

Thunder – July 5, 2000: And So, It Ends

Thunder

Date: July 5, 2000

Location: Civic Center, Columbus, Georgia

Attendance: 3,088

Commentators: Bobby Heenan, Mike Tenay, Tony Schiavone

It's the go home show for Bash at the Beach, meaning my moderate smile about WCW is about to go away. We're still in the "Can Jeff Jarrett build a whole main event by himself, even though it's a boring match in the first place?" phase which amazingly enough isn't working because Jeff Jarrett is one of the least interesting World Champions WCW has had in the last three months. Of the five guys to hold the title since early April, he's like the fourth most interesting at best. Let's get to it.

Standard Nitro recap to open things up. Enjoy this while it lasts.

Jarrett yells at the Cat about ratings and they keep insulting each other. Cat's decision is to put Jarrett on the show tonight. Why in the world is Jeff Jarrett vs. the Cat the main feud on this show?

Here's Jarrett to say THE EXACT SAME THINGS HE ALWAYS SAYS before talking about how he was told there was no time for him on the show this week. Tonight he's going to retire Hulk Hogan but here's Cat to interrupt. Cat is tired of hearing Jarrett go on and on (the Cat speaks for the people) so tonight he's putting him in the ring. Then he's going to put on a karate demonstration. Back to Jarrett, Cat is going to make Booker T./Buff Bagwell vs. Canyon/Shane Douglas with the person getting the fall earning a title shot tonight. I've heard worse ideas, even though this isn't very good.

Stasiak and Palumbo got into tanning beds earlier today and Woody turned them all the way up. What is up with this Woody guy? Is there no one else on the roster that could have used this to get somewhere? Maybe set up a challenger for the Tag Team Titles? No instead let's go with a production

guy who isn't going to have a match. The bits are entertaining but this isn't getting anyone anywhere.

Jarrett still wants Hogan. As he rants, Kanyon lays out a production guy with a Kanyon Cutter.

Rey Mysterio vs. Kidman vs. Lance Storm vs. Disco Inferno

One fall to a finish. Since this is WCW, the Animals' name plate says Tygress is accompanying them but they come out alone. Storm gets jumped during his entrance as we're waiting on Kidman to show up. Kidman finally hits the ring for the save and starts with Storm for a nice pinfall reversal sequence which is probably going to be the best thing on the show.

Mysterio elbows Kidman from behind though and Disco comes in to bring the quality down. Storm blocks a Bronco Buster with a raised boot, only to have Disco come in and try to steal a pin. Rey is fine with beating up his normal partner but Storm comes back in to break that up. A springboard legdrop gets two on Lance and everything breaks down. Disco piledrives Kidman for two but Storm grabs the half crab to make Disco tap.

Rating: C+. This was a lot more fun than I was expecting with all four guys (yes even Disco) moving around as much as they could in the four minutes they had. They're probably lucky to get that given how much time this show needs to dedicate to everything else they have going on.

Buff promises he'll go into Sunday as champion. The idea of Bagwell vs. Hogan as the main event of a pay per view makes me smile.

Buff is working on his own book called Positively Kanyon's Greatest Moments. Chapter One: Kanyon Sucks. Chapter Two: Kanyon Still Sucks. Chapter Three: Kanyon Sucks Again. This was funnier than it should have been.

Perfect Event is let out of their tanning beds and look like they fell in buckets of red paint. Palumbo wants his mommy as Stasiak is told Woody did this.

Here's the Cat for his karate demonstration with opponents....the Jung Dragons. They're Asian and therefore know martial arts you see. The Dragons jump Cat to start and take him down with a variety of kicks, setting up Jamie's middle rope legdrop. Well that lasted longer than I was expecting. Cat bails and says this isn't respectful enough. The Dragons are dumb enough to bow and all three get kicked in the face. Jamie's missile dropkick slows Cat down for a bit but he kicks them all again and throws Kaz over the top by the crotch. All three Dragons are sent to the floor and Cat says that's enough, meaning DANCE TIME!

Perfect Event goes after Woody in the production truck. Woody promises that he'll have an army. Gee I wonder who that's going to be.

Cat pays the Dragons and says he hasn't had that much fun in a long time. Ok then.

