

Monday Nitro – December 4, 2000: Those Little Teases

Monday Nitro #269

Date: December 4, 2000

Location: Pershing Auditorium, Lincoln, Nebraska

Attendance: 3,433

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mark Madden, Scott Hudson

Starrcade is rapidly approaching and WCW is clearly on its (final) last legs. We're building towards a double main event of Goldberg vs. Lex Luger II and Scott Steiner vs. Sid for the World Title. If you need a better reason than that to explain why WCW is in the shape it's in, you haven't been paying close enough attention. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of most of the events from Mayhem and the fallout last week.

The Thrillers are in the back and they run into...oh sweet goodness they run into OKLAHOMA, who is reading a speech tonight which is going to require security. TNA wishes they could do this kind of stupid stuff.

Opening sequence.

Here's Oklahoma to get things going and for some reason he's carrying a bowl. He introduces himself a few times and then stops so the fans can chant for the University of Nebraska. Tony says we only have six minutes for this segment to further destroy any feeling of legitimacy this might have and make me scream SIX MINUTES??? Apparently the bowl is here so the fans can be close to a bowl for a change.

After that hilarious sports commentary, Oklahoma says he's here to issue a statement from Mike Sanders on Sid Vicious. After spending a minute or so talking about how awesome the security is, the announcement is that Sid isn't allowed in the building. Cue Sid to beat up Oklahoma, which draws out Sanders with security to arrest Sid. Somehow we're over eleven minutes into the show and the top face in the promotion (we're in

trouble) has been arrested. This is totally like Austin right?

After a break, Scott Steiner arrives and tells Sanders he wants Sid tonight. Sanders blames Flair for Sid being arrested so Steiner says no one is safe tonight.

Konnan isn't worried about facing Jeff Jarrett tonight and wants a six man street fight at Starrcade.

Chavo Guerrero Jr. vs. Kwee Wee

Yes it's Chavo again, which at least means I don't have to try to keep Lieutenant Loco and Corporal Cajun straight anymore. Chavo breaks up the pre-match kiss with Paisley and we're off in a hurry. Kwee Wee's throat is snapped across the top rope which seems to wake him up for some right hands to the face. Something like a tilt-a-whirl faceplant gets two but Chavo floats over into a DDT. Chavo goes after Paisley with a chair and the distraction lets Kwee Wee get in a sunset flip for two. Some hero. A quick launch into the buckle sets up a brainbuster to give Chavo the pin.

Rating: C-. I liked this more than I was expecting to as the more aggressive Chavo was one of the only good things in the last few months of WCW. Kwee Wee continues to be one of the guys who was so crushed by a horrible gimmick that he couldn't showcase all the natural talent he clearly has.

Sanders tells Flair what happened with Sid and Steiner so Ric is going to get Sid out of jail before the end of the show. At least going into Wrestlemania X7 Undertaker said it would take him twelve hours to get out of jail for going after HHH.

Kronik has a new client.

General Rection says what happened to Torrie was an accident because that's now what MIA is all about. He isn't worried about Chavo's new attitude because tonight he has a World Title match. I don't remember the last time the "US Champion is #1 contender" rule was enforced but I guess this is bringing it out of mothballs one last time.

Hardcore Title: Elix Skipper vs. Crowbar

Crowbar is defending and Storm wants the weapons taken away from ringside. This brings out the Cat and Ms. Jones while Storm sits in on commentary. Cat sits in as well to give us a five person booth. Daffney comes out with Crowbar to make sure this is as crowded as possible. Crowbar pulls out a bunch of weapons from under the ring, allowing Skipper to get in a few cheap shots to take over.

A shot with a steering wheel misses for the champ as Storm FINALLY talks about how Skipper didn't bring these weapons into the ring. Duggan and Major Gunns get in some cheap shots so it's time for a catfight. Cat and Madden get in a fight so Storm jumps Cat, only to have Duggan hit Storm by mistake. Crowbar gives Skipper the Mindbender over a car bumper for the pin to retain.

Jimmy Hart's DJ challenge. Why it says this is a "paid paid" announcement from Jimmy Hart isn't clear but I'd assume it's because WCW is really bad at this stuff.

Stacy Keibler and David Flair are in the back. She's happy to be back but won't say who the father is. Ric comes in and has security escort them out because of the whole Steiner thing.

Reno asks Marie why his family has ignored him since he got out of jail. She's just glad she has his brother back.

We look back at Luger attacking Goldberg on Monday and then running on Thunder.

Here's Lex Luger with a copy of Goldberg's book. Luger thanks the fans as they chant for Goldberg and talks about how Goldberg has thirteen days left in his career, unless he can win 150 matches in less than two weeks. Luger finally gets to the point as he talks about Sgt. Dwayne Bruce (Sarge, better known as Sgt. Buddy Lee Parker), the man who trained Goldberg to be a wrestler.

We get a selection from the book with Luger altering a bit of the book, much to Sarge's annoyance. The only think I can think of is how much Sarge looks like a small Brock Lesnar. Lex rambles on for a LONG time about how poor Sarge is to finally wrap this up. I have no idea why I'm

supposed to care about a former sergeant/leprechaun who trained Goldberg but for some reason this is what we're getting instead of Goldberg in the World Title match.

Norman Smiley is with one of the Nitro Girls when Scott Steiner storms in. Steiner asks Norman who he has tonight. That would be Goldberg so Steiner hits Norman with a pipe.

Shane Douglas promises to take out Hugh Morrus just like Morrus did to Torrie Wilson.

Morrus and AWALL say they have business tonight but find Corporal Cajun talking with Chavo. This isn't cool of course.

Tag Team Titles: Insiders vs. 3 Count

So last week wasn't a title match. Good to know. The Insiders are defending while Moore and Helms are looking forward to their three team ladder match for the #1 contendership to the Cruiserweight Title. Nash throws Moore into the corner to start and drives knees into the ribs. Oh yeah we're firmly in squash territory here and it's even worse than it sounds.

A LOUD WE WANT HALL chant starts up and we cut to Mike Sanders who says he has something big planned for the champs. Back in the ring it's Page giving Helms the Pancake for two. A double suplex puts Page down as the fans (in theory at least) chant for DDP. The hot tag brings in Nash a few seconds later, setting up Snake Eyes and a super Diamond Cutter to put both guys down for the pin to retain the titles.

Rating: D-. Does this one really need an explanation? You have a team who is going to be competing for a title shot at the biggest show of the year getting squashed in less than five minutes by two veterans who probably just saw the titles and said "yeah we'll have those this week". Either give this match some time and let it be competitive (perhaps the time given to freaking Oklahoma where he made fun of Nebraska football fans) or just bring in local jobbers. I know it doesn't mean anything now but this stuff is so endemic of one of WCW's biggest problems.

Speaking of problems, post match here are Sanders and the Perfect Event to bring out Ric Flair. We see a clip from the title change at the pay per view showing the Insiders pinned the illegal man. Therefore, the titles are returned to the Perfect Event, likely so the Insiders can beat them again. Flair makes the rematch for Starrcade, which should complete the double beating.

Bam Bam Bigelow attacks Mike Awesome in the parking lot.

Reno vs. Kronik

This is the match where Kronik was hired but the referee throws it out after less than thirty seconds of double teaming.

Kronik keeps beating on him until Vito makes the save. Marie comes out to check on Reno as Vito walks away.

Glacier video.

Crowbar tells Daffney that they made a great team. She offers him a ride home but two women come up to leave with him instead. Daffney isn't pleased.

Flair tells security to watch out everywhere for Steiner.

We see Goldberg giving a kid a WCW World Title belt on the Maury show.

Goldberg vs. MI Smooth

Forty nine seconds this time and Goldberg hugs Sarge after the latest squash.

Steiner says Flair is next.

Jeff Jarrett vs. Konnan

Jarrett accepts the Animals' challenge for Starrcade but wants the Animals ejected before we get going. Konnan says it's fine so Jeff jumps him from behind. A kick to the ribs and an X-Factor sends Jarrett out to the floor. Jarrett chairs him in the back to take over but Konnan gets in a shot to the knee. It's a ruse of course as the Harris Twins come in for

an H Bomb on Konnan, setting up the Stroke to give Jeff the quick pin.

WCW World Title: Scott Steiner vs. General Rection

Rection is challenging. Before the match, Steiner rants about all the guys he's put on the shelf. Now it's SID of all people so he wants Sid out here after this match. If Sid isn't here, Steiner is coming after Flair. Scott jumps Rection during the entrance so Rection comes back with heavy forearms and a top rope clothesline. Midajah jumps on Rection's back (Madden: "The luchador with implants.") for the distraction and Scott takes over again.

That means more forearms and kicks to the ribs with a spinning belly to belly to refresh things a bit. We get the Tree of Woe choke for a bit but Rection backdrops out of a tiger bomb. Rection hammers away and knocks Steiner to the floor for a plancha. Back in and a powerslam sets up the moonsault for two, making it clear that Rection has no chance here. Another moonsault hits knees though and the Recliner makes Rection tap in a hurry.

Rating: D+. The match could have been worse but it continues the problem of building someone up only to crush them all over again. I'm fine with Steiner getting a big title defense but there was no reason to have the US Champion take a clean loss like this. Was there no one else on the roster that could have been in this spot? No one at all? Just more bad decision making which isn't even a surprise at this point.

Post match Steiner heads to the back to get Flair as Shane Douglas comes in to hit Rection with a chain. Steiner finds Arn Anderson and beats him down to the ring for the Recliner. Flair tries to get out for help but Goldberg runs out instead, only to get jumped by Luger. You know, the guy who was just standing at ringside in case this happened. After that tease of Goldberg vs. Steiner in what should be the main event, Sid comes out but is held back by security to end the show.

Overall Rating: D-. The booking here is such a disaster that there's almost no defending it. I have no idea why I'd want to see what they've got set up for Starrcade with mostly recaps from a show that wasn't very good in the first place. The wrestling was its usual bad stuff that you

had to expect but the real problem here is how badly they're doing everything else. Steiner's push has been acceptable but it should be setting up a showdown with Goldberg instead of Sid. Storyline or whatever aside, there's no logical reason to not be setting that up. As usual, it's a horribly run organization which has been the case for years now.

Thunder – November 29, 2000: They Quit

Thunder

Date: November 29, 2000

Location: Metro Center, Moline, Illinois

Attendance: 3,800

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Tony Schiavone, Mark Madden

We're now in the post Stevie Ray era so I'm really not sure how well we're going to be able to survive. It's just such a sad world anymore and they might have to just close the promotion to let us heal. We're rapidly approaching Starrcade and the main event is going to be Sid vs. Scott Steiner because we live in a random and chaotic universe. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Nitro's highlights, which included Sid Vicious in a turtleneck.

Here's Ric Flair to get things going. Ric praises the idea of Steiner defending the title against Sid at Starrcade but tonight it's Buff Bagwell getting a shot. Based off what exactly? Anyway he brings out Sid, who says he defended that champion night after night (yes defended the champion). Sid has been watching from home and has seen Booker T. and General Rection take over in his place. Steiner is in the wrong place at the wrong time, which Sid somehow tries to tie into the Wright Brothers.

Shane Douglas wants the US Title so he can move on to the World Title. Torrie tells Pamela to not hate her because she's beautiful. Pamela isn't sure what to think of this and I'm much more on Torrie's side here. Pamela is the hot blonde but Torrie is just on another level.

Lance Storm/Elix Skipper vs. Jung Dragons

Storm still has taped up ribs and seems to blame Duggan for the loss to Yang on Monday. The Dragons and Madden take turns oogling Leia Meow as Skipper rolls Yang up for two to start. Yang climbs the corner into an armdrag before it's off to Kaz for an enziguri. The Canadians regroup on the floor so the Dragons do some impressions to entertain the crowd.

Back in and Storm kicks Kaz in the back of the head to take over, allowing Skipper to walk the ropes into a hurricanrana. Kaz flips out of a powerbomb though and kicks a seated Elix in the head for the tag off to Yang. House is cleaned until a low blow gives Skipper a near fall as everything breaks down. Storm crotches Kaz on top so Skipper can hit a good looking butterfly superplex. The women have the required catfight as the Cat comes out to take care of Duggan. A top rope backsplash/legdrop is enough to put Skipper away.

Rating: C. Fun match but the announcers still act like the idea of the Dragons beating anyone other than Noble and Karagias or 3 Count is unthinkable. The match was fine for a high flying fight though which is something often overlooked about Team Canada: as much as people remember Storm's promos and catchphrases, both he and Skipper could go very well in the ring.

Storm yells at Duggan.

General Rection would love to fight Shane and AWALL wants Bam Bam Bigelow again.

Lex Luger vs. Norman Smiley

They bring Smiley back for this? Madden: "Luger has the body fat of a paperclip." Tony: "A paperclip has body fat?" Norman gets in a dropkick to frustrate Luger early on, followed by a cross body for two. They head

outside with Luger sending him into the barricade and gets two off a belly to back suplex. Norman comes back with the spinning slam and the spanking dance, only to have Luger forearm him low. The forearm sets up the torture rack to end Norman.

