

Thunder – August 2, 2000: If I Can Have Some Serious Wrestling For A Minute

Thunder

Date: August 2, 2000

Location: Hulman Center, Terre Haute, Indiana

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Stevie Ray, Mike Tenay

New Blood Rising is almost here and these shows just get worse and worse. Monday was another show where it felt like WCW was mad at us for watching them and were trying to get rid of as many remaining fans as they could. I don't want to imagine how bad Thunder could get. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Here's Lance Storm to open things up. Just like he did with the other titles, he's renaming the Cruiserweight Title to the Canadian 100 Kilograms and Under Championship. That brings out the Cat to say that Storm is defending a title tonight. Storm: "Which one Cat? I've got a bunch of them." Cat thinks the fans want to see title matches so tonight Storm is defending the Cruiserweight Title against Juventud Guerrera, the Hardcore Title against Norman Smiley and the US Title against the Cat himself. It's time for the first title defense because why not have it now when you could build it up for later?

Cruiserweight Title: Lance Storm vs. Juventud Guerrera

Storm is defending and Cat dances to the Filthy Animals' music before leaving. We're still not ready to go though because Storm has a rule booklet saying that this has to be under Scientific Rules. Therefore, the rest of the Animals have to head to the back. On a side note, shouldn't this be Chavo getting his rematch instead of Juvy? Storm jumps Juvy to start but gets caught in a bad looking hurricanrana to send him outside. A big flip dive over the top takes Storm down again but he avoids a high cross body back inside.

Not that it matters as Juvy drops him again and gets two off a falling springboard splash. He loads Storm up on top for a hurricanrana, which Stevie describes as "setting up a move here." Storm stops a charge with a boot in the corner, only to walk into a bulldog for no cover. Instead it's something like White Noise for two on Storm but he quickly counters a hurricanrana into the Maple Leaf to retain.

Rating: B-. Storm really can do no wrong at this point but I haven't seen Juvy going this hard in a long time. This was a really fun fast paced match with some good looking high flying and a solid ending as Storm continues to be the best thing going in WCW at this point. How he avoided being screwed up for so long is beyond me but he pulled it off.

The announcers show us a clip from after Nitro with Kronik running in to save Booker and Sting. As in the Sting WHO WAS LIT ON FIRE and seems to be fine.

General Rection yells at MIA as he always does.

Booker arrives and Tony is shocked to see him limping.

Smooth the limo decides Skip Over needs a better name.

Here are Miss Hancock and David Flair with something to say. Hancock asks if she's the kind of woman who would roll around in mud for a dollar. She thinks the mud might make Major Gunns look better, so here are the Misfits to interrupt.

David Flair vs. Sgt. A-Wall

Wall starts fast with a powerslam and some stomps. David tries chops and stops to strut with the expected result of being launched out to the floor. A chair doesn't make things any better as Wall punches it into David's face. Back in and a chokeslam through the table ends David quick.

The Nitro Girls are here (because of course they are) when an unnamed man (soon to be named Reno) comes in to yell at Siren. She says she was with the girls on Monday but here's Shane Douglas to tell him where she really was. We can't hear what he says but Reno isn't happy. See, if you insist on using the Nitro Girls in stories, this is the better way: have them as

plot devices to advance stories instead of having them be the story.

Skip Over gives Terry Taylor a piece of paper and Terry says he'll make it happen.

Jeff Jarrett wants to talk to Vampiro about their elimination tag tonight but Vampiro isn't all that interested.

Tank Abbott has written a new song for 3 Count. Freaking sweat!

Kidman vs. Elix Skipper

Apparently the paper was the new name, which also includes the moniker "Prime Time Player." Kidman isn't a fan and baseball slides him out to the floor. Back in and Kidman sends him into the turnbuckle but Skipper debuts the Matrix move to avoid a cross body. A headscissors puts Kidman down, only to have him come back with a dropkick to the face. Cue Shane and Torrie as Kidman grabs the BK Bomb, only to have Reno come in and lay him out with a rolling cutter (Cross Rhodes). Skipper adds the Rocker Dropper for the academic pin.

