

# Thunder – July 19, 2000: They're On A Roll

## Thunder

Date: July 19, 2000

Location: Breslin Students Events Center, East Lansing, Michigan

Attendance: 5,738

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Bobby Heenan, Mike Tenay

This is a rare live Thunder though I can't imagine it's going to make the show any better than it usually is. The big story at the moment is Scott Steiner being all insane and breaking various things, only to get beaten down by Kevin Nash, like so many people before him have been. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap from Nitro. As usual, that was the kind of show that flew by so fast that I could barely remember half of it anyway so for once this was helpful.

Harlem Heat arrives. I know I ask this a lot but what is Russo's obsession with showing people getting out of cars?

Jeff Jarrett is doing commentary tonight. Oh geez. He gets in two slappy's before he even sits down.

## Crowbar vs. Mike Sanders

Sanders is Above Average and had been on Saturday Night all the way back in 1998. Crowbar looks out at the crowd for some reason, allowing Sanders to get in some forearms to the back for an early two. A German suplex sends Sanders flying as the announcers point out Lenny Lane's huge USE ME sign. Hopefully that makes him put the thing down because it's really distracting.

They head outside with Sanders stopping a charge with a superkick, followed by a dancing knee drop back inside. We hit the chinlock for a bit as the USE ME sign is back. I'm sure the handful of fans that paid

for seats behind him (as he goes up and down the row) are thrilled to have their view blocked by a lame angle that isn't going to go anywhere.

Crowbar gets two off a Lionsault and Daffney adds a Frankenscreamer (is she immune to the no interference policy?) to send Sanders outside. Mike is sat in a chair for a plancha from Crowbar (Jarrett: "What kind of rasslin is that?") but Daffney's distraction allows Sanders to steal Jeff's guitar and knock Crowbar out for the pin. Jarrett: "He won the match with Slapnuts." So is Slapnuts the guitar?

**Rating:** C. Sanders will soon find his calling as a talker but this was much more about establishing someone new on the roster. There's definitely a push of some new talent around this time but it's so far past too late at this point that it's only more false hope. Still though, it's always cool to see someone fresh instead of the same horrible acts that have choked the life out of this company.

Lenny Lane is escorted off by security. Thank goodness.

Here's Booker T. with something to say but Rick Steiner jumps him from behind before anything can be said. Stevie Ray comes out for the save and Jeff joins in on the brawl until security breaks it up.

Daffney screams a lot and runs off with a chair to find Mike Sanders. For some reason I want to see where this goes.

Lane is being taken away when he runs into the Cat. All the Laniacs (I believe they meet in the same room as the Jericholics) want is their leader back. Cat: "You're not a leader. You're a jobber." For some reason Cat has a pebble in his pocket and says Lane can have a match if he can take it from his hand. Lane takes it away easily so Cat shouts that he didn't say go. The result: a tables match vs. the Wall.

Here's new US Champion Lance Storm. After the full Canadian national anthem, Storm gets right to the point by listing off some great US Champions. However, that title is dead because he's renaming the US Title the Canadian Heavyweight Championship and puts a Maple Leaf sticker on the front.

As the announcers freak out (save for Heenan because he's Bobby Heenan), Storm demands respect from the fans and asks security to bring in a typical American fan. This means an overweight woman, who Storm rips on for not being in shape. Cue Mike Awesome for the save but Kanyon runs out to try a Kanyon Cutter on the woman. This brings in Buff Bagwell and I'm guessing it's a tag match later.

Jarrett offers to teach Sanders how to swing a guitar and knocks him cold. So much for Sanders meaning anything.

Miss Hancock has gotten David Flair a Cruiserweight Title shot tonight and promises, ahem, some fun to him if he wins.

### Lenny Lane vs. The Wall

Tables match because that's what Wall does. Wall powerslams him to start and throws Lane across the ring with ease. Lane breaks up a superplex attempt and pounds away in the corner, only to charge into something like a backdrop/hot shot, sending him throat first into the middle turnbuckle. They go outside with Lane going throat first across the barricade before Wall sets up the first table. He takes too long though and gets knocked off the apron and through the table to give Lane his job back....in his last match with the promotion. Only in WCW.

The Misfits are given their assignments.

Mike Sanders is still getting up (that's quite the guitar shot) when Daffney comes in and hits him with a chair. "How do you like that rookie?"

Lenny Lane is happy in his locker room (because if you show up with no job, you have a locker room) when Wall comes in. It's implied that Wall took a dive.

The Filthy Animals sneak into Kronik's locker room.