Rating: D. Again: they brought Norman back for this? That's what Smiley gets for being talented and popular I guess, because somehow doing the opposite got Luger a two match feud with Goldberg of all people. As usual, WCW has no idea which people to push (not to say that Smiley should get a big push of course) as Luger has no business being there and it's been obvious since the day he returned.

Post match Luger keeps Norman in the hold until Goldberg makes the save.

Bigelow calls AWALL a freak and wants to hurt him in a tables match.

Crowbar is getting a massage when one of the Nitro Girls delivers him a present: a golden pipe wrench. Ok then.

Reno and Marie are with Pamela, who asks if they're dating. Apparently they're actually brother and sister, which makes Pamela realize that Reno and Vito are BROTHERS. Somehow this was never mentioned before, though it shouldn't be that hard for either of them to figure out.

Kronik seems to have a new client.

Jeff Jarrett has the Harris Brothers to fight the Filthy Animals.

Hardcore Title: Crowbar vs. David Flair

Crowbar is defending and has that wrench in his belt. The regular belt, not the title belt. They fight over a trashcan to start and David actually gets the better of it early on. Therefore, it's time to hit the champ in the face with a mop. Crowbar comes back with the wrench but the mop is right there for the save because they're the exact same thing.

It's time for a paint tray with Crowbar beating David out to the floor and putting a chair on top of him for a Vader Bomb. Flair comes back with a chair shot of his own but the Figure Four is broken up by with a cookie sheet. Just picture Dusty and Ric doing that and see if you don't chuckle

or cry at least a little bit. Crowbar pops up and hits him with the wrench for the pin to retain.

Rating: D-. I'm still waiting on a point to this division other than giving the overly talented Crowbar something worthless to do. David is still insane and therefore not very interesting as you can only see that sort of thing so often, especially when the running joke seems to be that he's not very good but tries so hard. Naturally since it's professional wrestling, that sort of effort is to be mocked instead of rewarded or nurtured.

Post match Stacy Keibler and the trainer check on David, who wants to know about the wrench.

US Title: General Rection vs. Shane Douglas

Shane, with Torrie, is challenging and they get in their standard pre-match stuff about how much better they are than all of us. Douglas is smart enough to go after the knee to start and gets in a few shots to slow the champion down early. We're already in the figure four so I can't imagine this is going to go long. Rection gets the rope and starts his comeback, only to have Torrie come in and jump on his back. Somehow not noticing that it's a smaller, lighter person or the long blonde hair, Rection drives her back first into the buckle. That's too much around here and the match is stopped, likely setting up a rematch at Starrcade.

Ever the gentleman, Lieutenant Loco tries to get her out of the ring so the fight can continue but basically everyone glares him off.

Post break, Loco yells at Rection for not following up and a split is teased.

Filthy Animals vs. Jeff Jarrett/Harris Twins

Great, the Band is back together. It's a huge brawl to start with Konnan staying on the floor instead of helping his smaller partners. We settle down to Konnan coming in to work on Ron's wrist as we hear about Torrie getting crushed again. Rey bulldogs Ron down as Tygress goes on about player hating.

Don comes in to help on a double spinebuster and a swinging Boss Man Slam gets two. Naturally this warrants a talk about paying the Harris Twins in sandwiches because WCW. Konnan isn't paying attention to a tag attempt from Rey so Jarrett knocks him off the apron. The referee tells the guys that they have three minutes as Kidman comes in to clean house. Everything breaks down and Jarrett guitars Kidman for the pin.

Rating: D+. That sounds like the mating call of a rubber match at Starrcade, likely with the guitar legal for a change. I really don't think I need to make fun of this one all that much when the story revolves around the Harris Brothers being willing to fight for sandwiches. Even David Flair is more respected than this. Oh and somehow the referee doesn't notice the pieces of the guitar around the ring.

Buff is ready for his title shot tonight.

Daffney returns to say she and Ozzy broke up so now she wants to be with Crowbar. He's not so keen on the idea though and turns her down, even though it seems to make him very sad.

This week's sitdown interview is with Stevie Ray because WCW actually thinks people care. We get right to the point as Stevie says no one has a brother in the business like he does. As usual I think I get the point but since Stevie is only a commentator, he isn't the best at getting his point across. Stevie made his debut here back in 1993 and is one of the most successful tag team wrestlers of all time. Now he thinks he might start a drag racing team (which I believe he actually did) and thanks the fans for their support over the years.

Glacier is still coming back.

Sgt. AWALL vs. Bam Bam Bigelow

Tables match and it's Bigelow pounding away to start. A powerbomb is countered with a backdrop to send Bigelow outside but instead of trying to put him through the table, it's time to brawl around ringside. Back in and a German suplex through the table.....doesn't count because both of them went through at the same time. Well of course they did. They head outside again so Mike Awesome can sneak in and blast Bigelow with a chair,

allowing AWALL to put him through the table.

Rating: F. Are they even ripping ECW off at this point? I mean, last year with Sandman and Raven was one thing but this is even less interesting than that was. I'm also not sure why none of these guys ever bother going after the Hardcore Title. It's not like what they're doing here is really all that much better than getting a belt out of it.

Awesome wants Bam Bam Bigelow at Starrcade. Somehow that's a big deal for Awesome.

WCW World Title: Buff Bagwell vs. Scott Steiner

Steiner is defending of course. Steiner gives Buff a chance to leave before the beating begins but Buff dropkicks him to the floor and sends him into the barricade. Back in and Buff's right hands don't get him anywhere as Scott ties him in the Tree of Woe for some choking. The elbow into the pushups gives us a signature spot as Madden does a bad Billy Graham impression.

The belly to belly gets two and it's time to grab the referee by the shirt. Buff misses a dropkick to stop a comeback bid because he's Buff Bagwell and this is a big match. A DDT puts Steiner down but Scott pops back up with ease. Cue Sid on the screen for a distraction though, allowing the Blockbuster to hit for two. Buff has to catch a diving Midajah though and a quick Recliner retains the title.

Rating: D. I actually like Buff as the one off challenger here even though he had no chance of winning because he's Buff Bagwell and never actually won a big singles match in WCW. The Sid thing was a waste of time but then again so is Sid in the main event in the first place. Bad match but perfect for a Thunder main event.

Sid comes out to jaw with Steiner to end the show.

Overall Rating: D-. They've just given up. You can clearly see that there's no real effort being put into the writing (though the wrestling is tolerable at times) or storytelling and that's caused them to hit a very hard wall. The younger guys are putting in an effort as they so

often do but there's only so much you can do when it's Lex Luger, Scott Steiner with the horrible chinlock, Sid and the Insiders as some of the top names in the promotion.

This place really is just about the old guys and the worst part is that's how they're being presented: the older, cagey generation who is still around and hogging all the spots. There's almost nothing here worth watching and it's going to make the next few months much more sad than hard to sit through.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of the History of the Intercontinental Title at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B01D4D3EG0>

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Monday Nitro – November 27, 2000: They Can't Even Get This Right

Monday Nitro #268

Date: November 27, 2000

Location: Metro Center, Rockford, Illinois

Attendance: 3,800

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mark Madden, Scott Hudson

We're past Mayhem and on the road to Starrcade with Scott Steiner now the World Champion for the first time. It's hard to say where things are going now but hopefully things pick up a little bit after we're done with another pay per view. If nothing else it should be interesting to see how things go to get to the biggest show of the year with less than three weeks of build. Let's get to it.

We open with a special announcement over the new President...and it's Jeff Jarrett hitting the guy making the announcement with a guitar. Thanks for that topical announcement.

3 Count vs. Corporal Cajun/Lieutenant Loco

It's a brawl to start as the Misfits interrupt the singing to clean house. The announcers actually try to push last night's show as a great event and a big deal with Steiner finally winning the title. Moore gets caught in the corner for a dropkick as things settle down a bit. The band takes Cajun into the corner as Madden tries to compare Helms and Moore to the Midnight Express. It's not quite the League of Nations as the Horsemen but it's still stupid.

Cajun springboards into an X-Factor on Shannon (Hudson: "Right onto his incredibly marketable face!" Clever line but I almost laughed at the idea of 3 Count ever being marketed.). It's off to Loco but here are Noble and Karagias with a ladder to beat up 3 Count, allowing Loco to hit a suplex (called a brainbuster) for the pin on Shannon.

Rating: C-. As usual we had what could have been a good match but it's brought down by interference to set up something else. That's WCW in a nutshell: matches don't exist to be matches because they're there to set up another match down the line. Yeah the three way ladder match is going to be fun but they need to do something with these teams down the line and that's just not going to happen.

Elix Skipper hits on Ms. Jones again so she knocks on a door to get the Cat out here. Wasn't this a one off story like a month ago? Lance Storm sneaks in and hits Cat with a chair. Storm: "That's why it's TEAM Canada!"

The announcers talk about Steiner winning the World Title last night and think Sting deserves a title shot for retaining the King of Europe Cup at one of the German shows. For those keeping track, he won it back in like 1994 and defended it six years later. Now he gets a title shot out of the thing. Such is life in WCW, as usual.

Here's Scott Steiner for his first chat as World Champion. After Hudson says this is Steiner's thirteenth year in WCW because he can't count (Steiner debuted in 1989 and wasn't around for 1993), Steiner rambles about how awesome he is and how much he wants to hurt people. He's already put Sting and Booker T. in the hospital and he's destroyed Goldberg at Fall Brawl so there's no one left for him to fight.

Cue Ric Flair so the announcers can again speculate that he'll come out of retirement to fight Steiner. Steiner is now the flagship of this company but he can't get off that easily. Flair has an opponent for Steiner at Starrcade and he's a big star. Steiner actually suggests that it's Austin or Rock and even does an imitation of the latter. Since this is WCW and they have no idea how the world works, Flair says that this star is just as big as Rock and Austin and will be around tonight.

We're still not done yet though as Stevie Ray gets up to challenge Steiner for tonight. Steiner agrees if Stevie will put his career on the line, which is accepted. His announcing career right? I mean, it's certainly not his wrestling career as he hasn't had a match in months at this point.

The Boogie Knights don't have the money to afford Kronik tonight. Yes this is still going.

Hugh Morrus is ready for Bam Bam Bigelow tonight.

Yang vs. Lance Storm

Storm has heavily taped ribs and promises to get back at Rection later. Yang grabs a rollup for two during the Canadian national anthem before punching him in the ribs. Back up and Storm gets in a superkick, followed by a backbreaker for two. The fans chant USA, which is actually appropriate here as Yang is from California. Of course it's not likely

that the fans know that so they just sound stupid.

A Rock Bottom gets two for Yang and he fires off some kicks at the ribs before elbowing Storm in the face. Yang hits a moonsault for two more but walks into a piledriver, only to have the women get into a fight on the floor. Cue the Cat to hit Storm with a chair, giving the unconscious Yang the big upset win.

Rating: D+. This worked better than some of the matches but the ending continues to defy logic. Yang isn't getting a push out of this (due to reasons of "it's WCW") and now Storm gets another loss on his record while setting up something against the Cat. Like I said before: this wasn't a match because it was a way to set up a match down the line.

Post break Storm yells at Jim Duggan for not having his back.

The Boogie Knights go to the Harris Brothers for protection tonight but still don't have any money. That's fine with the Brothers because they want.....sandwiches. Egads this company can't die fast enough.

Here's Lex Luger with something to say. It's time for a celebration because Goldberg's career is coming to an end tonight. Luger rants about how awesome his life is but none of it means anything compared to this because he did wrestling a huge favor last night. See, last night when Goldberg speared a referee, that should have been a DQ and the end of the Streak. He's appealed to Ric Flair and demands an answer tonight. So yeah, it really does seem that we're getting Luger vs. Goldberg again at Starrcade and not THE ONLY LOGICAL MATCH WCW COULD HAVE FOR THE BIGGEST SHOW OF THE YEAR.

A limo arrives.

Jimmy Hart is still issuing challenges to DJ's.

Jeff Jarrett is talking to Gene when the Filthy Animals come up and throw eggs at him. Those boys need a role model.

Big Vito is making sure Marie is ok before she leaves. He leaves and Reno comes up to leave with her.

Jamie Noble/Evan Karagias vs. Boogie Knights

Not so fast as this isn't happening.

Jamie Noble/Evan Karagias vs. Alex Wright/Ron Harris

Let's get this over with. Ron throws Evan around to start and a slam gives Alex two. There's a suplex from Alex and it's off to Ron vs. Jamie for more squashification. Ron finally runs into a boot in the corner to give Jamie a hope spot in the form of a top rope clothesline. A big boot knocks Jamie down again to give Alex two more. Everything breaks down and a quick H Bomb puts Jamie away.

Can we PLEASE cut out this "beatdowns for hire" nonsense? It was dumb enough when Kronik was ripping off the APA but now the freaking Harris Brothers are doing this for SANDWICHES. It's not funny, it's not entertaining, it's not intelligent and it's not doing anything to mock the WWF. On top of that you have all these better teams losing to Alex and one half of the goons winning more often than not. Who does this help other than people who put it together and get a cheap laugh?

Another Glacier promo which thankfully is ripped apart again. Now that's kind of amusing.

Ric Flair says Goldberg is fine because Luger pulled the referee in the way of the spear. That should be a DQ on Luger, but since WCW is about winning and losing, there's going to be a rematch at Starrcade. So yeah, apparently winning via DQ isn't really winning so we're getting these two again because doing Goldberg vs. Steiner for the title LIKE EVERYONE THOUGHT THEY SHOULD DO is out of the question.

