

Thunder – December 23, 1999: A New Breed Of Failing

Thunder

Date: December 23, 1999

Location: Wicomico Civic Center, Salisbury, Maryland

Attendance: 4,000

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mike Tenay, Scott Hudson

On Monday, this company replaced wrestling with some weird shoot style which involves whatever Russo and Ferrara feeling like throwing out there being presented as the new reality. The big story was the reformation of the NWO because....normally I would complain here but it was probably the most logical thing all night. I have no idea what I'm about to watch but let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Monday's main story. The two minute version doesn't make it any better than the three hour edition.

Tenay promises to prove that Thunder is special again.

Here's the NWO to open things up and Tony is RIGHT THERE to tell us how strong the NWO really is. Bret brags about all the gold and says they couldn't make this any more black and white. This has been in the works for over a month and the stupid wrestling fans never saw it coming. We see some clips of the Outsiders helping Bret out over the last few months with Bret conveniently never seeing a thing.

This is the one and only one thing I can give Russo some slack on: the big conspiracy stories don't hold up if you know what to look for, so tying all this together probably did work a lot better when this show was airing live. Basically the NWO lead Goldberg and Benoit along so the four of them wound up with all the belts and it was a big swerve all along. It still doesn't make up for Monday's debacle or the holes in the logic, but at least it's there. On the screwjob at Starrcade, Bret: "That was better than Shawn Michaels!"

Nash rips on the fans for only cheering the Outsiders because they wanted to be hip. They're a bunch of \$5 an hour workers who have no idea what it takes to be this great. They've never needed the people but they don't mind taking the money. Hall says a bunch of stuff that has to be censored but Jeff cleans it up by declaring this crowd the first annual slapnuts convention. Again he declares himself the chosen one, which makes me wonder why he isn't the World Champion.

Jeff: "No one saw it coming!" Hall: "I didn't know where we were half the time." This NWO is only going to be the elite, because once you've had the black, you never go back. That line is SO out of place from Jarrett. Cue Goldberg, who is quickly told he sucks. He's going to rip the NWO's hearts out and it's not going to be who's next but who's left.

The announcers eat up time by running down the card. Tenay is lead announcer and Tony is playing second fiddle. That's quite odd to see.

Token footage of Leia Meow stretching.

Two helmeted bikers arrive.

Benoit says he prefers life's hard decisions because they require sacrifice. He modeled himself after Bret for living his life the way he believed it should be lived. That ended Monday, so tonight he's taking Bret's heart.

PG-13 vs. Varsity Club

Steiner and Rotundo here but first, a rap from PG-13. Leia is forced to exercise before the match and I'm sure you get the idea here. PG-13 gets beaten down to start and Steiner runs over JC Ice. Sullivan says the Varsity Club is too smart to get conned like Goldberg. A combination of clotheslines and Steiner Lines knock PG-13 into oblivion but the referee throws it out. Tenay says it's a double DQ, even though PG-13 literally had no offense.

Wolfie D. is put in the Tree of Woe for a low blow from Meow. Who in the world thought these teams needed to be brought in?

David Flair beats up a fast food worker for not getting his order right.

Russo is yelling at Hennig in his office, which has been put back together but still has the damage from Piper. So they dragged the broken walls to the arena and set them back up? Hennig didn't seem to know what was going on in the big scheme but here are the bikers to interrupt. It's the Harris Twins who turn over Russo's table and yell at him for screwing with their lives.

Here are the Filthy Animals and Jim Duggan with something to say. Eddie says the Animals are a lot of things but above all else, they're Americans. The Revolution left them by the roadside but they're back to knock the Revolution down. Kidman and Konnan say the same thing as Eddie, albeit in very, very different methods of speaking. Rey promises to beat the Revolution like the dogs they are.

Duggan of course says H0 and USA. He wants to make the Revolution his personal H0 so here's the Revolution with Dean ranting about the flag of the Revelation (yes the Revelation because Dean doesn't even care what stable he's in). Saturn starts talking about Fred Flintstone never realizing that the rack of ribs is too big for his car, making him by far the most entertaining thing in this story. Shane wants to break Duggan's neck and complains about Americans. The fans are the ones that suck off the government programs and Duggan's comeback is just him being an idiot. Apparently there's a match tonight.

Russo sends Hennig and Jarrett after Creative Control.

Tank Abbott vs. La Parka

A right hand puts La Parka down and Tank hammers away in the corner. La Parka hits him with the chair and gets knocked out cold for a no contest.

Tank knocks Doug Dillinger out too.

Norman Smiley hides from Goldberg. Why is Goldberg having issues finding the NW0? Why didn't he just wait for them to come through the curtain earlier?

The Artist still has issues recording his music but still won't speak. Paisley gets on the producer for questioning the lyrics.

Hardcore Title: Fit Finlay vs. Norman Smiley

Smiley is defending but Finlay knocks him into the weapons cart to get things going. They fight into the crowd and into the back as we hit the hardcore requirement from the WWF. Knobbs shows up and helps beat Norman up in the concession stand. They lower a metal door and try to crush Norman but Meng makes the save. Norman is thrown on top of Finlay for the pin.

Meng gives Norman the Death Grip post "match".

Jeff Jarrett finds a paper.

Goldberg chokes Jarrett against a wall and says he's coming for the NWO when they least expect it.

Creative Control comes out to say they're no longer Creative Control. Now they're Ron and Don Harris because I guess that's supposed to make us care about them. They and their country accents are coming for the Powers That Be. Side note: if they're the Powers That Be, why do we never hear another voice?

Ron Harris/Don Harris vs. Curt Hennig/Jeff Jarrett

And there's no Jarrett, so the heel is now in a handicap match. Hennig tries to fight back as Tony tries to keep the Twins straight. The Twins throw Hennig around and a side slam gives we'll say Ron the pin. Total squash in less than two minutes.

The NWO comes out gives the Harris the NWO treatment, complete with spray paint.

Bam Bam Bigelow vs. Maestro

Kanyon comes out to do commentary for reasons of storyline development and immediately starts a BRING BACK JUVY chant. Well it's a one man chant but you get the idea. Maestro goes right at Bigelow to start but gets thrown away when trying a bulldog. Symphony comes in to prevent the diving headbutt so Bigelow dives at her anyway, sending Symphony running away. The distraction lets Kanyon hit Bigelow with a champagne bucket to

give Maestro the pin.

Diamond Dallas Page says there's nothing between Buff Bagwell and his wife. He's booked against the Wall but won't fight him until he gets a match with Bagwell.

Recap of Madusa and Karagias.

Evan is in the ring and YES! IT! IS! TIME! Evan says it's time for a comeback and introduces us to his friends Shannon Moore and Shane Helms. Their collective names: 3 Count. They may not be N'Sync or the Backstreet Boys but they'll charm the pants off everyone's girlfriend. Now hit the music. We get a music video for the yet to be named single, spliced together with the guys singing the song (I Can't Get You Out Of My Heart). The tasteless fans hate the song and here's a now serious Chavo Guerrero to clean house with dropkicks.

I know they're not the best remembered team but I loved these guys and thought they were a great idea. Boy bands were huge back then so why not go with a gimmick based on them? It's certainly better than Evan being the schnook who keeps getting beaten up by women every other week.

David Flair shows up at a gas station and runs into a guy named Crowbar. The Misfits show up and beat the two of them down for no adequately explored reason.

Konnan/Kidman/Jim Duggan vs. Revolution

Saturn/Malenko/Asya here with Shane on commentary. Konnan hammers on Malenko to start and Kidman comes in with a slingshot legdrop. Off to Saturn who eats a Bodog and a high cross body for two. Asya gets knocked off the apron as well but Saturn suplexes Kidman in half.

Back to Malenko for two off a suplex, followed by Saturn's top rope elbow for the same. Duggan gets the hot tag and cleans house with his variety of right hands and slams. He goes to hit Asya but takes a low blow from Saturn. Shane wants Duggan to denounce America and everything breaks down. The hobbling Rey distracts Dean and Saturn, setting up a sloppy double sunset flip to give the Animals the pin.

Rating: D+. Boring match but somehow this was the first one tonight to break three minutes. Duggan (why is he still the janitor?) doesn't fit in this story and there's no reason for the Animals vs. the Revolution to keep going other than they have nothing else to do. At least they gave this match something close to time.

The Revolution gets in some crutches shots to make themselves feel better.

