

Wrestler of the Day – November 27: Hector Guerrero

It's Turkey Day so here's the most famous wrestling turkey (?) of them all: the Gobbledy Gooker himself, Hector Guerrero.

Hector started off in regional promotions in California in 1973 but we'll pick things up when he's a bit more established in Memphis on January 18, 1981.

Gypsy Joe vs. Hector Guerrero

Joe is a legendary brawler who nails Hector before the bell. He rips Guerrero's ring jacket off and hammers him against the ropes as this is one sided so far. Choking in the corner has Hector in even more trouble and Joe keeps it up on the mat. All brawling so far. Hector is launched to the floor before he comes back in with a single right hand. That's the extent of his offense though as Joe pounds him down in the corner again before biting at Guerrero's head. Hector finally nails some chops but Joe plants him with a slam for two. Back up and Hector grabs a sunset flip out of nowhere for the surprise pin.

Rating: D. Total squash until the end here which isn't really surprising given that Joe never had much lasting success. I always like it when a wrestling surprises a brawler and wins in the end like he did here, especially with a move that catches the guy out of nowhere. Guerrero would have some success around here but didn't stay around long.

Off to Florida with a match in the CWF at some point in the first half of 1984.

Hector Guerrero/Chavo Guerrero vs. Barry Windham/Mike Rotundo

This could be good. Windham and Rotundo are the US Tag Team Champions but I think this is non-title. The Guerreros come out with mariachi music, sombreros and a big Mexican flag. Barry hammers on Chavo to start but Windham gets caught in a headlock. Off to Hector as Oliver Humperdink

goes on a rant about the history of tag team matches originating in America.

Mike comes in and takes Hector down with a headlock but gets countered into a headscissors. Back to the much smaller Chavo for two off a snap suplex but everything breaks down for a minute. That goes nowhere as the Guerreros take over on Rotundo, only to have him cross body Hector for two. Mike finally gets over to Windham for a tag as the biggest man in the match takes over.

A suplex drops Hector for two before it's back to Chavo for some right hands. That's fine with Barry as he clotheslines both guys down to take over on Chavo again. They hit heads to put both guys down as everything breaks down again. Dick Slater sneaks in with a swinging neckbreaker to Windham on the floor. Another guy comes out to explain what happened and the match is thrown out.

Rating: C-. This wasn't bad as you had four guys that could work a solid match out there at the same time. Hector and Chavo were just so much faster than almost anyone else they fought and they became an attraction as a result. They would take the titles from Windham and Rotundo eventually, though I'm not sure if it was in this reign.

Off to Jim Crockett Promotions now with the team appearing in the 1986 Crockett Cup.

Crockett Cup First Round: Shepherders vs. Hector Guerrero/Chavo Guerrero

The Shepherders are the Bushwackers as CRAZY heels. Believe it or not there's a match later on with them in it that Meltzer gave five stars, so they weren't exactly the same team. Joined in progress with Butch pounding on Chavo but the guy with a famous brother escapes with speed moves. Off to Luke who pounds away even more but gets caught in a sunset flip for two.

Moderate tag brings in Hector and the announcer says we're at ten minutes in. Abdominal stretch goes on but the Herders won't quit cheating. Butch is knocked out of the ring as the

flag bearer (Rip Morgan) is dropped for a BIG pop. Not that it matters as a double clothesline to Hector ends the Guerreros at just under three minutes shown of about 11. I'm sorry for the lack of ratings but at 15 minutes into the tape I've gotten through a two minute intro and five matches. What can I really do here?

Here's a one off tag match from Starrcade 1986.

Hector Guerrero/Baron Von Raschke vs. Shaska Whatley/Barbarian

Whatley and Barbarian are members of Paul Jones' Army while Guerrero and Raschke are kind of an oddball tag team. It's a big brawl to start with the Baron pairing off with Whatley as Hector sends Barbarian out to the floor. Hector and Shaska start things off with Guerrero hitting some fast paced offense for early control. It's off to Barbarian though to drop Hector throat first across the top rope, stopping his momentum cold.

Barbarian misses a running boot into the corner though and falls to the floor, allowing Hector to hit a BIG dive, taking out both Barbarian and Baron. That was a very big deal back then and still looks good even today. Whatley comes out to beat on Hector before throwing him inside for a gorilla press slam by Barbarian. A double backdrop puts Hector down for two and Whatley breaks up a potential hot tag to Baron.

Back to Barbarian for another near fall off a big boot followed by a backbreaker. Whatley sends him into the ropes and Hector spits right in his face, which is somehow enough for the hot tag off to the Baron. Raschke puts his Claw Hold on Shaska as everything breaks down. Barbarian breaks up the hold but gets pummeled in the corner by Hector. In the melee, Shaska misses a charge into the corner and Baron drops an elbow for the pin.

Rating: C. Just a basic tag match here which was fine for the most part. There was talk of a grudge coming in but there was not actual explanation given of what the feud was over or how everyone was involved. Baron seemed much more angry than Hector but that's normal for the both of them. Nothing bad here but it's just a tag match.

From the 1987 Crockett Cup.

Crockett Cup First Round: Jimmy Valiant/Lazer Tron vs. Shaska
Whatley/Teijho Khan

Tron is Hector Guerrero in a mask. Clipped to him working on Khan with a dropkick and it's off to Whatley. The ring is cleared so Tron and Valiant dance a bit. The heels collide as they look like idiots. Valiant comes in and the fun part goes away quickly. Valiant vibrates on the mat as he's beaten down and Whatley dances some more. Back to Tron who cleans house but the other guys brawl as he's covering Whatley. Whatley charges at Tron and Khan pulls the top rope down so his partner goes crashing, but it's a DQ win for them as the referee thinks it was intentional. Only a minute clipped here but not enough to grade.

Later in the 1980s, every promotion not called the WWF realized they were in big trouble. They banded together under the name of Pro Wrestling USA for a lot of supercards. Here's a match from one of their shows on March 5, 1988.

Hector Guerrero vs. Keith Hart

Hector is the heel here for a change and his partner Buddy Landel is on commentary. A quick headlock puts Keith down but it goes about as far as you would expect. Guerrero rides him on the mat before shoving him away, only to take his eyes with the boot. A shoulder drops Keith but Hector flips out of a backdrop as Landel makes racist jokes about Mexicans. Hector drops him with a vertical suplex but misses a splash.

Back up and Hector slowly punches him down before choking while holding a hammerlock. Keith comes back with a horrible looking back elbow so Hector takes him down again. Guerrero starts a Sharpshooter but leans forward for a cover instead. The referee isn't pleased with him being in the ropes though so we get a quick argument, followed by a flying forearm to give Guerrero the pin.

Rating: D. Keith was worthless here and it was clear that Hector didn't

have much to work with. Thankfully they kept this short with Hector just beating the tar out of him for the most part. It didn't help that Keith was botching stuff here while I had to listen to Landel's heel schtick.

Off to the AWA at SuperClash III.

Chavo Guerrero/Mando Guerrero/Hector Guerrero vs. Rock N Roll RPMs/Cactus Jack

WCCW vs. CWA. I'll list the companies for every match for the sake of sanity. Chavo is of course the senior version and Mando is the least known Guerrero. Hector is a dead ringer for Eddie and arguably better. The RPMs are the southern tag champions and are named Tommy Lane and Mike Davis. That Jack guy won't ever amount to anything. He was a total rookie at this point and almost the Abyss of his day: the guy that would take any bump asked of him so here he is as a result.

The Guerreros all have big sombreros and are about as stereotypical as you can get. Capetta (announcer) says this is AWA vs. CWA and that's just incorrect. Actually the Guerreros were in the AWA also so I guess it's correct. Granted both companies would be dead in a year so does it really matter? Hector starts and makes the RPMs look like idiots. Off to Jack and Mando (barely taller than the top rope) with the Guerreros being so much faster it's unreal.

They hit the floor and Jack actually gets beaten up even worse out there. Back to Hector and they work on the knee before Chavo, the oldest, comes in. Wait make that Mando. Oh and it's Cactus Jack Foley at this point. The Guerreros tag in and out about every 8 seconds. Jack wants out of there badly and brings in one of the RPMs who I don't think the announcers know the difference between.

The RPMs finally double team Chavo and that goes even worse for them and it's off to Hector. The Guerreros get in a big pile on and clear the ring. Jack vs. Chavo now and Jack finally gets something together. Off to Davis as it's pretty

clear the announcers don't know the RPMs' names. Off to Davis again and never mind as it's Jack now. Hot tag to Hector and everything breaks down again. There's some heel miscommunication and the camera misses the big dives but you can hear the crowd gasping. A moonsault press from Chavo ends Lane.

Rating: C+. Total squash here and a way to get the crowd fired up with the Guerreros doing stuff no one had ever seen before. The speed stuff was good as they looked like an awesome team out there. The dives were good and they made the fans get into the show, which is exactly what the point of an opener is.

After a run in Smoky Mountain and the infamous Gobbledy Gooker period, it was off to WCW for a quick run. Here he is on Nitro, November 4, 1996.

Hector Guerrero vs. Chris Benoit

Hector is Eddie's older brother and possibly even more talented. He's also a dead ringer for Eddie if you just glance at him. I've often gotten them confused until I took a good look. Flair has had his surgery and Anderson is out with a back injury. On Saturday, Benoit said Sullivan is no longer the man he used to be. Sullivan pops up and says he'll hurt Benoit in Baltimore. He's actually talking about a house show.

Hector speeds things up and hits almost a Vader Bomb from the top rope out to the floor onto a standing Benoit. Benoit's shoulder is still taped up. Hector works on the arm and mixes up the attack on it, because Hector Guerrero is smarter than most wrestlers. He goes to take the tape off and we take a break. After an NWO t-shirt ad, we come back to Benoit hitting a knee to put Guerrero down.

He draped Hector over the top rope with a release suplex and Guerrero is in trouble. Benoit works over the ribs and hooks an awkward abdominal stretch. Hector is basically crouched down and Benoit is bending over. Benoit hammers him down as Tony hypes up how amazing the second hour is. There's the explosion. Hector grabs a small package for two. Guerrero speeds things up and uses a rolling tumbleweed style cradle for two. Woman breaks it up which isn't a DQ. Benoit grabs a rollup via the

distraction and uses the ropes for the pin.

Rating: C+. Another long match which again works. Benoit could move better this week which is a nice perk. Hector wouldn't be around that much I don't think so this was really just to avenge Eddie I guess. Nothing that great but they were moving well out there and the psychology worked so big points for that.

