

Monday Nitro – September 4, 2000 (2016 Redo): Russo Does WarGames

Monday Nitro #256

Date: September 4, 2000

Location: Reunion Arena, Dallas, Texas

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Jeremy Borash, Mark Madden

This is a special (kind of) show for me as I remembered hearing about WarGames 2000 on Thunder and wanting to see it. Being a moron of twelve at the time, I stayed home to watch that while Monday Night Raw was taking place ten minutes from my house and a buddy of mine had an extra ticket. To this day I can't explain what I was thinking. Let's get to it.

On a side note: this is five years to the day that Nitro debuted.

We open with a video on tonight's big triple cage match with the teams announced. It's a four on four match with the World Title on the line, which already gives us a lapse in logic. The match is also called Russo's Revenge because WARGAMES isn't MANLY enough.

Team Russo (Russo/Nash/Jarrett/Steiner) are coming to the ring.

New opening sequence.

Tag Team Titles: Insane Clown Posse vs. Juventud Guerrera/Rey Mysterio Jr.

The Clowns are challenging for reasons I'll never understand. Konnan does his intro but gets jumped from behind to get things going. It's a brawl to start with Rey dropkicking Violent J to the floor for a double dive from the champs. Back in and Shaggy dropkicks Juvy out of the air to let the Clowns take over.

Borash to Konnan and Disco on commentary: "Do the ICP have it like that?" Somehow this turns into a discussion of Richard Gere as Shaggy takes Air

Juvy (Poetry in Motion) and a Bronco Buster from Rey, only to have the Clowns pop up like it was nothing. J presses Rey over his head but gets dropkicked down, setting up a double dropkick from the champs. What's Up with a legdrop instead of a headbutt puts J down to retain the titles.

Rating: C. Not a bad match here as the Clowns were kept to a minimum and mainly just had Rey and Juvy do all the work. The Clowns aren't the worst in the ring but they definitely need someone to walk them through the match. I'm still not sure why the Animals turned face but at least Rey and Juvy, the most natural underdog team ever, aren't supposed to be intimidating anymore.

Team Canada is in the gym and Storm is putting Major Gunns through boot camp. Gunns has to be taught to work as hard as a Canadian, which is nothing more than a reason to have her running on a treadmill.

Booker T., The Cat and Ms. Jones (in a neck brace) leave their hotel.

The triple cage is lowered way too early because here's Russo, flanked by the Thrillers, with something to say. In case you've never seen it, the structure is the Cell with a hardcore (weapons cage) on top with a one man cage on top of that for one of the biggest things you'll see in wrestling. Russo takes a quick shot at the Dallas Cowboys before explaining the idea of how you win this mess. Unlike Slamboree, you have to climb the ladder and get the belt at the top of the cage and then bring it back down and go out the door.

Tonight it's going to be the babyface team against the heel team (his words), though he claims that Team Russo will be the babyfaces. Also there's been an injunction that means Cat has no power. Therefore, the heels (as in Goldberg/Sting/Cat/Booker T.), all have to win qualifying matches to get into WarGames. If Goldberg actually wins, Russo will waive the no contact clause. It's going to be so big that Nash is going to hand Russo the World Title on a plate. This brings out Nash who doesn't look pleased. Yeah I'm sure.

Nash says this isn't how things work because his title isn't on the line unless he says it's on the line. He only has to defend it once a month

and maybe he'll do it on the 29th day at the 11th hour if he feels like it. Russo says he's the boss but Nash says in this cage, he's Russo's daddy. The lights go out and here's Sting coming through a hole in the ring. Nash flips Russo off and leaves, allowing Sting to get in Russo's face and say it's showtime. No contact of course because that's Vince Russo but whatever.

Sting turns back around so Russo climbs a ladder to get to the second cage. Sting chases him up but Scott Steiner and Jeff Jarrett come in. The Thrillers come in and move the ladder so here are Booker and the Cat to take them out. Russo uses the numbers game to get down but here's Goldberg (fresh out of the desert, which hasn't been mentioned yet) to chase him off. Geez people. You're having an eight person triple cage match later and you felt the need to have a big segment inside the cage as well? On five days' notice? Really?

Post break (and recap), Steiner and Jarrett yell at Russo for ticking Nash off.

Jeremy Borash is bald and we actually get a video of the Nitro Girls shaving his head. This was something about a ratings bet with Russo that isn't elaborated on, thank goodness.

Here are the Harris Brothers with some footage to show us. It's a clip of them going to a bar where Kronik is drinking and starting a fight. This has nothing on the Friendly Tap.