Kevin Nash vs. The Wall

It's Hall's turn to be on commentary. Nash takes him into the corner for some knees to the ribs to start but Wall comes back with right hands to the head. A clothesline and big boot put Nash down and it's Hall coming in with the pipe for the DQ.

Wall gets spray painted and beaten up even more.

Post break, Wall gets off a stretcher.

As Nash gets in the shower, Hall finds Goldberg in his room. Back to the shower, where Nash doesn't seem to notice the camera, and Goldberg is there too. Is he multiplying or something? We see both Outsiders out cold. Is it possible to like, SLOW DOWN on having him go through the NW0?

WCW World Title: Bret Hart vs. Chris Benoit

Benoit is challenging of course and erupts on Hart in the corner to get things going. They fight over to the announcers' table with the champ getting control. Back inside with Bret dropping a leg and an elbow, followed by a DDT for two. Benoit fights back with a kick to the ribs and elbow to the jaw for two of his own. The champ nails a low blow as the fans are just silent. Benoit reverses him into the corner and grabs the Crossface, drawing in Jarrett for the DQ.

Rating: D. Just a punch and kick match until the finish with no one believing that Benoit was going over here. That silence for Bret tells you everything you need to know though: this storyline is just a disaster. Monday was too much for the fans to take and there's no reason to care. They weren't even booing, but rather just sitting there in

silence. That's a bad sign after your big angle of the year.

Cue Goldberg to spear Jarrett and chase Bret to the back. Bret gets away in a car but Goldberg sees the Powers That Be's limo. One right hand through the window and see you in June Goldberg. By the way, for those of you that have never seen it, that injury is what Nash said killed the Fingerpoke of Doom fallout story with Goldberg rising up through the ranks to get Hogan. You read that right.

Overall Rating: F. You know the amazing thing about this show? That Bret vs. Benoit match took place after the show was supposed to end. Why is that amazing? That match (the longest of the night at 4:54) took us to our grand total of less than 21 minutes of wrestling. In other words, in the two hours Thunder was scheduled to be on the air, the total time spent on wrestling (and that's including Norman vs. Finlay in the back) was 15:41. If you add in the World Title match, the total time was 20:35. It took overtime to break 20 minutes of wrestling on a two hour show. That is unacceptable.

Now onto the good. This show wasn't the abomination that we saw on Monday. It was a disaster and one of the worst wrestling shows I've ever seen with almost no action, mostly worthless matches and a story that ran in two hours instead of two to six months, but it was NOT this past Monday. They reigned things way back in tonight and it made the show tolerable, but that certainly doesn't mean it's good. I think I can live with it like this, but there are far more changes needed here than WCW has time for.

The show isn't airing next week due to a college football game so that's it for Thunder in 1999.

Impact Wrestling – May 15, 2015: Let That Be Enough

Impact Wrestling

Date: May 15, 2015

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Josh Matthews, Mike Tenay

We're coming off the big live show last week and rolling towards Slammiversary at the end of June. The big story at the end of last week's show was Angle making Eric Young tap to retain the title, presumably to end their feud. Other than that we have the continuing story of the Rising vs. the BDC as Drew Galloway was beaten down by a pipe last week. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Angle vs. Young, who tonight will lead two teams in a hardcore war. Good grief just get to Carter vs. Angle already.

Here are Angle and Chris Melendez to start things off. Angle talks about going to war with Young last week, but Eric sided with the BDC. Well now Kurt has backup of his own, including Chris Melendez. He needs a bit more though, so Angle would like the Rising to come out here right now. Kurt calls them a breath of fresh air in this company as they try to eliminate a cancer calling itself the BDC.

Galloway praises Angle a bit but likes the look of that World Title. Angle likes the idea but here's Eric Young to say he got ripped off last week. Kind of like we're getting ripped off from having a good World Title challenger. Young was ripped off by the guest referee so he's owed another title shot. He goes on and on until Angle tells him to shut up because the stupidity caught him last week.

Angle tells him to shut up again and offers Young a title shot in an I Quit match. That's for the future though because tonight is about hardcore. Cue the BDC to go after everyone in the ring. Young comes in to help with the beat down but Lashley comes out to complete Angle's team and make the save. So it's going to be a twelve man hardcore war later

tonight? That's a bit excessive no?

Brooke/Rebel vs. Dollhouse

Marti/Jade here. Rebel is described as a former member of the Menagerie. The Dollhouse cleans house to start with Marti hammering on Rebel in the ring. It's quickly off to Jade for some knees to the head. The double teaming continues as Matthews confirms that the Menagerie is no more. Dang it I always like that act. Brooke comes in off the hot tag and fires off some forearms as everything breaks down. Rebel misses Christy's old Flying Firecrotch Guillotine (yep) and a double slam (think a chokeslam but lifting under the arms instead of by the throat) is enough to give the Dollhouse the pin at 3:57.

Rating: C-. The wrestling wasn't much but I'm digging the Dollhouse more and more every single week. Taryn is perfect as the borderline psycho leader, but the supporting cast is cool too as they can both go in the ring. Rebel and Brooke are fine as the good looking jobbers for them and the match was fine for what it was.

Post match Taryn says she has play time scheduled with Gail Kim's family.

The BDC and Eric Young are texting Homicide but he won't be here tonight. MVP has a replacement but Young has someone better. King doesn't trust him but MVP wants the crazy man on his side instead of against him.

Here are Ethan Carter III and Tyrus with the former wondering how he isn't #1 contender after the former #1 contender lost to the champion last week. He wants answers but gets Mr. Anderson with a chair instead. Anderson is disappointed when they leave because he wants to fight someone tonight. They start to walk but Anderson suggests a match with Tyrus. If he wins, he gets Carter in the future. After some swearing insults at Tyrus, the big man says get a referee out there.

Mr. Anderson vs. Tyrus

Anderson hammers away to start but gets run over for two. A Big Ending gets two and Tyrus slams him down again for the same. Carter tries to bring in the chair but gets ejected, allowing Anderson to play possum and

counter the spike into the Mic Check for the pin at 4:36.

Rating: D. Really, really dull match here and yet another instance of stretching out a feud before we get to the beyond obvious Angle vs. Carter feud for the title. This one is far more interesting than the Young version but it's clearly just filling time because having more than a month build to what is likely the Slammiversary main event doesn't work.

We take a quick look back at Magnus blasting Storm with the guitar last week.

Magnus wants Storm out here right now but gets Abyss instead. The monster says there are consequences for what you do and this week, Magnus' consequences are Abyss. It's a brawl at ringside instead of a match with Abyss taking over only to stop to throw in some barbecue equipment (cross promotion with a Destination America show about barbecuing). Abyss loads up the chokeslam but takes some tongs to the crotch, only to have Manik try to come in. That earns him something like a brainbuster but Khoya comes in with a walking stick to lay Magnus out. Magnus eats a chokeslam for good measure.

Quick recap of the Tag Team Title situation with the Wolves and Hardys having to vacate the belts, setting up a best of five series between the Wolves and Dirty Heels (I'm really not sure how to feel about that name) for the belts.

Wolves vs. Dirty Heels

That's their official name now and this is match #1 in the best of five series. It's also Edwards' first match back from injury. Roode and Richards get things going and for some reason the camera is zoomed in on Roode as they get started. That goes nowhere so it's off to Richards vs. Aries with the Wolves taking over on Austin's arm. Aries is driven into Davey's knee but sends him into the corner, allowing for the tag off to Bobby.

A catapult sends Eddie into a forearm from Aries, followed by the slingshot elbow for two. The running dropkick in the corner is countered

and Edwards hits a dropkick of his own to put Roode down. There's the hot tag to Richards for the "make your opponent DDT his partner" spot (one of the dumbest spots I've ever seen) before the powerbomb/Backstabber is countered with a hurricanrana. Aries takes out the Wolves with a suicide dive, followed by the corner dropkick to Richards. Davey is still in it though and counters Roode's spinebuster into a sunset flip for the pin and the first match at 8:26.

Rating: B. Good match here but they're still waiting to crank it up in the later matches. These are two of the better teams in wrestling at the moment and seeing them fight five times (perhaps with some gimmicks later on) is going to be really entertaining and likely blown off at Slammiversary.

Galloway picks Micah over Eli for the hardcore war tonight.

Taryn talks about going to see Gail Kim's stepdaughters earlier today. She's also going to show us what she's wearing for Kim's husband Robert.