Another Nitro match on July 22, 1997.

Eddie Guerrero vs. Hector Guerrero

Hector takes him down with a headscissors but a dropkick misses. Eddie starts stomping but we head to the floor for a chase. Back in and Hector uses a side roll to roll Eddie around the ring about four times for two. Eddie comes back with some biting but another headscissors sends him to the floor. Hector hits a big plancha on the floor but back inside, Eddie powerbombs him down and hits the Frog Splash for a fast pin.

Rating: C. This is the same problem I've mentioned before: Hector is a talented guy, but other than his name, he doesn't mean much to most WCW audiences. I get what they were going for here with the sibling rivalry thing but it's hard to care here because Hector isn't a guy we know as far as his stuff in WCW goes.

One more match on this show from Nitro, August 4, 1997.

Dean Malenko/Jeff Jarrett vs. Hector Guerrero/Chavo Guerrero

Malenko and Chavo start things off and we hit the mat very quickly. That doesn't last long so they run the ropes a bit until Dean gets taken down by a pair of dropkicks. Hector comes in to face Jeff and we have a strut vs. dance battle. A headscissors puts Jarrett down and frustrates him so he pounds away a bit. Hector makes a brief comeback but stops to jaw with Dean, letting Jeff take over again.

There's the running crotch attack to a 619'd Hector (I'm still looking for a better name for that) before it's back to Malenko. Make that back to Jeff again and Hector gets two off a backslide. Chavo breaks up the Figure Four and Dean is rolled up for two. Hector won't tag and is caught

in an electric chair. Dean hooks the Cloverleaf and we're done.

Rating: C. The idea here was that Hector wouldn't tag, presumably due to stubbornness, but it doesn't make Jeff any more interesting. The guy is just flat out not interesting no matter how you try to push or package him. Malenko was fine but he needs to get away from this stupid tag team thing.

One more WCW match from Saturday Night on October 4, 1997.

Rey Mysterio Jr. vs. Hector Guerrero

Eddie and Rey are feuding but Hector says he isn't his brother. Then he tries to pull Rey in to start before taking him down with a headscissors. A nice spinout armdrag sends Hector outside and Rey follows him with a suicide dive. Guerrero slams him down on the floor before working on Rey's back in the ring. A tilt-a-whirl backbreaker gets two but Mysterio grabs a victory roll for the same. Guerrero gets two more off a running splash but Rey fires off right hands to break up a superplex attempt. A top rope West Coast Pop is enough to pin Hector.

Rating: C-. This didn't have time to go anywhere but it worked well enough. You had Rey flying around like only Rey can do and Hector basically wrestling the same kind of style that Eddie was going to. This was a nice warmup for the masterpiece at Halloween Havoc a few weeks later.

We'll wrap it up with the only Gooker match, from Wrestlemania X7.

Gimmick Battle Royal

Luke, Butch, Duke Droese, Iron Sheik, Earthquake, The Goon, Doink, Kamala, Kimchee, Repo Man, Jim Cornette, Nikolai Volkoff, Michael Hayes, One Man Gang (He couldn't fit into the Akeem gear), Gobbledy Gooker (complete with video from Survivor Series 1990), Tugboat, Hillbilly Jim (biggest reaction of the entrants), Brother Love, Sgt. Slaughter

Take eighteen of the goofiest gimmicks of all time, throw them in a match, have fun. I thought this was awesome when I was 13 and it's still awesome to this day. The entrances take nearly three times longer than

the match but that's beside the point. Repo Man is put out in about two seconds as is the Gooker. Quake puts Tugboat out before Kamala throws him out as well.

People are thrown out right and left with Doink being eliminated to a chorus of booing. The final four are Brother Love, Slaughter, Hillbilly Jim and the Sheik. Within about 12 seconds it's down to Sheik and Jim with Sheik winning because he can't go over the top to the floor. This was like three minutes long and it worked just fine all things considered. Slaughter puts Sheik in the Cobra Clutch post match.

Hector Guerrero is an incredibly talented guy who was overshadowed by his brother's success. That being said, Hector is still a guy who kept steady work for the better part of thirty years as an active competitor before joining TNA as a Spanish commentator. He's very smooth in the ring and you can see so much of Eddie in him and vice versa.

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Wrestler of the Day – November 26: Nikki Bella

Today we're looking at a chick who is now one of the focuses of the Divas division. If nothing else it shows you the power of sleeping with John Cena. Today is Nikki Bella.

The Bellas got started in developmental in 2007 and we'll pick things up on ECW on March 30, 2009 with their first showdown.

Nikki Bella vs. Brie Bella

Nikki comes out with Miz and Morrison but Brie counters with Carlito and Primo. Brie grabs a quick rollup for two before just hammering away at her sister's face. Some armdrags put Nikki down but she grabs a quick suplex for two. Brie hooks a bulldog but the tag teams get in a brawl, allowing Nikki to roll up Brie for the pin.

Rating: D. Somehow this is going to be even worse when we get the big showdown in a few months. The girls just aren't that good in the ring and it really shows in these matches. Nikki and Brie try out there but they seem to take things way more seriously than they should and it drags everything down. Just be good looking women and shake your hips.

Nikki didn't have a lot of success at first so we'll jump ahead to Raw on August 9, 2010.

Gail Kim/Eve Torres vs. Maryse/Jillian Hall vs. Bella Twins

This is a Summer Spectacular or something. They're all in swimsuits, but of course one pieces. Santino and Kozlov are here too and they come in on a water slide. This goes like 3 minutes and one of the Bellas hits a cross body to beat Jillian. Tamina comes out in a swimsuit as well and slaps Santino's tights. Yep it's Glamarella all over again.

Rating: N/A. The girls looked good at least. If you have a

thing for legs, FIND THIS MATCH IMMEDIATELY.

Off to Tribute to the Troops 2010, when it still meant something.

Bella Twins/Natalya/Kelly Kelly vs. Alicia Fox/Melina/Laycool

Not on the first show either. Yep the evil ones are definitely hotter. They're all in Santa outfits of course. Alicia vs. a Bella starts us off and Cole thinks it's Nikki. Since Cole is a very stupid man we'll call her Brie. Melina is working as a heel here to play up the whole turn on Raw two days ago. Kelly comes in and we get the headscissors to show off the underwear under her skirt. She beats the tar out of Michelle before Layla saves. Everyone gets in until Kelly hits K2 to beat Michelle. Another nothing match.

We'll head stateside again for Raw on March 7, 2011.

Women's Title: Eve Torres vs. Nikki Bella

The bell is after the break. Gail Kim is here with Eve. Eve starts all fired up and hammers away on Nikki including a bicycle kick. Cole talks about going to be on New Year's Eve and waking up on Christmas morning. That's how he feels about introducing his referee tonight. Cole literally gets up on the table and grabs a mic, saying we need to end this because he wants to announce his referee. Eve uses the bottom rope as a springboard to get an enziguri. Twin Magic gets caught and a spinning neckbreaker gives eve the win at 3:12.

Rating: C. Even with the Cole stuff in there the whole time this wasn't bad for the most part. Eve dominated and thankfully they didn't manage to make things look stupid with the Twin Magic getting by again. It makes the referee and wrestlers look stupid so I'm glad it failed here. Decent match here and pretty good for the most part. Should be interesting to see where it goes from here too.

Another year, another Tribute to the Troops, this time in 2011.

Bella Twins/Natalya/Beth Phoenix vs. Eve Torres/Kelly Kelly/Alicia Fox/Maria Menounos

Maria is the host of I think Extra. She was a guest host of Raw a few years ago. Eve vs. a Bella starts us off but it's off to Maria quickly. Off to Eve with the other Bella quickly and the standing moonsault gets two. Beth comes in but gets caught by an enziguri. Kelly comes in and everything breaks down with one from each side having the upper hand for about 3 seconds. Maria comes in against Beth and gets a pin off a sunset flip. This was what it was.

The Twins would go back to the only thing that worked for them on Raw, January 2, 2012.

Bella Twins vs. Eve Torres/Kelly Kelly

Kelly vs. let's say Brie to start and Kelly does her spanking and Stinkface to get on my nerves even more. Eve comes in and does her usual stuff. The moonsault is broken up and it's Nikki in now. Top rope moonsault gets two and it's Twin Magic for the pin on Eve at 2:04. Are we really back to this again?

Then things would change in a hurry on Raw, April 23, 2012.

Divas Title: Nikki Bella vs. Beth Phoenix

Before the match here's Eve to say that this is now a lumberjack match. Maxine is one of the divas here so I'm sure she'll be complaining about not being off NXT yet this week again. Nikki dropkicks Beth down and monkey flips her down. That results in her getting slammed into the corner and gorilla press dropped. Off to a chinlock followed by a backbreaker. Beth throws her to the floor and injures her knee. Brie goes after Beth and the lumberjacks jump on Beth in a dog pile. I think there was a switch in the pile but I'm not sure. Beth's ankle or leg is messed up, allowing Nikki to roll her up and win the title at 4:11.

Rating: D. The girls looked good, the match was the usual Diva stuff, the whole deal with the Bellas leaving soon is now up in the air, I still don't care about the Divas. Next. Oh and the leg injury appears to be real. This really was a surprise, mainly due to rumors that the Bellas were going to be leaving soon.

The title reign would last all of six days and the Bellas actually would leave the company for over a year. They would return in 2013 and pick up where they left off. From Raw on October 21, 2013.

Bella Twins vs. Tamina Snuka/AJ Lee

Brie takes Tamina down to start but the Twin is knocked to the floor with ease. Back in and a snap suplex gets two on Brie before we hit the cravate. Off to Nikki who is easily slammed down before it's off to AJ, who gets the biggest reaction of the match. Nikki fights out of a chinlock and makes the hot tag off to Brie, sending the fans back into their coma. Brie speeds things up and dropkicks Brie down, only to get caught in a half crab. Brie hits a bad looking knee to the ribs before accidentally kneeing Tamina in the head. Not that it matters though as the Bella Buster pins AJ at 5:27.

Rating: D. The Bellas look good in their outfits but man alive this face turn isn't working. The problem is the double turn by the Bellas and AJ depends on if you like Total Divas. If you like the show, you buy the double turn. If you don't like Total Divas, you side with AJ, even though there aren't any shades of gray in the story. AJ is meant to be the heel and Brie as the girl who is fighting for what she wants, even though no one seems to care.

