

Thunder – December 6, 2000: Ric Flair Changes His Mind

Thunder

Date: December 6, 2000

Location: Pershing Auditorium, Lincoln, Nebraska

Attendance: 3,433

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mike Tenay, Stevie Ray

I'm really not sure what to talk about with this one. As weak as Monday Nitro has gotten in recent weeks it's almost scary to think about how bad Thunder could get at this point. We're getting closer to Starrcade and the night of many rematches, which is exactly what I want to see after such a horrible Mayhem. Let's get to it.

Long Nitro recap opens things up.

Ric Flair is on his way to the ring.

Stevie Ray comes out to take over Madden's spot because....well it's an upgrade in a way.

Here's Ric Flair with something to say. After what happened on Monday, Scott Steiner and Sid aren't allowed here tonight. That's not all though: due to Steiner attacking Arn Anderson, he's stripped of the World Title. This brings out Mike Sanders to say that Flair is just jealous of Steiner's body but Ric tells him to keep bringing the insults. Cue Arn Anderson on the screen to say he can take care of Sanders anytime. Steiner should keep the title though because if they're going to take him down, it might as well be when he's on top. This is of course enough to change Flair's mind and Steiner is champion again.

Post break, Flair makes Sanders vs. Chavo Guerrero Jr. for the Cruiserweight Title.

Crowbar tells Daffney he has a new outfit for her.

AWALL doesn't like Chavo's new attitude.

Mark Jindrak/Sean O'Haire vs. Noble and Karagias

Noble gets annoyed at Karagias for dancing to the ring. Jindrak and O'Haire throw both guys over the top but spend too much time posing, allowing the small guys to come back in with dropkicks. That means it's time to drive the Cadillac before Noble starts with Jindrak. Jamie's top rope clothesline gets two but Evan tags himself in for a springboard cross body. O'Haire gets in a great looking gorilla press into a Falcon's Arrow as Tony goes on about how much better Jindrak and O'Haire are because of their size.

Noble takes a middle rope Hennig neck snap followed by a tilt-a-whirl slam for no cover. Evan comes in off the hot tag and faceplants Jindrak before pulling out a ladder to take out both Thrillers. Yeah sure why not. Noble and Karagias argue over the ladder though, allowing Sean to clothesline both of them down. The double toss sends Karagias inside and another puts Noble on top of him. A top rope hurricanrana sets up the Seanton Bomb to pin Noble.

Rating: C+. Jindrak and O'Haire looked awesome here and are pretty easily the best team in the company right now, of course save for the two old guys who squashed 3 Count after taking the belts from Perfect Event at Mayhem. I'm sure the rematch will be FAR more competitive though and O'Haire and Jindrak will be treated as serious challengers.

Whoever hired Kronik on Nitro has another job for them tonight.

Shane Douglas is ready for Morrus at Starrcade and Goldberg tonight.

Sgt. AWALL vs. Bam Bam Bigelow

Winner gets Crowbar for the Hardcore Title at Starrcade so Crowbar is on commentary. Daffney has on her 60s attire because WCW can't even get old school fashion right. They start with the usual weapons exchanges as this hopefully doesn't go on very long. A trashcan lid shot takes Bigelow down and it's already table time. AWALL takes too much time setting everything up though and gets sent over the announcers' table. That's not enough

though as Bigelow sends him into the regular table for a bonus. Cue Mike Awesome with a chair to knock both guys out though and that's a no contest in a hardcore match.

Rating: D-. More of the same here but now they're having no contests in matches designed to have the toughest guys in wrestling. To the shock of no one who pays attention, Crowbar was the highlight here as he was basically doing an over the top Gordon Solie impression, which of course made him funnier than any commentator has been in years.

The Filthy Animals arrive but get jumped by Jeff Jarrett and the Harris Twins.

The Cat talks strategy with the Jung Dragons.....who don't understand English. It's funny you see.

Video on Sid vs. Steiner.

Buff Bagwell goes on a rant about how tired he is of jobbing to B-Level talent like Scott Steiner. Tonight he has Alex Wright which doesn't make things any better. This feels like a flashback to the Russo days and that's not a good thing.

Team Canada vs. The Cat/Jung Dragons

Before the match, Storm implies that he's going to punish Duggan for screwing up on Monday in the near future. Kaz starts with Skipper who avoids an early clothesline with a Matrix move. Yang comes in and hammers away in the corner so Skipper shoves him away and it's off to Duggan. That goes as far as you would expect so Storm comes in for a jawbreaker. There's the Mapleleaf but everything breaks down and the referee doesn't see Yang tap. An enziguri drops Storm so it's off to Cat for some shots to Skipper's head. Everyone else fights on the floor and the Feliner puts Skipper away.