Here are Page and Nash with something to say. During the entrances (yes entrances because they're not even pretending that they're a real team), Hudson mentions them being partners many years ago. The fans want Hall because they love to cling to false hope as Page talks about their history, including managing Hall back in the day. The famous team is called the Outsiders but this team is called the Insiders.

Nash takes the mic but here are Sanders/Jindrak/O'Haire to the Wolfpac

theme. Sanders thinks Page is trying to ride Nash's coattails so they'll defend against the Thrillers at Starrcade. Page thinks they should have a fight right now, which I guess is for the titles though it's not quite clear.

Insiders vs. Mark Jindrak/Sean O'Haire

Jindrak and Page fight to the floor while Nash beats up Sean in the ring. Well of course he does. Nash gets in the framed elbows but charges into a boot. That's fine though as Page comes in, only to take a low blow. The young guys stomp him down in the corner but Page counters a whip into a headscissors of all things. Everything breaks down and Jindrak eats a Diamond Cutter with Sanders pulling the referee out. Cue the rest of the Thrillers to beat down the champs, allowing Jindrak to pin Page. The Thrillers leave with the belts but this doesn't seem to be a title match.

Rating: D. Other than that headscissors, this was a bunch of standing around punching because that's all Page and Nash know how to do at this point. Jindrak and O'Haire getting a win, albeit a cheap one, is fine enough and about as good as they're going to get because you know Nash and Page aren't laying down for them.

Stevie Ray calls Scott Steiner a sad sack cracker jack.

Reno vs. Goldberg

The announcers basically say Reno can only win on a miracle. This one actually gets some time as Goldberg knocks Reno across the ring and gorilla presses him into a drop. A quick Roll of the Dice attempt is countered into a powerslam, followed by the two moves to make Goldberg 26-0.

Post match Luger comes in and hits Goldberg with a chair....which Goldberg eventually sells. Luger Racks him for good measure.

The Filthy Animals don't have much to say.

US Title: General Rection vs. Bam Bam Bigelow

Rection is defending. Bigelow pounds on him in the corner and rakes the

eyes like a heel should. Rection works on the arm and there's just no reaction. Were you really expecting anything else here? He's a guy with a comedy name who has won his big battle against Team Canada and really doesn't have much of character outside of that. I really have no reason to care about him other than he was fighting for America but that doesn't really work when he's fighting against someone from New Jersey.

Bigelow slaps on a chinlock for a bit before some clotheslines and a suplex put him down. A top rope elbow misses so Bigelow powerbombs the champ....and goes for a table. Never mind though as here's AWALL to take it away, allowing Rection to kick Bigelow down and retain with the moonsault.

Rating: D. The crowd silence suggests that this wasn't working and again I can't say I'm surprised. At the end of the day, Rection isn't interesting and while it's nice to see them try and make a new star, this is about as far as things are going to go. It also doesn't help when you have another big power guy in there as an opponent and the stupid AWALL thing to continue that thrown together feud.

Scott Steiner steals a camera and goes to the limo to find out his opponent. Now why did no one else ever think of this? It turns out to be full of Smooth's women though because the other limo isn't here yet. Smooth gets beaten up for general purposes.

Jeff Jarrett vs. Rey Mysterio

Before the match, Jarrett rails against Konnan for the prank earlier tonight. I mean it wasn't funny or anything but it was indeed a prank. Tygress trips Jarrett five seconds into the match and Rey gets two off a springboard bulldog. Konnan gets on the apron to distract Jarrett so Kidman can trip him as well. Dang it act like faces already. The Bronco Buster is stopped by a raised boot (as always) but Kidman grabs Jarrett to stop him again. Even the announcers are treating Rey as the heel here.

Jarrett misses his running crotch again and a Lionsault gets two for Rey. Now it's Konnan getting inside so Kidman can get in a low blow, followed by a Bronco Buster from Tygress. Rey's springboard hurricanrana is countered into a sweet powerbomb but the Animals break up the cover after

the Stroke. Jeff has had enough of this and blasts Rey with the guitar for the DQ. Madden brings up the obvious point: after everything the Animals did in front of the referee, THAT'S A DQ???

Rating: D-. This is another example of the biggest problem with WCW at the moment. Jeff Jarrett vs. Rey Mysterio could be an entertaining match between two very talented guys but instead we're getting the Animals being all goofy and flat out stupid referees who either don't notice or don't care about what's right in front of them. This was an insult to the fans' intelligence and a waste of something that could have been entertaining.

Post break Jarrett challenges the Animals to a six man on Thunder.

The Starrcade opponent's limo arrives.

WCW World Title: Stevie Ray vs. Scott Steiner

Steiner is defending and Stevie's career is on the line. Stevie jumps him in the aisle to start until Midajah gets in a pipe shot to the back. Hudson tries to push the idea of a ten year feud between the Steiners and Harlem Heat because a team that formed in 1993 can have a ten year feud in just seven years.

Steiner takes it inside for the big pounding before cutting off a comeback with a shot to the ribs. After a quick trip outside to yell at some fans, Steiner plants him with a belly to belly for two. Stevie kicks him in the face and grabs a bad DDT, only to have Midajah offer a distraction.

An even worse looking Book End puts Steiner down again for no cover. We get an awkward sequence where Stevie can't get his boot up to Steiner's ribs so they head outside where Steiner is sent into the barricade. Back in and another suplex gets two for the champ but he walks into the Slap Jack for one. The announcers are just burying Stevie for being blown up here. An electric chair drop sets up the Recliner to end this mess.

Rating: F. Yeah there's no defending this and it's clear that Stevie Ray had no business being in the ring at this point. You can't be blown up

five minutes into a match and drag the World Champion down in his first title defense. I get the idea behind the match but this was a disaster and one of the worst matches I've seen in a long time.

Post match Sid Vicious returns as the challenger for Starrcade. It makes sense given that he was never defeated for the title but it's December 2000 and Sid Vicious is challenging for the World Title while Goldberg has another match with Lex Luger.

Overall Rating: F. Oh yeah they've given up. It's clear that they're just setting up a bunch of rematches and/or stupid matches at Starrcade because Sid is their idea of a draw. Yeah Goldberg vs. Luger is happening again for absolutely no logical reason and it seems that we're still getting the Insiders vs. the Thrillers again, plus the three team ladder match.

WCW has given up on trying to do their best and is just throwing out whatever old names they have because for some reason it took them this long to get to Steiner. Why Goldberg, as in the guy who could conceivably draw money as the World Champion, is stuck carrying Luger to another bad match is beyond me but that's what we're getting because Steiner needs to beat up a "legend" at the biggest show of the year. This is another great example of an idea that should have been a layup but somehow WCW has managed to screw it up because that's how things work around here.

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Thunder – November 22, 2000: The Clouds Are Back Again

Thunder

Date: November 22, 2000

Location: Augusta-Richmond County Civic Center, Augusta, Georgia

Attendance: 3,800

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Stevie Ray, Tony Schiavone

It's the go home show for Mayhem and unfortunately that means we're not likely to see much tonight. We might get some build towards the Tag Team Title match which was only added on Monday but other than that, this could be a very long night. Not as long as it would have been for the people who had to sit through this and Nitro of course. Let's get to it.

Opening Nitro recap.

Here are Mike Sanders, Mark Jindrak and Sean O'Haire to get things going with Mike having a big bandage around his head after the Goldberg match. Sanders brings up all the stuff with Kwee Wee on Monday before mentioning Meng, which draws out the monster.

Meng vs. Mark Jindrak/Sean O'Haire

The Thrillers pound him down as well as they can with O'Haire getting in a good looking clothesline for no cover. Instead Meng shrugs it all off and Samoan drops Jindrak. Something like Poetry in Motion doesn't work and Meng slowly beats them both down like the glorified jobbers they are. A double Tongan Death Grip brings in the rest of the Thrillers and it's a big DQ after Jindrak and O'Haire look worthless.

Nash and Page make the save and Sanders is ticked. Mike wants Page to fight a Thriller tonight and Stasiak volunteers, with Sanders making it a lumberjack match for no logical reason.

Scott Steiner is here.

Ric Flair says there's a restraining order between Scott Steiner and Booker T. If they fight before Sunday, Booker is suspended and Steiner loses his title shot. I'm so glad they did this four days before the pay per view.

Here's 3 Count to say they are in fact still 3 Count. The dancing ensues and almost no one cares.

Yang vs. Shannon Moore vs. Evan Karagias

Evan and Shannon slug it out to start with Shannon getting the better of it, only to be sent out to the floor for his efforts. Yang misses a kick at Evan and gets rolled up for a fast two as Shannon gets back in. It's Yang taking over on the singer/former singer before Evan pancakes him down. That means it's time to drive the Cadillac (that stupid thing where Evan has his hand on a steering wheel and his other hand as a phone), only to have Shannon get come back in with a Fameasser.

Yang gets sent outside so Jamie can stomp him, leaving Shannon to eat a powerslam for two. There's always something strange about someone Evan's size doing a powerslam. Helms pulls Evan to the floor but gets whipped hard into the barricade. Back in and Yang hits a quick reverse White Noise for the pin on Shannon. It's as sudden as it sounds.

Rating: C. As usual this needed more time and some more polish but at least it was entertaining while it lasted. I still have almost no idea why these teams are still fighting but they can do some fun big matches. Unfortunately this was nowhere near long enough and the match was a bit sloppy, which dragged it down too much.

Alex Wright tries to buy Kronik for later tonight but apparently can only afford half. Adams seems to have an idea.

Stevie Ray interviewed Scott Steiner earlier today and oh this could be a train wreck. Steiner is sitting behind a plastic screen, apparently to prevent another version of what happened to Tenay. Scott is ready to right the wrongs of Halloween Havoc, which of course leads into a

discussion of the University of Michigan. This sets off a big censored tirade, during which the camera pans over a bit too much to reveal that the plastic isn't attached to anything. Stevie is all defensive but here's Booker to hit Steiner with a chair. Some hero.

Here are the Filthy Animals for their match with the Boogie Knights, but first it's time to hit all the catchphrases, meaning you have time to make a nice sandwich before we get things going. Alex Wright comes out and says he has a surprise.

Rey Mysterio/Kidman vs. Bryan Clark

Kidman gets thrown into the corner to start and it's time for some stomping. A big boot has him in even more trouble but of course a single dropkick staggers Clark. Where would cruiserweights be without their dropkicks? Mysterio comes in to help but Kidman gets crotched for his efforts. A chokeslam sends Rey flying and it's back to Kidman for another dropkick. The faceplant to break up a powerbomb gets two on Clark and it's High Times, with Rey looking right at it and doing nothing. Instead he heads outside to beat on Wright, leaving Kidman to take a Meltdown for the pin.

Rating: D. Why does WCW hate cruiserweights so much? They just had former Tag Team Champions lose to Bryan Clarke in a glorified squash match for the sake of pushing a feud with the Boogie Knights. I know they might not have been the biggest things in the world but it would have been nice to see them not treated as cannon fodder.

Steiner invades Sanders' office and demands a match. Mike immediately agrees and that's the segment.

Bam Bam Bigelow and Reno say they'll win their tag match later.

Page and Nash are ready for the Thrillers.

Vito rambles a bit until Sanders comes in to give him a match tonight. Vito calls him Parmesan face.

Recaps of Steiner vs. Booker and DDP/Nash vs. the Thrillers.

The Thrillers rant a lot and Gene Okerlund swears at them. O'Haire says have Paulshock interview them next time.

Video on Sanders vs. Goldberg. Feel free to have a match anytime here.

Here's Booker to talk about various player haters. You'll have to kill him to take the title from him and he's sorry about giving Major Gunns the Book End. Booker has six words for Goldberg: Don't hate the player, hate the game. Instead of killing Booker to take the title, maybe you could just teach him how to count. This brings out Goldberg, who says he saved Booker on Monday. After Mayhem, that title is coming back where it belongs. So I guess the Streak angle is officially dead? They shake hands, though Booker is a bit tentative.

The Cat and Buff Bagwell are ready for their match tonight. Is that match happening ANYTIME SOON???

Shane Douglas and Torrie come out to insult Buff with Shane saying he has a surprise partner to face Bagwell/Cat tonight. That would be Jeff Jarrett, which shouldn't surprise anyone. For some reason Jarrett makes Christmas jokes about Bagwell and this really doesn't go anywhere.

Buff Bagwell/The Cat vs. Jeff Jarrett/Shane Douglas

Cat pounds on Douglas in the corner and kicks him a few times, only to get poked in the eye to stop that cold. As usual, heel wrestlers easily defeat karate guys. Jarrett comes in to keep Douglas safe and it's time for a double beatdown. Cat dropkicks both guys down and makes the hot tag to Bagwell (yeah a hot tag a minute in) for some house cleaning. Everything breaks down and the women argue on the floor, earning Ms. Jones an ejection. The Stroke plants Cat for no count as the referee is out with the women. Buff mostly botches the Blockbuster but gets hit with a foreign object to give Jeff the weak pin.

