

NXT – February 18, 2015: They're Giving Me Chills

NXT

Date: February 18, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Corey Graves, Jason Albert

Last week, evil won. Kevin Owens destroyed NXT Champion Sami Zayn and powerbombed him into oblivion over and over until he just couldn't get up again, leading to the referee stopping the match and awarding the title to Owens. The question now is what is he going to do with the title, because Zayn can't possibly be back that soon. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Rival, mainly focusing on the title change.

Commissioner Regal says the title can change hand by referee's decision so the title change stands. However, Owens doesn't have authority here because he's won the title. Therefore, tonight Owens will face Adrian Neville in a non-title match as Neville hasn't earned a title match. However he has earned the right to get revenge on the man that put him in the hospital. A new era begins tonight.

Opening sequence.

Here's the new champ with something to say. The fans are almost completely divided on their opinion of him. Some people may have issues with how he won the title, which draws a WIN OWENS WIN chant. Those people who are upset have no right to be angry at anything. He hasn't lied or pretended to be anything he isn't. He said he would fight anyone and everyone to make things better for his family and that's exactly what he did.

Who he beat and how he beat them is irrelevant because Sami Zayn is now the past. That means it's time to look to the future, and that is Finn Balor. Owens is well aware that Balor is the #1 contender for the NXT Title, so go to Regal and pick whatever date you want. However, what

happened to Sami at Takeover is what's going to happen to Balor, because no one is taking this title from him. It takes a lot to instantly make me care about a new champion like this but I'm digging the heck out of this already. Hearing him say Balor is next gave me a big smile.

Rhyno vs. Elias Samson

Yes THAT Rhyno, who wins with the Gore in 33 seconds. The only note here is that the announcers said Rhyno invented the spear, which is completely inaccurate but his version has enough impact that it works like a charm. I can also totally get behind the idea of people like Rhyno showing up for short stories or even one night cameos like this for a surprise.

Finn Balor says he has a high opinion of himself too. Owens calls himself a prize fighter, but Balor fights for a prize too. Before he can finish what that is (the NXT Title), Rhyno comes in for a staredown. The fans REALLY like that idea.

Vaudevillains vs. Enzo Amore/Colin Cassady

Enzo and Cass get a great reaction but Carmella isn't exactly beloved by the fans. Amore now has a blond beard to go with his black handlebar mustache. Cass say they wan the titles. Gotch grabs Amore's foot to start but English gets in a cheap shot to give the Vaudevillains early control. Aiden stomps away but Enzo ducks a clothesline and dives over for the tag. The big man cleans house and throws English into the corner. Enzo is thrown onto him for good measure and Cass' big boot is good for the pin at 2:03.

Blake and Murphy pop up on screen and say that's not enough for a title shot before hitting on Carmella.

Adrian Neville says he can be the hunter tonight and he wants revenge for Owens putting him on a stretcher.

Bayley says her night is coming.

Becky Lynch gave it her all last week but Bayley cost her the title. At least Charlotte lost.

Here's a ticked off CJ Parker to rant about not being on the show last week. He's ending this show by taking it hostage, meaning he starts tying caution tape across the ring. Cue the long awaited debut of Solomon Crowe who quickly destroys Parker and returns us to our regularly scheduled broadcast. As usual with NXT debuts, this worked.

Sasha Banks vs. Blue Pants

Non-title and Blue Pants is billed from the clearance rack. Sasha offers her the chance to leave but Blue knocks her out to the floor. A rollup gets two on the Boss but she cranks on Blue's arms to take her down. Sasha plants her down and the Bank Statement is good for the tap out at 2:30. Just a feel good moment before the squash.

Sasha says its her time.

A doctor looked at Sami and says he'll be back strong.

Kevin Owens vs. Adrian Neville

Non-title. Owens bails to the floor at the bell but Neville is right there with him to hammer away. Back in and Neville takes him down with a kick, only to walk into a gutbuster. He hammers on Adrian with big right hands as this is starting similar to last week's title match. The fans tell Owens to fight but another faction is behind Neville. We hit the chinlock for a good while before Kevin throws Neville to the floor and us to a break.