Storm yells at the Revolution for going after Magnus without permission. This is between him and Mickie James and no one else.

Here's the Dollhouse again with Taryn in a robe. Taryn makes fun of Gail for being so serious of a wrestler because the Dollhouse is making something special. She has pictures of her with Gail's stepdaughters who look borderline terrified. But now, here's what she's wearing for Gail's husband. It's some very revealing lingerie so here's Gail, but Marti asks why she's so serious. Gail wants a match with Taryn but Taryn brings up the husband again, meaning the fight is on with the Dollhouse running.

Jesse Godderz vs. Robbie E.

Robbie has straightened his hair a bit. This is fallout from their brawl a few weeks ago and they bump fists to start. That's the highest impact of the match though as Robbie grabs a rollup for the pin at 24 seconds.

Godderz wants to restart the match so here we go again.

Jesse Godderz vs. Robbie E.

Jesse throws him down with authority but a majestic cradle is good enough to make Robbie 2-0 at 31 seconds.

Godderz wasn't ready so let's do it one more time.

Jesse Godderz vs. Robbie E.

The fans count the seconds this time and Jesse celebrates a headlock. A dropkick gets two with Jesse driving his forearm into Robbie's face. Robbie comes right back with a crucifix for the pin at 1:10.

Godderz is livid so he hits Robbie in the head with the mic. He throws Robbie to the floor and puts a chair around Robbie's neck before driving it into the post.

Angle fires up his team for tonight. Eli Drake still doesn't look happy.

Eric Young has a fifth guy.

Mr. Anderson is having something built to help deal with Tyrus.

Team Angle vs. Team Young

Hardcore war, which apparently means a gauntlet match, which seems to be Lethal Lockdown minus the cage but with weapons. Low Ki with his pipe and Drew Galloway with a pipe of his own start things up. First fall wins with 90 second intervals and Team Young won the coin toss (duh) to have the advantage. Low Ki loses his pipe early and Drew takes him to the floor for some hard chops instead of laying pipe into him.

Kenny King is in next with a weapon that is knocked out of his hands too quickly to notice. Galloway eats some chops against the barricade as King pulls out a cane to nail him in the back. Micah and a nightstick even things up and the Rising takes over with the usual brawling. Eric Young is in next with a trashcan lid (that is one CRAZY trashcan lid. Like, you know your crazy Uncle Stu who thinks he's Catherine Zeta-Jones? It's crazier than him) and he quickly sets up a Tower of Doom, but Galloway sits up out of the Tree of Woe into a German suplex to take everyone down.

Kurt Angle comes in with what looks like another pipe but throws it down for a bunch of Germans. We take a break and come back with MVP (kendo stick) and Chris Melendez (another pipe) involved. Eric's mystery partner, with another kendo stick, is Bram. Team Young cleans house for a bit until Lashley completes the field, meaning it's now first fall wins. Lashley avoids all of King's kicks and plants him with a powerslam.

MVP's Playmaker is countered but Bram cracks Lashley in the head with a kendo stick, setting up the Brighter Side of Suffering. Micah hits a Big Ending (just like Tyrus earlier) but King springboards in to take him down. That's fine with Galloway who takes most of Team Young down with a big flip dive over the ropes. Angle dives on everyone not named Young or Melendez, leaving Eric to hit a quick piledriver for the pin on Chris at 17:21.

Rating: D+. Basically this existed so it could exist. There was no real need for this to be a gauntlet match or a hardcore match as a ten man tag would have accomplished exactly the same thing. That's the bad sign for a gimmick: you can do the exact same thing without the gimmick being in place. The match was nothing special though and really could have done with being cut down to eight people.

Post match Young rips off Melendez's leg and chokes Angle out with it to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. This show felt really rushed and packed full of stuff. It felt like they were cramming in as much stuff as they could and it brought down the good stuff they were doing. You can see most of Slamiversary from here, but some of it really isn't that interesting. I mean, the Rising vs. the BDC just keeps going with no real reason to exist. The tag team series is good, but it's not something that's going to blow the doors off the place until it gets closer to the end. The show should be good, but the build isn't great so far.

As for tonight....meh. The hardcore war didn't do anything for me as you have ten guys with weapons in a gauntlet format. Clearly that just needs 100 minutes of build. The battle of the BroMans could be good and they got through the whole thing in like eight minutes so points for that. The

Anderson vs. Carter and Angle vs. Young feuds feel like they're just going for the sake of going, but Angle vs. Young seems to be moving towards wrapping up. It's a decent enough show, but they've cooled way off in recent weeks.

Results

Dollhouse b. Brooke/Rebel – Double lifting slam to Rebel

Mr. Anderson b. Tyrus – Mic Check

Wolves b. Dirty Heels – Sunset flip to Roode

Robbie E. b. Jesse Godderz – Rollup

Robbie E. b. Jesse Godderz – Majistral cradle

Robbie E. b. Jesse Godderz – Crucifix

Team Young b. Team Angle – Piledriver to Melendez

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Lucha Underground – May 6,

2015: Why I Love This Show

Lucha Underground

Date: May 6, 2015

Location: Lucha Underground Arena, Los Angeles, California

Commentators: Matt Striker, Vampiro

We're getting closer to the season finale and a lot of these stories are starting to reach their peaks. The big story from last week was the elimination of Drago after he lost his Lucha Underground Title shot. Other than that we have Dario Cueto being all evil with the threat of his brother, whoever or whatever that may be. Let's get to it.

The standard recap (I like these things as I haven't watched the show in a few weeks) shows us Albert vs. Johnny Mundo being set up and Hernandez becoming #1 contender.

Johnny and Alberto pitch themselves as #1 contender but Cueto isn't sure. Mundo thinks they're both more worthy than Fernandez, even though he won the triple threat. Cueto sets up Alberto vs. Mundo with the winner facing Hernandez for the #1 contendership next week. Hernandez better be ticked over this.

The Crew vs. Son of Havoc/Angelico

Neither gets an entrance. Bael is the odd man out here, as if that matters. Havoc starts with I think Cisco (seriously people, get them a nametag or something) and takes him down before Angelico tags himself in for the rolling kicks to the head. Castro comes in (thankfully in a shirt so I can tell these two apart) and jumps over a legsweep, only to eat another kick. Ivelisse, with her bad leg, is sitting in the front row and barking orders as her partners.

The Crew tries to make some tags but Angelico comes back in and cleans house with those fast strikes of his. Castro (wait now he doesn't have a shirt. Either they're changing clothes or Striker is making up the names as he goes) gets rolled up for two and heads outside, only to have both champions "hit" big flip dives to take them out. Back in and Angelico

gets a quick two on Castro but the fans want Havoc. That's exactly what they get as he tags himself in after Angelico flips out of a double belly to back suplex. Everything breaks down and the Crew hits the flapjack into the Codebreaker to pin Havoc.

Rating: C-. This was decent enough but my goodness I'm sick of the Crew being the same guy with three different names. The champions that can't get along idea has been covered, but this match continues to show the bigger issue: there aren't enough trios to validate having a whole division with titles. Decent match but I really don't care for the Crew.

Daivari tells Cueto he likes to inflict violence, so Dario gives him Texano next. Apparently Daivari's family owns a bunch of real estate in the area so he's a wealthy man. That's one of the things I love about Lucha Underground: they just make up characters and backstories, like you would see in the old days before everything had to be the truth. You don't have a story for someone? Just make one up. Why is that so complicated?

Konnan doesn't want Hernandez coming after Puma's title because of their friendship but Hernandez want to beat Puma for the belt. The chuckling Cueto comes in and tells Hernandez about the ruling he made earlier about Alberto and Mundo, which thankfully ticks him off. As for tonight, it's Puma/Hernandez vs. Cage/Cuerno. Simple, effective, and it took about a minute. If this were WWE, it would be five minutes, boring, and predictable.

Delavar Daivari vs. Texano

Daivari has a drink during the entrances. Texano charges in and beats Daivari down, only to be called for the DQ maybe 15 seconds in.

Cage/King Cuerno vs. Hernandez/Prince Puma

Still no entrances. Cage and Hernandez get things going and trade shoulders with Cage getting the better of it until Hernandez hits a slingshot shoulder to take over. Off to the champ but he's quickly caught in a powerslam, only to break it up with a headscissors. Cuerno comes in but gets taken down just as quickly. The King kicks the Prince in the

chest and nails a TKO (love that move), setting up a 619 of all things from Cage. That was really cool to see actually.

