay by his side. Scott Steiner arrives and Cat runs away screaming. Russo sees Steiner as well and runs on top of some cars because being a MAN involves being a great athlete. Well done on hitting the people arriving and movie tropes in the same segment.

Here are Mike Awesome and Positively Kanyon with something to say. So are they a team now? Kanyon scares himself with the pyro but says that he's feeling really positive tonight. He's so positive that he's willing to team with the guy that tried to kill him. Again: was it a big ruse or not? We still don't have an answer for that. Kanyon plugs his book signing at some little town in Kentucky (could you narrow that down for us?) with Mark Madden and his appearance on Craig Kilborn this Monday. It's open challenge time.

Mike Awesome/Positively Kanyon vs. Rick Steiner/Tank Abbott

It's a brawl to start of course with Steiner throwing Kanyon into the barricade while the other two fight in the ring. Kanyon crotches Rick on the top as the pairs switch off, leaving Awesome to load up a table. Back up and Rick Steiner Lines Abbott by mistake, which is actually enough to throw the match out. Really?

Stasiak and Palumbo come out to beat on Tank and Steiner but Scott Steiner comes in for the save. So are Rick and Scott back together now

for no explained reason?

Russo tries to steal Nash's car but gets caught by Kev, who rips Russo's shirt off.

The Cat hits on Pamela and promises to take out Scott Steiner tonight.

Recap of Kidman/Hogan/Goldberg/Jarrett.

Kidman says he's not New Blood anymore.

WCW World Title: Jeff Jarrett vs. Billy Kidman

Kidman screws over the team, gets a title shot out of it. So who booked this match exactly? Jeff is defending and in street clothes while Tygress is on commentary. Heaven help me. Kidman starts fast with a dropkick but walks into a hot shot to slow him down again. They head outside with Kidman being sent into the barricade in various ways. Back in and Kidman's bad luck continues as he misses a dropkick.

Cue the Filthy Animals but Jarrett says he can do this on his own, allowing Kidman to grab a rollup for two. A Sky High gets two more for Kidman, followed by a rollup for the same. Jarrett tries a powerbomb because that's something he uses all the time and we get the faceplant counter. That's enough so Rey offers a distraction, allowing Konnan to hit him with the guitar. The Stroke retains Jeff's title.

Rating: D+. Too much interference and too much Tygress trying to sound hip aside, this was an entertaining match that could have been a lot better if they just let the guys do their thing. If you need to do interference then do it, but stop pouring it on and trying to have three stories in the same match.

The Animals beat down Kidman until Nash makes the save and chokes Jeff with a belt. So Nash vs. Jarrett isn't done either?

Here's Vampiro because we haven't had enough talking on this show tonight. It's been three days since Steve Borden's career went up in smoke but the fans are still brainwashed by the t-shirts and posters. He yells at a fan to take their Sting mask off and goes after her, only to

have red liquid spat in his face. It's Asya, which brings out the Demon for a brawl. Vampiro loads up the blowtorch but stops to lay out Asya instead. They keep brawling up by the stage with Vampiro being thrown into Demon's coffin. Demon loads up the blowtorch but stops to check on Asya. Vampiro stumbles out of the coffin and is all spaced out.

Random clip of 3 Count to brighten your day.

Here's Daffney in her black wedding dress because she's sad over David leaving her for "Miss Peacock." Daffney promises to break her legs but here's Hancock with something behind her back. Apparently the something was just her hands as the fight is on until David comes out for the save. Crowbar comes out as well and gets hit low, allowing David and Hancock to leave.

Russo goes into Cat's office to yell about Nash. Now you know what's about to happen, the audience knows what's about to happen, and anyone who has ever seen a movie knows what's about to happen, so I'm going to spare you the details because unlike WCW, I don't think you need everything explained to you.

This Week in WCW Motorsports.

US Title: Scott Steiner vs. The Cat

Steiner is defending and rants about how Cat is taking Russo and Bischoff's beating tonight. Scott hammers away in the corner and Cat claims a hair pull off a hiptoss. Cat tries to sneak in and comes up a few feet short in a funny bit. The security helps Cat out and a superkick gets two on the champ. Now it's out to the floor so security can stomp him down and then get inside because why not. Shakira gets in as well and the distraction lets Midajah come in with a high cross body. The Steiner Recliner makes Cat tap.

Rating: D. In a change of pace from the previous match, the interference was probably the right call. Cat is great on the mic now that he's figured out a fun character but his in ring stuff is still about as bad as it's ever been. Bad match here and can we please get the US Title off Steiner? He's held the thing for months now and I don't remember the last

important title defense he had.

Post match Cat says not so fast because the Recliner is now banned, meaning that's a DQ loss for Steiner.

Jarrett is down in the back as Nash is on the phone with a buddy from Florida named Scott. The buddy gives him two ideas, but only one is legal.

David promises to shave Crowbar.

David Flair vs. Crowbar

Flair has the Statue of Liberty and the shaving gear with him. After a quick brawl on the floor to start, Crowbar throws him inside for a back elbow to the jaw. The chops have Crowbar in trouble and David tries a.....suplex I guess you would call it. Either way it puts Crowbar down but he rolls away from the elbow. They go back outside with David's head coming into contact with various metal objects. David is sat in a chair so Crowbar can go back inside for a plancha, breaking the chair in the process. That looked cool at least.

Crowbar is banged up too though, allowing David to crotch him on the barricade. Back in and David does.....well it was something with a gutwrench. After some strutting it's time for a superplex but David screws up AGAIN by letting Crowbar go early, nearly causing a big crash. Crowbar is tired of all the botched moves and takes David down with a front suplex, followed by a slingshot legdrop for two. After David begs off, Crowbar loads up a sunset flip but Flair hits him in the head with the Statue for the pin.

Rating: D-. David Flair is really bad at this. Like, he's just not good at the whole wrestling thing. That's not his fault though as he's nowhere near ready to be on a national program. He needed a few years on the indy circuit or in some form of developmental because it's almost impossible to make your debut in a company this big.

Post match David goes to shave the hair but Daffney comes out for the save. Hancock comes out to lure David away.

We wrap it up with Nash (of course) as he drags Jeff out to the ring. Nash talks about his nephew being traumatized on Monday and brings up Deliverance. This brings out Russo with Scott Hall's contract. If Nash does anything else, that contract is ripped up. Goldberg comes in from behind and helps Jeff beat Nash down to end the show. Indeed: the show ends with Russo getting the last laugh again.

Overall Rating: D-. People talk about Cena winning all the time but he has nothing on Vince Russo. All night long Russo was running scared and hiding and then in the end he gets to be all HAHA I WIN AGAIN! It stopped being something worth getting annoyed at...well I can't say a long time ago because it's only been going on for a few weeks now but it feels like it's been going on for years already.

As for the rest of the show, it was your usual night for this era: short matches that didn't have time to go anywhere, bad wrestling (on the brief occasions wrestling had the chance to happen), angles that felt more contrived than your stereotypical adult film plot and WAY too much Russo and Nash. Jarrett is basically the US Champion at the moment because Steiner's title is just a prop for the Freaks to hold up. Bad show here, as is the custom.

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