Back with Owens stepping on Neville's head (such a simple yet effective heel move) before kicking him in the back. Another chinlock has Adrian in trouble but he fights up with more kicks and hits a springboard dropkick for two. That sends Owens outside again but this time Neville dropkicks him through the ropes, followed by a 450 from the apron. Back in and Adrian rolls some Germans for a very close two.

Owens just takes his head off with a clothesline, but the Cannonball is broken up with a superkick. A reverse hurricanrana gets two and the fans are WAY into this. The Red Arrow has to be canceled in mid air, setting up the popup powerbomb to give Owens the pin at 15:34.

Rating: B. This is the kind of stuff that that NXT excels at: take two guys, give them some time and let them beat each other up. Owens looked great as always and a win over Neville still means quite a bit since no one could pin him for so long. The match with Balor could tear the house down and hopefully they get a lot of time to do so.

Overall Rating: B+. Tonight was about setting up new stuff for NXT and they did a great job of doing so. Sami being gone opens up some room at the top of the card, but his return for revenge is still going to rock. As usual, the future looks incredibly bright in WWE and it looks even brighter for the next few months down here. Really solid show this week and a good followup to last week's classic show.

Results

Rhyno b. Elias Samson – Gore

Enzo Amore/Colin Cassady b. Vaudevillains – Big boot to English

Sasha Banks b. Blue Pants – Bank Statement

Kevin Owens b. Adrian Neville – Popup powerbomb

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And check out my Amazon author page with wrestling books for under \$4 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

New Column: The Man Called Sting

Time for a retrospective!

<http://www.wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-man-called-sting/33950/>

Monday Nitro – September 27, 1999: When Good Matches Happen To A Bad Show

Monday Nitro #207

Date: September 27, 1999

Location: Phillips Arena, Atlanta, Georgia

Attendance: 11,919

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Bobby Heenan

It's time to continue into this downward spiral that Nitro has become. Tonight they have a major six man tag with Hogan/Hart/Flair teaming up to face Luger/Sting/Page. Keep that in mind. This is one of the few times that the show has set up a major match a week in advance and actually hyped it up. I'll come back to that later. Let's get to it.

We open with Hogan arriving in a limo to sign autographs for fans. Sting sneaks up on him and speaks in a kid's voice for a distraction. Hogan, ever the genius, falls for it and gets hit in the knee with the ball bat. They're changing the main event aren't they?

Quick recap of last week's major events.

The announcers preview the show and oh man Heenan does not sound good. This could be a long night.

Tenay tries to talk to Hogan but Hulk gets inside anyway.

Sting says he isn't done with Hogan tonight.

Before the first match, Heenan goes on a RANT, ripping into WCW for being a mess and telling him how to talk. From now on the Brain is back and he isn't putting up with this nonsense. That's quite out of nowhere.

TV Title: Ernest Miller vs. Chris Benoit

The ring looks WAY bigger tonight for some reason. Like bigger than a modern WWE ring. Cat is challenging after asking for a title shot and doing his usual schtick. Benoit chops away to start and Miller immediately bails to the floor. Back in and Chris misses a charge into the corner and things slow down. Miller has "Godfather" on his tights. I would make a joke about that being a lawsuit but it probably was at this point. More kicking and choking ensues as Miller is rapidly running out of offense to go through. A sunset flip gets two for the champ but he walks into another superkick.

For a change of pace, Sonny gets in some kicks on the floor. The lack of Revolution backup tells you all you need to know about Miller and Onoo's standings. Back in and Benoit ducks the Feliner and scores with a clothesline, only to have Sonny try a choke. Even the referee doesn't think enough of Miller to make it a DQ. Miller's loaded shoe kicks Onoo by mistake and it's the German suplex followed by the Swan Dive and Crossface to retain the title.

Rating: D+. It's nice to see Benoit get a win and for the TV Title to be defended as it was intended to be for years. Miller losing is always a fun thing to see, which really does make him decent as a heel. Yeah he's annoying and limited in the ring, but the point of a heel is to see them get what's coming to them, and that's what you saw here. Nothing great but an acceptable match that the fans could get into.

Sid has chokeslammed and powerbombed a lot of people.