Then came Total Divas, which basically starred the Bellas in the early days. This led to a long feud with the True Divas, including this match on Raw, December 2, 2013.

Summer Rae/Tamina Snuka/AJ Lee vs. Bella Twins/Natalya

The non-Total Divas are now the True Divas. AJ skips around the ring while Nikki gets two off a crucifix on Tamina to start. Brie comes in with a middle rope dropkick and a running knee to Snuka's chest. AJ is still skipping around the ring. Summer chokes Brie on the ropes and shows off her flexibility before getting a two count.

Brie finally fights out and makes the tag to Natalya who speeds things up a bit. Tamina is knocked off the apron so Summer shouts at AJ to stop skipping and make the tag. AJ finally comes in and nearly gets caught in

the Sharpshooter as everything breaks down. The distraction lets Natalya roll up AJ for the pin at 4:18.

Rating: D. Here's the problem with the Total Divas face push in a nutshell: we haven't been given a reason to care about them. There was never a moment where they were all turned face, other than AJ's promo from months ago which was all true stuff. WWE is assuming that fans like the Total Divas because they have a reality show and the Bellas date Cena and Bryan, though I don't think Cena and Nikki have ever been announced on WWE TV. Other than that, they just started being faces and the announcers started talking about AJ being mean. That's not enough to build a boring feud on and it's showing badly.

Off to the blue show on March 14, 2014.

Nikki Bella vs. Tamina Snuka

AJ sits in on commentary as Tamina takes Nikki down by the hair. Nikki is sent to the floor and holds her knee, prompting some amusing fake concern from the champ. Back in and Nikki gets slammed down but still avoids the Superfly Splash. AJ tries to figure out who the #1 contender is as Tamina kicks Nikki's head off for two. Tamina gets bored with Nikki and throws Brie into the barricade for fun. It doesn't pay off though as Nikki hits the Rack for the pin at 3:13.

Rating: D. Divas, regular match, Nikki's turn for a push. Next.

Nikki would get a big push over the summer and eventually turned heel on her sister, setting up this match at Hell in a Cell 2014.

Brie Bella vs. Nikki Bella

Loser is the winner's servant for 30 days. They lock up to start with Brie sending Nikki into the corner but missing a charge. Nikki runs her over for two and a facebuster gets the same. The fans start chanting JBL because NO ONE CARES ABOUT THIS STORY. Brie plants her face first for two before hitting a few dropkicks. A running knee to the face has Nikki in trouble but she misses a charge and falls out to the floor.

She comes up clutching her knee and heads back inside to take a missile

dropkick for two. Nikki pops back up and hooks the Rack for two. Brie slaps on the YES Lock but Nikki gets her feet on the ropes. Nikki comes back with a hard forearm to the face and a second Rack for the pin at 6:21.

Rating: D+. The worst part: the wrestling wasn't all that bad. The problem with this is it's one of the least interesting stories in years as I don't even remember why they're fighting. I get that it's about Brie quitting but are we really supposed to care that a woman is dating John Cena (wait, does that relationship exist in WWE?) and had to wrestle some handicap matches against some heels. Also, if Nikki hates her sister so much, why would she want her around for thirty more days?

We'll wrap it up with Nikki's title shot at Survivor Series 2014.

Divas Title: AJ Lee vs. Nikki Bella

AJ is defending and Nikki has her sister Brie as an assistant. We get big match intros and Brie gets up on the apron with with title in her hand. She kisses AJ, allowing Nikki to get in a cheap shot and the Rack Attack gives us a new champ at 38 seconds in the Sheamus vs. Daniel Bryan ending from Wrestlemania XXVIII.

I've made no secret out of the fact that I really don't think much of Nikki Bella. She tries to be all serious and intense and it really doesn't work. At the end of the day, she's another Diva who is there because she looks good in tight outfits and has a twin. She's gotten better over the last year or so, but there's still just not enough there to warrant the push she gets. There are far worse Divas out there, but at the end of the day my reaction continues to be that I don't get why I'm supposed to care.

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Bash at the Beach 1999: When Greatness Isn't Enough

Bash at the Beach 1999

Date: July 11, 1999

Location: National Car Rental Center, Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Attendance: 13,624

Commentators: Bobby Heenan, Tony Schiavone

We're going in a new direction at this point in WCW as the promotion has gone from really boring to freaking insane in the course of a few weeks. A good chunk of this show was booked within the last few weeks and knowing the stories isn't likely going to help me get through it. Let's get to it.

I've actually seen this show far more often than I should as I found it at a Blockbuster for \$2 when I was about thirteen. It took many years to suppress those memories but here we go again.

The opening video is a wordless montage about the four men in the main event. I mean, if there's one story that doesn't need a verbal explanation, it's one about Savage and Sid trying to kill Nash and then the heroic champion kidnapping and potentially raping Gorgeous George, causing Savage to throw her out of their dressing room with a side plot of Sting potentially driving the Hummer that nearly killed Nash and then Nash changing the rules of the tag match so that anyone, including his

partner, can pin him for the title. Also for some reason they air the video then show it about five more times as a very fast speed.

Tony says the tag match tonight started as a tag match. It was once going to be Sting/Nash vs. Savage/Sid in a tag team match, but it's now Sting/Nash vs. Savage/Sid in a tag team match. No that's not a misprint.

After those words of wisdom, Schiavone explains the junkyard match and the boxing match before throwing it to Gene for a Hotline ad.

Mike Tenay is at the junkyard, which he knows about because his sources told him where to go. Apparently there's going to be a ring of cars with a bunch of obstacles to get around and the first person to jump over a fence and escape wins. This company is rapidly becoming more of a parody of wrestling than an actual wrestling promotion.

Video on the Cat vs. Disco Inferno. Cat had a kickboxing match with Jerry Flynn and lost via DQ so Flynn took him down in a brawl after the match. He and Disco had a dance off a week earlier, making the kickboxing stuff completely pointless.

Disco Inferno vs. The Cat

The original stipulation was the loser could never dance again but that has since been dropped. The lawyers must be working overtime as the match was announced three days ago and the stipulation was never mentioned on Thunder. Miller rants before the match and wants another dance contest before we get going. He demands that the people all vote for him or else he'll beat them all up. Tony explains that he'll lose because he threatened the fans because WCW thinks we're rather thick headed. Disco dances for about two seconds before Cat goes after him and we're ready to go.

Inferno starts like a kitchen of fire (not enough for a whole house) and sends Miller sliding out to the floor. Back in and Cat nails a few kicks, so Disco just tackles him to the mat and hammers away. Some atomic drops from Disco set up some miscommunication on what looked to be his swinging neckbreaker.

Cat comes back with a kick to the head and walks around as Sonny gets in a few shots of his own. Those are as effective as you would expect since Sonny, a legitimately accomplished karate fighter, is a manager and therefore incapable of hurting anyone. Back in and Disco grabs a quick sunset flip for two but gets his head kicked off again.

Another kick misses though and Disco legsweeps him down, setting up a middle rope elbow for two. Cat rakes the eyes and puts on the shoe, only to have Disco take it away and blast him in the face. Sonny's distraction makes it only a two count though, allowing Cat to put the shoe back on and kick Disco for about the fifth time for the pin.

Rating: D. This really was the best thing they could think of to start a show? It's really hard to care about a match with no build, no value and nothing beyond basic moves. The fact that it had Ernest Miller in there made things even less interesting. It's not even a horrible match or anything, but there's just no reason to care about something like that.

Judge Mills Lane won't put up with any garbage tonight and will chase Bagwell or Piper if need be.

We recap the TV Title match. The video starts with Van Hammer surviving against Disco Inferno because the referee was down and a handful of tights. Then Flair saved Hammer from getting put through a table by banning hardcore matches, allowing Hammer to hit Hugh Morrus with a table and drive him through it. Somehow that earned him a TV Title shot here.

TV Title: Rick Steiner vs. Van Hammer

Keep in mind that there really isn't a face in this match as there's no reason to like either guy. Steiner comes out first for no apparent reason. They trade hard shots to the face to start and Steiner is knocked out to the floor. Steiner goes into his new standard of just driving someone down to the mat and ripping at their face a lot. Back up and Rick hammers away before taking Hammer outside to send him into the barricade.

Rick hits a horrible looking DDT on the exposed concrete and covers on the floor to continue getting on my nerves. Back in and Hammer hits him low, only to have Rick punch him in the face to take over again. They

head outside one more time with Hammer nailing him in the head with a chair before taking him back inside for the Alabama Slam for two. Steiner bites him between the legs, punts him in the same spot (referee just watches him) and hits the Steiner Bulldog to retain.

Rating: F. Rick Steiner has reached the point where he's an embarrassment. Between never selling anything from a chair shot to a low blow, there's just nothing Hammer (who isn't the guy you want carrying a bag of groceries, let alone a PPV title match) can do. What WCW saw in him other than name recognition I'll never know, but if someone thinks he's skilled in the ring, they have no business being in charge of a wrestling company.

We get an overhead view of the junkyard, which really just looks like a parking lot with a bunch of cars stacked up in a circle. The winner gets a trophy but Tenay can't answer who is going to be in the match because it's unsanctioned.

We recap David Flair being named US Champion, meaning we just see the segment again. Again, weren't the Flairs fighting months ago about David siding with Torrie and having his father hold him down? Now David has ten women around him (including Torrie) and his dad made him US Title. That's a big jump in the span of five months.

US Title: Dean Malenko vs. David Flair

David is defending of course and comes out with Torrie, in a very pushed up tied off top, shirt that might be nine inches long, and a black cowboy hat. Ric, Arn and Asya are here too but Johnny Boone is refereeing. Tony says David hasn't been impressive in all of his title defenses. You know, all one of them.

Dean of course throws him down with ease and stomps away in the corner before planting David with a suplex. Ric comes in but gets decked as Dean puts on the Cloverleaf. Anderson nails the referee with a spinebuster, allowing Robinson to take over as referee. Dean Cloverleafs Asya but Ric nails him with the US Title to give David the pin.

Rating: F. Dang it this was just long enough to grade. As I said in the

Nitro review, I get the idea they're going for here, but wasn't there another scrub you could put in there instead of Malenko? I know Dean isn't going to be headlining a PPV anytime soon, but he's the kind of guy that should actually be the US Champion. This kind of story is good in the right circumstances, but WCW isn't in a place where they can turn yet another title into a joke and keep beating their midcard guys into the ground, even in a match that doesn't end anywhere near clean.