Cat promises Mike Awesome a title shot at New Blood Rising if he wins the title tonight. Point for tying up a potential loose end at least.

Shane is in the back again and calls Judy Bagwell a redneck. Bagwell attacks and they're pulled apart.

Sean O'Haire vs. Shawn Stasiak

Chuck Palumbo sits in on commentary and we look at him as the match starts in the ring. We finally start watching as O'Haire nails a superkick, only to miss a charge in the corner. That means it's time for generic heel offense a go-go from Stasiak as he chokes and elbows while Stevie talks about ballet for some reason. Stasiak's Death Valley Driver is countered into a DDT but his comeback is cut short as he's sent out to the floor.

Palumbo loads up the exercise bar but Stevie pulls him back into his seat. Stasiak gets two off a PerfectPlex (northern lights suplex according to Tony because he's too distracted arguing with Tenay over

Stevie's level of coolness) as Jindrak and Palumbo fight at ringside. O'Haire pops back up with a spinwheel kick and the Seanton Bomb for the pin.

Rating: D+. O'Haire has talent but he's certainly still best as part of a team at this point. Stasiak on the other hand would be better off as a driver's education teacher somewhere in Oklahoma. The guy simply does not have it in the ring and it's getting more and more annoying to watch him every time he gets in the ring.

Gene Okerlund is in a neck brace while talking to the Bagwells. Buff wants Shane tonight and makes jokes about his performance issues from last week. Judy swears a lot because it's funny.

Hardcore Title: Lance Storm vs. Norman Smiley

Storm is defending and Big Vito comes out for commentary. The Canadian flag comes down again but the music stops halfway through, allowing Norman to come out with the American flag. We're not ready yet though as the Canadian rulebook says the title has to be defended with no weapons and the match can only end via submission. Storm isn't pleased with his dancing challenger so they trade wristlocks instead. A pinfall reversal sequence doesn't go anywhere so Norman elbows him in the face.

Norman stops to dance though, allowing Lance to come back with a nice dropkick. Vito sounds annoyed that Norman is wrestling in a shirt but Smiley's splash hits knees. The swinging slam sets up the Big Wiggle but the referee gets bumped, allowing Storm to hit Smiley with the American flag. The Maple Leaf retains Storm's title.

Rating: C-. See, this is a story that makes sense and is being played out logically. Storm is a guy capable of winning any single match on his own but he needs to cheat when he has so much to do. That's a logical, well written character and it makes for a good story. As I said before, Storm is one of the best things going today and the simple storytelling is a big reason why.

Vito comes in to break up the hold.

Torrie threatens to sue Judy if she gets in her face tonight.

Shane Douglas vs. Buff Bagwell

Bagwell starts fast by hammering away in the corner and grabbing a swinging neckbreaker. A Vader bomb gets two on Shane so Torrie trips Buff, allowing Shane to get in an atomic drop. Shane snaps (work with me here) off Three Amigos and a powerslam, followed by the Pittsburgh Plunge for two. Torrie throws in a chair so here's Judy to start a catfight. Kidman runs in and dropkicks the chair into Shane's face, setting up the Blockbuster to give Buff the pin.

Rating: D. These two just do not have very good chemistry together, though there's far worse out there. The Kidman and Torrie stuff helps but Shane really isn't the most interesting guy in the world. It doesn't help that Buff is almost even less interesting and it's probably about time to turn him heel again because he's been a face long enough now.

Post match Torrie goes after Judy again but here's Kanyon to help beat down Mama Bagwell. Buff makes the save but walks into a Kanyon Cutter onto the chair. Mike Awesome makes the real save.

After a break, Buff gets off the stretcher and says he wants to fight Kanyon tonight. Awesome says he'll do it himself. Apparently Mike thinks Judy is good looking.

Sting tells Booker that he doesn't have to fight on that bad leg but Booker wants to take out that sucka.

The Vince Russo interview will not air tonight because "WCW management" won't allow it. One of the few things they actually build up and then oh forget about it because we've changed our mind.

Mike Awesome vs. Positively Kanyon

Awesome has one of his women with him. More interestingly though, Tony says that tickets are going on sale for Nitro on August 28 two days from now. They're only starting to sell tickets 24 days in advance? Tickets sold for that event: about 4,600 out of about 13,000 seats. I'm sure there's no connection there. Before the match, Mike reiterates that Judy

is good looking.