Vampiro vs. Buff Bagwell

Thank goodness the Clowns are gone. Buff, now minus the mustache, takes a kick to the face early on and Vampiro stomps away a lot. In the vein of Ernest Miller, Vampiro goes up top for a kick this time to really vary up his offense. Bagwell finally starts going with a monkey flip before nailing him with a clothesline. Vampiro's hurricanrana is countered with a powerbomb and they head outside with Vampiro sending him into the steps.

A chinlock goes nowhere as Heenan rips into Bagwell for the new facial hair. Buff fights up but walks into the Nail in the Coffin, which is just a regular move now. Vampiro misses a guillotine legdrop and Buff starts his comeback, only to walk into an enziguri. They head to the corner for a superplex but Buff shoves him off and hits the Blockbuster for the pin. So NOW Buff's face push starts and will take him up the card right?

Rating: D. These lower midcard matches are death for Nitro. There's no reason for them to be taking place, they don't go anywhere, and the best part about them are Heenan's rants about how stupid so much of this stuff is. That being said, I'll take this a hundred times in a row over the Clowns in the ring again.

The announcers talk about Goldberg for a bit and we hear a voice (which sounds quite a bit like Dustin Rhodes) call out to Tony. There's a window shown and the voice says the darkness is coming. Well if the best it can do is go after Tony Schiavone, it won't be lasting long.

And now, to a funeral parlor for the funeral of Lex Luger. As in the guy in the main event tonight. He's laying in a casket but his ghost appears to describe himself as a great man and a great champion. We cut to a cemetery and a woman in black, presumably Elizabeth, throws flowers into a grave. It's off to the arena with the woman in black being revealed as Elizabeth of course. She comes to the ring to reveal Lex Luger, who is officially renamed as the Total Package. Same guy and the same gear, but now he doesn't have wrist tape. Literally, identical other than the tape.

Hogan is having his knee looked at when Sting comes in and nails him with the bat again.

Dean Malenko vs. Rey Mysterio Jr.

Douglas tells Dean to take care of this guy but Dean doesn't want "his kind of help". Saturn and Benoit are cool with this decision and leave but Shane gives a look that says "well screw you then." Mysterio sends the Animals to the back and we get a one on one match. They start fast as you would expect by trading shoulders and armdrags into a standoff for one of the best exchanges WCW has had in months.

Malenko is sent to the apron and they head up top for a crash out to the floor. Back in and Rey escapes a reverse suplex into a rollup for two but his springboard hurricanrana attempt is countered in a big sitout powerbomb. A tilt-a-whirl backbreaker gets two and the Cloverleaf goes on, but we need to watch Rick Steiner and Sid arrive. Mysterio gets to the ropes and grabs a crucifix for the fast pin before Sid can come out and ruin another good match.

Rating: B-. Of course this match doesn't get any time because we need to see Hogan getting hit in the knee again because once wasn't enough. Again, when you just have the talented wrestlers wrestling, the show gets so much easier to sit through. I could have watched another ten minutes of this but that's simply not allowed in WCW.

Malenko shakes his hand post match and leaves as a good sport.

Goldberg vs. Hugh Morrus

Time for an anniversary match. After the full on entrance, Goldberg busts out a very good looking dropkick and a superkick to send Morrus out to the floor. A hard whip sends Morrus into the steps and Goldberg takes him back inside for a powerslam. Heenan continues to be a huge Goldberg fan, even now that the filter is off. Jimmy tries to offer a distraction and Hugh sends Goldberg outside, allowing Sid to sneak in for a chair shot to the back.

A top rope elbow gets two for Morrus but he's a bit shaken up from the impact. Stomping and choking ensues as Goldberg's leg is bleeding. Morrus slams Goldberg to quickly stop a comeback bid and loads up No Laughing Matter. In a repeat of Goldberg's first match, he kicks out at two and

hits the usual for the pin.

Rating: C. This was far better than I was expecting, even though it wasn't all that great of a match. The Sid stuff is already old but at least they're pointing at something instead of just having him beat up random luchadors. Morrus was good for a decent match when he needed to pull one off, which is why he wound up with his upcoming punny name.

Goldberg wants Sid.

An ambulance leaves the arena, presumably with Hogan inside.

More Nitro Girls Search stuff with good looking women who still aren't Stacy Keibler.