Long recap of the Rednecks vs. the No Limit Soldiers, complete with the full I Hate Rap video. Barry Windham is such a talented drummer that he just scares the drums into playing themselves because he certainly isn't hitting them. This includes a lot of shouting HOOTY HOO, which amazingly enough didn't get the rappers over. Master P. is long gone, apparently saying that there weren't enough of "his people" in the audience for the night the angle took off. That would be in P.'s hometown in New Orleans if you aren't big on guys who shout like owls.

No Limit Soldiers vs. West Texas Rednecks

Swoll, B.A., Rey Mysterio Jr., Konnan

Curt Hennig, Barry Windham, Kendall Windham, Bobby Duncum Jr.

Elimination tag, which I believe is the first explanation of the rules for this match. The best part of this: the camera comes back to the arena early, showing ring announcer David Penzer counting the fans down on when to cheer. Tony fails at covering for him by saying that he was saying hi to his five family members in the audience. The levels that this company falls to when trying to cover their mistakes is astounding. Heenan redeems things a bit by saying that the Soldiers' problem could be solved if they just put a light in their closets. Rey and Konnan make sure to shout a lot before we're ready to go.

Mysterio and Barry get things going with the Cruiserweight Champion getting hammered down in the corner. Rey comes back by sending Barry into the corner and getting two off a split legged moonsault. Off to Hennig vs. B.A. with Armstrong nailing a dropkick before trying to talk some trash. Thankfully that goes nowhere as it's off to Duncum before the big Swoll comes in with a bad looking clothesline. Swoll hammers on Duncum

but Kendall comes in with a cheap shot to take over.

Kendall misses a charge into the post so Mysterio comes in without a tag. Naturally the referee is fine with this. Kendall tries to beat the rules into him but Rey nails him with a springboard seated senton to knock both Kendall and Duncum out to the floor. Back in and it's Konnan vs. Hennig before Rey hits another springboard seated senton on Hennig. Duncum and Hennig both get hammered in the corner until it's Swoll ducking Duncum's cross body for two in an awkward sequence. Rey adds a springboard legdrop and Swoll pins Bobby.

The other Soldiers, Chase and 4x4 (who makes Ezekiel Jackson look like David Flair) beat up Duncum in the aisle because they're heroes. Barry and Konnan hammer away on each other until Curt comes back in for a double clothesline. Off to BA as the Rednecks keep control with Curt nailing a quick HennigPlex to make it 3-3. Mysterio tried to dive in for a save but came in too fast and basically started crawling in slow motion for no logical reason.

So it's Konnan getting beaten down now with Kendall hitting a bad looking lariat and a slightly better looking slam. He misses a middle rope knee though and Konnan hits a rolling lariat of his own (called a DDT by Tony), followed by the facebuster for two. Rey dropkicks Kendall into a horrible "rollup" for the pin on Kendall. Barry DDTs Konnan for two as 4x4 and Chase beat up Kendall.

Everything breaks down with Barry going to the floor....and being carried off by Chase with Konnan following. For some reason this isn't a DQ and both guys are counted out. So it's Hennig vs. Swoll/Mysterio. Swoll comes in for some incredibly sloppy offense as Barry comes back in. Curt tries to bail but 4x4 stops him in his tracks. Back in and Swoll hits his stupid palm strike to the chest before bringing in Rey for the Jimmy Snuka/Andre the Giant big splash off the shoulders for the pin.

Rating: C-. Swoll is horrible. Like he's really, really bad, to the point that he can barely throw punches correctly. I understand that he was really new at this, but as WCW should have learned over the years, that's why he shouldn't be on a major show like this. The Soldiers continue to

act entirely like heels here, just like they have for most of this feud.

The announcers chat for a bit about the rest of the card.

We get Hak's challenge for the junkyard match.

Junkyard Invitational

Ciclope, Jerry Flynn, Johnny Grunge, Hak, Horace Hogan, Brian Knobs, Hugh Morrus, La Parka, Lord Steven Regal, Fit Finlay, Rocco Rock, Silver King, Squire David Taylor, and Mikey Whipwreck

They're in a junkyard, first person to climb over a fence wins. The place is huge so there's almost no way to see more than four or five people at once unless you go to a helicopter shots. Public Enemy (a surprise) flips a car over as I'm only going to be able to call big spots. There are barrels of fire everywhere. Jerry Flynn puts an electrical cord into an engine to make sparks fly out. Knobbs dives off one car for an elbow onto King on the roof of a van.

Finlay hits la Parka in the ribs with a bumper as Dave Taylor hits Morrus in the head with a trashcan lid. The annoyed look on Morrus' face as he just keeps walking is rather amusing. The camera shots are only lasting about ten seconds at most so it's hard to call much of anything. Jimmy Hart is running around in a yellow shirt and a hard hat. Rocco Rock is thrown into the window of a van. Morrus dives off a car with an elbow onto Rock because they're already repeating spots.

I think Ciclope dives off a car onto about six guys before they start throwing things at each other instead of doing anything coherent. Finlay goes Captain America by blocking a punch with a trashcan lid and hitting Horace in the face with it. Brian wraps Taylor in a tire as we're waiting on someone to try and win. Rocco and Horace make the first trip over with Horace making a last second save to keep Rock from escaping.

Silver King is bleeding from the arm as this just keeps going. Taylor has to dance out of a tire before Knobs and Hak put Finlay in a car. A forklift pops up and takes the car over to the crusher but Finlay gets out to prevent death. Of course the forklift hasn't been seen all match

until this point. Then another car blows up and Finlay climbs over the fence to win.

Rating: N/A. This wasn't wrestling, and quite frankly I'm really not sure what it was. Why in the world WCW thought this was a good idea is beyond me and I'm sure the live audience is going to be THRILLED after having sat there for fifteen minutes waiting on this to end. On top of all that, Finlay would hurt his leg soon after this at a house show (in a hardcore match of course) and be out for months, making the whole thing worthless. I can't imagine he's the only one to get injured in this mess either.

We recap the Triad vs. Saturn/Benoit. They fought each other, then they fought each other some more, then they had some singles matches, now they're having a title match. For some reason we get a bunch of clips of the eight man tag from Nitro which doesn't seem to be going anywhere, other than a boxing match. They're trying to tie this into the old vs. new feud, which doesn't even seem to be a thing anymore.

Tag Team Titles: Chris Benoit/Perry Saturn vs. Jersey Triad

The Triad is defending. Kanyon starts on the floor as Saturn and Page slug it out in the middle. It's Saturn taking over with a bunch of right hands before knocking Bigelow and Kanyon off the apron for good measure. Off to Bigelow vs. Benoit as the announcers call Benoit an uncrowned champion. Hasn't he been a three time champion by this point? Bam Bam gets dropped into the middle buckle and sent out to the floor for a meeting with his partners.

Back in and Kanyon fights out of a suplex from Saturn and knees him down against the ropes. He grabs the referee to block a German attempt, only to have Benoit chop him into a t-bone. Back to Benoit for the decapitation clothesline followed by a Liontamer (which he used before Jericho). A double clothesline drops Kanyon for two more as the challengers stay in full control. Benoit stomps Kanyon down in the corner and starts in on his leg.

Saturn drops a top rope legdrop for two but Page comes in without a tag to take over, sending Saturn to the floor for a triple team to take over. Bigelow comes in for a big suplex and a falling headbutt for two. Back to

Kanyon after Bigelow uses Flair's "how much time is left" trick. Kanyon drops a leg for one of the slowest two counts I can remember in a long time. The fans get distracted by something in the crowd so Bigelow puts Saturn in a chinlock.

Kanyon comes back in but gets crotched on the top, setting up a belly to belly superplex from Saturn. Benoit gets the hot tag and goes after Bigelow, only to have Page take him down with a top rope clothesline. Page is VERY pleased with this move, running out to the floor and celebrating like a mad man, even climbing onto the barricade. Back in and Page gets two off an elbow drop before it's off to Bigelow for some fat man offense.

Page comes in again and runs Benoit over for two with Saturn making the save. We get a front chancery from Page but Benoit drives him into the corner for the hot tag, which of course the referee doesn't see. That wicked sitout powerbomb from Page is good for two. Benoit finally suplexes Kanyon down but Bigelow breaks up a hot tag attempt. Bam Bam misses the moonsault though and we FINALLY get the hot tag to Saturn (which the camera doesn't catch).

Saturn cleans house with suplexes and clotheslines Page and Kanyon out to the floor. Everything breaks down again and Saturn hits a top rope splash, followed by the Swan Dive from Benoit but Page comes in off the top for the save. Saturn loads Page up with the Death Valley Driver but Kanyon throws powder in his face, only to have it get in Page's eyes too, causing him to Diamond Cut Kanyon. Bigelow makes the save but Benoit Germans Page for a VERY close two. Page throws in a metal trashcan as the referee gets bumped. He hits Kanyon by mistake but Bigelow comes in for a 3D on Saturn to retain the titles.

Rating: B+. Give that match a less messy finish and it's a classic. There was a lot of good stuff in here and the majority of it was due to how much time they were given. Everyone was allowed to get in there for awhile and the fans bought into the idea of two guys trying to fight against the big cheating team. They gave it a great effort and the whole thing just worked. Really good stuff here, though not enough to save this disaster of the show.

Clip of Judge Mills Lane agreeing to referee the boxing match. That's all of the recap because there was no reason for this to be a boxing match other than Piper barely being a wrestler anymore.

Roddy Piper vs. Buff Bagwell

Big time boxing referee Mills Lane is referee here to try to make people care. In case you've never seen him, just picture Mr. Strickland from Back to the Future. Piper has Flair in his corner. Buff's gloves are actually labeled "Buff's Left" and "Buff's Right". Bagwell sees Flair in Piper's corner, so he has someone to have his back: HIS MOM, "Judge Judy" Bagwell. And I give up. Seriously it was bad enough when this was boxing instead of Piper just doing a freaking job for Bagwell like he should be doing, but now BUFF'S MOM IS HERE???

Flair gives Bagwell a chance to leave but Buff reminds him of the pin off the Blockbuster a few weeks back. You know, when Flair put Bagwell over in the middle of the ring in the whole point of this entire story. The rounds are two minutes long here. Piper sticks his chin out to start until Buff hammers him into the corner. The fans are dead at this point if you couldn't guess. Bagwell tees off on Piper (well, as much as he can BECAUSE HE ISN'T A BOXER) to end the first round.