The squats into a Jackhammer gets two for Cage but Puma pops up (selling? What's that?) and hits a series of kicks to the face and a Blue Thunder Bomb on Cuerno. Back to Hernandez who cleans house and throws Cuerno over the top and onto Cage. The big SuperMex dive takes both guys down again and of course the fans are way into it. Puma loads up one of his own but Hernandez gets back on the apron to "accidentally" break it up.

Back in and Puma and Hernandez clean house on Cuerno but Cage takes Hernandez's head off with a clothesline. Hernandez runs Cuerno over but eats another clothesline from Cage. They head outside, where Hernandez pulls Puma right in the way of the suicide dive from Cuerno. Hernandez has had enough of this teaming up thing and powerbombs Puma on the apron, setting up Weapon X to give Cage the pin over the champ.

Rating: C. Storyline loss for Puma here and there's nothing wrong with that. Hernandez is a good choice for a big power guy who can put over someone like Puma in the future as he looks more and more like a giant killer every time he fights off someone like Hernandez or Cage. Good enough stuff here and that Arrow from Cuerno looked great.

Black Lotus' master says if she can beat him, she can go for her revenge. She tries to strike him and is easily blocked. The master tells him that she requires more training so she agrees to stay.

Alberto El Patron vs. Johnny Mundo

The winner faces Hernandez next week for a future title shot. They trade headlocks to start until Alberto sends him into the corner and hits a dropkick to the back of the head for two. Johnny gets all ticked off and hits those hard right hands of his to knock Alberto to the floor, only to get tied up in the ring apron. An enziguri knocks Mundo's block off and we hit the chinlock.

Patron misses a moonsault and Johnny starts slugging away, followed by the Flying Chuck for two. Mundo slaps on something like the cousin of a cobra clutch but Patron pops up for a backdrop over the top, sending

Mundo onto the steps. A big suicide dive takes Mundo down again but Alberto can't follow up. Back in and they slug it out with Alberto taking over with clotheslines followed by the tilt-a-whirl backbreaker. That goes nowhere as Johnny knocks him outside for a big corkscrew plancha.

Back in again and Alberto nails a reverse superplex for two before finally taking his shirt off. Alberto starts going for the arm but eats a running knee to the head, setting up the End of the World for two. The armbreaker sends Mundo rolling to the ropes for a quick break. Patron misses a charge into the post and takes a top rope double stomp to the back for two more. Back up and a quick Codebreaker to the arm sets up the low superkick to give Patron the pin.

Rating: B+. I don't know if it was the dream match that the announcers were building it up to be but this was a very fun wrestling match, which is all it needed to be. Mundo can still more than go in the ring and Patron's style is so much better suited for a company like Lucha Underground than WWE. Good stuff here.

Catrina, with the magic rock, opens the casket to release Mil Muertes.

Overall Rating: B. Really fun show here and it set up the stories for the future. Alberto and Mundo are the kind of guys you need for the main event scene to give Puma some serious competition as well as credibility. On top of that you have the continuing story of Black Lotus but I'm not sure where that's going and I'm not sure if I care. That being said, it's different enough to make me want to see where it goes and that's the point of a wrestling story. Good show here and I had fun watching it, as always.

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Thought of the Day: Wrestlemania XXXI Didn't Mean Much

Think about it: what from that show still matters less than two months removed?

Other than Rollins and Cena winning their titles, almost nothing that happened there matters.

Bryan – Vacated his title

Kidd/Cesaro – Lost the titles they were defending

Sting – Hasn't been mentioned

Lesnar – Appeared once

Undertaker – Hasn't been mentioned

Wyatt – Basically no sold the loss

AJ/Paige – Both gone

Bellas – Now faces

Big Show – Nothing changed after winning the battle royal

Cena is still feuding with Rusev and Rollins is still feuding with Orton. Other than that, it's almost like Wrestlemania just came and went.

Impact Wrestling Moving Back To Wednesdays Starting June 3

According to Dixie, though I'm sure you all know this as EVERYONE follows her on Twitter right? I'd much rather have three hours to do on Wednesdays (counting NXT) and have Friday night off. There's no way around the Friday night death slot, though I'm always curious to see TNA diehards' latest explanation for why the ratings still aren't great.

Smackdown – May 14, 2015: I Need A New Watch

Smackdown

Date: May 14, 2015

Location: Ford Center, Evansville, Indiana

Commentators: Jerry Lawler, Byron Saxton, Michael Cole

It's the final show before Payback and we're pretty much all set up. Raw ended with Ambrose standing tall over his three opponents, meaning tonight is likely going to end with one of the other three doing the same, albeit not over the other three people in the match. Raw has been good lately so Smackdown has a lot to live up to. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

We open with Bray Wyatt talking about Ryback coming face to face with him on Monday. Ryback is a very strong man, but he has an Achilles heel. Bray

is going to prove that the Garden of Eden does exist and tonight he'll scratch an itch. Ryback's dreams will be turned into nightmares. Resist the itch and run. Why are these two even fighting?

Here's Dean Ambrose to get things going. Dean says he works best alone, fights alone and drinks alone. It felt good on Monday to stand alone because this Sunday it's every man for himself. You have Seth Rollins and his Lollipop Guild Goon Squad. Randy Orton was last seen eating a spear. That leaves Roman Reigns, who is Dean's only friend in the world. Dean has one thing to say to Roman, but he'll get to say it to his face as here comes Reigns.

Dean isn't going to apologize but Reigns wasn't expecting one. This past Monday, Dean hit him with Dirty Deeds and that's all he's going to get. There's no grudge between them because they're brothers but this Sunday, Reigns is bringing the big guns. They're about to shake hands when Kane comes out.

Dean should be less concerned with winning the Slammy Award for Bromance of the Year and be worried about what he has to do. Ambrose brings up HHH's decree that Kane is out of a job if Rollins doesn't win on Monday. This might be the last night we see Corporate Kane. That's not cool with Kane, who makes Ambrose vs. Sheamus RIGHT NOW. Ambrose: "Is that the only time you know?"

Sheamus vs. Dean Ambrose

This match starts after a break. They fight up against the ropes with neither getting an advantage so it's time to go basic. Ambrose grabs a top wristlock but gets taken down with a headlock. Dean ties his legs up though and grabs the mohawk for a kick to the back. Sheamus gets a boot up in the corner but Dean bulldogs him down to take over again. The running dropkick against the ropes is countered and Sheamus knees him out to the floor.

We take a break and come back with Dean slugging away but getting caught in the Cloverleaf. Dean makes the ropes like any good rebellious hero should do, only to charge into White Noise. To be fair he deserves that after not selling the hold. The threat of the Brogue Kick sends Dean to

the floor and he nails a hard clothesline to take over again.

Back in and it's a missed Brogue Kick, a clothesline to the floor and a suicide dive to take Sheamus out again. Back in again and Sheamus' tilt-a-whirl backbreaker gets two. He takes too long to follow up though and eats a clothesline, sending Dean to the top. Sheamus tries what looks to be a top rope powerslam (facing the floor instead of the ring though) but Dean slips out to avoid the whole broken back thing and sends Sheamus face first onto the post, followed by a rollup to give Dean the pin at 12:42.

Rating: B. This was the fun power brawl that you would expect between these two. Ambrose is one of those guys that can work well against anyone regardless of their size or style. Unfortunately it came at the expense of Sheamus, who has lost almost all of his momentum since returning with the really good bully character. Therefore, he's likely getting the title in the Chamber.

Rollins channels his inner Stephanie by repeating the stipulations of Sunday's match to Kane in a way that no normal person would ever actually speak. Kane says he's set for life and doesn't need the Authority's money. Oh and Rollins gets Ryback tonight.

Here are Rusev and Lana with something to say. The fans chant USA but Rusev says the woman wants to talk. Lana reads a prepared statement, apologizing for Fandangoing on Raw last week. It should all be about Rusev, who shows us a clip from Raw where Rusev interrupted Neville vs. Cena and beat John up post match. I can't wait for this feud to be over already so the writers have to wake their lazy brains up for a change.

Rusev knows Cena was quitting in his head when he passed out, but this Sunday everyone will hear him quit. We get a loop of Cena saying he quits (out of context) from Raw and no big followup line to end this. Lawler however does think that video was doctored because Cena never gives up.