Rating: D. I'm honestly not sure why these people are fighting in the first place and I really have no idea why I'm supposed to want to see them having matches on pay per view. It really does seem like they're just throwing whatever they can to fill in a card. That's never a good sign for a promotion and it's not a good sign here.

Crowbar and Mike Awesome say they'll win.

Scott Steiner vs. Big Vito

Before the match, Steiner accuses Goldberg and Booker of having a love fest earlier. After Sunday, he'll celebrate being the World Champion by getting horizontal. Steiner goes over to the announcers' table to yell at Stevie but Vito comes out to start the brawling. The fans chant for Stevie as Vito gets thrown around, including the spinning belly to belly. A backbreaker allows Steiner to throw Vito outside and it's time for another trip to the announcers' table.

Back in and Steiner keeps beating on Vito in the corner with a genuine imitation mudhole stomping. Vito gets tied in the Tree of Woe for some choking he grabs a quick belly to belly for a breather. The top rope elbow gets two and there's a flying headbutt for the same. Vito goes up for the third time but gets crotched down, setting up the super t-bone. The Recliner puts Vito away.

Rating: C-. I remember this being way better and that comeback is still pretty good. Vito has gotten some insane mileage out of that Hardcore Title reign despite barely ever winning anything else since then. This was a better match than it had any right to be and it's clear that they're setting up something with Stevie vs. Scott, or at least they should be.

Mike Awesome/Crowbar vs. Bam Bam Bigelow/Reno

Hardcore rules. Awesome and Crowbar bring in the weapons because they're the good guys here. It's a big brawl to start with Crowbar and Reno heading outside, where Reno uses a trashcan lid to block Awesome's suicide dive. Crowbar loads up an Asai moonsault and has to hit the mats stomach first as the heels are too busy brawling to catch him. Thanks for that guys.

They head up to the stage for all of ten seconds before it's back to ringside while Tony plugs Backstage Assault (that wrestling game where you never actually get in a wrestling ring). Reno goes after Awesome's knee in the ring as Bigelow throws a cookie sheet at Crowbar's head.

Unfortunately it misses and hits a fan, but at least it was a nice try.

Bigelow and Reno are laid onto tables and Crowbar is nice enough to let Awesome powerbomb him over the top and through Reno for the big crash. Bigelow gets up and kind of sends Awesome through another table (kind of as in Awesome jumped WAY harder than Bigelow threw him) as Reno covers Crowbar for the pin on the floor.

Rating: D-. Some of the spots worked here but the match was a huge mess that had no business existing. There's a Hardcore Title match on Sunday and I really don't need to see a hardcore match here to help set that up. The title and the division are just so dead and stupid at this point but for some reason it's still a thing. Really bad match here and no one cared, which is sad when you have someone like Crowbar going all over the place and working so hard to get the stupid idea over.

Shawn Stasiak vs. Diamond Dallas Page

Lumberjack match with most of the midcard sans the Thrillers at ringside. During the lumberjacks' entrances, Tony mentions Starrcade for perhaps the first time all year. Mike Sanders sits in on commentary to brag about Stasiak's "youthness." Page knocks him outside early on and hits a big dive to take out Stasiak and some lumberjacks. There goes the brawl between the lumberjacks and we're down to a regular match inside of a minute.

Stasiak gets in a jumping back elbow and here are Chuck Palumbo and Kevin Nash to stand at ringside. A fireman's carry gutbuster gets two on Page as more Thrillers start showing up. We hit the chinlock and some choking before Page starts a comeback, only to get hit in the head with a foreign object for two as Nash pulls the referee out. There's a Diamond Cutter but there's no referee, allowing Palumbo to hit Page with a chair to give Stasiak the pin.

Rating: D-. There's a little credit here for the sake of giving Stasiak a win but this was way messier than it needed to be. They really could have done the exact same match without the lumberjacks and that's never a good sign. Also well done on having Page lose his first match back before he gets a title shot on Sunday.

Nash powerbombs the referee to end the show, which the announcers find funny for whatever reason.

Overall Rating: F. The horrible days of Thunder are back and it's as we're going into a pay per view that I had little to no desire to see in the first place. There's almost nothing interesting going on here and the main event really couldn't be more obvious. The second biggest match on the card is going to be Goldberg vs. Lex Luger, which is as horrible of a thought as you could possibly have. This was a really bad show though and there are no signs that it's getting better.

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Monday Nitro – November 20, 2000: Set It Up, Blow It Off

Monday Nitro #267

Date: November 20, 2000

Location: Augusta-Richmond County Civic Center, Augusta, Georgia

Attendance: 3,000

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mark Madden, Scott Hudson

It's the last Nitro before Mayhem and most of the show would seem to be

set up already. Scott Steiner continues to be one of the strongest heels the company has pushed in years but at the same time he's not exactly lighting the world on fire with the chinlock finisher and all the insanity in his promos. Maybe the TV being back in America will be better so let's get to it.

We open with a video on some of the big stories at the moment, including Luger vs. Goldberg, Nash vs. the Thrillers, Major Gunns leaving the Misfits for Canada, because that's still a thing, and of course Steiner being all crazy.

Also in Europe, at a show called Millennium Final, the Boogie Knights won the Tag Team Titles in a major upset. Wright won the match on his own after Disco was injured early on.

Earlier today, Luger tried to get a World Title match tonight. Sanders wasn't sure but seemed to agree, only to have the Thrillers bail when they found Sean O'Haire laid out in the hallway.

Sanders says there will still be a Tag Team Title match tonight no matter what. Luger's title shot is confirmed.

Opening sequence.

Jamie Noble vs. Yang

Yang hits the ring and starts fast as Madden realizes that Jamie is "a white guy." Jamie sends him to the floor for a flip dive (Madden: "He's pretty fly for a white guy.") but Yang powerbombs the heck out of him back inside. Jamie bails back to the floor where Leia Meow snaps off a hurricanrana to pop Madden harder than it should. Back in again and they chop it out, followed by Jamie getting two off a middle rope legdrop. Yang catches him coming out of the corner for an over the back piledriver but here's Evan Karagias and 3 Count for a distraction. Jamie dives on Moore and Helms before rolling Yang up for the pin.

Rating: C. Standard yet fun fast paced cruiserweight match here and that's always a good way to open the show. The three team idea is fine and could set up some interesting stuff down the line, though I have no

hope of any of these guys getting anywhere as a result. They're far too low on the WCW totem pole and there's almost no way to rise up that thing before turning 40.

Evan and Noble clear the ring post match.

Luger talks to Flair about doing the right thing and Ric promises to make sure it happens.

We look at Scott Steiner beating Sting down on Thunder to put him on the shelf AGAIN.

Alex Wright is on the phone with the injured Disco and doesn't know who his partner is tonight. He finds Kronik but they won't take a check. The Filthy Animals chase Wright away.

We see Rick Steiner vs. T-Money (Terry Crews) on Battledome in a boxing match which turned into a big brawl because of course it did.

Here's Ric Flair with something to say. Ric talks about how awesome WCW is for going from Europe to Georgia and tells Tony that he was great in England all night long. Madden: "DID YOU SLEEP WITH RIC FLAIR???" My goodness there's an image I never need to think about again. He can't change Luger vs. Booker T. for tonight because it came from the Commissioner (Can we please pick a set of rules for these two?) but he'll spice things up tonight.

If Luger wins the title tonight, Goldberg has a title shot on Sunday. Flair doesn't care about the Streak that Russo invented because Goldberg can get a shot on Sunday. Cue Jeff Jarrett to threaten Ric with a guitar shot. Jeff actually has a reason to be out here: he has information about the father of Stacy Keibler's baby. Ric looks a bit shaken up Jeff says that he (as in Jeff) knocked Stacy up, or gave her the guitar shot of love that is.

David comes out and wants to know when and where this happened. Apparently it was on the night of the Great American Bash at the Baltimore Marriott after Jarrett won another World Title. Stacy came to the door wearing very little and carrying a shopping bag. The Keibler elf

wanted to know if Jeff wanted some of her cookies and didn't care what happened with David.

Things happened and the next morning all that was left was the shopping bag. That bag was full of garbage, just like the rest of this story. Jeff guitars David as the announcers try to figure out why Jarrett came up with this story, which is a fair question. Cue Buff Bagwell to go after Jeff, only to be whipped into the set like the goon that he is. Buff gets back up and knocks Jeff off the stage for his big hero moment.

Kevin Nash tells Fit Finlay (now an agent) that he's not here alone.

Team Canada is in the back and apparently Elix Skipper is going to be Wright's partner.

Tag Team Titles: Perfect Event vs. Elix Skipper/Alex Wright

Wright and Skipper are defending. Stasiak and Wright get things going with Alex stomping away before Palumbo comes in with a big right hand. A double slingshot suplex puts Wright down and Stasiak gets two off a neckbreaker with Skipper making a save. Everything breaks down and here are the Filthy Animals to lay out Wright, giving Stasiak the pin and the titles.

Rating: D. Another nothing match in a move pretty clearly taking place to transition the titles from O'Haire and Jindrak to Perfect Event because that was the big solution they needed or something. They would have been better off having Kidman or one of the Animals in there as the partner but instead they went with Skipper for reasons of randomness, even though he wound up being a normal partner for Wright.

Video of Mancow attacking Jimmy Hart to set up their match at Mayhem.

Kwee Wee thinks Lance Storm is scared to fight him so he's dropping out of the tag match so General Rection can fight instead. How does that make sense? Kwee Wee's partner Meng promises (yes he's talking) to rip those crossed eyes out of his head. So much for any kind of logic.

Mike Sanders has an idea for Kwee Wee tonight.

Vito hits Reno in the head with a bat with compliments of Maria (Vito's sister). Ignore the bat clearly bending as it made contact.

The Battledome guys are here yelling about something.

Wright thinks WCW is scared of the Boogie Knights being champions so now they want the Animals in a handicap match at Mayhem.

The Battledome guys are still here so Rick Steiner comes out with the Battledome belt. Naturally this means it's time to talk about Luger vs. Booker T. tonight. Steiner challenges them to a fight and T-Money gets in, only to have the other three get in and help with the beatdown. Security comes out for the save and this takes WAY too long to break up.

The Thrillers are ordering pizza when Reno comes in and says he wants to fight Vito tonight.

Rection gives the Misfits a pep talk.

Here's Kevin Nash to introduce his help against the Thrillers. Nash has come to the realization that he has thirteen months and ten days left on his contract and he's not sure how he wants to spend the rest of that time. He drove here from Atlanta today with a good friend of his and now he has to watch the Thrillers be handed the Tag Team Titles.

Cue Sanders to make the match because he's convinced that Nash doesn't have any friends around here. Nash says he's here to make money instead of making friends, which somehow turns into a discussion about cheese whiz 101. For some reason Nash insults Sanders' ability to hold himself in a bar and that's enough to bring Mike to the ring. Cue Diamond Dallas Page to the ring for the save, which would have worked a lot better had he not come out a few weeks ago for a Battledome segment. Jindrak eats a Diamond Cutter and Page says he'll see them on Sunday.

Luger isn't worried about fighting Booker T. tonight because it's a main event style match.

We recap Meng/Kwee Wee vs. Team Canada in a bizarre yet interesting feud.

Jim Duggan/Lance Storm vs. Kwee Wee/Meng

Before the match, Storm rips on America for not being able to figure out its Presidential race two weeks in. Meng kicks Storm in the ribs to start but a Duggan 2x4 shot to the back puts him down. Duggan comes in for some shoulders to the ribs as the fans chant USA. So I guess they're for Duggan as he's the closest thing to an American that they have in the ring right now. A Tongan Death Grip is quickly broken up but the hot tag brings in Rection. Skipper blasts him with the flagpole, which draws out the Misfits to give him a beating. In the melee, Rection rolls Duggan up for the pin. Tony makes WAY too big of a deal out of this.

Rating: D. Well that happened. I'm really not sure why Rection pinning Duggan is supposed to be a big deal but Tony certainly seemed to be excited over what we just saw. The match was too short to mean anything, much like everything else that's happened tonight, but at least we had that Jeff Jarrett/Stacy story.

Jeff Jarrett and Shane Douglas are talking about something.

Kwee Wee vs. ???

Sanders is on commentary and very pleased when the opponent is revealed as Goldberg. The match lasts 29 seconds in case you were expecting something else.

Post match here's Ric Flair to say Sanders deserves equal treatment. Goldberg isn't all that tired though so here's a bonus.

Goldberg vs. Mike Sanders

36 seconds and it's 21-0, even though Flair said the Streak didn't matter anymore.

Booker isn't worried about Goldberg interfering tonight because he can beat Luger on his own.

We flash back to Halloween Havoc at Shane Douglas attacking The Cat and then beating up Ms. Jones the next night on Nitro.

Shane Douglas vs. Buff Bagwell

Before the match, Torrie insults the Georgia women because she's from Los Angeles. Oh and Shane wants Cat at Mayhem. Buff gets sent into the corner to start before coming back with a neckbreaker and that stupid strut of his. Shane knocks him towards the ropes though and Torrie adds in some choking from the floor. The announcers try to push Bagwell as a matinee idol because so many of their fans know what that means.