Hardcore Title: Big Vito vs. The Demon

Demon is challenging. Vito attacks the coffin in the back but gets jumped by Demon. Hardcore master Vito comes back by throwing Demon into a wall and bringing him out to the set for a ram into....whatever those metal things on the set are. Vito puts a trashcan lid between Demon's legs and stomps down on it before getting a piece of plywood. Was the table making union on strike this week?

As you might expect, Vito is thrown through the wood instead, followed by a middle rope elbow for two. This brings out Vampiro because this story is still going for some reason. Demon dropkicks a chair into Vito's face (close enough) but Vampiro breaks a shovel over Demon's back to give Vito the easy pin.

Rating: D. Vito's hardcore stuff isn't entertaining, anything Vampiro does is stupid at this point and no one ever cared about the Demon. This is the kind of stuff that could have been cut out to give the four way more time (maybe make it an elimination match) but WCW has a bad tendency to try and fit everything they can into one show. That's rarely a good idea because most of the stuff doesn't have the time to develop and we get stupid ideas like this.

Mike Awesome shows doctored footage that makes it look like he beat Rick Steiner on Monday. Gene calls him a mullock (trash) but Awesome hears him, scaring Gene half to death.

Shane and Kanyon argue over who is going to win tonight. Kanyon tries a Kanyon Cutter but Shane stares him down.

Here's the Perfect Event with Stasiak slapping his partner on the back to make Palumbo cringe. They DEMAND Woody come out here right now so here he is, removing his shirt to reveal that he is in fact not a wrestler. As you might expect, Woody has some backup.

Brian Adams/Woody vs. Perfect Event

Non-title. Adams fights out of a double team to start thanks to Woody slapping Palumbo on the back. A powerbomb sends Stasiak onto Palumbo and Adams kicks Shawn in the face for good measure. Woody offers a double back slap to break up another double team, allowing Adams to full nelson slam Palumbo. A chokeslam (called High Times thanks to Woody) lets Woody pin Stasiak. Yeah a production guy just pinned a Tag Team Champion and I'm supposed to want to see Kronik fight them on Sunday.

Vito beats up Funk and leaves the arena.

Buff Bagwell/Booker T. vs. Shane Douglas/Kanyon

Whoever gets the fall gets a title shot tonight. Kanyon shoves Booker from behind and gets double teamed for his efforts. This brings up the question of whether Douglas should help his partner or not, which actually merits some discussion. Granted it's not a discussion you're going to get here but it could be interesting. A double suplex drops Kanyon and Booker officially starts with him. The assorted kicks keep Kanyon in trouble but Shane won't tag in. That ends the interesting psychology discussion and goes right to stupid as you can't get the fall if you're not legal.

Buff comes in for a DDT but a Shane distraction (how hard can it be to distract Bagwell?) lets Kanyon get in a Russian legsweep. Shane still won't tag in so Kanyon gets two off a neckbreaker. Buff elbows him out of

the corner and drops a Vader Bomb (263 according to Tony. Huh?) followed by the Blockbuster but Shane makes the save. Booker comes in without a tag and Book Ends Canyon for the pin and the title shot. Ignore Booker's music playing at two.

Rating: D. Shane being stupid aside, it's cool to see them actually push someone new. Of course Horace got a title shot last week so this could mean absolutely nothing. The problem is this is the kind of thing that they needed to do two years ago because now it means nothing. The match was nothing to see because again, it didn't have enough time after Woody's match.

MIA is given their orders for the night.

Daffney, now with red hair, is wearing a shirt that says step child.

Mike Awesome sprays something on Rick Steiner's glasses.

Tygress/Juventud Guerrera vs. Major Gunns/Lieutenant Loco

The guys start with Juvy grabbing a headscissors but having to stop to pull his pants up. Heenan: "Juvy looks like he's wearing the seat cover from a '69 Pinto." Loco's tilt-a-whirl backbreakers send Juvy crawling over to Tygress so it's time for the girls. Tygress tags out as well so Gunns takes off the shirt as a distraction to kick Juvy low. The catfight is on and Gunns does one of the worst slams I've ever seen. Loco lays out Juvy but another catfight breaks out. In the melee, Juvy hits Loco with the belt for the pin.