Ryback says he's no meat head. He saw fear in Wyatt's eyes on Monday but tonight, he's hungry.

Tough Enough videos, including one from Gabriel Iglesias.

Here's Rollins with something to say before his match with Ryback. He continues the trend of showing clips from Raw by giving us his big beatdown, but promises that's the last time anything like that will happen.

Ryback vs. Seth Rollins

Non-title but that might not matter as Wyatt jumps Ryback on his way to the ring. Back from a break and Ryback says he can go because he's tough that way and the idea of calling a DQ for someone attacking before the match is unheard of in this company. Ryback tries a suplex to start but Seth knees him in the head to escape and knocks Ryback out to the floor. He dives back in at nine and eats a DDT for two. We see a clip of Bray's attack, which was just a shoulder block. Ryback is that banged up off a single shoulder?

A neckbreaker gets two for Seth and he slaps on a front facelock. Ryback counters exactly how you would expect him to and plants Seth with a tilt-a-whirl powerslam to put both guys down. The big guy gets all fired up and nails a not great spinebuster for two. The Meat Hook connects but Rollins rakes the eyes (a rare sight these days) to break up the Shell Shock. Seth hits the top rope knee to the head and the a pair of low superkicks for the pin at 8:23.

Rating: C. So to recap, a shoulder block is enough to knock Ryback silly and give him a huge disadvantage? I love the idea of not having Ryback lose clean, but couldn't they have had Bray send him into the steps or give him a big beatdown or something more than a simple shoulder? The match was fine and actually had a story to it of Rollins focusing on the head with the low superkicks getting the pin. It's not as good as the curb stomp but I'll take a high impact move over that lame falling DDT.

Here's what you missed on the WWE Network this week. So the news broke this week that the classic content wasn't getting a lot of views. Now I'm just thinking out loud but maybe people might watch it if it was advertised, say, once. That's just nutty though as WWE thinks eight minute interviews with the stars of a movie that is bombing or Wiz Khalifa is what really draws in the viewers.

It's the Bellas vs. Naomi/Tamina on Sunday. That makes sense but can we please stop finding ways to keep the title on Nikki? It's just not going to be seen as epic no matter how WWE tries to spin it.

Naomi brags about how strong Tamina is and says they're tired of walking around empty handed. The Bellas get all the opportunities around here, even though Nikki is overrated and Brie is more worthless than her quitting husband.

Tyson Kidd vs. Kofi Kingston

Before the match, Woods informs us that Cesaro/Kidd are cheaters but the New Day is giving them one more title shot on Payback. Big E. tells us just how bad Cesaro/Kidd are: they don't recycle, the double dip and they buy one ticket at the movies and go see two! The New Day is the change you need to see in this world and the fans should sing with them. Instead it's a siren and we're ready to go.

Kofi kicks him in the ribs to start as Woods is cheering even harder than usual this week. Tyson fights back and knocks Kofi to the floor for a big flip dive (Woods: "KOFI MOVE!"). The New Day distraction prevents the Sharpshooter but Tyson gets it on a few seconds later for the submission at 2:06.

Elimination Chamber preview.

We see Bryan's speech from Raw as he vacates the title. This seems to be the promised health update.

Here's Bo Dallas with something to say. He saw Daniel Bryan vacate the title on Monday but he sees it as an opportunity. There are five stages of grief and Dallas can help you through them all. First up is denial, but there is no denying that Bryan let all the fans down. Next is anger, which the fans should feel towards Bryan for letting you down.

Third is bargaining. You'll get one heck of a bargain on those Daniel Bryan t-shirts now that he's gone. Depression is going to completely engulf Bryan when he realizes everyone has forgotten him. Finally there's acceptance and Dallas can help us all accept that Daniel is gone. All you

have to do to accept it is Bo-lieve! Dallas will have a job for years with promos like this.

Neville vs. Bo Dallas

This is joined in progress after a break with King Barrett on commentary and Neville flipping forward out of the corner. Neville sends him to the floor but gets pulled down onto the apron to give Bo an opening. Back in and we hit the chinlock for a bit but Neville fights back with those running kicks to the head. A longer Red Arrow than usual is good for the pin at 2:17. I believe this is Neville's first match against anyone who has never held a WWE Title.

Post match Barrett mocks Neville for wearing a stupid costume every week. This Sunday Neville is in for some corporal punishment in the form of a royal Bull Hammer.

The Rosebuds ask Adam Rose when they're going to be paid. Rose doesn't take kindly to this and says they're just like the Bunny. The hot dog gets pushed down and the party is officially over. Rosa kisses him and Kane walks by them on his way to the ring. So the Rosebuds are officially gone. That's probably for the best, but Rose really needs to get away from Rosa as she's possibly the most worthless Diva in years.

More Tough Enough hype.

Kane vs. Roman Reigns

Pin or submission only, making this a glorified street fight. Kane goes after Reigns during the entrance again and they slug it out on the floor before the bell. Neither guy can get the better of it until Kane sends him into the steps. We finally get a bell and Kane punches Reigns back to the floor, only to miss a stairs shot against the post.

It's kendo stick time (because there must be kendo sticks under the ring at all times for reasons that aren't entirely clear) but Kane takes it away from Roman and pounds him down. A kendo stick to the face gets two and we take a break. Back with Reigns taking a big boot to the face for two more before Kane throws him outside.

Kane loads up the table but Reigns punches him down and nails a clothesline off the table. It's time to bring the steps back in as Reigns drives them into Kane's head to put him down again. Roman throws in a pair of tables but Kane takes his head off with a big boot for two. The chokeslam through the table is blocked but Kane catches the Superman Punch in a chokeslam through the table for two. Thanks for coming Kane and if you would kindly stand in front of that table in the corner for the spear please. A Superman Punch puts Kane in perfect position and the spear through the wood is good for the pin at 11:16.

Rating: C. Decent enough brawl but it felt like they were filling in time until the obvious ending. Kane is still capable of having a power brawl but my limited interest in him is killed by the long promos with HHH and Rollins, plus a story that almost no one cares about. Good enough here though and Reigns kicking out of a big finisher keeps up the idea that he never quits.

Seth isn't worried about Reigns but it's going to take more than that to get this belt off him on Sunday. That's true for anyone that wants to take the title off of him, including Ambrose....who is behind the Stooges. For some reason he has a plate of cookies to throw at them but the numbers catch up with him. This brings in Roman Reigns for the save and they stare each other down. The camera pans down to show the belt on the ground. Roman extends his hand but Dean reaches down and picks up the belt. He puts it on Reigns' shoulder, saying he'll take it back on Sunday.

Overall Rating: C-. How was this possibly a two hour show? It feels like we should just be at the halfway mark and somehow the whole thing is already done. This show did as well as it could have with what it had though, as Payback just isn't that interesting. I don't have much of a reason to care about seeing the same stuff that's been boring me for five hours a week for another three hours this Sunday. Passable episode this week but nothing past that.

Results

Dean Ambrose b. Sheamus – Rollup

Seth Rollins b. Ryback – Low superkick

Tyson Kidd b. Kofi Kingston – Sharpshooter

Roman Reigns b. Kane – Spear through a table

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New Column: Knock, And The Chamber Shall Be Opened

Looking at the Elimination Chamber and what it's return means, plus how it connects to NXT.

<http://www.wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-knock-chamber-shall-opened/35591/>

NXT – May 13, 2015: Building

In Reverse

NXT

Date: May 13, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Byron Saxton, Corey Graves

It's the go home show for Unstoppable, but it's been clear that one of the only things that can stop NXT is the injury bug. Sami Zayn and Hideo Itami have jacked up their shoulders. Sami's time on the shelf (if he'll be out at all) has yet to be determined but Itami is looking at six to eight months. It's going to be interesting to see how the Takeover card changes as a result of the injuries. Let's get to it.

We open with a long recap of Sami Zayn answering John Cena's Open Challenge for the US Title. Sami is still going to be here tonight to go face to face with Owens, but this was taped before the injury.

Opening sequence.

Solomon Crowe vs. Baron Corbin

Crowe goes right after him to start but gets shoved across the ring. Baron slowly hammers him down and the fans chant either BORING or CORBIN. It turns into BARON'S GONNA BORE YOU but Solomon kicks him into the corner. I'm digging this spunky fighter character but I still want the hacker gimmick instead. Not that it matters as Crowe charges into the End of Days for the pin at 2:07.