We hit the chinlock on Buff for a bit before he gets out with an electric chair. The Pittsburgh Plunge gets two but Buff gets in a Vader bomb for the same. A quick double arm DDT (Hudson: "The Kobashi DDT!") puts Shane down so here's Jarrett to interfere and Cat to cut him off. The Blockbuster gives Buff the pin.

Rating: C. Totally watchable match here and it's nice to see something actually get a little time (less than six minutes is a marathon tonight) for a change. Douglas isn't much to see in the ring and Bagwell was his usual self but at least we had something decent enough to watch. You can only watch so many three minute matches around here before it gets tiring.

Post match Cat wants to fight right now but it winds up being dance time instead.

Scott Steiner comes out for the main event but first of all he has something to say. He pulls out a box of Kleenex to cry over Sting but doesn't need them because he isn't really sorry for the injuries. Sting had a fair warning to walk away but he came to the ring anyway. Whenever he comes back, Steiner is more than willing to hurt him again. As for Flair, all he wants to do is screw Steiner out of his World Title. It doesn't matter though because Steiner beat Goldberg at Fall Brawl and he can do it again anytime. Steiner can put Luger and Booker out of wrestling too if he has to because he's a genetic freak.

WCW World Title: Booker T. vs. Lex Luger

Steiner is on commentary, Luger is challenging and we've got less than five minutes left in the show. Luger gets kicked in the face to start, followed by an elbow to the jaw. Some forearms to the back have Booker in trouble and a backbreaker gets two. The champ gets in a spinning kick to

the head and the ax kick sets up the Spinarooni. Cue Goldberg so Steiner gets up, triggering their big brawl. Luger loads up a chair but Goldberg gets in and spears Lex to give Booker the retaining pin.

Rating: F. This was about four stories mixed together in a match that didn't even last four minutes. I don't know who thought bringing Luger back was a good idea and I don't know who thought putting him in the main event was an even better idea. The match barely existed of course because we needed to see the Cat dance earlier but did you want to see more of Luger?

Booker yells at Goldberg but has to fight off Steiner to end the show.

Overall Rating: D. Pretty worthless show here other than to set up the Tag Team Title match on Sunday. The main event was one of those stories that was invented and blown off in the span of a night and went nowhere while not really changing anything. The wrestling was nothing to see, the angles were nothing interesting and the show did almost nothing to make me want to see Mayhem. Such is life in WCW as we approach one of its final pay per views.

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Thunder – November 15, 2000: Wrestlers Doing Wrestling

Thunder

Date: November 15, 2000

Location: Evening News Arena, Manchester, England

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Tony Schiavone, Stevie Ray

We're still in England and we're still creeping towards Mayhem where the inevitable Scott Steiner title reign is coming. Things are right back down in the depths where they were a few weeks ago and now the nice run they were on is over. Hopefully the stories make sense tonight. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Monday, which isn't the best idea in the world.

Scott Steiner is angry on arrival and beats up a security guard.

Big Vito vs. Reno

We actually get a bit of the history leading up to this, which is basically I hit you and you hit me. They slug it out on the floor with Reno taking over, including a dropkick to the ribs for the first real advantage. Vito comes back with a clothesline and the good looking Mafia kick, followed by the equally good looking top rope elbow. There's something about that move that makes it hard to screw up. Since this is starting to be entertaining, here are Jindrak and O'Haire with the former offering a distraction and the latter offering a superkick to Vito's jaw. Roll of the Dice gives Reno the easy pin.

Rating: D+. Not enough time to go anywhere of course here and they didn't need to have interference in a match like this. It also doesn't help that Vito continues to lose no matter who he's in there against. Reno doesn't seem to be going anywhere but at least he got a win here, even if it's over someone who should get better treatment.

Post match Reno challenges Vito for the Hardcore Title at Mayhem.

Here's Ric Flair with something to say. He wants an answer on what Mike Sanders is going to do about the Cruiserweight Title (which was brought up on Monday) and also we're getting a Hardcore Title match between Bam Bam Bigelow and champion Crowbar. As for Mayhem, it's going to be the final match between General Rection and Lance Storm. Amen to that one.

Lance Storm puts the Canadian sticker back on the US Title and wants Booker T. for the World Title tonight.

Hardcore Title: Crowbar vs. Bam Bam Bigelow

Crowbar is defending and stands in the ring while Bigelow pulls out the tables. Just get straight to it I guess. Crowbar goes outside and sends Bigelow through one such table leaning up against the apron, followed by some trashcan lids to the head back inside. Well to be fair, trashcans and tables go together.

Bigelow sends him into a table but it doesn't break. See, British furniture is quality. A splash misses Crowbar and puts Bigelow through the table, allowing Crowbar to send him outside for a chair shot to the back. Crowbar dropkicks a chair into Bigelow's face but he comes back with a BIG chair shot of his own, or at least a very loud one. Bigelow puts Crowbar under the table for what appears to be a headbutt, only to have Mike Awesome come out and shove him off, giving Crowbar the pin to retain.

Rating: D+. This was more entertaining than most of the hardcore matches and that chair shot had a lot to do with it. Crowbar continues to be the most entertaining guy in this division though unfortunately it means he's still here being wasted instead of doing something interesting. Fun enough match here though and that's all you can ask for in these things.

Booker is tired of being disrespected and would love to fight Storm tonight.

Bigelow jumps Awesome in the back.

The Misfits are devastated by the loss of Major Gunns and contemplate splitting up. Realizing that means unemployment, Rection says they should

stick together and they'll keep going for now.

Kwee Wee vs. Rey Mysterio vs. Kidman vs. Corporal Cajun vs. Lieutenant Loco vs. Elix Skipper

Elimination rules for the #1 contendership. Loco suplexes Skipper down to start and it's already time for the women to get into it because that's what they're for in WCW. Cue AWALL to yell at Gunns so the women are thrown out, which is probably best for everyone. Cajun and Loco start double teaming Skipper...until the referee does his job by disqualifying them for being in the ring at the same time.

We get a rare break in a match and come back with Kidman baseball sliding Kwee Wee in the corner so Mysterio can hit the Bronco Buster. Skipper comes back in with a dropkick, allowing Kwee Wee to faceplant Kidman for a quick elimination. Kwee Wee holds Mysterio so Skipper can add a top rope spinwheel kick to eliminate Rey, getting us down to one on one. Before Kwee Wee can get anywhere, here's Jim Duggan to help Skipper, only to have Meng come out and nail Skipper to give Kwee Wee the pin and the title shot.

Rating: C. They could have cut this down to three or four people and it would have been a much better match but any time I get to see Meng and Kwee Wee together, my world is just a little bit brighter. Kwee Wee vs. Sanders doesn't do much for me but the division is such a death trap right now that it doesn't make much of a difference.

The Boogie Knights aren't worried about facing Konnan and a mystery partner tonight.

Ric Flair has a mystery opponent for Sanders tonight.

This week's interview is with Buff Bagwell, who is frustrated over his lack of a chance around here. He's been around for a long time but for some reason he's never been given the ball. For some reason he's never been given the chance like Luger, Sting and Jarrett. Somehow he's never had a singles title, which actually surprises me even to this day. You would think he might get a token US Title run in there somewhere. Buff wants Jarrett at Mayhem.

Mike Sanders is on the phone with Jeff (presumably Jarrett) and thinks Buff has no respect for the veterans. So he doesn't respect himself?

WCW World Title: Booker T. vs. Lance Storm

Booker is defending of course and I still don't understand why the champ is always on in the middle of the show. Before the match, Storm demands respect before he brings dignity back to the WCW World Title. They trade arm holds to start before Booker kicks him down for a standoff. Storm gets in a shot of his own and they head outside with Storm sending him into the barricade to take over.

Back in and Storm hits that great looking superkick, followed by a springboard missile dropkick for two. The Bookend is countered into a neckbreaker for two and that annoying horn in the crowd keeps honking. Booker comes back with the ax kick but gets thrown into the Mapleleaf on the bad knee. I know he's not tapping but point here for actually setting up some drama here. Booker gets out to the floor for the break for a bit, only to have Storm counter a suplex into a DDT for two back inside. Storm follows Booker to the top and shoves him down, only to dive into the Bookend to retain the title.

Rating: B. I had a great time with this one and both guys looked awesome. It's amazing what happens when you let two talented wrestlers have some time to work a good match. Storm continues to be one of the shining stars of WCW and I almost always enjoy whatever he's doing out there. Good stuff.

Team Canada runs in after the match but Booker quickly dispatches them, including a Bookend to Gunns. Stevie loses his mind with laughter.

The Boogie Knights are in the back, talking about whether Konnan will find a partner. Disco has an idea but he'll need money. Gee I wonder what that means.

Cruiserweight Title: Mike Sanders vs. ???

There's no opponent yet but here's Ric Flair to say he has good news and bad news. First of all, this is going to be a non-title match. The bad

news is it's a non-title match because the opponent is almost 100lbs over the cruiserweight limit.

Mike Sanders vs. Kevin Nash

Nash starts with a very slow motion right hand, which Tony describes as high gear. Sanders gets thrown across the ring again and a side slam gets two as we see security holding the Thrillers back. Nash kicks him in the head and takes the straps down but here are the Thrillers for the DQ.

Rating: D. This was an angle instead of a match and another example of how bad things are if you're a cruiserweight in 2000 WCW. Nash was squashing Sanders for about three minutes before the Thrillers came in, showing how valuable the Cruiserweight Title really is. At least Sanders didn't get....yeah I can't finish that. This was a horrible way to treat a champion and proof that they need to keep the bigger guys FAR away from the top cruiserweights unless they change a whole lot first. Also well done on making back to back champions look bad.

The Thrillers beat Nash down.

Post break Nash is having his knee looked at.

The Cat/Konnan vs. Boogie Knights

Cat is of course a surprise partner. Wright grabs a wristlock to start before it's off to Konnan, who somehow is the workhorse of his team. Some cheating has Konnan in trouble and Disco gets in a few good stomps. I still feel sorry for him having such a goofy gimmick because he really good work well in the ring. Back up and Cat tags himself in for a variety of kicks, followed by that dancing elbow to Disco.

It's off to Wright for a quick double clothesline, though to be fair Cat had been wrestling for a good 45 seconds straight. Konnan comes in and blocks the Chartbuster but the referee gets bumped. Cue Kronik to chokeslam Konnan because the referee seems to be dead, allowing Disco to get the cheap pin.

Rating: D. What else are you expecting in a match like this? The Knights are underrated workers but Miller is one of the worst in the company at

the moment. Konnan continues to be fine while still looking horribly lazy most of the time. At least he gets a reaction though and that's what matters most.

Plug for Goldberg's book.

Lex Luger is annoyed at not being in Goldberg's book, which he can't put down. He was there when Goldberg's career began and he's going to be there when the career ends.

Goldberg vs. Buff Bagwell

Goldberg starts fast with a gorilla press drop but Buff grabs the double arm DDT. That means it's time for posing but Goldberg is on his feet first. The spear and the Jackhammer make Goldberg 19-0 in a hurry.

Goldberg helps him up post match.

Booker leaves.

Lethal Lottery Finals: Scott Steiner vs. Sting

Winner gets a title shot the night after Mayhem. Steiner hammers on him to start but gets backdropped to the floor where Sting hits him with a ball bat. They go to the announcers' table (Sting: "Hey Stevie.") with Steiner going face first into the wood. Back in and Steiner counters the Stinger Splash with a belly to belly. There are the pushups and a slam for two, followed by another belly to belly. Steiner is ticked off at the near fall so he cranks on both arms at once instead. We get the choking in the Tree of Woe but more pushups allow Sting to make his comeback, including a quick Death Drop for the pin out of nowhere.

Rating: D. So the solution to building up Sting is to have him get pinned clean in the middle of the ring. Sting winning is the only thing that makes sense here though because they built up this idea of getting a title shot the night after Mayhem. As usual they stop thinking with because they'd rather do a gimmick than set up something that makes long term sense.

Post match Steiner beats Sting down with the pipe and puts him in a

straitjacket. A huge beatdown ends the show and puts Sting on the shelf until the final Nitro.

Overall Rating: D+. It much be a WCW law that the shows have to get weaker as they go. They would have been much better off closing with Booker vs. Storm for the World Title instead of setting up a #1 contender in the main event but they're the "draws" I guess so therefore they must go on last. You would think the British shows would be better but somehow WCW manages to screw that up as well.

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Monday Nitro – November 13, 2000: It's About Battledome

Monday Nitro #266

Date: November 13, 2000

Location: London Arena, London, England

Attendance: 9,138

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Stevie Ray, Mike Tenay

Well maybe it's going to get better on the other side of the world. I mean, the Australian shows were an improvement in a way but it should be

interesting to see what they do over in England. We're a few weeks away from Mayhem and it's fairly clear that Booker T.'s World Title reign is in trouble. Let's get to it.

The opening video is about...Battledome. There's the Thrillers turning on Nash and all the other stuff in there too but the fact that Battledome is in this spot disturbs me.

Opening sequence.

