

Thunder – January 3, 2001: They Still Suck

Thunder

Date: January 3, 2001

Location: Mid-South Coliseum, Memphis, Tennessee

Attendance: 2,547

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Tony Schiavone, Stevie Ray

Happy New Year everyone and welcome to some of the final months of WCW. It's been a little while since we've had anything to actually watch as a few shows were preempted by holidays. Even WCW wasn't stupid enough to try and have a show on Christmas night so this is a fresh start for them. Let's get to it.

We open with a rapid fire video of everything that has been happening recently. It would be nice if they had more than five seconds per story but we need to get in and out of this in thirty seconds.

Mike Awesome has a Team Canada bus.

Opening sequence.

Tony calls this 2001: the Wrestling Odyssey. Well it certainly is a difficult journey.

Here's President Ric Flair to get things going. He has a few things to get through before we start the show. First of all, Goldberg's Streak is on the line in his tag match at Sin, as per Goldberg's request. Second, Scott Steiner will be defending his World Title in a three way dance against Jeff Jarrett and a mystery partner (Yes partner. Even Flair said it twice.). For now though, he's under a two week suspension because that's how you build up a World Champion for a pay per view title defense. That suspension ends on Monday, because having a two week suspension WHEN YOU DIDN'T HAVE ANY SHOWS makes perfect sense.

Cue Jeff Jarrett to interrupt because he's tired of hearing about Steiner

and the Mystery Man because he's the other one in the match. Ric really doesn't like being threatened so he gives Jarrett a match with Sid with the three way dance spot on the line. His opponent is Sid, whose music starts playing before Ric can even introduce him. It's a taped show and they still can't pull this off. We see a clip of Sid having Steiner pinned at Starrcade, which is enough to warrant another title shot. Shouldn't that be a guaranteed title shot and not a match with Jarrett? Sid says it bees that way so the beating is on tonight.

Post break, Ric asks Mike Sanders why the Insiders aren't on the show. Sanders says they were given a night off. Ric isn't convinced but Sanders insists he's not up to anything.

The Thrillers are in their office when Sanders comes in to say that yeah, he's the reason the Insiders aren't here tonight. Reno is given a match with Johnny the Bull later tonight.

Crowbar has a chair match with Meng tonight before he gets to face his idol again. Terry Funk was the man Crowbar looked up to before he bound Crowbar's hands together and hit him in the head with a chair over and over. Crowbar swears revenge and to receive the hardcore torch at Sin. This was a really impassioned promo, which is why Crowbar isn't going anywhere.

Buy a Cat T-Shirt!

Shane Helms vs. Jamie Noble

This should be good. They run the ropes to start until Shane shoulders him down, followed by Shane pulling on a double underhook and bending Jamie around like an abdominal stretch. A middle rope fist drop (remember that we're in Memphis) gets two on Noble. Shane takes too much time posing though and the Nightmare on Helm Street (that dragon sleeper into a standing elbow drop) is countered into a northern lights suplex for two. The Vertebreaker plants Jamie but again Shane won't cover. Now the Nightmare on Helm Street is enough for the pin in a bit of excess violence.

Rating: C+. Nice little match here with Shane looking good before he

heads into his title shot. The Cruiserweights has been one of the few bright spots in these last months as there's a story here and a talented champion defending against a bunch of guys who want the belt and personal revenge at the same time.

Post match Evan Karagias comes out to go after Shane but Shannon Moore runs in for the save. Jamie tombstones Shannon but takes another Nightmare. Now it's Chavo running out to hit Shannon with the belt, making him the last man standing.

We see Konnan beating Elix Skipper for reasons I still don't understand other than stupid politics.

Konnan and Elix get in an argument in the back but it's a Canadian trap with Konnan getting beaten down.

Cat wants to be the Commissioner again and suggests that Gene Okerlund watch Lassie. Gene thinks he could do things to Miss Jones.

The Harris Twins have been laid out.