Post match Rhino comes out to start the brawl until security breaks it up. Well it's better than Bull Dempsey. Rhino Gores down some of the guards.

Finn Balor says he isn't underestimating Tyler Breeze because he knows how awesome Breeze is. As for who he'd rather face for the title, Sami is one of the best in the world but he's still bothered that he didn't beat Owens. Either is fine with him though.

Tyler Breeze says he's winning the triple threat and getting back where

he belongs. He doesn't care who he faces for the title.

Sasha Banks vs. ???

Before the match, Sasha says she made Becky Lynch and next week she'll prove that she's the Boss. A small package and backslide get two each for the unnamed one (the fans dub her Black Shorts) and Banks bails to the floor. Back in and a cross body gets two on Sasha. I love how the announcers manage to avoid saying they have no idea what the other girl's name is. Sasha drives two knees into the ribs in the corner and Black Shorts is in trouble. The Bank Statement is good for the submission at 2:31.

Charlotte and Bayley want a tag match with Emma and Dana Brooke at Takeover. Nothing wrong with combining feuds into one match.

We get the same Uhaa Nation vignette from last week.

Nation comes in and sees....someone I don't recognize but it might have been Crowe. They seem friendly. Nation still doesn't have a name.

Alexa Bliss vs. Carmella

Feeling out process to start with Bliss grabbing some rollups for two each. Carmella takes her down into a body scissors but here come the Tag Team Champions. Bliss gets caught in a full nelson with Carmella's legs as the fans tell the champs that they look stupid. We get an awkward sequence of Bliss wrist dragging Carmella off the top but pausing once she hits the mat. She pops up into a standing moonsault but it's called double knees to the ribs. Carmella grabs her headscissors crossface but Blake and Murphy distract her, allowing Bliss to slam her down and hit the Sparkle Splash for the in at 3:40.

Rating: D+. This was missing most of the time as Bliss looked a few steps off. Then again it could have been Carmella not being in place for the spots. Not that it matters though as Bliss could have been any given girl out there as this was all about Carmella, who now seems to be against the champs. Granted that's changed almost every week so it shouldn't be a surprise.

Murphy and Blake get in the ring and the fans chant NO MEANS NO. Carmella says her boys will be here next week and prove that Blake and Murphy are SAWFT. The fans were actually behind here here.

Itami says he wants to fight Owens after he wins the triple threat to beat some respect into Kevin.

Emma and Dana Brooke are on for the tag match. They leave but Brooke comes back to pat Devin on the head.

Hideo Itami/Finn Balor vs. Tyler Breeze/Adam Rose

No Rosebuds this week. Remember that Itami accidentally kicks Balor in the face last week during his match with Breeze. Balor does an extended entrance (no paint) and the fans think it's awesome. Itami chops Rose to start and brings Balor in for a slingshot stomp to the chest and two. A big clothesline puts Rose on the floor and we take a break. Back with Balor dropkicking Adam for two before Breeze comes in and takes over. It's Balor in trouble in the corner as Rose and Breeze start taking turns stomping on Finn.

Breeze stays in for a chinlock before Rose gets two off a spinebuster, which transitions into a Boston crab. When is the last time anyone not named Jericho used that move? A rope is grabbed so Rose switches over to a sleeper. Balor finally jawbreaks his way to freedom and nails a Pele, setting up the hot tag to Itami. The fans quickly get into Hideo as he fires off his strikes on Breeze. Balor tags himself in though and hits the Sling Blade on Rose, but Itami tags himself in to break up the Coup de Grace. The fans cheer for Hideo, only to have Breeze roll him up for the pin at 11:52.

Rating: C. This was a by the book WWE tag team match and that's not the most entertaining thing in the world. I like that they're setting up Itami vs. Balor, but it would have been nice if they hadn't had Rose in there to kill off a bit of the suck. It's interesting that the fans cheered Itami more than Balor as I don't think I've heard that before.

Breeze kicks Balor and Itami down and gets cheered on by some of the crowd. Rose congratulates him but eats a Supermodel Kick.

Another package on Sami vs. Cena.

From after the match, Sami says he's tweaked his shoulder and made it even worse in the match. He doesn't know the results of the injury yet but he's too high off the match to worry about it. No word on if he'll be able to go for Takeover but the announcers don't say he won't be there.

It's time for the face to face hard sell between Zayn and Owens. Sami says they're not here to fight and we go to a long shot of Owens as what is clearly a recorded voiceover from Sami where he says his shoulder is hurt but the match is still happening. Back to live audio with Sami asking Owens to tell him why he did this. Just one time, tell him the truth. Was Owens jealous because Sami got here first?

Maybe it's about Kevin's son wanting to wear a Sami Zayn shirt instead of a KO shirt. That finally gets under Owens' skin but he walks out without saying a word. Sami asks if that's it, but Owens, with his back to Sami, says everything Sami just said is irrelevant. After Owens took the title from him, Zayn left to "clear his head", but it was because Sami was hurt. He's still hurt, and it was Owens that hurt him in the first place. At Takeover, he's going to do it again. This time though, Sami isn't coming back. Owens is so awesome at being evil and the lack of emotion in his voice as he talked about hurting Sami was great.

Overall Rating: C+. This show felt....uneven. I'm looking forward to Takeover but it's lacking that big, emotional feeling to it. Now that being said, NXT is the one place where I have the faith that they can pull off something special, but I'm just not sure what's going to do that next week. Zayn being able to go is obviously a good thing, but the question is what happens to him after that. Decent enough show this week but it feels like we already had the big moments to build the matches.

Results

Baron Corbin b. Solomon Crowe – End of Days

Sasha Banks b. ??? – Bank Statement

Alexa Bliss b. Carmella – Sparkle Splash

Tyler Breeze/Adam Rose b. Hideo Itami/Finn Balor – Small package to Itami

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Monday Nitro – December 20, 1999: This Is Rock Bottom

Monday Nitro #219

Date: December 20, 1999

Location: Baltimore Arena, Baltimore, Maryland

Attendance: 8,915

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Bobby Heenan, Tony Schiavone

We're just past Starrcade and.....I have no idea what we're supposed to do now actually. Bret is still World Champion, Sting is out of action again and the rest of the show was pretty much a big waste of time with short matches that went nowhere or that only Russo and company care about. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Piper calling for the bell on Goldberg to end the title match against Bret. Yes, that's their big idea: Montreal part 58.

So you might be asking how the big fallout show starts. After last night, we're ready to start on the new road forward for WCW. I promise, I'm not making this up. This is really how this show began.

Here are Madusa and Spice for a chat. Madusa brags about being the first female Cruiserweight Champion and how the women of WCW are taking over with their T&A. Right now she wants any man in the back to come out here so she can neuter him. As luck would have it, Buzzkill is in the crowd campaigning for equal rights, so Madusa calls him to the ring for a title match right now.

Cruiserweight Title: Madusa vs. Buzzkill

Madusa takes the sign and blasts Buzzkill in the head, followed by the missile dropkick for two. The German suplex is blocked though and Buzzkill dropkicks her down. The Russian legsweep should have the title won (because it's a Russian legsweep) but Spice has the referee. In the distract, Spice throws in a foreign object and Madusa knocks Buzzkill silly, setting up the German suplex to retain.

I need a minute here. After last night's disaster of a Starrcade, Vince Russo, the man who actually takes credit for the Attitude Era, decided that the big idea was to open Nitro with a match between a comedy character and Madusa, who is flat out saying she has one of the most popular titles (well at least it used to be) in the company because of how she looks. That's their big way to open the post-Starrcade Nitro. Imagine if the night after Rollins cashed in Money in the Bank or after Bryan overcame the Authority, we opened with a Nikki Bella promo and match. That's basically what they did here and it's making my head hurt.

The announcers talk about Goldberg getting screwed last night. I'll set the over/under for use of that word in this story at about 6,000.

Russo tells Curt Hennig to get rid of Hugh Morrus tonight. Why Russo has issues with Morrus isn't clear, but I'd bet it's a nuance of a plot point that I missed in Russo's 19 segments a night. Creative Control is sent to find Piper.

Speaking of Piper, he arrives with his assistant and son because of reasons I don't want to be told. The kid tapes Piper's wrists and Creative Control comes to collect him.