The roster comes down to ringside and it looks like it's time for a meeting. Tony has an envelope from Ric Flair, which isn't to be open until Ric is here. Cue Ric to put over WCW and talk about how hard Mike Sanders works as Commissioner. However, if Mike ever steps out of line, Flair has the authority to override him at anytime. That brings Flair to the Cruiserweight Title, which Sanders has 48 hours to defend. Tonight though, we're going to have an eight man Lethal Lottery with the final team standing facing off on Thunder for a World Title shot the night after Mayhem. Here are the teams:

Mike Awesome/Bam Bam Bigelow

Booker T./Lex Luger

Alex Wright/Disco Inferno

Sting/Scott Steiner

They really can't go through one of these without giving away how rigged the drawing is. Anyway there's no Steiner so Flair says get out here right now. Steiner comes out and gets in Flair's face which triggers a brawl. Sting and Booker get into it a bit and the rest of the roster get in the ring as everything falls apart.

The Natural Born Thrillers arrive.

Earlier today, Big Vito took credit for helping Crowbar win the Hardcore Title on Thunder. A shot is granted for later tonight.

Sanders gives Lance Storm a match with General Rection for the US Title

tonight. Steiner comes in and agrees to anger management.

Hardcore Title: Big Vito vs. Crowbar

Vito is challenging and they start going at it immediately with Vito punching the champ in the jaw, only to be sent into the post. The fight goes into the crowd and Vito knocks him under some bleachers before slamming him through some fish and chips. Back to ringside with Vito loading up a table, which unfortunately gets a chant over in England too. Vito gets catapulted into the post to bust him open but he's still able to knock Crowbar onto the table.

The big elbow doesn't get to launch though as Crowbar rolls away so Vito throws the table inside. This is getting a lot more time than most hardcore matches and it's only proving that hardcore matches don't need to last very long. Back in and Vito kicks the referee by mistake, because a hardcore match needed a ref bump. Another kick puts Crowbar down but here's Reno to hit Vito with a baseball bat. Crowbar doesn't see it so he superplexes Vito through the table to retain.

Rating: D+. Standard hardcore match here with a little more time than usual. In other words, nothing we haven't seen a dozen times, though it was cool to see Crowbar and Vito getting a bit of time instead of having to rush through everything. I like both guys but no one could make anything out of the hardcore division. Look at Norman Smiley, who was an actual act in the division and is now just another jobber.

Mike Awesome and Bam Bam Bigelow would rather be fighting but they're willing to work together for the sake of getting a title shot.

Here are the Thrillers for a chat. Sanders says the polls are closed and the votes are in, meaning the team has won the award for World's Biggest Swerve. Tony: "We demand a recount." Kevin Nash is a master manipulator who gets whatever he wants but if he can't, he resorts to violence. All that changed last week when Nash hit a roadblock which left him SOL. "And he knows what that means now." I didn't know for years after this show and WCW used it WAY too often.

Stasiak says Nash fell to evolution (Stevie: "Revolution?") but here's

Nash to interrupt. Kevin gets right to the point and says he's twice as dangerous now so Sanders makes O'Haire vs. Stasiak vs. Palumbo vs. Nash in a four corners match. Nash accepts and promises that Stasiak is his tonight.

Sting is willing to work with Steiner to get a title shot.

Elix Skipper hits on Ms. Jones but she says he's not over. Cat comes in and a match is made for later.

Mike Awesome/Bam Bam Bigelow vs. Sting/Scott Steiner

Steiner starts brawling with both guys before Sting even gets to the aisle but I can't blame him for not being worried about either guy. Sting gets in and cleans house as Tony wonders what happens if Steiner wins this whole thing and then wins the title as well. A fight almost breaks out between Sting and Steiner, allowing Awesome to get in a shot from behind as this turns into a regular match. Steiner comes in to beat on Awesome and Bigelow gets thrown with a suplex. Awesome grabs an Alabama Slam on Steiner but Sting breaks up the Awesome Splash, setting up the Recliner to advance Sting and Steiner.

Rating: D. Nothing match here of course but that's exactly what it was expected to be. Sting and Steiner advancing was the only option as no one is going to buy Bigelow and Awesome as a threat to win anything, especially after Awesome lost his two title shots in the last few weeks. At least Steiner didn't make Bigelow submit because that might have taken away some of his heat, which he totally has.

Bigelow lays Awesome out post match.

Jimmy Hart accepts a challenge from a DJ from August, Georgia.

The Boogie Knights try to sell Kronik their spot in the Lethal Lottery but wind up paying them to take the spots instead.

The Filthy Animals tell Flair what the Knights just did because the boss doesn't watch the show.

Booker doesn't care who he's fighting tonight.

Flair has a replacement to face the Knights. Just say it's Goldberg.

The Misfits are ready for Storm and Team Canada tonight.

We recap last week's brawl with the Battledome Warriors.

This week, WCW invaded the Battledome set.

Earlier today, the Battledome Warriors invaded and had a brawl in the back. There's no evidence that this was actually in London of course.

Booker T./Lex Luger vs. Kronik

Booker and Clark get things going with the champ kicking him in the face and bringing Luger in, only to have Lex get taken into the Kronik corner. Adams gets two off a piledriver (Tony: "That move right there could change the landscape of WCW.") but the referee gets distracted, allowing Booker to get in a kick to to set up the hot tag.

Now it's Booker cleaning house until what looks like a low blow takes him down. Lex comes in and throws Booker to the floor, earning himself a full nelson slam from Adams. Cue Scott Steiner to hit Booker in the back, setting up High Times to give Adams the pin, naturally on Booker because Luger needs to be protected.

Rating: D. These matches are getting worse each time and the ending here made my eyes roll. What is this company's obsession with making the champions look like morons who can't win anything on their own? Much like the first match, this didn't have enough time to go anywhere and the story was more important than the action.

Kronik says if one of them wins the belt, they both do.

Shawn Stasiak vs. Sean O'Haire vs. Chuck Palumbo vs. Kevin Nash

Shawn bails to start and brings in Palumbo to eat a side slam for two. It's off to O'Haire for knees and kicks, allowing Stasiak to come in for his cheap shots. Palumbo sends him into the buckle as I'm still trying to figure out why this is a four corners match. I know it's a common thing in WCW but I really don't get why this is happening. Nash fights up and

cleans house but Reno comes in to break up the Jackknife on Stasiak, drawing the DQ.

Rating: D-. If there's a good match coming on this show, I'd love to see it anytime soon. This was another bad match that should have been a handicap as they did nothing to suggest that it was anything else. Nash vs. the Thrillers is fine but it doesn't work unless the young guys go over in the end.

Jindrak comes in and helps with the beatdown.

Elix Skipper vs. The Cat

Slugout to start with Cat taking over, unfortunately at a very fast pace which means he's likely to get blown up in a hurry. They head outside with Elix sending him into the apron, only to get smacked in the face for hitting on Jones. Stevie: "She learned that at Yak University!" Cat gets in his dancing shots to the face, followed by the Feliner for the pin.

Rating: D-. Well Jones looked good so the match wasn't a total loss. As has been the case all night though, this was a short, nothing match set up earlier in the show which isn't likely to mean anything by the end of the night. It filled in time though and at this point, that's almost all you can ask for in WCW.

Boogie Knights vs. ???

Of course it's Goldberg. Wright gets in a missile dropkick to stagger Goldberg but a spear cuts Disco in half. Some slams set up the Jackhammer for the pin on Wright in short order.

Steiner says he'll win everything.

US Title: General Rection vs. Lance Storm

Storm is challenging and Gunns is the only one at ringside. Rection shrugs off some chops and takes him outside, only to have a suplex countered into a DDT on the floor. Back in and Lance gets two off a springboard missile dropkick. Rection gets the same with a powerslam as the Misfits and the Canadians come out to brawl. Gunns turns heel though

by handing Storm a foreign object but Rection is up at two. We hit the Mapleleaf though and Gunns throws in the towel to give Storm the title. Well that's overkill.

Rating: D. Another angle instead of a match here on a show full of them. Gunns turning means nothing because now she's going to be Canadian by choice instead of by force, which is totally different you see. In theory it sets up Rection winning the title one on one though and that's fine all around. No one cares about Gunns turning though.

Post break, Gunns takes off the Bombs Away shirt to reveal the Mapleleaves.

Kronik vs. Scott Steiner/Sting

Adams gets in an early piledriver on Sting, followed by a gorilla press gutbuster for two. It's off to Steiner for a low blow on Adams and a hard beating on Clark in the corner. The belly to belly sets up more right hands to Clark's head before making the tag off to Sting. Everything breaks down and Adams has to break up the Deathlock on Clark, setting up a full nelson slam and High Times on Scott. Midajah offers a distraction though and Sting counters the Meltdown into the Death Drop for the pin.

Rating: D. Good night there have been some bad matches tonight. This was the most obvious ending, even though having Steiner potentially win a title shot when he could be champion beforehand isn't the brightest idea in the world. Kronik being in here was fine but the story is a bit messier than it really needed to be. At least this competition was only three matches long instead of a full show. I don't want to imagine what WCW would try with twenty or more people in one of these things.

Post match Steiner chairs Sting so Booker comes out with a chair of his own to knock Steiner out. Sting gets up and Booker knocks him out by mistake.

Overall Rating: D-. So much for the hot streak as WCW comes crashing right back down to earth with this mess of a show. There were way too many matches that either meant nothing and a competition that didn't need to be there (though could have been worse). This was a really weak show

overall though there's always the chance that the flight to England might have had something to do with it.

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Thunder – November 8, 2000: Get To Mayhem Already

Thunder

Date: November 8, 2000

Location: United Center, Chicago, Illinois

Attendance: 7,000

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mike Tenay, Stevie Ray

We're still rolling towards Mayhem and things are starting to get a bit better. The shows still aren't great but they're coherent and you can see where they want to go for the most part. I'll take that over Russo's insanity as now I kind of want to see where things are going instead of waiting on the next big surprise. Let's get to it.

Booker goes to see Mike Sanders and asks for a match with Shawn Stasiak tonight. Instead he'll get to defend the title against Mike Awesome, which earns Sanders a quick threat.

Opening sequence.

Evan Karagias vs. Jamie Noble

Apparently Evan is a spoiled celebrity now. The fans don't appreciate a pair of cruiserweights slugging it out so Jamie sends him to the floor and dives off the apron to take Evan down. Back in and Jamie drops a leg to set up what looks like a moonsault, only to get crotched for his efforts. That means it's time for some posing before Evan almost drops him on his head in a gorilla press. I know Evan is trying to act strong but that doesn't mean he can throw people around.

Thankfully Jamie rolls into a sunset flip, only to get powerbombed for two. A World's Strongest Slam looks to set up a superplex but Jamie shoves him down and drops a top rope legdrop for a near fall of his own. Jamie fights back with chops and a good looking dropkick before missing a charge to the outside. Cue 3 Count to beat down Evan, giving Jamie the easy pin. As usual, WCW referee prove themselves to be such brilliant minds.

Rating: D+. Evan wasn't the best worker in the world to start and now they're having him do stuff he isn't exactly ready to do yet. Jamie is talented enough to do a lot in WCW, though of course I can't imagine they'll actually go anywhere with him other than just having the same matches over and over. Splitting the two teams into three was a nice short term concept but as usual it didn't have anywhere to go.

Jamie runs 3 Count off. Music hater.

The Boogie Knights don't like Konnan but Gene doesn't like Disco's hat.

Hardcore Title: Reno vs. Crowbar

Reno is defending. Thankfully Crowbar drops his 70s clothes on the way to the ring since he barely interacts with Awesome anymore. Reno starts with some kendo stick shots before opting for trashcan shots to the head. He's nothing if not versatile. Crowbar comes back like it's nothing (because it pretty much was) and splashes a chair onto the champ, meaning it's time for a ladder. To be fair the match is like a minute and a half old

so the next step much be a ladder. A splash and a moonsault onto the ladder onto Reno don't even get two so it's time for more chopping.

The ladder is set up in the corner but Reno's suplex is left a good bit short and Crowbar barely makes contact. You had to see something like this coming eventually. Roll the Dice is broken up so Reno settles for a t-bone suplex, only to get dropkicked out to the floor so Crowbar can drop a ladder onto him for a painful crash. Crowbar puts him on a chair on the floor for a clothesline off the apron and they fight up the aisle with Reno suplexing him near the entrance. A quick trip to the back goes nowhere so here's Vito to kick Reno off the stage, setting up Crowbar's splash for the pin and the title.

Rating: C-. Good enough for a hardcore match here and it's nice to see Crowbar finally getting some recognition for how talented he really is. Unfortunately the division barely exists and there's no reason to believe that this is going to lead anywhere for Crowbar. There were some good spots here too and that's as much as you're going to get in a match like this.

Mike Awesome and the Misfits celebrate with the new champion.

Konnan vs. Disco Inferno

Kidman is on commentary as Konnan jumps Disco at the bell. An armbar doesn't get Konnan anywhere and it's Disco stomping away in the corner. Disco and the referee (Scott Armstrong, oh he of the hitch in the count) get in an argument over choking, which means we get another discussion of Road Dogg. Konnan makes a quick comeback but the Animals ave to take out Wright. The distraction lets Konnan get in a quick X Factor for the pin.

Mike Awesome doesn't think much of Booker and/or Scott Steiner.

Now we get a sitdown interview at what looks like a restaurant (minus food of course) with Mark Madden talking to the Cat, with Ms. Jones who seems to be there to give us something to look at. They manage to stay civil for all of two seconds before Cat calls him greasy. I would say just like the food but again this is a restaurant without actual food.