Evan Karagias vs. Berlyn

Penzer reminds us that the fans are not to make any noise during Berlyn's match. You can tell Bischoff isn't in Tony's ear as he points out that demanding something means Berlyn doesn't get what he wants. Berlyn hammers away in the corner but Evan comes back with some generic cruiserweight style offense.

The evil German hides away but pokes Evan in the eye and slugs him down even more. A running knee and nice overhead belly to belly have Karagias in trouble but he's still able to crotch Berlyn on the top. Evan hits a high cross body for two as the announcers keep focusing on the bodyguard. Said bodyguard nails Evan in the back, allowing his boss to get the win with a neckbreaker.

Rating: D. Berlyn is going absolutely nowhere and it's pretty clear that they're shifting the focus over to the bodyguard instead. I can't say I blame them as he at least has an intimidating look and could cause some damage. Other than that though, there isn't much to get fired up about for either guy as Berlyn is just horribly boring in the ring.

Berlyn goes after Evan again post match but Brad Armstrong makes the save, only to get beaten down as well. I like Armstrong, but he's the clearest sign possible that Berlyn is done.

Goldberg breaks into Sid's locker room and steals his keys from an attendant.

David Flair can't find Torrie.

Tag Team Titles; Harlem Heat vs. Kendall Windham/Barry Windham

The Windhams are challenging for Heaven knows what reason. Tony continues to screw up continuity by saying Booker was a multi sport athlete in high school. This goes against Tenay's often repeated line about Booker only being in the marching band. Somehow I have a feeling I'm the only person to pick up on that. Booker superkicks Kendall to start and hammers him down with ease. It's almost like one guy is a Hall of Famer and the other guy is there because he has a famous brother.

Off to Barry vs. Stevie with the latter in control as we take an early break. Back with Hennig working over Booker on the floor before throwing him in for a beating from Kendall. A DDT drops Booker and everything quickly breaks down. In the melee, Stevie hits Kendall in the knee with a title belt behind Booker's back, giving T. the pin.

Rating: D+. These teams have fought so many times that there's nothing left for them to do. As I've said before, there are so many teams around WCW but this is the only combination we ever get. A simple change of pace on the booking staff could do wonders for this company, which we're inching towards every single day. Whether that's a good thing or not is yet to be determined.

Goldberg calls a towing company. Your top star of the future ladies and gentlemen.

Rick Steiner vs. Van Hammer

This was supposed to be Hammer getting a US Title shot but Sid must be afraid of vengeance from Slamboree 1993. Rick Steinelines him to the floor and Rick laughs as he beats the tar out of Hammer. Back in and Hammer keeps getting beaten up before grabbing a quick Flashback for his first offense. Charles Robinson breaks up the cobra clutch slam because Heaven forbid Rick Steiner have to look bad for more than ten seconds.

Steiner tells Robinson to look the other way so he can kick Hammer low, setting up the Bulldog for the pin.

Rating: F. So in other words, WCW built up a match (kind of) for the US Title but instead of giving us something that might involve a new guy getting into the title picture, we got ANOTHER Rick Steiner squash that no one wants to see. What in the world does anyone see in this guy that makes them want to push him down our throats as more and more people change the channel?

Here's Bret for a chat. He got hit by a ball bat a few weeks ago but he's just a little banged up. He's back in the ring and thinks Hulk Hogan is the Elvis of wrestling. Seriously? I don't really disagree with the statement but it's not something Bret would ever say. Cue Flair, who Bret immediately praises as well. That's not quite as much of a stretch but still doesn't fit. Flair says they need to take care of Sting/Luger/Page tonight and takes off the jacket to pose. He'll ride Liz too if she gets involved. I can't say I blame him after how she looked earlier.

Heenan talks about the mask vs. hair match tonight and says no one cares if Kidman is bald.

Torrie is in the Filthy Animals' locker room when David calls her. He doesn't like the other male voices and hangs up. Dude, you had her for like six months. Go out on that high note because you knew it wasn't going to last forever.

Sid is told Goldberg stole his car keys.