Corporal Cajun/Sgt. AWALL vs. Sean O'Haire/Chuck Palumbo

O'Haire and Palumbo are surprise opponents as this was supposed to be a six man. Sanders publicly says that he's the reason the Insiders aren't here tonight. The rest of the Thrillers lay out the Misfits to give the team an early advantage with Cajun taking the early beating. It's a shame the Thrillers can't beat these stupid names out of them. Stevie makes a Hogan's Heroes reference which actually breaks Tony up a little bit.

AWALL comes in and punches Palumbo a few times, allowing Cajun to powerslam him for two. Cajun gets two more off a back elbow, only to have Chuck do the Chris Jericho springboard dropkick to knock him off the apron. Of course the Thrillers get in some cheap shots on the outside and AWALL is knocked to the floor. The Seanton Bomb puts Cajun away.

Rating: D. Quite the messy match here but it establishes O'Haire and Palumbo as a good team for the future. Odds are they'll be the pair that faces the Insiders for the belts at Sin, which is the best possible option due to the level of talent there. The Misfits on the other hand

just need to go away. They're not interesting, the joke is long past over and there's just nothing left for them to do.

The Thrillers lay out the Misfits post match until Chavo tries to make a save. Shane Douglas comes in through the crowd and beats on Rection.

Post break Shane says he's going to keep tormenting Rection until he gets the US Title as revenge for him taking away Torrie Wilson. Sin is going to be a chain on a pole match, which makes me think Russo is back. Rection runs in and beats Shane down.

On the bus, Jim Duggan sneaks up on Skipper and attacks because HE NEVER WALKS AWAY FROM A FIGHT. No, apparently he starts them by sneaking up on someone and telling the camera to stay quiet.

The Filthy Animals need to regroup after Konnan got attacked.

Johnny the Bull and Big Vito are talking about their priest when Cat comes up to say he wants to take out Reno tonight so he can put him in soup.

Buff Bagwell doesn't understand why Sarge has issues with him. Someone who can turn a goof like Goldberg into a wrestler must be talented. Lex Luger has an "autographed copy" of Goldberg's book and apparently Goldberg can't spell.

Video on Sarge running the Power Plant.

Lance Storm gives Mike Awesome a match with Duggan tonight, which apparently he can just do.

Rey Mysterio has a plan.

Flair comes in to see the Thrillers and gives Reno a match with the Cat. So Reno has a night off? Jindrak will have a match too but his opponent isn't named.

Sid, in different clothes than earlier, is ready for Jeff and is very thankful for his spot.

That's about nine straight minutes of backstage segments. Maybe next up

they can have someone hold up a sign that says "YEP! WE'RE STALLING!"

Crowbar vs. Meng

Chair on a pole match, making me even more convinced that Russo is back. Of note: there isn't an actual pole as the chair is just in the corner. They slug it out to start as Daffney breaks some glass with the screeches. It's already time for the chair with Meng getting his hands on it, only to have Crowbar dive over the top to take him out. Meng is whipped into the barricade but comes right back with his normal Tongan insanity. A drop toehold sends Meng head first into the steps and for some reason it actually works.

Daffney and Paisley get in a fight over the chair (you remember the chair) as Crowbar slows Meng down with a reverse DDT. That's not enough for a cover though as Crowbar charges at Meng, only to be flapjacked into the chair on the top turnbuckle. The Death Grip puts Crowbar out.

Rating: D+. For some reason the announcers were stunned by the win, even though this feels like your standard way to build Meng back up before having him get taken down again. I'm assuming we'll be having another three way for the Hardcore Title at Sin, which makes me think this should have been a standard hardcore match but why do that when you can have a (non-existent) pole.

Flair shakes Bagwell and Luger's hands but nothing is heard.

Mark Jindrak vs. Goldberg

Jindrak actually gets in some offense but gets beaten in just over a minute with the usual.

Goldberg is ready for Luger and Bagwell.