Cat keeps going with something about wanting to be anti-establishment and how much he wants to hurt Madden. He's also not a fan of Ric Flair being around forever and then gets into a stupid discussion of Battledome. Yes that's still a thing and they're really still doing it for reasons that I'll never understand. Oh and he'll fight Shane Douglas anytime. The thing just kind of ends after A LOT of yelling at Madden with Cat really just going insane instead of really sounding coherent or having a point, aside from maybe Battledome.

Steiner goes into Sanders' office and asks if he can get anger management courses to avoid losing his title shot. That's rather out of character for him so he grabs Mike by the throat and threatens to kill him if this doesn't work. That's more like it.

Mayhem ad.

Here's David Flair to accuse Rey Mysterio of being the father. Why in the world is this still a thing, especially since Stacy hasn't been on TV in weeks? Rey says he isn't the father but he'll be David's daddy tonight. Uh, isn't David's daddy already a character on the show?

Rey Mysterio vs. David Flair

Rey starts fast with a springboard splash for two but David, in street clothes, takes it outside for a chop against the barricade. The commentary focuses on Battledome of course as Tygress knocks David out with a hard forearm, setting up back to back Bronco Busters on David. A springboard legdrop to the back of the head puts David away with ease.

Shawn Stasiak vs. Kevin Nash

Not so fast of course because Stasiak brings out Kronik for some backup. Sanders advises Kronik to head to the back because this isn't worth losing their pay over. They do indeed leave...and the Thrillers turn on Nash for the big beatdown. So Nash is a face? Again? And forget the whole Stasiak face turn I guess? Booker comes in for the save for no real logical reason.

Nash is checked out by the trainers.

Scott Steiner video.

Luger and Bigelow seem to be in cahoots for the main event tonight. Thanks for clearing that up for us WCW.

Lance Storm vs. Meng

Storm isn't happy with Meng's job against Sgt. AWALL last week, which made it even more clear that if you want something done right, hire a Canadian. Kwee Wee and Paisley come out with Meng to continue one of the most confusing pairings in a long time. Naturally the two of them sit down on commentary because that's how you get in bonus material on a wrestling show.

Meng shoves him around to start as Paisley says Angry Alan (the alter ego that comes out when Kwee Wee gets mad) a mini-Meng. Storm gets knocked to the floor and you can see the glitter on him from his match against Kwee Wee on Nitro. Back in and Storm's clothesline has no effect but Skipper gets in a cheap shot so Lance can take over. A Samoan drop plants Storm but it's time for Meng to go after the other Canadians for a double countout.

Rating: D. Nothing match here but at least the right guy won while they kept Meng looking strong. Paisley got on my nerves by arguing with Stevie during the entire match but it makes sense that she would be annoyed at being called a yak for weeks. Meng and Kwee Wee have potential as a goofy team and I've heard worse ideas. It was a bad match but the right result so at least they're getting something right.

WCW World Title: Booker T. vs. Mike Awesome

Booker is defending of course. Awesome is all fired up to start and gets in Booker's face, finally showing some fire instead of his Saturday Night Fever influences. A headlock doesn't get Mike anywhere as Booker gets in a dropkick for an early advantage. Awesome clotheslines him out to the floor and sends Booker into the barricade before hitting Booker in the back. Maybe he learned that by watching Booker do it to Nash on Monday.

The beating continues for far too long on the floor before some stomps

get two on the champ. The fans finally get the table they've been requesting all match and of course the announcers act like this is perfectly normal. Stevie on Booker: "I know this guy like a book. Do you know why?" Tony: "Because he's your brother?" At least he didn't say "because his name is Book."

The running Awesome Bomb through a table doesn't work so Awesome throws him through the table for two instead. You could hear the fans gasp at that kickout. Mike misses the Awesome Splash and gets caught in the sidewalk slam for two. The ax kick gets an even closer two but the Bookend retains the title.

Rating: B-. Best match they've had in weeks here and oddly enough the match that got more time than anything else. It's so funny how that works. Awesome being more serious would only be a good thing for him as he's more than talented enough to make it on his own without a gimmick. Anyway this was a fun match and I had a good time with it, completely unnecessary table spot aside.

We go to the back to Lanita Ericson, who looks like Pamela Paulshock crossed with the bad version of Madusa. She's interviewing future MMA fighter/wrestler Bob Sapp, who has signed with WCW. Sapp was an NFL offensive lineman and decided to make a career change to wrestling. That should be a cakewalk but then he was taken down by a little guy named Sarge on his first day at the Power Plant.

Sapp plugs his upcoming boxing match/toughman contest with Refrigerator William Perry and I have no idea how this is supposed to make me want to keep watching. This new woman is HORRIBLE as well as she sounds like someone trying to get picked up at a bar. Terrible all around here and thankfully Sapp never wrestled for WCW.

Goldberg vs. Bam Bam Bigelow vs. Lex Luger

Actually hang on a minute as Kronik comes out before Goldberg and beat up the referee. Stevie: "This is all making sense now." Tenay: "EXPLAIN IT THEN!"

After a break we see the Boogie Knights paying Kronik off. Dang Stevie

was right. It did make sense earlier, assuming you paid attention.

Mayhem ad.

Let's try this again.

Goldberg vs. Bam Bam Bigelow vs. Lex Luger

Goldberg fights them both off because this is one of those handicap matches called a triple threat in an attempt to make it more interesting. The villains are sent outside for a bit where they get things together, allowing them to take over inside. A beating on the floor keeps Goldberg in trouble but he easily powers out of Luger's elbow drops. That's enough for Luger as he walks out, leaving Goldberg to Jackhammer Bigelow for the pin.

Rating: D. The match has come and gone and I'm still not sure what it changed to make this a three way instead of just having the handicap match that it should have been. Goldberg winning was of course the obvious ending and it makes sense to have Bigelow take the pin but Goldberg vs. Luger is their big idea? That's the best they've got? No wonder they are where they are right now.

Overall Rating: D+. Mayhem needs to get here already so we can wrap up some of these stories and get on to some fresh stuff. The midcard stuff has a few interesting ideas in there but they need to polish a lot of this show instead of just running it like they've been doing. The shows are passable enough but they need a few big changes to really make them good.

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Monday Nitro – November 6, 2000: Well, It Didn't Suck

Monday Nitro #265

Date: November 6, 2000

Location: United Center, Chicago, Illinois

Attendance: 7,000

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mark Madden, Scott Hudson

It's a new month for Nitro and hopefully things stay on the good path that Thunder put WCW on. The big story is Scott Steiner vs. Booker T. for the World Title in a few weeks at Mayhem but unfortunately we have a lot of TV left for them to screw up. We also have a new boss in Ric Flair, who wasn't even on Thunder. Let's get to it.

The opening recap focuses on Ric Flair returning and the Stasiak turn, followed by Steiner vs. Booker.

Earlier today, Midajah distracted an arriving Sting (head to toe in red) so Steiner could attack him. Buff Bagwell made the save.

The Thrillers talk about putting Jeff Jarrett in a tag match for no apparent reason.

Here's Lex Luger, the hometown boy, to open things up. Instead of getting in the ring he goes over the announcers' table and asks Mark Madden to stand up. Apparently Madden insulted Luger's body last week despite being in horrible condition and having no business to talk about anyone. That's about it, save for the other announcers ripping on Madden a little bit.

Luger gets inside and talks about all the big names that have been around this company over the years before getting to Goldberg. That Streak isn't

happening again because someone like Luger isn't going to let that happen. They'll be meeting at Mayhem and that Streak is already going to be history.

It also seems that Goldberg has been working on a book for eighteen months. Now after Luger got over the shock of finding out that he meant writing it, he was lucky enough to get his hands on a chapter. Lex calls up one of the writers from WCW Magazine, who says there's nothing in the magazine about Luger himself. As you would expect, Luger beats the guy down and racks him. I get the idea here but Luger wasn't exactly the best talker.

Goldberg arrives.

The guy from WCW Magazine was taken away on a stretcher.

Nash and the Thrillers look through Goldberg's book before saying the Thrillers are now down a member. That makes them a better team though because Stasiak was making a bunch of crazy statements like wanting to be a World Champion. You know who should be a champion? Kevin Nash, who wants Booker tonight. Stasiak comes in and begs to be on the team again but is brushed off. He promises to be there for the team tonight.

Lance Storm vs. Kwee Wee

Before the match, Storm tells us to not vote because we all lose due to being Americans. Madden thinks Storm won't want to fight Kwee Wee due to all the glitter. Tony almost calls Ric Flair the WWF CEO because he'd rather work for the other company too. Storm jumps Kwee Wee during the entrance as Paisley is on commentary. They get inside with Kwee Wee hitting a high cross body for two, followed by a tilt-a-whirl into a reverse sitout powerbomb for the same. A quick spinebuster sets up the Maple Leaf to make Kwee Wee tap.

Post match the Canadians keep the hold on so Paisley calls out Code Blue. This apparently means Meng who comes out for the save. Now wouldn't Meng have been a more interesting option than Rection over and over?

Goldberg is ready for Bam Bam Bigelow tonight and isn't worried about

Luger either. Cue Luger to list off his resume but it's a ruse for Bigelow to attack.

Now we get to another sad moment on the show as Tony brings up Battledome. What's Battledome you ask? It's an American Gladiators ripoff with WWF elements added including characters and storylines etc (along with Terry Crews as one of the Warriors). It was a pretty low budget show but I always had a good time with it, albeit partially because I was twelve years old. The idea of putting it together with wrestling was awesome at the time but looking back now it's just sad.

Anyway Tony and company talk about how lame it is that the Battledome guys are to challenge WCW wrestlers to a fight. This led to a brawl on Battledome with Diamond Dallas Page and Cat with Page stealing their Warriors title belt (yeah they had a title belt) and spitting on it. This is actually worse than I remember.

Hardcore Title: Shawn Stasiak vs. Reno

Reno is defending and I suppose this is Stasiak's punishment. Just like last week on Thunder, there's no opponent for Stasiak though as we see Reno down in the back. Apparently Reno is still champion though because it wasn't a pinfall or a submission.

Nash and the Thrillers look at Reno, who says more than one person was behind this.

Here's Ric Flair with something to say. Flair sucks up to the Chicago crowd and says it's time to change this company for the better. As for Mayhem, we'll be seeing Rection vs. Storm for the US Title for the last time, along with Goldberg vs. Lex Luger. That only leaves Flair with the World Title and it doesn't matter if it's Scott Steiner or Booker T. because both of them will be walking into a cage at Mayhem. However, Steiner needs to behave himself better because it's time to be a man around here.

Cue Steiner to get right in Flair's face and grab him by the lapel. This brings out Booker to clean house in very short order. Steiner is taken out so Flair makes the cage match a straitjacket cage match, meaning a

straitjacket is above the ring though you still win by pinfall or submission. Flair still isn't done yet though and says if Steiner touches any non-wrestler, he's out of this company.

Jimmy Hart has gotten some responses from various DJ's for his fight. As soon as he says Howard Stern, it's clear that this isn't exactly on the up and up. Mancow comes in (Wearing a Creed shirt. Yeah there are going to be jokes but I was a fan.) because this is STILL a thing. A fight nearly breaks out with Mancow running his mouth until 3 Count comes in to beat him down.

Tag Team Titles: Mark Jindrak/Sean O'Haire vs. 3 Count vs. Jung Dragons

Jindrak/O'Haire are defending against Moore/Helms and Yang/Hayashi respectfully. The challengers all brawl to start but the champs him the ring and start cleaning house. They stop to pose though and Hayashi slingshots in with a DDT while Yang comes off the top with a good looking headscissors. Now it's Jindrak and O'Haire getting double teamed in a smart move from two teams that can't stand each other.

Yang stops a comeback with a double poke to the eyes as the champs bail to the floor. They're in good enough shape to catch the Dragons as they come over the top, including the beal from the floor on Yang. Helms gives Jindrak the Nightmare on Helms Street (Final Cut) but Evan Karagias runs in for the save. O'Haire comes off the top with the Seanton Bomb to give Jindrak the easy pin.

Rating: C+. This is easily the highlight of the week time after time and most of it is because they're just letting the people do their thing. It's very similar to what the cruiserweights did back in the day: have meaningless matches to pop the crowd before everyone else screws things up.

Post match the Battledome Warriors appear (off camera that is) to yell at Jindrak and O'Haire. At the same time the unmasked Jamie-San comes in and chairs the Dragons. Jamie and Evan stare each other down.

Diamond Dallas Page is back after several months away and Hudson is WAY too excited. Page talks about having a non-televvised match about four

months against WCW World Champion Booker T. It was that moment that he realized how negative a person he'd become. Then he heard the crowd popping louder than they have in a long time and it made him realize how happy he is with this job and this life. Now he's back to have the time of his life thanks to a call from Flair.

Page says he's back and does the usual celebrating but he stops to yell at the Battledome guys. He calls out some boys from the back so here are Buff Bagwell, Cat and Rick Steiner for a showdown. All of them talk trash and a brawl breaks out. This would lead to Steiner showing up on Battledome to compete in a game.

Stasiak says he had nothing to do with attacking Reno.