Flair sprays something on Piper's gloves in between the rounds as this continues to fall apart. Piper hits a few jabs to the face and Bagwell's eyes are burning. He gets punched down in the corner as Judy brings over a sponge to try and clean Buff's eyes out. Back up and Piper wildly swings until Buff knocks Piper down in the corner in an identical sequence from Piper vs. Mr. T. thirteen years ago, because that's what this is supposed to be...a tribute to I suppose? Piper gets up as round two ends.

I'm going to pause for a second here and give you a bit of context to what is about to happen. Fifteen months ago, WCW was still in control of the Monday Night Wars and hadn't lost a night in the ratings in nearly two years. Their last win was about nine months before this. Yeah they were in trouble, but it's not like they were so desperate for something good to happen that they had to go insane. A few weeks back, Buff Bagwell

hit his finishing move and pinned Ric Flair in the middle of the ring on Nitro, which should have been the start of a huge push for him. After all that, I give you the third round of this boxing match.

Piper jumps Bagwell in the corner and attacks Bagwell early, so his mother Judy gets in the ring and bites Piper's ear. She then dumps the spit bucket over Piper's head as Buff punches Flair off the apron. Buff goes up and hits the Blockbuster on Piper as Judy holds Flair on the apron, allowing Buff to pin Piper for the win. Judy chases the President of WCW around the ring after the match.

Rating: G. As in below an F and for GOOD FREAKING GRIEF THEY REALLY COULDN'T COME UP WITH ANYTHING BETTER THAN THIS??? Piper wasn't capable of doing a five minute match and doing a job for Bagwell? Does WCW really think that it's important enough to protect him from taking a fall in a wrestling match that they'll let him take a fall in a boxing match? Read that sentence back and see how insane it sounds. Now throw in Judy Bagwell and more hijinks than an episode of Looney Tunes and you see what happened to WCW in the summer of 1999.

We recap Nash/Sting vs. Savage/Sid. Savage being a woman beater and Nash potentially raping George is glossed over. On the other hand, the Fake Sting attacking Nash, causing Nash to go after Sting, even though the real Sting came out to beat up the Fake Sting, is left out with only the Fake Sting beating Nash down being shown. For some reason Nash wanted this to be a tag team match where anyone, including his partner, could pin him for the title. Again, this isn't mentioned in the video. We'll also ignore Nash saying he saw Sting driving the Hummer before we see that happening in the package.

WCW World Title: Sid Vicious/Randy Savage vs. Kevin Nash/Sting

Nash is defending in what is more like a handicap fatal fourway than a tag match if that makes sense. In theory Sting can only pin Nash for the title, meaning it's basically one on one on two. Thankfully Tony mentions the whole Sting can pin Nash and the real Sting coming out during the entrances. Yes, we've reached the point where Tony Schiavone is having to cover for the production team's goofs.

George (living up to the gorgeous moniker tonight) comes out in sunglasses but takes them off to reveal a black eye as she goes to stand in Nash's corner. The reason for the black eye isn't explained because that really wasn't something that should have happened, nor is it even referenced by the announcers. Savage and Sting start but Randy sees George changing corners and freaks out. Sting uses the chance to deck Savage and the fight is slowly on.

Off to Sid to face Sting as Tony explains the rules, making this match even more confusing that it was in the first place. Sting quickly knocks Sid out to the floor but Nash isn't interested in tagging. So in theory, if Nash doesn't get pinned, he doesn't lose the title? It's not like we've ever gotten a clear answer to that, though to be fair I doubt WCW thought it that far through. Sid and Savage start double teaming Sting with the big man putting on a bad looking camel clutch.

Savage comes in and spits at the champ, but thankfully doesn't hit his hair. Sting finally rolls away and makes the tag to Nash for all the usual offense. He has Savage in trouble but gives Sting a very hard tag to get out. Sting takes it outside and splashes the barricade before Savage takes him back inside for some choking. Tony points out that almost no one has tries to pin Nash yet, making the whole stipulation rather pointless.

Sid hooks one of the lamest chinlocks I've ever seen on Sting, who is nice enough to go down to the mat in a heap. Granted he might have fainted after hearing some of the nonsense they actually aired on this show. Sting fights up again and does the falling low blow spot, allowing for the hot tag off to Nash.

Everything breaks down and the girls come in, only to have Sting splash both of them plus Sid. Savage and Nash get splashed at the same time, allowing Sid to plant Sting with a chokeslam. George gets in and low blows Nash (SHOCK AND AWE, SHOCK AND AWE), setting up the big elbow from Savage for the pin and the title.

Rating: D-. I wonder if they bothered to tell everyone else in the match about the whole Sting can pin Nash rule, because it was NEVER attempted

and was a complete non factor. George's face turn (can you even call it that?) lasted all of twelve minutes, meaning she's picking the woman beater over the kidnapper and potential rapist. I can't believe I just had to type that, so I'll wrap it up by saying it's a horrible match.

Overall Rating: F. The fact that a REALLY good twenty three minute Tag Team Title match is needed to bring this show up to a failure tells you all you need to know. This show had eight matches. One of them was a joke with David Flair needing an army to beat Malenko, one wasn't wrestling because it was a big fight in a junkyard, and one was a boxing match. Two of the others were matches that belonged on Thunder at best, another one was a boring elimination tag, and one MADE NO FREAKING SENSE.

This show blew my mind in ways that I honestly didn't think were possible. Just let some of this stuff sink in for a few minutes. Roddy Piper apparently can't be trusted in a five minute match, we can't have a DQ anymore because Rick Steiner wouldn't be able to have a match break 10 seconds if we did, and we have to drop stipulations that are made less than three days before the match. WCW is dying before our eyes and it's kind of amazing to see in a morbid way.

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Thunder – July 8, 1999: Remind Me Why This Show Exists

Thunder

Date: July 8, 1999

Location: Jefferson County Civic Center, Birmingham, Alabama

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Larry Zbyszko

It's the last show before Bash at the Beach and things have gone from boring to completely insane. Thankfully this is one of the live shows which are usually far better, especially than next week's episode where it will have been taped before the PPV, meaning they can't spoil anything. Let's get to it.

The announcers recap Sunday's main event tag match.

Clips of the main event stuff from Monday which is still disturbing.

Here's Big Kev with something to say. He's been looking at the video from Nitro and is now sure that Sting was in on it. Therefore, using his power as champ, he's making Sunday's tag match a title match, meaning anyone, including Sting, can pin him for the title. Why they don't just make it a four way is beyond me but seeing how much they can screw this up should be interesting.

Dean Malenko comes into the Oval Office and yells at Flair for breaking up their PPV match due to a bad back. Flair says it's from carrying this company for the last twelve years. Anderson and Malenko bicker for a bit before Flair says that Dean may be the Man of 1000 Holds, but he's not Ric Flair. Point to the Nature Boy.

Clip from Nitro of Eddie's hunt for a thief.

Lenny Lane vs. Eddie Guerrero

Lodi's sign: "If you can read this, you ARE NOT from Alabama." They lock up to start and Lenny bails to the corner for a hug. Back in and Eddie fires off punches and uppercuts followed by a pair of dropkicks. Eddie throws him into the corner but gets backdropped to the apron, kicking the referee down in the process. With the referee down, the luchadors Eddie forced to unmask on Monday come out to beat Eddie down, giving Lenny the fluke pin.

Rating: D+. Thank goodness this is for a story, but you can see that Guerrero isn't going to get any higher up the card than being the big star who is stuck in the Cruiserweight division. The story is interesting and ties back into the LWO stuff (in a way), but Eddie should be higher up the card than he is and that's just not happening.

Jimmy Hart is in the back and invites La Parka and Silver King to join the Hardcore Invitational on Sunday.

Disco is in the ring with Gene and talks about his match on Sunday with Ernest Miller. Why they're fighting isn't made clear but Disco makes Mr. Miyagi and Tae-Bo jokes before promising a Brooklyn, New York beating.

Van Hammer vs. Al Green

They fight into the corner to start until Green grabs a slap to take over. Hammer throws him across the ring in response and clotheslines him out to the floor. That goes nowhere so Hammer kicks him in the face for two. The Alabama Slam and cobra clutch slam is good for the pin on Green. This was nothing.

Rick Steiner runs in and beats Hammer down post match.

Jimmy Hart tries to get Horace into the junkyard as well.

We get the Bret video from Monday.

Most of Bret's promo from Monday.

Brian Knobbs vs. Fit Finlay

Finlay jumps him to start but is quickly sent to the floor and into the steps. Jimmy Hart (he's a busy guy tonight) gets in a few cheap shots of his own but Finlay is able to reverse a whip into the barricade. He sends Brian into the post and goes for a table, drawing in Hugh Morrus and Jerry Flynn for the DQ.

Regal, La Parka, Silver King, Horace and Dave Taylor all come out to brawl. Remember people, this is to preview a match in a junkyard. Like, a real junkyard.

Gene is in the ring with Flair and all of his associates. Piper talks about Peter McNeley (a guy Mike Tyson knocked out in 30 seconds) making Bagwell look good this coming Sunday. Buff asked for the match (no he didn't) because Piper would kill him in a wrestling match. Flair talks about his match with Dean being canceled (despite it never being announced on the main shows) so instead, Dean gets a US Title shot. That's quite the punishment. If Dean loses on Sunday, Gene gets a night with Asya. Ok then.

Rap Is Crap video.

This Week in WCW Motorsports, now with Ricky Rachman.

Disco Inferno vs. Kidman

Kidman scores with a quick dropkick and clothesline. His Fameasser is countered though and Disco nails a clothesline of his own. A wristlock goes nowhere so they head outside as we hear that Regal is now in the junkyard match. That match sounds like it could be so bad that it's amazing.

Kidman scores with a dive but Disco grabs an atomic drop back inside, only to charge into a boot. You know you would think a match with these two would be a bit more entertaining. Kidman hits a high cross body and the Low Down for two. Cue Sonny and the Cat as Kidman gets two off a top rope bulldog. Not that it matters as Cat kicks Kidman with the red shoe for the disqualification.

Rating: D+. Every time they get close to giving me something to care

about, we get something like Sonny Onoo to screw it up. What happened to Kidman anyway? Oh that's right: this company is more about screaming HOOTY HOO than having Rey and Kidman tear the house down every night. Also, can we get a match to break five minutes tonight?

Disco lays out Cat post match.

The Triad comes out and says they'll win on Sunday because Benoit and Saturn have never come close to beating them.