Perry Saturn vs. Konnan

Konnan hiptosses him down but gets caught in an armbar for his efforts. A superkick staggers Konnan but he blocks a suplex attempt. That's some of the hardest work I've seen Konnan do in years. The rolling clothesline is countered into a Tazzplex and it's back to the armbar, sending Konnan into the ropes. Who would think a match between two bald guys could be this watchable? Back up and a double clothesline puts both guys down as we take a break.

We come back with Saturn cranking on the arm again, sending Konnan right back to the ropes. A top rope elbow gets two for Saturn but Konnan grabs a powerbomb out of nowhere for the same. They head back to the corner with Konnan hitting something like a reverse Razor's Edge, setting up his usual finishing sequence. Cue a bunch of luchadors and the Filthy Animals for a big brawl to throw the match out.

Rating: C+. The match was far better than I was expecting but the run-in finish hurt things as usual. Who would have thought Konnan could keep up with someone like Saturn though? That's quite the surprise and a flashback to when Konnan actually could work a decent match. I'd assume this ties into the mask vs. hair match later but given that it's WCW I doubt they've thought it that far through.

Sid goes to his car but doesn't find the keys. He heads back inside as the tow truck arrives.

Post break, the tow truck pulls the car away.

Here's Page for a chat. Page says he's married to the most beautiful woman in the world and that's why the people hate him. He mentions Luger being gone and the Total Package taking his place, only to call him Luger a few seconds later.

Various celebrities are here, including one of the members of ZZ Top.

Quick recap of Psychosis vs. Kidman in the mask vs. hair match which was thrown together by Chavo Guerrero.

Kidman vs. Psychosis

Hair vs. mask and Psychosis has Juventud and Chavo in his corner. Psychosis hammers away on him to start and they're quickly on the floor. The outside stuff goes nowhere so they head back inside where Kidman scores with dropkicks. Psychosis sends him right back outside for a slingshot moonsault but Kidman goes for his mask. That's not the nicest thing in the world to do and pretty out of character for Kidman.

The referee yells at him, allowing Psychosis to get two off a DDT. A dropkick to the side of the head has Kidman in even more trouble and a

top rope hurricanrana gets two. The other luchadors get in some cheap shots on Kidman on the floor, setting up a top rope spinwheel kick for another two count. Kidman misses a dropkick but grabs a quick sunset flip. They head to the corner with Psychosis hitting a sitout gordbuster to drop Kidman again but we still don't have a bald guy yet.

Kidman comes back with a powerslam and loads up the Shooting Star, only to have Juventud pulls Psychosis to the floor. Chavo plants Kidman with a tornado DDT for two and Juvy sneaks in with a Juvy Driver for an even closer two. Psychosis is so stunned that he thinks he can powerbomb Kidman. The Filthy Animals come out to take care of the luchadors, allowing the Shooting Star to get rid of the mask and blow the roof off the place. That's kind of a surprising reaction.

Rating: B+. Again, give two talented guys ten minutes to work and let them fly all over the ring before soaking in a great reaction from the crowd. This will of course be followed by the fans not caring about the main event because of whatever reason you care to pick for this show. This was a really fun and fast paced match though with some great near falls.

Kidman quickly rips the mask off and there's a huge brawl.

Sting, Luger and Page are coming to the ring. Luger stops dead and starts chuckling until Page says the red light is still on and Luger keeps walking. Just.....yeah.

Bret Hart/Ric Flair vs. Sting/Total Package/Diamond Dallas Page

Because this show clearly has enough power to pull a bait and switch. Sting shoulders Flair down to start before hitting a gorilla press. Just like last week, if you watched this match as a stand alone, you would never know Sting had recently turned. Flair avoids a Stinger Splash so it's off to Luger vs. Hart. The Canadian takes over as Heenan makes more jokes that don't make sense.

Bret starts up the Five Moves but Page breaks up the Sharpshooter before it can do much. Everything breaks down for a bit with Sting nailing a running clothesline. Tony brings up Liz sending an official memo to the

announcers, forbidding them from calling her man Luger. It's a shame he doesn't bring up Bret injuring all three guys last year because that might make things more interesting.

Luger chokes Bret in the corner before Sting draws in Flair, allowing Hart to get double teamed. A double clothesline puts Sting and Hart down and it's a hot tag to bring in Flair. It quickly settles down to Flair suplexing Sting and going for the leg. Hart takes out Page and Luger but Kimberly sneaks Luger the ball bat which nails Flair for the DQ.