Shane Douglas wants Goldberg in a qualifying match so Russo grants the wish to get rid of him. The catch is Shane wants the Thrillers but Torrie says he doesn't need them. Torrie and Shane leave so Russo sends the Thrillers out to keep an eye on him.

WarGames Qualifying Match: Sting vs. Great Muta/Vampiro

I'm assuming Muta and Vampiro can get into the cage if they win. Muta and Vampiro double team him to start but Sting clotheslines Vampiro to the floor. Back in and Vampiro grabs Sting but takes the Mist to the face by mistake. Muta is sent outside and a Death Drop pins Vampiro in just over a minute.

Post match the Clowns come out to yell at Muta but nothing happens.

Major Gunns, now drenched in sweat, is on another exercise machine and the camera just happens to be looking down at her in a low cut top.

Russo makes Stevie Ray wrestle tonight by threatening to take away his Thunder commentary job.

Jarrett tells Nash to get over his issues with Russo. Nash threatens to switch teams tonight.

WarGames Qualifying Match: Booker T. vs. Stevie Ray

Stevie says this is for the fans instead of Russo. Booker gives Russo his catchphrase and Stevie jumps him from behind to take over early on. Ray sends him face first into the steps for two before bending Booker's arms back to slow things down. Back up and Booker hits a quick forearm to set up the ax kick. The Harlem Side Kick is caught in a kind of powerbomb but the Slap Jack is countered with a backdrop. The Book End sends Booker to the main event in a hurry.

Post match Booker yells at Stevie for jumping him. The explanation: suckas gotta know and a hug. Ok then.

Kronik asks the Jung Dragons where the Harris Brothers are but beats them up for not speaking English. Totally not a Kai En Tai knockoff.

Back from a break and Kronik triple chokeslams 3 Count for fun. They want the Harris Brothers right now but get Jeff Jarrett instead. The tag match isn't happening tonight but here's a handicap match for them instead.

WarGames Qualifying Match: The Cat vs. Kronik

Cat says they should be getting together to fight Russo and company. Clark agrees and goes after Jeff, leaving Cat to roll Adams up for two. The beatdown is on but Cat drops to the floor to save Ms. Jones from Jarrett. Kronik pulls Cat back inside for High Times and the pin in less than a minute and a half. So Kronik is in the match instead.

Russo and Steiner are thrilled by the result.....until it's announced that

Kronik advances instead. YOU MADE THE MATCH AND YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW THE RULES??? You can't make this stuff up.

WarGames Qualifying Match: Shane Douglas vs. Goldberg

Torrie, really not very good on the mic yet, yells about being stuck in Dallas for the night. Shane gets shoved down to start and a quick legbar sends him out to the floor. Goldberg fires off a forearm but hits the post instead of Shane, giving Douglas a target. Back in and Shane works on a wristlock which goes as well as you would expect it to go. A clothesline with the bar arm drops Shane (no selling of course) and here are the Thrillers. They're beaten down just as quickly with Reno taking a Roll the Dice. Douglas loads up the chain but gets speared down to set up the Jackhammer for the pin.

Rating: D. For an evil genius, Russo does some really stupid stuff. With that win, Goldberg is in the cage and can beat on Russo, all because of Russo's doing. The match itself was as good as Shane Douglas vs. Goldberg in an overbooked match was going to be though at least we could look at Torrie.

Russo panics because he doesn't think thinks through. Nash tells him he has an agenda tonight and Russo is foiled again.

Major Gunns is swimming for her final test to become Canadian. Well they might have been too subtle earlier so just put her in a swimsuit and be done with it. The Misfits are watching with binoculars from all of twenty feet away. Pamela Paulshock is thrown in as well so here are the Misfits to fight the Canadians in the pool.

Russo puts Vito in a gauntlet match against the Thrillers. That's their final chance.

Arn Anderson is asked about whether he'll show up for David's wedding next week. After saying Pamela looks good soaking wet (he has a point), he wonders why someone like David would want to get married anyway. It's in Horsemen country though so sure they'll show up. The fact that the only thing they build up for weeks is likely another chance to humiliate Ric Flair is very telling about WCW.

Big Vito vs. Natural Born Thrillers

Vito says he doesn't sweat anyone so bring it on. The Thrillers do their catchphrases so Vito turns it into gay jokes. After even more filler yelling at each other, Sanders says the five of them (there are six) will fight at the same time. Vito fights with the stick ball bat for as long as he can until Jindrak and O'Haire kick him in the face. The beating is on as you would expect and it's a parade of finishers, capped off with the Seanton Bomb for the easy pin.