Hugh Morrus vs. Curt Hennig

Before we get started, it's time for another angle that no one will care about but we need to force it in there anyway. This time it's Shane being beaten down by a guy in a Scream mask with what looks like a pipe. As for the match, here's Tony's take on it: "I've never been so confused coming out of a WCW pay per view." I can't believe I'm saying this, but preach it Tony. Morrus slugs Hennig into the corner to start as the announcers don't explain Hugh's issues with the Powers That Be, likely because they don't exist.

After a big running splash in the corner, Morrus gets distracted by some old guy in a hospital gown who wanders from the crowd to the ramp. For the love of.....JUST HAVE A WRESTLING MATCH! Morrus goes outside and helps the man he calls Pop to the ramp so he stays out of harms' way. Hennig gets in a few shots as Pop comes back down to ringside. In the distraction, Hennig hits the PerfectPlex for the pin.

Rating: D-. I would ask why this is happening and what this is supposed to mean, but I really, really don't care. Hugh Morrus is getting a story now? Apparently about his father who just wanders around ringside after leaving a hospital? As usual, Russo doesn't get that you have to make us care about a person before you just throw them into a story that makes no sense on the surface. I don't care about Hugh Morrus because he's never done anything worth caring about. Therefore, I don't care about his Pop or whatever they're doing with him. Again, just let them wrestle and THEN come up with a story.

Pop checks on his son, who is still down after a devastating suplex.

Piper is in Russo's office where Russo talks about Piper making some sort of deal with the devil, meaning Piper can't touch Russo. It's not over though because Piper has to go out there and tell everyone that he sold out and that Russo had nothing to do with it. So who did he sell out to if Russo wasn't involved? That question is immediately wiped from my memory as Russo says that Piper will take his heat. Piper talks about going out there to "shoot on the marks" and how he and Hogan built this sport. The audio screws up so I can't hear the rest of it but do I really need to?

So to recap: Russo is the mastermind behind screwing Goldberg out of the title and gave Piper something in return for ending the title match last night and now Piper has to go and take the rap for it. This is going to be a SHOOT, because all those times where Piper was evil and made his big name were just him acting and we should believe how much he cares for wrestling? Can we go back to Hugh and Pop?

And now, a word from Tony Schiavone about how Vince McMahon screwed Bret Hart out of the WCW Title. Russo worked for McMahon at that time, so rumors are speculating that Russo scripted the ending to that match. I don't even know how to respond to that so we'll move on to Tony talking about how Kevin Nash is defending Goldberg in the locker room. You know, the SHOOT locker room.

This brings out Kevin Nash, who talks about living by a code in wrestling. There are certain rules you have to live by no matter what happens. Yes people, KEVIN NASH is talking about ethics in wrestling. Just go with it and maybe it'll be over soon. There are two groups of people behind the curtain: the boys and the office. The boys are all a fraternity and the office doesn't care about any of them. Nash doesn't care about Goldberg, but what happened last night was....a word they don't actually censor. TV-14 it is I suppose. Hart screwed one of the boys and now he has to pay.

Creative Control says Nash is the biggest politician in the locker room. So yeah, it's clearly a big worked shoot (in case it wasn't obvious before) and the audience, after sitting through Madusa vs. Buzzkill and Hennig vs. Morrus/Pop gets to hear a lot of stuff that is probably going over their collective heads while Russo jerks off to this nonsense because it makes him feel so much smarter than everyone else. I understand what they're talking about and it's just so dumb.

Tank Abbott vs. Jerry Flynn

No holds barred of course. They trade slaps/punches before shoving the referee, drawing out security to break it up. Flynn is put in handcuffs and Tank knocks him out cold. This didn't last a minute and the fans are rightfully booing it out of the building.

Goldberg arrives.

Here's the Revolution for what is actually the most interesting part of the show so far. Douglas talks about how the Revolution was proven right at Starrcade, but we pause for a word from Saturn about Tootsie Pops. He calls out Jim Duggan to denounce America, but Jim doesn't want to do it. Instead, Duggan says he lied and gets beaten down. The Revolution goes to burn the American flag but the Filthy Animals (minus Eddie) return for the save. Great. It's this feud again. Shane's look of shock when the Animals came out (walking at about half a mile an hour) is great.

Here's Piper for his big explanation as Goldberg and Hart watch from backstage. Piper lists off some of the evil things he's done in the past before going into a mini rant against Russo's writing. Couldn't they just call it like, match making? Anyway, Piper knows people just want to see the wrestlers fight. After listing off his accomplishments from the 80s, Piper says he's a real fighting and quits. His son comes out to walk to the back with him, but Goldberg comes out to block their way.

Goldberg has stayed up all night trying to make sense of this (now THAT is probably a shoot comment). He's looked up to a few guys all his life and until last night Piper was on that list. Piper made the wrong decision last night but Goldberg doesn't think Piper would ever sell out. Roddy apologizes and things seem to be a bit better until Bret comes out to pick it up all over again. As far as he's concerned, there's no point in blaming Piper and the title is vacant. Bret goes to the back to tell the Powers That Be what they can do with their title. Keep shooting people. You'll hit something eventually, though it's likely your own foot.

Post break, Hart yells at Russo, but the boss says that was an attempt at making up for Montreal. Yes seriously, THAT'S THEIR BIG STORY. Bret throws the belt at Russo so he makes Hart vs. Goldberg for tonight. Nice to see them continue their tradition of airing the same match the night after Starrcade. I mean, it's gone so well before.

Meng/Norman Smiley vs. Fit Finlay/Brian Knobbs

Hardcore of course. So why would Meng want to team with Smiley here? My

question is quickly answered as Meng goes after Smiley before their opponents come out. Knobbs and Finlay come out to watch as the announcers try to explain the psychology. Apparently Knobbs and Finlay want Norman to keep the Hardcore Title so they can take it from him with less of a fight.

Therefore, we're supposed to ignore the two of them knocking Smiley out cold with a pipe so Norman could pin him with one hand last night, proving that they could beat Meng with ease. As for the match, Norman gets chased through the crowd, objects are thrown, a bathroom is invaded, Norman's head is put in a toilet and Knobbs gets the pin.

Rating: F. We're over an hour into this show and this is the second best match of the night so far. I'm not sure if it's good or horribly stupid that they're trying to add psychology to this division. Yeah there's an idea to it, but the idea is stupid. The joke isn't funny though and Meng was just kind of there most of the "match" as everyone else was "fighting."

Piper tells his kid to wait in the limo and gets a ball bat.

Video of the Artist Formerly Known As Prince Iaukea's recording session where he doesn't actually sing. Somehow this sounds like one of the more logical things on the show.

Hart is walking and runs into Piper. Bret tries to talk but Piper is back to babbling to himself.

Maestro vs. Evan Karagias

It's a flashback to the NWO days as the announcers ignore what's going on in the ring to talk about the backstage stuff. Maestro runs him over to start but Evan hits a springboard spinning cross body. Evan rains down right hands in the corner until he gets dropped throat first across the top rope. We get a bit of a tease as Maestro loads up a chinlock but slaps Evan in the face with both hands instead.

The announcers talk about Montreal with Tony saying it's unbelievable that Russo wants to make up with Hart. Evan fights up and counters a

hurricanrana into a powerbomb. Symphony gets shoved onto the apron but Evan has a quick change of heart to check on her. The distraction lets Maestro hit a knee to the back for the pin. Symphony is of course fine. Tony: "She sold that knee."

Rating: D. Total mentions of Evan losing the title last night: zero. Then again it's fairly clear that there's no future to the title so losing the belt might have been the best thing possible for Evan. Maestro and Symphony are a nothing pairing but at least they're not victims of a stalker anymore.

Piper literally destroys the Powers That Be's office. Piper: "How about Adrian Adonis and Gorilla Monsoon?" And yes, he breaks the fourth wall.

Chavo Guerrero tries to sell Evan a book on how to pick up chicks. Thankfully, this ends in a beating.

Chris Kanyon vs. Bam Bam Bigelow vs. Diamond Dallas Page

Kanyon says this isn't Hollywood and talks about destroying the Triad. Bigelow and Page come out and double team him with Page hitting a Rock Bottom and Bigelow adding a headbutt. A clothesline and another headbutt have Kanyon reeling but Page and Bigelow argue about which finisher should end Kanyon. Page offers a handshake but pulls Bigelow into a Diamond Cutter. It's angle time though as Page drops to the floor, kisses a fan, and leaves. J. Biggs throws Kanyon a briefcase but the referee cuts him off, allowing Kanyon to hit Bigelow with a champagne bottle for the pin.