Rating: D. As usual, not enough time for this to go anywhere but at least Storm didn't take another completely unnecessary pin. If they want Duggan out of there so badly just throw him out already instead of having the team take all these losses in a row. It's nice to see the Dragons getting

a few wins but there's no way it turns into anything important.

Storm blames Duggan post match and the winners dance a lot.

Post break Storm tells Duggan he's done for the night.

Vito and Marie argue about Reno.

Cruiserweight Title: Chavo Guerrero Jr. vs. Mike Sanders

Sanders is defending and the Thrillers are banned from ringside. Chavo takes him to the mat to start and gets in a kick to the back. A whip sends Sanders chest first into the buckle and there's a belly to back to keep him in trouble. Sanders gets in a release pumphandle slam to take over, followed by the shaky fist drop.

We hit a cobra clutch to fill in some time They head outside with Sanders being sent into the barricade as this hasn't been the most competitive or interesting match so far. Back in and Chavo dropkicks him into the corner before a northern lights suplex gets two. The referee pulls Sanders away and Chavo gets in a quick belt shot, setting up a brainbuster for the pin and the title.

Rating: C-. The match was nothing to see but the ending was the exactly right call. Chavo is getting better every single week and Sanders only held the title as a joke for the last few weeks. I'm liking the idea of Chavo as a heel and he can more than back it up in the ring so this is a good result all around, even if the match was nothing to see.

Post break, Chavo says he won and screw the Misfits.

Sanders is livid.

Disco Inferno tells Alex Wright that he has a plan but Wright wants to do things himself.

Now we get a somewhat infamous moment as the Insiders talk about their history, which includes A LOT of references to Scott Hall. However, WCW had instituted a ban on any mentions of Hall so the name is edited every time, basically making this look like a bad comedy sketch. Oh and the

lighting is all screwy because WCW can't even get a light bulb right.

Anyway the interview itself is about what you would expect: they talk about how they came together after Page was coming back from his injury (Battledome sequence ignored of course) and their history with censored. The Hall stuff is much more odd as they talk about how much they want him back and how important he was to their careers but the editing makes it sound like they're talking about some illegal drug. They make fun of Stevie Ray (the interviewer) a bit to wrap things up.

Lex Luger is reading Goldberg's book and doesn't seem happy.

Alex Wright vs. Buff Bagwell

Disco is on commentary. Buff dropkicks him a few times to start but eats a quick leg lariat. I've always liked that move. That means it's time for a very early chinlock which goes nowhere of course. Why would you even use that move, knowing it's just going to make a face come back? Wright dives onto a raised boot and misses a dropkick, setting up the Blockbuster for a quick pin.

Bryan Clark vs. Big Vito

This is supposed to be one on one but both members of the team beat Vito down on the floor to start. Clark finally takes him inside but Vito grabs a snap suplex. The top rope elbow connects, only to have Vito come up holding his knee. They seem to go home really fast as Clark hits a quick Meltdown for the pin.

Post match Reno comes in for the save and it's a big family moment.

The Thrillers yell at Reno for making the save in the back.

Here's Shane Douglas for the main event but first of all he has something to say. Apparently everyone here in Nebraska who can afford television knows what General Rection did to Torrie Wilson ("my meal ticket") but the same people cheer for him. Great things happen in great places like New York, Los Angeles and Pittsburgh, but tonight the fans here in Nebraska get to see something special.

Shane talks about how he's going to beat Goldberg tonight and then tries to start a GOLDBERG chant. Somehow this makes Stevie talk about Shane being kicked out of college for his attitude. He goes on even more about how he'll win the title at Starrcade and then calls Goldberg out again. This went almost five minutes and really felt like they were stretching to fill in time.

Goldberg vs. Shane Douglas

Shane gets smart by wrapping the chain around his hand before the bell. Three straight chain shots actually put Goldberg down but here's Luger with Sarge in the Rack on the stage. Goldberg starts to go for the save (in slow motion) but Shane jumps him from behind. That earns him a quick spear (really good one too) and Jackhammer, allowing Goldberg to get win #29 and then run up for the save to end the show.

Overall Rating: D. Somehow this was an improvement over recent weeks. The problem here is the same as it has been lately: at some point, we're going to have to sit through Goldberg vs. Luger II and Sid vs. Steiner for the title at the biggest show of the year. Oh and the Insiders getting the titles back because they need them so badly. The booking is crippling anything else they could do and it's only going to get worse.

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