### Cruiserweight Title: David Flair vs. Lieutenant Loco

David is challenging and wearing a suit here. Loco jumps him from behind and gets two off an early side slam. Hancock distracts Loco because.....well

because she's Miss Hancock and it's not that difficult for her to distract someone, allowing David to take over off a suplex. Loco comes right back with basic stuff, including a bunch of chops after ripping off David's shirt. Hancock tries to bring in a chair but David gets caught in a sunset flip instead. Some cheating backfires as the referee catches Hancock holding David's hands. Cue Major Gunns to chase Hancock off, leaving Loco to tornado DDT David onto a chair to retain.

Gunns goes to give David mouth to mouth but Hancock starts a catfight. Yep it's time for this feud.

Cat reinstates Lane and fires Wall for taking a dive. That earns Cat a beating from the big man. Security breaks it up and I'm pretty sure Chris Harris and James Storm could be seen.

Sanders is getting up again when Canyon runs in for a Cutter. Well if they're going to treat the guy like a goon, at least it's funny.

The Jung Dragons beat up the Cat because they finally have an open shot.

#### Tank Abbott vs. Great Muta

Mike Tenay has had to leave commentary due to some throat issues. Tank forearms a few times but gets kicked down to set up the Power Drive elbow. Cue the Dragons to help with a beatdown so here's the Cat to help Tank. That earns him some mist to the face, allowing Tank to knock Muta out for the pin. Was Muta REALLY that bored in Japan that he called up WCW and agreed to put over Tank Abbott on live TV?

Major Gunns challenges Miss Hancock to a Rip off the Camouflage (ROTC) match at New Blood Rising. Gene is WAY too happy about this.

Kronik's locker room has been trashed so they tell a crew member to keep an eye on the door. As soon as they leave, it's another Canyon Cutter. He's getting really good at those things.

Jarrett and Rick Steiner are making plans for the match when Midajah comes in to say she'll do anything tonight.

#### Kronik vs. Filthy Animals

Disco/Juvy/Rey here in a handicap match with Juvy and Rey coming out in Kronik's vest coats. Juvy tries to jump Clark from behind as Konnan babbles in whatever language he uses on commentary. I know it's not English and I know it's not Spanish but it involves cherries and potatoes. Kronik gets annoyed at the Animals for getting in their way and chases them out to the apron.

Rey comes in and gets to face Adams, which is one of the most backwards face vs. heel dynamics I've ever seen. Mysterio springboards into a full nelson slam and Adams throws Disco into him for good measure. The Animals finally take over on Clark with a Bronco Buster but Clark throws Juvy away with ease. Everything breaks down and High Times plants Disco for two (called three by Tony), followed by the powerbomb/top rope clothesline for the pin a few seconds later.

**Rating:** D+. Some of Kronik's offense looked cool here but the commentary from Konnan took away any of the good this match had going for it. Thankfully the Animals aren't in the Tag Team Title match at the pay per view because it would have been really stupid to have them lose like this. Don't worry though because I'm sure WCW will find far more stupid things to do in the coming weeks.

Here are Shane Douglas, carrying a bag, and Torrie, with the latter wearing a dress tighter than should be physically possible. Shane pulls out the Stuff Magazine with Torrie inside and asks about her turn-ons listed in the magazine. Apparently she likes seeing her man work out so Shane pulls out a dumb bell and starts lifting, causing Torrie to rub his chest. This brings out Kidman to dropkick Shane but a Torrie distraction lets Shane hit him in the neck with the dumb bell, likely breaking his neck in the process.

We get the Road Report but the guy doesn't have his phone. Perfect Event comes up to suggest that he use 1-800-CALL-ATT. Problem solved until it's another KANYON CUTTER for the best fake commercial I've seen in a very long time.

The Artist, who can talk now, issues an open challenge to any champion. I think you know what's coming.

### Hardcore Title: The Artist vs. Big Vito

Vito is defending in case you're a bit slow. They quickly go into a room with Paisley and Kwee Wee watching.....I'm guessing a monitor or something. Artist hits him with an ironing board before doing the same to Kwee Wee for no apparent reason. Pink hater. Vito takes over again and brings him down to ringside, only to get hit with a chair a few times. Artist goes with a low blow because good guys are just less bad in WCW.

The Mafia kick and a suplex set up a top rope elbow from the champ and it's already table time. Vito sets it up in the middle of the ring for the implant DDT....and the table breaks as they're standing on it. The fans boo it out of the building as Vito hits him with a trashcan, followed by the DDT to retain.