Chris Benoit vs. Kanyon

This HAS to be better. Kanyon goes after him in the corner but gets taken down with chops. Benoit runs him over again but Kanyon rakes him in the eyes. That's fine with Benoit who snaps off a suplex to send Kanyon rolling out to the floor. We get a chase around the ring with Kanyon getting in first and stomping on the Canadian, only to eat more chops as a result.

They head outside again but WAIT A MINUTE. Jimmy Hart has gotten Mikey Whipwreck into the junkyard match. We're still not done with anything but the match as Tenay talks about Team Madness going insane in the back because they can't be on camera. Kanyon suplexes Benoit on the floor and takes him back inside, only for Benoit to fire off more chops.

Back up and Kanyon headbutts him down, setting up a middle rope Fameasser for two. We hit the chinlock for a bit before Benoit fights up, only to have his powerbomb countered into a sitout version from Kanyon for another near fall. Kanyon heads up top, only to get caught in a superplex to put both guys down. Back up and Benoit starts rolling Germans, only to get drilled in the face with an elbow.

Cue Bigelow with a title belt but Benoit whips Kanyon into the big guy to knock him off the apron. Chris loads up the Swan Dive but gets shoved off by Bam Bam. Now Saturn comes out to even things up but gets whipped into the barricade. Benoit hooks the Crossface but has to avoid Bigelow's flying headbutt. A dropkick puts the big man outside again and the Crossface makes Kanyon tap.

Rating: B-. The interference was a bit much but they let two talented guys have a good match for about ten minutes. It's not the best match in the world or anything but after the hour and a half that I had to sit through put this just a step below Steamboat vs. Flair. Kanyon hasn't been busting out much new stuff lately but he's still different enough to stand out in the sea of brawlers in WCW.

Page comes out and the Triad lays out Benoit and Saturn to make sure they don't lose any heat.

Here's Megadeth's performance from Monday to waste about five minutes.

Curt Hennig vs. Konnan

Konnan has to chase Bobby off the apron to start before kicking Curt in the ribs to break up a test of strength. A bulldog and dropkick put Hennig down as well, meaning we at least get some great selling. The less famous Windham interferes to give Curt control with all of his usual. Konnan comes back with the rolling clothesline and X Factor, only to have Hennig throw him outside. A huge brawl breaks out on the floor as Konnan hooks the Tequila Sunrise, only to have Barry come in with the cowbell to give Hennig a cheap win.

Overall Rating: D-. Well let's see. Eddie loses to Lenny Lane, one match broke five minutes, the show long story was Jimmy Hart adding people to the junkyard match, despite no affiliation with the guy running it, multiple matches for Sunday were either added or changed, and about a fourth of the show was spent on videos from Nitro. Someone remind me why this show exists.

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Lucha Underground – November 26, 2014: They're Slipping

Lucha Underground

Date: November 26, 2014

Location: Lucha Underground Arena, Los Angeles, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

Finally caught up here with a show I'll probably keep reviewing weekly. The interesting story now is likely going to be Mundo wondering why Puma didn't come out to help him, putting a strain on their tentative partnership. Other than that we have a lot of masked guys running around and flipping a lot, which is perfectly fine for the most part. Let's get to it.

We open with the usual recap from last week.

Konnan comes in to see Cueto on Puma's behalf. He isn't pleased with Puma being attacked last week but Cueto says they were acting on Big Ryck's orders. Konnan isn't sure if he believes that but wants Puma vs. Ryck in a street fight tonight. Cueto says he'll drink to that but Konnan takes the glass from him and drinks it himself.

Drago vs. Mil Muertes

Drago has a big black tongue to go with the dragon motif. The announcers already screw up their own continuity by saying this is Mil's first real

test, despite his first match being against Blue Demon Jr., who they treated like the greatest thing ever. Muertes jumps Drago to start and tries a powerslam but drives Drago's shoulder into the mat instead. Now it's Drago being thrown out to the floor as King Cuerno is looking on from the entrance. Apparently he's stalking his latest prey.

Back in and Muertes stays in control with a real powerslam for two. He charges into a superkick though and Drago fires off more kicks for two. A springboard DDT gets the same on Muertes but he spears Drago out of the air in a great looking crash. The Downward Spiral ends Drago a few seconds later.

Rating: C-. This was just a step above a squash but that spear looked great. Drago comes off like a midcard guy who seems to be like a Kofi Kingston: capable of doing some impressive looking stuff but comes up short in the big matches. Cuerno vs. Muertes could be a very interesting feud depending on how it's built up.

Muertes and Catrina leave so Cuerno comes out to stalk Drago. So much for the more interesting feud. Cuerno lays out Drago with a fireman's carry into a Michinoku Driver.

Video on Johnny Mundo. He won't take nonsense from anyone and is here because he thinks he's the best. This is mostly stuff we already know but it's a good idea to fill people in who didn't see him in WWE.

Catrina and Muertes in to see Cueto. She grabs the key around Cueto's neck and says you can't keep darkness locked away forever. Interesting indeed.

Son of Havoc vs. Mascarita Sagrada

Havoc has Ivelisse with him. She takes too long getting out of the ring though so Sagrada goes after Havoc to start fast. An armdrag puts Havoc down on the floor and Sagrada teases a big dive but he settles for countering a chokeslam into a rollup for two back inside. Havoc is ticked off though and throws Sagrada into the air for a big crash. A gorilla press drop into a standing moonsault gets no cover as Havoc would rather ram Sagrada's head into the mat. Some good looking woman with long hair

is watching from the entrance.

The small guy dives into a kick to the ribs for two with Havoc pulling him up. Ivelisse gets in a kick to the head of her own, earning her a dive a few moments later. Striker: "Payback is an Ivelisse!" Good line, but explaining it to Vampiro a few seconds later made me shake my head. Havoc goes out to check on her and gets a dive of his own to put all three down. Back in and Sagrada does his spin around into a rollup for the pin.

Rating: D+. Other than Ivelisse looking great, this really didn't do much for me. Much like last week, you run the risk of the fans thinking Havoc is a joke because of the loss to a guy Sagrada's size. Nothing much to see here and the announcers barely acknowledged the girl watching from the entrance.

Chavo Guerrero Jr. vs. Sexy Star

This is the fallout from a few weeks back when Chavo nailed Star with a chair in a rather violent act. Star looks all ticked off and...shoves him. Chavo shoves her in the face and pulls Star down by the hair like the villain he is. He sends her into the corner before kissing Star, earning him a slap to the face. A nice hurricanrana sends Chavo out to the floor and Star grabs a chair of her own and kicks the referee low when he tries to break it up.

Post match Pentagon Jr. comes out and picks up the chair, seemingly to hit Star. Cue Fenix for the save, likely setting up a tag match.

Big Ryck vs. Prince Puma

Street fight and Ryck has Cortez and Cisco in his corner. Puma says it's 3-1 but the lackeys head to the floor. He goes right after Ryck with rights and lefts but Ryck just blasts him with forearms. Ryck pulls Puma away from the ropes for a crash but misses a charge into the post. Castro and Cisco are quickly dispatched but something like an F5 is countered into a DDT, sending Ryck out to the floor.

Puma hits a huge dive to take everyone down but Cortez offers a

distraction, allowing Ryck to nail a big running clothesline. Cortez is busted open as Ryck kicks Puma in the back over and over. Cisco throws in a trashcan to be wedged into the corner. Puma is whipped back first into the can and a gorilla press drops him face first onto the turnbuckle. The goons come in again and Ryck sits in a chair as they pick Puma apart.

Puma finally backflips out of a double belly to back suplex and takes the lackeys down with a DDT/Downward Spiral. That's not it though as Puma kicks Ryck out of the chair, leaving Puma to take the kendo stick away from Cortez. A shot to Ryck's back just gets on his nerves though and he swats away a shot to the head. Puma gets blasted in the face as Cortez and Cisco throw in a ladder.

Ryck adds a table as the goons tie Puma in a Tree of Woe in the ladder. Not that it matters as Johnny Mundo dives off the wall and into the ring for a save. That looked awesome, even though he landed next to Ryck. Mundo throws the ladder onto Cortez and Cisco before spearing Ryck down and hammering away. Johnny grabs a chair but hits Puma by mistake, allowing Cisco and Cortez to hit their flapjack Codebreaker. A release Rock Bottom through the table is enough to end Puma.

Rating: C. Eh I've seen better. This was just your standard set of weapons but with Puma fighting in a handicap match instead of anything normal. It's clear that they're setting Puma up as a big deal, which is interesting given that you would think Mundo would be the first top star. Not bad here but it just kind of came and went.

Mundo checks on Puma to end the show.

Overall Rating: C-. This one didn't do much for me. It was much more about setting stuff up for the future than anything here and while that's good for down the line, it really doesn't do much at the present. The street fight was nothing of note and the rest of the matches were just kind of there. A lot of stuff has been set up for the future though and that's enough to keep me coming back.

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Thought of the Day: Reach Out And Touch No One

The other night I felt like watching Survivor Series 1989 for no apparent reason and something occurred to me when I watched the opening match. As the guys were coming out for the match, it's amazing how close the fans got to the wrestlers. They could often touch the guys on the back or high five them on the way to the ring. That still happens today, but it's when the wrestlers want to go over there due to how far away they are from the crowd. I understand why they do it now, but I miss having the wrestlers that close to the fans. It makes things so much more personable.

Lucha Underground – November 19, 2014: Lost In The Masked Shuffle

Lucha Underground

Date: November 19, 2014

Location: Lucha Underground Arena, Los Angeles, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

I'm finally getting caught up on this series and I'm actually glad that I am. The show has been consistently entertaining and making me want to see where the stories go, which is the most important thing you can do while you're still setting up a series. The big story tonight is Mundo vs. Big Rick, which could be interesting as a power vs. speed match. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Cueto going to war with Mundo and Johnny wanting to fight Big Rick this week.

A live band plays us in, which we really don't need. Thankfully it's just some quick shots of them instead of a song.

Sexy Star vs. Ivelisse

Before the match, Star (in Spanish with subtitles) calls Chavo a coward that needs a chair to beat her. She wants revenge on him for hurting both herself and Sagrada and is going to finish the Guerrero dynasty. Ivelisse says that Star got what she deserved for trying to fight with the boys. She gets in Star's face and thinks she's hiding an ugly face behind an ugly mask because Star knows Ivelisse is the toughest girl around here. Star slaps her in the face and the brawl is on. Vampiro: "This is anti-Diva!"