Rating: F+. These women are bad. Like, they're Eva Marie kinds of bad. It's ridiculous to call them wrestlers because this has nothing to do with wrestling. We have two women out there because of how they look, trying to do moves to each other and failing miserably. Chavo vs. Juvy will be fine but this was another big waste of time with the women in there.

Juventud leaves with the title.

Steiner puts the glasses on and is almost blinded.

Booker says he'll win the title.

Video on Vampiro and the Demon.

Mike Tenay is at Jim Duggan's home for a sitdown interview. Duggan and his wife are glad that he's ok but he'll be back no matter what Russo does. Somehow this takes three minutes.

Crowbar jumps David Flair as Miss Hancock watches.

Jarrett insults Gene for general purposes.

Rick Steiner gets medical treatment.

We recap Crowbar/David/Hancock/Daffney.

Crowbar vs. David Flair

Impromptu match. Crowbar throws David down the aisle but gets crotched on top. A superplex drops Crowbar and it's already time for the Figure Four. Hancock comes out to help but gets caught to force the break. Crowbar yells at the referee and gets shoved into a rollup for two as Hancock comes in, allowing the low blow from David. Cue Daffney for a tug of war so Hancock can roll backwards with her skirt coming up. Daffney goes for Hancock's hair and they run off, leaving Crowbar to hit David with the pipe. The Mind Bender (sitout gordbuster) puts David away.

Crowbar chokes David and threatens violence until David admits that he shaved Daffney's hair. Again: IT WAS ALL ON TAPE! David also admits to cheating on Daffney, sending her leaving in tears. This is actually a good story no matter how goofy it's been.

After a break, Hancock is getting checked out for a leg injury. David comes in and thinks something is up so the trainer gets his head shaved.

Rick Steiner vs. Mike Awesome

Rick's eyes seem to be fine as Awesome pounds him down. Some belly to bellys get two for Steiner and they head outside for a table. Mike sets it up in the corner and is quickly shoved through it, only to have Awesome spray the stuff in Rick's eyes again for an easy three count. The

blinding stuff earlier in the night could have been completely omitted and nothing would have changed.

WCW World Title: Jeff Jarrett vs. Booker T.

Jarrett is defending. Heenan thinks winning the title might push Booker over the edge to being a big star. They trade shoulders to start until Booker clotheslines the champ to the floor. Jeff is sent into the announcers' table but comes right back with an early sleeper back inside. A quick knee crusher and the Figure Four have Booker in trouble.

That's way too early (and since it's the Figure Four it's not likely to win a big match) so Booker makes the rope and runs into a double clothesline. The ax kick sets up a spinebuster for two but here's Canyon with a Cutter on the floor to knock Booker silly. Jeff gets the pin but before he can even get in some good celebrating, Cat comes out to say not so fast. The champ is thrown back in and a rollup gives Booker two.

The missile dropkick gets the same with the foot going on the ropes (When Booker hooked the leg. I don't think I've ever seen that.). A side kick hits the referee by mistake so there's no one to count after the Book End. Cat is going to be referee and counts two off another kick. Jeff knocks Cat out with the guitar and walks out as another referee calls that a DQ to end the show.

Rating: C+. Good match marred by too much stuff going on at once. Cat vs. Jarrett is about as far down on the Austin vs. McMahon scale as you can get but you can see what's going on and the promos are adequate so it's still firmly above whatever Russo and Bischoff were doing. Booker felt right in this role for the simple reason of he's spent years being built up. That's something so many people don't understand today: it's really hard to throw someone with no resume into the main event and expect it to work. Booker has been built up for about seven years at this point and it feels right to see him moving forward.

Overall Rating: D+. They really are trying to make Hogan feel like he doesn't matter here. It was so strange to not have Hogan, Nash or Goldberg around for an entire show as it was almost all about the young (well younger) guys for a change. That allowed for much better

storytelling because you didn't have so much focus on the old guys wanting to be champion but putting in the least amount of effort possible. It's even more proof of what WCW could have been if they didn't have so much chaos going on backstage to screw the whole thing up.

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