Rating: D+. Well that happened. They spent the entire summer building up the Triad and then the blowoff (I guess?) match takes four minutes with no announcement on a Nitro? Sounds appropriate to me. At least Kanyon has a new character and he's getting as close as he can to thriving in it.

Bigelow is busted way open and Kanyon is bleeding from the hand. Were they stupid enough to use a real bottle???

Creative Control vs. Kevin Nash

There's no referee so I don't think this is a match. Actually that makes

sense given how things worked earlier. Hall accompanies Nash on crutches. Since this isn't a match (no bell), the twins tag. Nash slugs away at Patrick in the corner and kicks Gerald in the face as the tagging part is already done.

The numbers catch up with Nash and Gerald takes him down for a cover but there's no referee. Heenan praises Nash for having the guts to say what he said earlier in the night. They start going after Kevin's knee and the tagging starts up again. Hall gets bored and comes inside for some crutch shots to the twins. Creative Control walks out to end whatever this was.

Luger and Liz are amused at Sting having a broken jaw. Why they're in the rafters and why Luger is dressed as Sting isn't clear but I don't think I want to know.

US Title: Chris Benoit vs. Jeff Jarrett

Another ladder match with Benoit defending because there's no reason not to do it again twenty four hours later. At least it was good last night so maybe it works again here. They slug it out to start and Benoit takes over with a pair of dropkicks. Benoit ties him in the Tree of Woe for a running dropkick but Jeff crotches him against the post to take over. Back up and Benoit is the first to the ladder but he has to side step the baseball slide.

Benoit throws him into the chair in the corner before nailing the back and knee with the same chair. Jeff stays on the floor and holds his leg as Benoit breaks the ladder by stepping on the rungs. Tony: "Someone has gimmicked this ladder!" Tenay: "You know who it is!" Heenan: "Kidman?" The other side's rungs break as well and it's a guitar shot to Benoit as Jeff's leg is fine. He grabs a fresh ladder and wins the title because SCREW YOU BENOIT FANS! YOU'RE GETTING JARRETT WHETHER YOU CARE OR NOT!

Rating: D+. They said the word gimmick for the ladder about ten times in two minutes near the end as the levels of obnoxiousness get higher and higher every single week. Benoit winning the title last night and being in the main event of a pay per view last month already seem to be nothing but memories.

After a bunch of replays, Curt Hennig tells Jarrett that the Powers That Be need to see him.

Sid Vicious vs. The Wall

Sid kicks him in the face to start and takes it outside for some right hands to Wall's face. Back in and Wall hits him right back, only to eat a chokeslam. Cue Berlyn for a distraction, allowing Wall to load up a chokeslam of his own. Not that it matters as Berlyn missile dropkicks Wall for the DQ.

Sid powerbombs Berlyn and shakes Wall's hand to complete the face turn.

Russo tells Jarrett that it's going to happen tonight.

Disco offers to pay the mafia but Tony Marinara's dad tells him he can join the Family or spend the rest of his life in a coma.

Harlem Heat vs. Varsity Club

Rotundo/Steiner here with Sullivan on commentary, where he spends the whole match referring to Rick as Robbie (Rick's real name) because SHOOTING IS COOL AND HIP AND MAKES US SMARTER THAN YOU SO HA! Stevie quickly runs Rotundo over to start before it's off to the partners. Booker kicks him in the face a few times but it's too much to ask Steiner to sell so it's a big clothesline to put Booker on the floor. Things get a bit confusing as the Varsity Club decides they're the Freebirds (they're from the right time period) and start changing places with Rotundo going to commentary.

That lasts all of eight seconds before Mike runs back in and misses a charge, allowing Booker to plant him with a Rock Bottom. Stevie comes in off the hot tag and cleans house but there go the lights because it's Midnight. Ever the genius, Stevie yells at her, allowing Mike to roll him up for the pin.

Rating: D. More mindless brawling here with Booker doing everything he could to make it a match. I still have no idea why the Varsity Club is back as Rick was the only one doing anything, even though he's one of the least likeable people on the roster. I'll give them this though: at least

this felt like a match, even with the screwy ending.

PG-13 runs in and attacks the Varsity Club. They can't be serious.

The yet to be named Daffney is getting a Surge when the Misfits come up to hit on her. For reasons of crazy, she knees Jerry Only low and runs off.

Here's David Flair for a chat but he beats up David Penzer first. Flair calls out Vampiro, who says he has no problem with David. Vampiro yells at Daffney but eats a crowbar shot. Jerry Only comes out and takes a beating as well, leaving David and Daffney to kiss.

Buff Bagwell comes out with something to say. He's had a good career in WCW but now he wants some gold around his waist. Gene goes way out in right field and asks about rumors regarding Bagwell and Kimberly Page. Buff pushes the mic away and whispers to Gene, but Okerlund says that sounds like an admission of guilt. Bagwell admits that Kimberly is a knockout and if Page wasn't a factor, he would, and I quote, "put his stuff all over Kim." He mentions his bed and Page comes out to jump Bagwell.

Piper says goodbye to the locker room and calls Sid a kid. He rambles on about how hard wrestling has been on him and wants the boys to fight back against the Powers That Be.

WCW World Title: Bret Hart vs. Goldberg

The title is officially vacant coming in and Jeff Jarrett is watching on a monitor in the back. Goldberg hammers him in the face to start and chokes with a boot in the corner. They head outside with Goldberg hammering away even more as Bret has been on defense almost all match. Back in and a powerslam drops Hart but he grabs the ropes to break up a leg lock.

Bret starts going after the leg with kicks to the knee before wrapping it around the ropes. The referee goes down because of course he does and Bret slaps on the Figure Four. Cue the Outsiders with ball bats to beat up Goldberg. Bret lets go of the hold and beats on Goldberg as well so

Piper comes back to try and protect Goldberg as the referee calls for the bell. There was a cover in there somewhere and Bret has won the title.

Jeff Jarrett comes out with spraypaint and.....THE BAND IS BACK TOGETHER! Bret tries to say something but his mic doesn't work. Everyone celebrates with their new titles to end the show.

Overall Rating: W. That's W for waste. I've watched a lot of wrestling shows in my day (upwards of 4,000 last I checked). In the course of my time as a fan, I don't remember a show that felt like a waste of my time. That has changed after this show. I can live with a show where nothing happens. I can live with a show full of bad matches. I can live with a show where the company loses its way for a night.

That's not what happened on this show. This show was about eliminating every single concept and idea of logic and common sense from what used to be World Championship Wrestling. I'm not going to go into the long, long list of things this show did that made no sense, as A, I don't have that much memory on this computer and B, I don't think my blood pressure can take it.

Let's sum up the major flaw in logic on this show. The idea is that Russo and company are in charge of booking the show and have turned it into a shoot. Ignoring how absolutely stupid that is to point out (from a kayfabe perspective, wrestling is always supposed to be a shoot), let's go with Russo's theory (I'll ask for forgiveness later). Let's say that Russo has complete authority and is writing himself into this position.

If that's the case, why have any of his guys ever lost a match and why did we need some big conspiracy? Why didn't Russo just book his boys on top the second he debuted? Why are we having some big conspiracy with Jarrett having to win the title back? Why am I supposed to believe anything that happens if Russo is just in charge of the whole thing? Did he book Nash to fight back against his authority or is Nash going into business for himself?

I get that it's what Russo is going for, but it leaves so many ridiculous holes in the story and makes the whole thing so completely illogical that you can't buy into anything going on in this company. Ninety percent of

the show is scripted but THIS RIGHT HERE is real? Why should I believe that? At the end of the day, this is wrestling. I shouldn't need a scorecard and a flow chart to keep track of what's going on, nor should I have to hear all these insider terms. This is the definition of too much going on and making things way too complicated.

This stopped being wrestling and became Russo having fun and deciding to make this show his big personal playground. He's removed logic and common sense from this show in order to turn it into some insider fest. I know I say this a lot, but I literally do not think it can get worse than this. They've taken away any the basic core principles of wrestling and made this a B movie. There is however one bright spot to this whole mess: Jim Cornette suddenly makes so much more sense to me.

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Elimination Chamber To Feature Intercontinental And Tag Team Title Matches

Well that's certainly different. I can't wait for them to use the obvious six people for the Intercontinental Title match though, making sure we're never getting any elevation

and with the title winding up on Ziggler or Barrett. Again.

The Tag Team Title match could be fun though.