Jeff Jarrett calls out the Mystery Man tonight because the Mystery Man can choose who he's facing at Sin.

Luger and Bagwell talk to Kronik.

The Cat vs. Reno

Before the match, Cat says he wants Sanders out here because he has no issue with Igor (his name for Reno, which he's used at least five times tonight). Reno jumps him from behind and chokes a lot to start, only to get knocked out to the floor. Miss Jones fires off some kicks, which certainly isn't an excuse to showcase how she looks in chaps. Back in and Reno stomps away but his t-bone suplex is countered into a small package for two. Stevie: "Is that a brainbuster?" Cat pops up, does the crotch chop, and the Feliner ends Reno quick. I have no idea what this is supposed to accomplish but Cat is winning a lot lately.

Jim Duggan vs. Mike Awesome

There's a big blurred out area behind the Canadians during their pre-match speech due to fans flipping them off. Duggan is back in the blue trunks here. They slug it out to start with Awesome being knocked to the floor for a change. Back in and Awesome slowly beats him down as the match loses the little interest it had coming in. Duggan comes back with a running clothesline as Stevie name drops Bronco Lubich. Skipper does....something from the floor though, allowing Mike to hit a quick Awesome Splash for the pin in a hurry.

Post match the beatdown is on until the Filthy Animals come in for the save. Konnan grabs the mic and tells them to look at the screen, where we see the Team Canada bus covered in graffiti.

After a break, Team Canada says they want to deal with the Animals at Sin instead of calling the cops.

The Mystery Man's gear is shown in the back.

Buff Bagwell vs. DeWayne Bruce

Buff turns his back to pose to start (and it's hard to blame him), allowing Bruce to get in a shot from behind. They take it to the floor with Bruce in control and walking around the ring with Buff being dragged behind. Back in and Buff gets two off a neckbreaker before we hit the choking. Bruce fights up and makes his comeback so here's Luger with a chair. We cut to Goldberg running out of his locker room but Kronik jumps him, throws him in a box and carries him away on a forklift. Back in the

arena, Luger Pillmanizes Bruce's arm for the DQ.

Rating: F. Leave it to two moronic heels to attack a career jobber and injure him instead of going after GOLDBERG. This is such a stupid story as we've already had Goldberg go over Luger twice and now they're going to use Bruce to stretch it out to a third pay per view. Why this is happening while Sid, Jarrett, and whoever is under that mask get a title shot isn't clear, but I'd chalk it up to "WCW is stupid."

Jeff Jarrett vs. Sid Vicious

The winner is in the three way dance at Sin. Before the match, Jarrett wants to talk (of course) to the Mystery Man. Jeff rambles on for a long time about how he and Sid both want momentum coming towards Sin but the audio keeps cutting out, likely trying to censor some chants. Sid won't let him bail though and the brawl is on in front of a dead crowd with Jeff being dropped throat first across the barricade.

Back in and Jeff stomps away before a dropkick gets two. We hit the sleeper (of course) until Sid fights back and gets in a chokeslam. The powerbomb is loaded up but the Mystery Man comes in and hits Sid in the back, but since this is WCW we'll call that a no contest, meaning neither has advanced to Sin.

Rating: D. Naturally two former World Champions can only get four minutes before a run-in finish that didn't even go the way it was supposed to. As usual, Sid didn't quite look great in the ring and Jeff was doing nothing other than his signature stuff. I'm sure you know where this is going for Sin and I really wish they could have just gone with that in the first place.

Sid gets double teamed and of course it's Scott Steiner under the mask to end the show.

Overall Rating: D-. There's just so much stupid on this show with the main event scene being the biggest issue. I can't get over the fact that it's freaking Buddy Lee Parker getting the spotlight in a story. Yeah he trained Goldberg, but you can't just make up a story to get someone in there with a slightly better win/loss record? As in with any wins on his

record? The rest of the show was the usual mess, not made any better by the fact that Sin is next week. Bad show here and a really horrible way to start the new year.

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