Kanyon actually charges in so Awesome runs him over with a clothesline. Commentary goes silent for a bit and comes back talking about the three way at New Blood Rising. Stevie actually brings it back to focus as Kanyon hits Awesome low to slam him out of the corner. A sitout spinebuster gets two for Kanyon and a neckbreaker out of the Tree of Woe (not a Kanyon Cutter Tony) gets two more.

Kanyon lays out the referee for no apparent reason and gives a photographer (As in a guy holding a camera and taking pictures. Stevie: "Is that a photographer?") a Kanyon Cutter. Some more production guys get the same but here's Judy with a loaded purse to knock Kanyon silly, setting up the Awesome Bomb to give Mike the pin.

Rating: D+. Not the worst match here but Awesome's gimmick is killing him. Kanyon's cutters all over the place continue to be entertaining but they need to have Page come back and Diamond Cut him in half at some point. Given that this is WCW, I'd bet on them joining forces because Page respects him now or something.

US Title: Lance Storm vs. The Cat

Storm is defending one more time. Cat interrupts the national anthem one more time and kicks Storm in the face. Back in and they slug it out with Cat taking over before taking Storm down with a low blow. That's rather lame of him. Storm's sunset flip is broken up by dancing, a crotch chop, and a shot to the face. You can't say Cat is just going through the motions out there.

They head outside with Storm superkicking him to take over, followed by the springboard missile dropkick (looks great as always) back inside. Cat comes back with a Feliner to knock Storm into the referee, allowing Great Muta to run in and give Cat one of the best looking dragon screw legwhips I've ever seen. The Maple Leaf gives Storm the easy submission.

Rating: C-. It was clear that Cat hadn't wrestled that often and that he really shouldn't be very often these days. He wasn't going to be able to last much longer and that really shouldn't be the case just four minutes

into a match. Storm wrestled three matches tonight and was in better condition than Cat who wrestled once. That really shouldn't happen but Cat didn't wrestle much at this point so it's a bit more understandable.

The good guys in the main event promise to win because the other four guys are player haters.

WAY too long video on Gunns vs. Hancock.

Vampiro tells Demon he's on his own at New Blood Rising and that he wants nothing to do with Jarrett after tonight.

Jarrett calls Gene a broke neck slapnut.

Booker T./Sting/Kronik vs. Great Muta/Vampiro/Demon/Jeff Jarrett

Elimination tag. Booker is limping badly on the way to the ring. It's a brawl to start with the good guys cleaning house and Booker's knee being strong enough for a side kick to the face. Muta sneaks in and goes after Booker as we hear about Sting being on Vampiro with a chair. Of course we can't see that but we do get to see Adams cleaning house inside.

High Times eliminates Muta in just over a minute. Again: why did he bother to come back? Cue Cat to go after Muta as the referee breaks up High Times to Jarrett through the table. That's fine with Kronik as they chokeslam the referee instead, earning themselves a double elimination. Sting gets triple teamed by Jarrett, Demon and Vampiro as the match actually settles down.

Jarrett lures Booker in so they can...not cheat in the slightest. It's off to Vampiro to stay on Sting until a double clothesline puts both of them down. Booker comes in to pound on everyone, including an ax kick to Demon. Jarrett bails and gets counted out, followed by double finishers to give Sting and Booker the double pin to wrap it up.

Rating: D-. Leave it to WCW to give us a six minute Survivor Series match with one person walking out, two people getting disqualified and three pins. As usual, the match went by so fast that it didn't have time to mean anything and the action that we got was mainly chaos with a quick wrestling portion at the end. Of course they couldn't cut ANYTHING else

out to give this more time either.

Overall Rating: D+. This wasn't their worst show ever and amazingly enough it was a show centered around a wrestler wrestling. It also helps that the Russo interview didn't air, which was false advertising but probably a lot better than whatever nonsense Russo would have gone on about in his talk. The less said about the upcoming triple threat the better and it made for a much easier show this week. Not good mind you, but easier.

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