Ivelisse takes her down for some right hands but Star grabs a headlock. Looks Divaish to me so far. Star Matrixes under a clothesline and takes Ivelisse down with a hurricanrana. Ivelisse is fine with that and sends

Star face first into the middle buckle. The fans are completely behind Star as Striker goes on some tangent about the constellation of lust. Ivelisse slams her face first into the mat before kicking Star backwards with Star's legs underneath her for a painful looking fall.

We hit a chinlock with a knee in Star's back with Ivelisse even fish hooking her. Striker: "Kind of hot!" Star comes back with some chops and a Codebreaker to put both girls down. A rollup gets two on Ivelisse but she comes back with a LOUD slap. She chokes Star down and slams the masked head into the mat over and over, only to have Star come back with a cradle for the pin.

Rating: C. I stand by what I've said before: Ivelisse could have been a HUGE deal if TNA wasn't a bunch of nitwits. She's gorgeous, she can talk and she has a unique style. Insert your own joke about Barbarian's niece here. Striker drove me insane here again though and I'm sick of hearing his stupid lines over and over again.

Cueto is with Drago, who didn't win but didn't lose last week, so Drago gets one more chance tonight.

Pentagon Jr. vs. Fenix

Before the match, Pentagon says no one in Mexico respects him but Cueto is finally giving him a chance. Fenix will be the first example of what happens when you mess with him. Pentagon starts with some kicks to the ribs but gets sunset flipped for two. A standing moonsault gets two for Fenix as they're flying around very early. We hit a standoff and the fans give them a quick ovation. A headscissors sends Pentagon to the floor and Fenix hits a big cartwheel dive.

Back in and a springboard guillotine legdrop gets two for Fenix so Pentagon kicks him in the face for the same. Fenix climbs the corner and does some unnecessary springboards into a dropkick to put Pentagon down again. More springboards set up an armdrag to send Pentagon outside for a corkscrew dive. Back in and Pentagon jumps over Fenix into a Backstabber (Lung Blower according to Striker. Pest) but Fenix comes right back with a cutter for the same.

A half nelson into a kind of piledriver gets two more for Pentagon but they head outside for a punt to the face from Fenix. Back in again and Pentagon grabs a jumping wrap around neckbreaker for two and a rollup into a mat slam for the same. He takes too much time to get up top though, allowing Fenix to kick him in the head. A top rope C4 is enough to put Pentagon down for two, but we'll call it a pin despite his shoulder being about a foot and a half off the mat.

Rating: C. The high spots were good here but this was several steps below the previous match. At the end of the day, these really shouldn't be going eight minutes as they were clearly just doing spots near the end. It's entertaining, but there really isn't much substance here. Think of it as the fast food of wrestling.

King Cuerno (El Hijo Del Fantasma) is coming and looks like a vigilante lumberjack.

King Cuerno vs. Drago

Cuerno has a deer head on top of his own head. I don't mean a picture of one as it's about two feet off the top of his head. Striker takes another lame shot at WWE, saying you can't predict everything that's going to happen here. Cuerno keeps knocking Drago down to start but Drago comes back with an enziguri. A nice dropkick puts Drago down again but he sends Cuerno face first into the middle buckle.

Drago's headscissors is thrown off and it's time to look at the commentators again. Drago fires off some of the lamest kicks I've seen in a long time before Cuerno just throws the referee down. That's fine with Drago who uses him as a springboard for a hurricanrana to send the King outside. A big dive puts Cuerno down again but he knocks Drago down with a kick to the head, setting up a big suicide dive of his own. Back in and Drago does a bunch of flips into a nice looking rollup for a surprise pin.

Rating: C+. I liked it better than the previous match but I really wouldn't have had Cuerno lose here. Drago isn't bad, but Cuerno looks like he could be a future star. The problem here is this is the same style match we just saw. This one was better, but a lot of the match felt

like I saw it about ten minutes earlier.

Prince Puma is working out when Konnan comes in. Konnan tells Puma to stay out of the main event and not save Mundo no matter what happens.

Big Ryck vs. Johnny Mundo

Johnny fires off a kick to the leg to start but a hard shoulder block puts him down. Mundo misses a splash in the corner and Ryck just pounds him down. He throws Johnny across the ring but Mundo flips over and lands on his feet in a nice counter. That's fine with Ryck who takes Mundo down again and chokes with a boot.

We hit a neck crank on Mundo but he kicks Ryck in the head to escape. Back up and Mundo hammers away in the corner as well before the Moonlight Drive connects for two. There's the Flying Chuck for two more but we cut to Cisco and Cortez attacking Puma in the back. They quickly hit the ring to break up the End of the World and that's a DQ.

Rating: C. This wasn't bad but it didn't have time to go anywhere. Puma getting beaten down keeps things a bit mysterious as he might not have come out otherwise. Ryck is a good option as a huge monster, even though he's about as unpolished of an in ring performer as you'll find with his experience.

Cortez and Cisco put Mundo through a table to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. This was still good and entertaining but it was almost all in ring stuff tonight instead of the story advancement. That's not a bad thing, but when you have a promotion with a good deal of similar guys (so far at least), it can get a bit dull to sit through. This worked well enough though and I like where this place is going so far.

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Lucha Underground – November 12, 2014: Viva El Nitro Flashback

Lucha Underground

Date: November 12, 2014

Location: Lucha Underground Arena, Los Angeles, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

Off to episode three now as this promotion is actually looking good to start. The main story seems to be Chavo Guerrero as a monster heel, even though he's 0-1 in singles matches so far. I'm assuming he's going crazy due to his family's legacy wearing him down, but it could be that he watched his TNA promos and has been bored out of his mind. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Chavo's loss on the first show and then him going psycho last week. The other major stories are covered as well.

Konnan is in Cueto's office and says he's bringing in three new guys: Fenix, Pentagon Jr. and Drago. Cueto is worried about Konnan's recent visa issues but Konnan assures him that they're cleared up. The boss puts those three guys in a triple threat tonight, which pleases Konnan very much.

Blue Demon Jr. is in stable condition at the hospital after last week.

Here's Cueto to open things up. He's heard people complaining about a lack of lucha in Lucha Underground. Well tonight he's going to fix that with this man: El Mariachi Loco. He plays a mean trumpet but he's crazy as well. Dario discovered him at his favorite Mexican restaurant, and maybe he'll play a song after his match.

El Mariachi Loco vs. Mascarita Sagrada

Sagrada is one of the most famous mini wrestlers of all time. Mariachi asks for time out as soon as the bell rings before asking for a test of strength. That goes as well as you would expect so Sagrada dropkicks his knee out and hits a spinning headscissors to take over. An armdrag sends Mariachi to the floor, setting up a suicide cannonball. Back in and Sagrada nails a top rope hurricanrana for two.

Mariachi has had enough of this and throws Sagrada down by the ears to take over. He nails Sagrada a few more times and dances a bit before planting Sagrada down. Sagrada avoids a swanton and plants him with a spinning DDT. Back up and he tries another but has to settle for a guillotine into a small package to pin Mariachi.

Rating: D+. Here's the thing: these matches can be fun and I get that they're a bigger deal in Mexico, but small wrestlers are comedy guys in America. You can explain the history and tradition all you want, but most fans are going to see them as comedy guys and people who lose to them are going to be jokes. They have to be careful with these things or fans are going to stop caring when these segments come on.

Chavo comes in and destroys Sagrada in a far less violent attack than last week.

Video of Chavo's path of rage in the last two weeks.

We get a sitdown interview with Chavo, conducted by Vampiro. He thinks Chavo has always been riding on the Guerrero's coattails. Chavo says he's been living through his family and for the first time he's going to do it his own way. Vampiro brings up Chavo tapping out in the first Lucha Underground match. Guerrero says Demon Jr. is only famous for his father and that he's here to make his own name. He'll do that however he can and

Demon knows that Chavo is better than he is.

After a break, Chavo comes up to see Konnan. Apparently the people in Mexico aren't happy with what Chavo did to Demon and it's going to get worse when they find out what happened to Sagrada. Konnan leaves and Catrina comes up to kiss his cheek, saying Muertes is coming for him.

Video on Mil Muertes. He was trapped in the rubble caused by an earthquake in 1985 but the coldness and death comforted him. That day, he changed from Pasquel Mendoza, but now he's Mil Muertes. That's certainly a different kind of origin story.

Ricky Mandel vs. Mil Muertes

Mandel sidesteps Muertes to start and fires off some right hands, only to get speared in half. Some chops in the corner allow Catrina to snap Mandel's throat across the middle rope. Striker enjoys Catrina slapping the mat. Mandel makes a brief comeback but dives into a right hand to the face, setting up a Downward Spiral for the pin. Just a squash.

Cortez and Cisco don't let Johnny Mundo in to see Cueto. That earns Cisco a superkick and Cortez a ram into the wall, allowing Mundo to get into the boss' office. He wants Big Rick next week and Cueto seems to be ok with it.

Big Rick takes money from Cueto, who wants Mundo in the hospital next week.

Weekly video on Prince Puma without much new information.

Pentagon Jr. vs. Drago vs. Fenix

Drago is a blue dragon with a cool looking match, Pentagon looks like a combination of Super Calo and La Parka, and Fenix has rooster spikes on his head. One fall to a finish. Pentagon quickly kicks both guys to the floor and dives over the top to knock them down again. Fenix kicks him in the face to stop a charge though, right before he backdrops Drago onto Pentagon.

With both guys on the floor, Fenix busts out Hector Garza's corkscrew

dive to the outside. Back inside, Drago and Fenix both miss some strikes until Drago hits a spinning DDT. Pentagon gets back in but misses a big kick, allowing Fenix to hit a very spinny and flippy armdrag. Drago is still on the ground as Pentagon throws Fenix into the air, allowing Fenix to flip forward into a hurricanrana. Awesome looking spot.

Drago comes back in for a running flip DDT, only to have Pentagon hit a kind of gutwrench piledriver for two. Fenix takes Pentagon down with a Tajiri handspring into a cutter ala Jay Lethal, which I still can't stand. Everyone is down for a bit until Drago gets caught in a Tree of Woe, allowing Fenix to take Pentagon down in a huge top rope hurricanrana. Fenix counters a rollup but gets caught in a backstabber from Drago.

Pentagon rolls out to the floor for a huge dive from Dragon. Fenix one ups both of them though by climbing onto a very high wall for a VERY HUGE dive to take both guys down. Back in and Fenix charges into the post, setting up a package piledriver from Pentagon to Drago. A reverse hurricanrana from Fenix to Pentagon is enough for the pin.