Buff Bagwell/Sting vs. Jeff Jarrett/Scott Steiner

Jeff and Buff get things going as the announcers get on Madden for suggesting that Steiner could kill a fan. Bagwell gets in a quick swinging neckbreaker and it's off to Sting vs. Steiner. A belly to belly suplex sends Sting flying and the heels take over with Jeff coming in for a middle rope elbow. It's already back to Steiner to crank on Sting's arms as they're certainly not going anything beyond average so far.

Jeff gets caught in a sunset flip with Buff adding in a right hand to knock him backwards, only to have Steiner take over again. A DDT on Scott allows the hot tag to Bagwell and everything breaks down. Sting and Jarrett fight to the floor as Buff gets in a Blockbuster on Steiner, only to eat a guitar shot. The Recliner puts Bagwell away.

Rating: D+. It's your standard main event tag formula but of course the match was short and had a weapon spot because it's not like this was something that could have gone through clean. Bagwell not being on this level didn't do him any favors either but I'm really not sure why Sting and Jarrett are STILL fighting. Isn't that story done yet?

US Title: Alex Wright vs. General Rection

Wright is challenging and Lance Storm is on commentary. Before the match, Wright speaks German and Disco gives a questionable translation though

there's no big punchline at the end. Rection takes him into the corner before catching a charge in a powerslam. The fans sound like they want to see Gunns' puppies as Rection gets two off a legdrop. Madden: "Legdrop never wins anymore."

Wright gets in a spinwheel kick to take over but it's time for dancing. An impressive slam sets up a Vader bomb for two on the champ and a top rope stomp (might have been a botch) gets the same. Disco tries to get in a chair shot so here's the MIA for the save. A splash in the corner sets up No Laughing Matter to retain Rection's title.

Rating: D. Rection really isn't very good. They're trying something with the US Title push but there comes a point where that's not going to get you far enough. Wright was a good challenger but at the end of the day, there's only so much you can do with what you're being given.

Jim Duggan says America sucks because it doesn't work.

Booker will defend against Kevin Nash tonight but he's also ready for Mayhem.

Goldberg vs. Bam Bam Bigelow

We get the full Goldberg entrance and his right leg is heavily taped. Bigelow is right on him to start with an early splash as Madden thinks the taped leg might be injured. He's not sure of course. Cue Luger as Goldberg is in trouble early on. A single right hand sends Bigelow flying across the ring but a Luger distraction lets Bam Bam get in a belly to back. There's the top rope headbutt for two so Goldberg pops up for the two moves and the pin.

We come back from a break with Steiner ranting a lot before joining commentary for the main event.

WCW World Title: Kevin Nash vs. Booker T.

Nash is challenging of course. Feeling out process to start with Nash getting the better of it off those big right hands to the head. They head outside for more punches before Booker gets in a chair shot to take over. Well that's pretty heelish. Nash doesn't bother selling it anyway though

and kicks the champ in the face for two. Booker fights up again and gets the ax kick, only to have another kick hit the referee by mistake. Cue Shawn Stasiak with brass knuckles to knock Booker out but then he knocks Nash out too (duh), giving Booker the pin to retain.

Rating: D-. Just a bunch of punches and kicks before all the screwy stuff that makes sure they both look equally weak. Booker is turning into a lame duck champion in a hurry as he hasn't looked strong in weeks. If you don't want your champion to be strong, it's probably time to find a new champion. Then again they haven't exactly been going out of their way to hide what Steiner is getting at the pay per view.

Steiner grabs Booker to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. Well it didn't suck and that's a step in the right direction for WCW. There isn't much to say here as we're coming up on Mayhem and the shows aren't looking great but at least they're coherent and seemingly going somewhere. It should probably be Goldberg vs. Steiner for the title at Starrcade (which is next month) but that stupid Streak thing is getting in their way. If only there was a way to change things in wrestling with almost no ramifications. Anyway, another not awful show here and that's an improvement.

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Thunder – November 1, 2000: Much Like TNA

Thunder

Date: November 1, 2000

Location: Bren Events Center, Irvine, California

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Mark Madden, Tony Schiavone

We're out of October and things are...well they certainly exist. For a few more months at least. Scott Steiner is still insane and chasing Booker T.'s World Title but more importantly WCW has made it very clear that Mike Awesome, the athletic freak, has no future as a main event player. It's a good thing they caught that problem before it became serious. Let's get to it.

3 Count vs. Jung Dragons

There's almost no way this can't be good. It won't mean anything but it should be entertaining at least. Shannon doesn't seem to like Evan hogging the mic but this point is dropped as we see Leia from behind to make the announcers way too happy. They don't even bother waiting on the dives this time with everyone going nuts to start.

Jamie-San accidentally takes out his partners though until things settle down to Shannon vs. Yang with the former dropping a nice backsplash. It's off to Jamie who misses a springboard legdrop, allowing the tag to Evan. This is treated as a very sudden issue in the band because that's how plot devices work in wrestling. Yang pokes Evan in the eyes before Jamie accidentally clotheslines his partner. A double flapjack puts Jamie down but Evan tags himself in to steal the pin.

Rating: C. I can always watch these guys do their high spots and the storyline breakup is fine, but stop hammering it in like this. Would it have killed you to set this up over the course of a few weeks? I know it would have cut into Jeff Jarrett calling people Slappy but it might have worked a little better than inventing it in one night.

As you might expect, after the match 3 Count throws Evan out and Leia ejects Jamie-San. Jamie's mask is ripped off to reveal....Jamie Noble, who isn't a thing yet. Jamie and Evan look at each other, possibly setting up a third team. Why not at this point? It's not like they're doing anything else.

Nash and Palumbo say Stasiak couldn't cut it, suggesting that he's off the team. That's not a bad idea actually.

Bam Bam Bigelow attacks Crowbar, who just happened to be standing there waiting while a camera was on him.

Elix Skipper vs. Lieutenant Loco

This is still fallout from the parody and has nothing to do with the Misfits getting back the US Title or Major Gunns. Loco starts fast with clotheslines and a dropkick because what else is a midcard cruiserweight supposed to do. A pumphandle suplex gets two on Skipper but the Matrix is enough to let him take Loco out to the floor.

We finally start flying around with Skipper hitting a corkscrew plancha, only to have Loco suplex him again inside. Gunns finally does something besides show off her shorts but gets caught trying a low blow. The distraction lets Skipper load up the ring which goes upside Loco's head during a sunset flip to give Elix the easy pin.

Rating: C-. This didn't have time to go anywhere but it's cool to see Chavo getting better and better every week. Skipper still doesn't quite get the finer points but he's more than athletic enough to make up for it. If nothing else though, I'll take a heel beating a face instead of doing all the insane and screwy stuff we're used to around here.

Chuck Palumbo vs. Shawn Stasiak

Nash is on commentary of course and talks about how this is going to settle all of the issues in the Thrillers. Actually there's no match as we cut to the back and see Palumbo out cold. Nash is ticked but Stasiak claims innocence.

Post break, Palumbo gets checked out while the rest of the Thrillers

promise to take out Stasiak tonight.

Bigelow says he's back and wants Goldberg, only to have Crowbar attack him for earlier.

Video on Goldberg vs. Bigelow. First, did anyone want to see Goldberg vs. Bigelow again? Second, how convenient that they had this ready at a moment's notice.

Mayhem video.

Boogie Knights vs. Rey Mysterio/Kidman

Konnan is on commentary. Kidman and Wright get things going with a pretty sweet technical sequence that you would expect from these two. A nice headscissors sends Wright down and it's off to the partners. For some reason Rey only throws a couple of kicks before it's back to Kidman who gets beaten down in the corner. The Knights work him over for a bit as Konnan babbles in what is supposed to be English.

Some knees to the back have Kidman in trouble and it's time for a surfboard. As usual that only lasts a few seconds so it's off to an abdominal stretch for some additional time. Kidman hiptosses out after Disco gets caught holding Wright's hand and it's off to Rey as things speed up. Everything breaks down and Disco gets crotched in the corner, setting up the Bronco Buster. The Kid Crusher puts Wright away.

Rating: C. As not great as the booking has been, WCW has actually been putting together a very nice tag division around this time. You have the Thrillers on top and Kronik as the monsters with teams like these two filling in the extra time. Now you even have the three teams from the opener and the thing is really stacking up. Factor in the Harris Twins disappearing again and everyone wins.

Crowbar wants to fight Bigelow tonight. I thought we had covered that already.

Sgt. AWALL vs. Lance Storm

Actually never mind as Storm has found a replacement.

Sgt. AWALL vs. Meng

Of course it's a brawl to start with only AWALL selling anything. Meng pounds him into the corner but gets taken down with a clothesline. For once Tony freaking out over this offense makes sense. A low blow stops AWALL again and it's already time for a table. AWALL pops back up and chokeslams Meng through it for a big upset.

Storm yells at Meng post match and gets the Tongan Death Grip.

Vampiro and Jeff Jarrett are ready for the main event.

This week's big interview is with Shawn Stasiak of all people because WCW has no idea what these things are supposed to be about. The interview is listed as from yesterday, which is either Sunday or Tuesday depending on how much you're expected to listen to the commentary. Stasiak gets right to the point by talking about how he didn't train at the Power Plant (thanks for finally acknowledging that) and was always the outcast. Nash may be a great talent (he is) but Stasiak doesn't like this stuff from Palumbo.

This week on Thunder, there's going to be a big surprise, which may or may not have been the attack which may or may not have been Stasiak in the first place. Stasiak wants to be the first former Thriller to be the World Champion. Given that none of them have yet, this isn't impossible actually. Ignore the fact that Stasiak isn't a wrestler anymore and hasn't been for fourteen years or so.

Lance Storm vs. Norman Smiley

They better not screw this up. Storm can't do his usual yelling so it's National Anthem time. Storm starts with a full nelson for a nice series of reversals, capped off by the start of a Big Wiggle. Oh how I missed that one. Norman's sunset flip sets off a pinfall reversal sequence before Storm gets in a hot shot to really take over. Storm starts in with his usual well done stuff, including a suplex and legsweep before having his leg lock broken up with ease. There's something so cool about watching two guys who are this skilled on the mat trading holds.

Norman climbs the middle rope for a jumping back elbow and gets two off a rollup. That's enough wrestling though because IT'S WIGGLE TIME. Storm gets two off a northern lights suplex and they hit the mat for even more fast counters. A piledriver doesn't work as Smiley backdrops Storm off, only to get caught in the Maple Leaf for the submission out of nowhere.

Rating: B-. I'm a sucker for this kind of stuff as they kept it moving fast enough to avoid being boring but showed off a lot of technical stuff at the same time. It would be nice if this was setting up a match against someone Storm could work off of but why do that when we can have Hugh G. Rection instead? Also can we get Smiley some more TV time? Would that be asking too much?

Meng has to come out and break up the Maple Leaf. This would mean more if he hadn't gotten pinned in two minutes earlier tonight.

Bam Bam Bigelow vs. Crowbar

Bigelow drives him into the corner and blasts Crowbar with a hard clothesline. If there's one thing Bigelow can do, it's hit smaller people very hard. They head outside for dueling whips into the barricade with Crowbar actually getting the better of it. Something like a DDT gets two on Bigelow but he pops back up for Greetings From Asbury Park and the fast pin.

Booker isn't happy with never pinning Scott Steiner so he's willing to have another rematch at Mayhem with Steiner getting to pick the stipulation.

Jeff Jarrett/Vampiro vs. Mike Awesome/Sting

Jarrett doesn't get why Ric Flair has been named CEO when he's the only one with the stroke around here. Of course it's a brawl to start with Awesome throwing Vampiro over with a belly to belly while the other two fight on the floor. The pairings switch places with Sting getting the better of Jarrett off some right hands in the corner. Unfortunately the announcers make sure to bring up the Halloween Havoc match for reasons I'll never understand.

Jarrett backtracks up the aisle before sneaking back in for a cheap shot on Sting as a tag match breaks out amid the fighting. A double back elbow gets two on Sting and Vampiro kicks him in the face for two. The announcers bring up Sting flying off the video screen a few months back as it occurs to me that Nitro and Thunder are shot very differently.

On Thunder, the camera is mostly from ringside instead of the standard hard camera. It actually makes the shows feel different, aside from the fact that nothing happens on Thunder. Jarrett slaps on the required sleeper until Sting breaks free and makes the tag to Mike. Everything breaks down and Sting uses the ball bat to block a guitar shot. The Awesome Bomb is enough to pin Vampiro a few seconds later. STRIKE UP THAT 70s ELEVATOR MUSIC!

Rating: C+. This was about as good as a main event tag is going to get at this point and that's really not saying much. After Sunday's disaster it's clear that they need to go somewhere new with all four guys but here we are again combining two feuds that aren't interesting in the first place. At least the Awesome vs. Vampiro match was good but Sting vs. Jarrett needs to stop now.

Overall Rating: C+. Definitely a better show for the most part here as you can (in theory at least) see where they're going for Mayhem. I'm not wild on a lot of the booking but that's almost always the case with WCW. The important thing here is a lot of the action was good and a higher standard than what WCW had most of the time. Much like TNA today, when they cut out the nonsense and just wrestle, the shows are MUCH easier to sit through.

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