The Thrillers beat him down even more post match.

The teams have meetings in the back.

The good guys, minus Goldberg, are ready.

WCW World Title: WarGames 2000: Vince Russo/Kevin Nash/Scott Steiner/Jeff Jarrett vs. Sting/Kronik/Booker T./Goldberg

Nash is defending and the teams are only a thing for the timed interval (two minutes) entrances. The match can end at anytime and it's Jarrett vs. Sting to start. They fight on the floor next to the ladder (needed to climb to the second cage) before throwing the ladder inside. Sting sends him into the ladder and it's Scott Steiner in because the heels won the coin toss. Wait didn't Russo say his team was the babyface team? So officially, the faces won the coin toss? Leave it to Russo to screw up the easiest idea in wrestling (which I believe he did in TNA's Lethal Lockdown match as well).

Steiner hits Sting in the ribs to take over and brings in a bigger ladder but stops to beat on Sting even more. Kronik, meaning both of them, come in to "even" things up. Steiner heads up to the second cage, leaving Jarrett to take High Times, allowing Kronik to follow Steiner up top. A double gorilla press drops Steiner as the question becomes if Adams or Clark wins the title for themselves since they entered the match as a unit.

Russo comes in next but has the Harris Brothers climb the Cell and go inside the second cage after Kronik. As you might expect, Sting beats

Russo down with ease and puts him in the Scorpion (of course Russo never taps). Now it's Nash coming in as the heel/face order is thrown out. Nash goes after everyone and grabs Russo (standing with no issues after being in the Scorpion) by the throat but Steiner breaks it up. The Harris Brothers and Kronik are brawling in the crowd, apparently with Kronik having been eliminated. In WarGames.

Now Steiner breaks up Nash's choke on Jarrett as Booker comes in. Booker ax kicks Steiner so Russo hits him from behind like a moron, earning himself an ax kick to the helmet. Yeah he's wearing a helmet. Nash decks Booker and everyone still in the match is in the bottom cage. The heels all beat down Booker and Sting until Goldberg comes out to complete the field. Jarrett and Steiner take the bullets for Russo, leaving him to hit Goldberg in the back with the ball bat to drop Goldberg.

Booker goes up top for the belt (Yeah remember that?) as Nash stands next to the door. Well that's smart, even though you could conceivably just climb down the side of the cage to get to the floor. Somewhere in there Goldberg was handcuffed to the corner. You would think they would have pointed that out earlier. Sting, Jarrett and Steiner go up to the second cage, leaving Booker to go up and get the belt. Booker starts hitting people with the belt to get down but Sting has been handcuffed to the weapons cage, allowing Steiner to take the belt away from Booker and blast him in the face.

Madden admits there are no teams in this mess as the belt falls through the hole. Russo picks it up and taunts Goldberg, allowing the Cat to come in and kick Russo in the head. Nash lays out Cat with a Jackknife but Goldberg breaks the handcuffs and cleans house. He picks up the belt and goes to leave but Bret Hart appears and slams the door on his face. Russo has the belt free and clear until Nash grabs him by the shirt. They hug, it was a swerve, and Nash retains.

Rating: D+. Let's get this out of the way to start: this wasn't WarGames. Russo can call it that all he wants but this had as much to do with WarGames as the set of collectable plates that McDonalds put out in 1998 to promote Hercules. This was a big cage match with timed intervals and that's about it for WarGames connections.

That being said, the match was enough of a mess that it wasn't boring and at least presented something that could be interesting if someone competent was booking the thing. It would have been a lot better if it had been just going up and getting the belt without having to get back down but you knew Nash wasn't going up that high. It's total insanity of course, but were you expecting anything else?

Here's the thing though: it's a huge waste of time. Think about it: this match was announced last Wednesday, had its main story set up earlier in the night, and the match happened tonight. Nothing changes in the storylines, Nash is still facing Booker at the pay per view, and it was all a big swerve for a few hours. At least it was memorable though, which is Russo's definition of good.

Overall Rating: D. The main event helped a bit but an hour and a half of nothing matches before the main event isn't the best idea with one more Nitro before the pay per view. However, I'd rather watch a somewhat interesting one off show than the traditional insanity that I have to put up with when they try to do multiple storylines. On a sidenote: where was Mike Awesome? He was part of the team on Thunder and I don't think he was even mentioned here. That's probably best for him actually.

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