Rating: B. Take three guys, give them about eight minutes and let them go insane. It wasn't supposed to be anything technically sound or coherent and there's nothing wrong with that. It's exciting and the kind of thing that's going to make the fans want to come back, which is the kind of thing you want when it's still very early in a series.

In the office, we get an inner monologue from Cueto about how he needs to deal with Mundo. Someone comes in and stands in front of him. Cueto looks at the key around his neck and says he isn't afraid of anyone, including whoever is in standing there.

Overall Rating: C+. This show gets more like NXT every week and that's a good thing. We have regular stories that bring in new characters to keep things fresh and a bunch of different stories going on at once. Good episode here and I want to keep going with the series, which is more than I can say about some wrestling I watch anymore.

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Smackdown – November 28, 2014: House Show Badness

Smackdown

Date: November 28, 2014

Location: Allen County War Memorial Coliseum, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Commentators: John Bradshaw Layfield, Michael Cole, Tom Phillips

The Authority is gone, for now at least, and much like Raw we don't have a permanent boss. There's a chance that WWE will just use the same rotating boss idea like they're doing on Raw, because goodness knows wrestling fans just aren't smart enough to get by without a GM pointing the way. Let's get to it.

We open with a Sting montage. That's still so strange to see in WWE.

Opening sequence.

First up is MizTV with Miz saying he became WWE Tag Team Champion at

Survivor Series. The fans of course cheer for Mizdow. Tonight's guest is Big Show and we see a clip of Rowan knocking him to the floor on Monday. Miz says a lot of people aren't happy with Big Show but the only problem Miz sees is that Show joined Team Cena. Show is so glad that someone finally gets it. He had to look out for himself because no one else will and no one knows his situation but him.

Cue Daniel Bryan for an interruption and a huge ovation. On Monday, Show said that if anyone has something to say, they should come say it to his face. Well Bryan has something to say: he's in charge tonight. First of all, we're going to have Ryback vs. Seth Rollins. That's not all though, as a title is going to be defended tonight when Luke Harper defends against Dolph Ziggler.

Miz tells Daniel to stop stealing his spotlight. Bryan: "Mizdow already did that." Show wants Bryan out, but Daniel has something for Big Show too. On Monday, Rusev refused to say the Pledge of Allegiance, so tonight he's defending the US Title in a 20 man battle royal, which starts right now.

US Title: Battle Royal

Rusev, Big Show, Miz, Damien Mizdow, Erick Rowan, Jimmy Uso, Jey Uso, Diego, Fernando, Titus O'Neil, Jack Swagger, Heath Slater, Tyson Kidd, Adam Rose, Sin Cara, Cesaro, Goldust, Stardust, Justin Gabriel, Curtis Axel

It's a huge mess to start with Show crushing Los Matadores in the corner before throwing Gabriel and Cara out with ease. Rowan does the same to Slater and Cesaro punches Axel over the top. Los Matadores throw out Rose but Show tosses both of them at the same time. We get the showdown with Rowan and Big Show and Erick gets the better of it by knocking Show into the corner and eliminating him pretty easily. Show isn't done though as he grabs Rowan from behind, allowing Rusev to dump him.

A bunch of guys go after Rusev to no avail as we take a break. Back with Miz saving himself and no new eliminations as far as I can tell. We have Jimmy Uso, Jey Uso, Tyson Kidd, Cesaro, Miz, Damien Mizdow, Stardust, Goldust, Rusev, Titus O'Neil and Jack Swagger to go. Stardust low bridges

Miz to the floor so Mizdow eliminates himself. Swagger puts out the Dusts before Titus knocks Jimmy out.

Jey dumps Titus, Kidd eliminates Jey and we're down to four: Swagger, Kidd, Cesaro and Rusev. Everyone goes after Swagger but he fights his way off the and back inside. He throws all three evil foreigners into the corner and gives Rusev the Vader Bomb, only to have to save himself from Cesaro. Kidd dives at Jack but gets dumped, allowing Cesaro to send Swagger to the apron. He backdrops Cesaro out but Rusev hits the running superkick to eliminate Swagger and retain at 13:27.

Rating: D+. This was a fast moving battle royal that didn't have any significant threat to the champ. Show and Rowan could have won just on size and power alone but Rusev is going to have the title a lot longer than he has so far. You could tell there wasn't going to be much here with all those tag teams in there though.

Kane is working merchandise tonight when Santino comes up. He mocks Kane's Ryback shirt, gets stared at, and runs away.

Bray Wyatt is here for a chat. When Ambrose started climbing that ladder on Sunday, he looked like an angel climbing up to Heaven. It almost brought a smile to Bray's face, but there's not enough room for people like them up there. He could feel those chairs crashing down on him and it almost made him think he failed Dean for the first time. They have reached the point of no return and what happens next will change Ambrose. Tables, ladders and chairs. Bray says it over and over because he's going to enjoy torturing Ambrose's body with all those things. Follow the buzzards.

TLC ad, set to Jingle Bells.

Nikki Bella vs. Emma

Non-title. Nikki slams Emma down with ease but gets caught in the Dilemma for a few seconds. A big slap puts the champ down but Emma runs into an elbow to the jaw. Rack Attack ends this at 1:29.

Post match Nikki has Brie hold the title and say it's time to hear the

truth about AJ Lee. We've heard her sob story over and over, but Nikki has worked harder. She's what a real Divas Champion looks like and AJ will always be that pathetic little girl from New Jersey. AJ runs in and nails Brie as Nikki bails. Nikki had good passion in her promo, but trying to take her seriously as this hard working woman who has clawed her way to the top cracks me up every time.

Kane has destroyed the merchandise stand.

Ryback vs. Seth Rollins

Ryback quickly shoves him down so Rollins grabs a headlock to take away the momentum. A slam sends Rollins rolling to the floor but he comes back in for some unsold chops. Ryback gets all fired up but misses a charge and goes shoulder first into the post. Back in and Rollins nails a dropkick for two and puts on a front facelock. Rollins fights out of a quick Shell Shock attempt and hits the Downward Spiral into the corner for two. They head outside with Ryback going after Mercury, only to have Rollins send him into the steps as we take a break.

Back with Rollins holding a headlock until Ryback lifts him up into a kind of slingshot belly to back suplex. Ryback's powerbomb is escaped and an enziguri connects, followed by a superkick for two. Seth misses a splash in the corner so Ryback lifts him up, only to be countered into a running buckle bomb for two. That was a surprising power display from Rollins. The big guy backdrops Rollins onto the Stooges before planting him with a spinebuster back inside. There's the Meat Hook but Kane runs in for the DQ at 14:46.

Rating: C-. They telegraphed the ending with that shot of the destroyed merchandise stand and the match felt like it was just killing time until we got to this point. That and Kane runs in on at least a match a week anymore so you had to know this was coming. At least Ryback should be able to destroy him in a few weeks.

Rollins and Kane take Ryback down and Kane destroys him with a chair.

Curtis Axel/Slater Gator vs. New Day

New Day is very excited to be making their debut here. Woods dropkicks Axel down to start before bringing Kofi in to kick him in the chest. Big E. nails the Warrior Splash but stops to wipe the sweat off his face. Axel finally takes Xavier down and it's off to Slater for some stomps to the chest. The heels start taking over until Woods flips out of a suplex and tags out to Kofi. Everything breaks down and Big E. backdrops Kofi onto Titus and Axel. Back in and a combination top rope DDT/Big Ending puts Slater away at 3:23.

Rating: D+. This wasn't bad but what are you expecting from two former Intercontinental Champions and Woods? That's the problem with a team like this: two of the three members have already had success, so it's not like them beating a team of jobbers really means anything. It's not a bad idea but they need to actually go somewhere instead of acting like these wins mean much.

Recap of the Authority having to leave and Bryan's revenge on all of the Team Authority members.

Bryan makes Ryback vs. Kane in a Chairs match for TLC. Oh and YES he will be back soon.

Stardust says the Cosmic Key is gone but their anguish goes on and on. He says each day is part of the endless march to oblivion and welcome to the Black Hole. Goldust declares that darkness has fallen on the New Day. There's the first feud.

Intercontinental Title: Dolph Ziggler vs. Luke Harper

Ziggler is challenging and goes right at Harper with a rollup like he beat him with on Sunday. A dropkick puts Luke on the floor and we take an early break. Back with Ziggler fighting back with Cole saying it's rally time. A high cross body gets two but Harper sends him face first into the buckle. We hit the chinlock from the champ but Ziggler hits a quick jawbreaker. Back up and Ziggler hammers away before getting two off the big elbow. The Fameasser is countered but Dolph slips out of a powerbomb and hits the running DDT for two.

Harper gets the same off the sitout Boss Man Slam and Ziggler nails a

Fameasser for yet another two. Luke comes back with the big boot and Batista Bomb for two more and Harper is getting shocked. Why he's shocked I'm not sure as that's the third time that combination has gotten a near fall. They head outside with Ziggler being launched over the announcers' table, only to pop up with a superkick, allowing him to beat the count for the win at 10:52.

Rating: C+. Nice match here as these two have good chemistry and Ziggler can take big bumps like almost no other. Harper is going to be a good dragon for someone to slay and take the belt but I can't imagine him as a long term champion. They'll likely have a ladder match at the pay per view which should be fun.

Post match Harper lays Ziggler out with the discus lariat but takes too long getting the belt, allowing Ziggler to hit the Zig Zag to end the show.

Overall Rating: C-. This felt like a B house show that was filmed and aired on a Friday night. Nothing on here meant anything and the only thing that mattered was Ryback vs. Kane being announced for the pay per view. That being said, it wasn't really bad or anything, but it's back to the old Smackdown standard: it came, it aired for two hours, it had some passable matches and I'm never going to think of it again. That makes it far more dull than bad, which isn't necessarily a good thing.

Results

Rusev won a battle royal, last eliminating Jack Swagger

Nikki Bella b. Emma – Rack Attack

Ryback b. Seth Rollins via DQ when Kane interfered

New Day b. Curtis Axel/Slater Gator – Big Ending/Top rope DDT combination to Slater

Dolph Ziggler b. Luke Harper via countout

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews, check out my website at

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Complete Monday Night Raw Reviews– 1998

Complete Monday Night Raw Reviews – 2001

History of In Your House

Let me know if you have any questions.

KB