**Rating:** D-. So we're using the lame Hardcore Title match to set up what's going to be an even worse Kwee Wee vs. the Artist feud. I can kind of understand Russo's obsession with Jeff Jarrett but I will never get WCW's love of Artist. The guy just isn't that good and it shows worse and worse every time he's in the ring.

Awesome wants to bring one of his women to the ring but Bagwell doesn't think that's the best idea.

### Positively Kanyon/Lance Storm vs. Buff Bagwell/Mike Awesome

Kanyon during his entrance: "BUY MY BOOK!" We get the Canadian national anthem again until Awesome runs down to clean house. A clothesline puts Lance on the floor and Awesome nails a nice dive to take him down again. Back in and Bagwell beats Kanyon up as Tony recaps Judy Bagwell's recent problems. It's off to Awesome vs. Kanyon with Mike coming in via the slingshot shoulder. A nice suplex plants Kanyon again and it's back to Storm, who walks into an Awesome Bomb.

The Awesome Splash gets two on Kanyon with Storm making the save and everything breaks down. Storm gets the Maple Leaf on Awesome but Buff breaks it up with the Blockbuster. Kanyon makes a quick save though and pulls the ref in the way of a baseball slide. He hits Bagwell with the book (which I'm assuming he reloaded with a fresh brick) and does the

same to Awesome, setting up a Canyon Cutter for the pin.

**Rating:** C. Not a bad little match here but we had to speed through things because we needed to see stuff like the Cat earlier in the night. Storm has somehow been a breath of fresh air for the company despite his character being one of the most boring guys in the history of wrestling. Maybe it's just that he's a fresh name or something but he's working very well here.

Rick Steiner and Jarrett say nothing of note. Jarrett uses the acronym NOFYB.

Cat doesn't know what that means but is sick of Steiner and Jarrett.

Harlem Heat is ready. Well that's good for them but it's time for the real star power.

We get a sitdown interview with Kevin Nash. He thinks the people behind the scenes of WCW are trying to keep Hall out. The only time WCW ever had a spark was when the two of them came down from New York to make the company go somewhere. Hall has been healthy for months now but he's sitting around because WCW doesn't want him around.

Nash has seventeen months left on his contract and he'll honor that deal, but then who knows because it's not about money anymore. As for Goldberg, WCW gave him too much power too soon. Nash has to keep him in check because he's never paid his dues and won't have nine years from now. It's nice to see guys like Booker make it and he was glad that "they put the strap on him."

Hudson asks about the three way at New Blood Rising (Nash: "It won't be a dance.") which is now a #1 contenders match. Apparently there's a problem with who is going to come out on top. Nash says he's coming out on top no matter how the match is booked and he's not going to lobby for a finish. He's going over (his words) because he says so and it's time for him to get his.

These are the kinds of segments that I never know what to say. Nash talking about someone not wanting Hall around was fine because you can

pin that on Russo and Bischoff (Is he even still around anymore? I don't remember seeing him after Bash at the Beach.). Hinting at going to the WWF was even fine, but then you get to him talking about how a match is going to be booked or who is going to go over in a big match because of how the finish was lobbied. I have no idea what this was supposed to accomplish but I'm sure the internet will be talking about it tomorrow, right Russo?

### Jeff Jarrett/Rick Steiner vs. Harlem Heat

This is the closest we're going to get to Harlem Heat vs. the Steiners. Cat is out here to make sure things are fair. Booker and Rick start things off with the champ taking over. This brings out Midajah to try to come off the top but Cat calls her down and handcuffs himself to her. Well what did she thing was going to happen with the boss out there and her in bright pink pants?

It's off to Stevie vs. Jarrett with Jeff getting kicked out to the floor. Back in and Steiner clotheslines Stevie for two and we hit the chinlock after all that grueling work. A belly to back puts Steiner down and the hot tag brings in Booker as house is cleaned. Jeff breaks up the missile dropkick and nails a superplex, only to have Booker tie their legs up for a small package and the pin.

**Rating:** D+. The Booker comeback was good but Rick Steiner is just killing anything he's doing at this point. The guy isn't any good and hasn't been for a very long time yet for some reason they just won't get rid of him. Jarrett was Jarrett and Stevie was more energetic than usual but there's only so much you can do in a five minute main event.

Booker gets beaten down to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C-. Dang they're on a roll lately. These last few shows have taken out a lot of the nonsense and just let them have their dull wrestling shows. The point though is you can see the stories they're telling and for the most part, they're working fine. There's still a lot of stuff they need to fix but at least there's some good stuff going here and far less bad, which is the most important thing. Enjoy it while it lasts though because you know this is going to go bad soon enough.

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