Rating: D. Totally standard tag match which wasn't even advertised because WCW is so much better than WWF about giving what they advertise. Remember when that was Tony's big talking point every week? Nothing to see here as this was more running around in circles before the "money" matches at the pay per view. Just more dull stuff here that didn't advance anything.

David Flair runs in and gets beaten down. We cut to the back where we see an empty ambulance and Hogan limps out as his partners and David are destroyed. Hogan cleans house, gets the bat, and sends the villains running. Screw off WCW. Seriously, it's 1999 and Hogan is still destroying everyone while Flair and Hart look like mere mortals. Was there ANY reason to not have Hogan in this match?

Sid goes to his car....and it's been completely crushed. He shouts for Goldberg as we go off the air and I shout about why Sid was actually in the arena despite having nothing to do tonight.

Overall Rating: C. There are some very good moments on this show but the bad ones drag it back down to reality. The same problems continue to plague this show: a main event with no heat and Goldberg being wasted on a feud people don't really want to see while Rick Steiner suddenly has match making power and gets to pick who he beats up in the ring without ever selling for more than five seconds. Two of the three big matches being changed didn't help either, which brings me back to something I brought up at the beginning.

So with the big main event match announced in advance, here are the final ratings for the shows this week. Monday Night Raw: 6.8. Monday Nitro:

3.0. To put this in perspective, back on Christmas night 1995, Raw only beat Nitro by 2.5. On that night, Nitro wasn't on television. From what I can tell, this is the second largest margin when both shows were on in their regular time slots in the entirety of the Wars so far. Of note, the only time that beat it was built around the return of Hulk Hogan. Somehow, neither week taught WCW a thing and that's a bit reason why you don't see Nitro every Monday night.

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<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

Samoa Joe Gone From TNA

According to his own Twitter. I can't say I blame him one bit at this point, given that it's clear he isn't getting back to the top of the company. He was a huge deal for years, but it doesn't seem like an option again.

Content Announced For New

Ultimate Warrior DVD

The trend of leaving off matches you can find on the Network continues, and that's a good thing.

Matches

Boston, MA – October 10, 1988

Intercontinental Championship

Ultimate Warrior vs. Honky Tonk Man

Madison, WI– June 6, 1989

Ultimate Warrior and King Duggan vs. Ravishing Rick Rude and Andre the Giant

Superstars – May 18, 1991

Ultimate Warrior vs. Smash

Monday Night Raw – April 29, 1996

Ultimate Warrior vs. Isaac Yankem

Meadowlands Arena – May 8, 1989

Intercontinental Championship

Ultimate Warrior vs. Ravishing Rick Rude

Maple Leaf Wrestling – October 29, 1989

Intercontinental Championship

Ultimate Warrior vs. Andre the Giant

Wrestling Challenge – April 28, 1991

Ultimate Warrior vs. Rick The Model Martel

Lexington, KY – May 19, 1992

Ultimate Warrior vs. Papa Shango

SummerSlam Spectacular – August 19, 1992

Ultimate Warrior and Macho Man Randy Savage vs. Nasty Boys

Promos/Interviews

Wrestling Challenge – March 13, 1988

I Live For Anger and Frustration

Wrestling Challenge – August 13, 1989

Mean Gene Interviews Ultimate Warrior About SummerSlam

Superstars – May 23, 1992

The Papa Shango Curse

Monday Nitro – September 21 – 1998

Running to Reappear

Wrestling Challenge – June 25, 1988

I Won't Let You Down

Superstars – July 16, 1988

Legends Weren't Built Overnight

All American Wrestling – September 18, 1988

You Can Feel It

Superstars – February 3, 1990

I Speak to You, Hulk Hogan

Superstars – April 14, 1990

The New WWE Champion

Superstars – June 23, 1990

The Brother Love Show Discussing SummerSlam

Superstars – September 19, 1992

The Ultimate Maniacs Are Born

Wrestling Challenge – November 7, 1992

The Ultimate Maniacs Are Out of Control

Monday Nitro – August 24, 1998

One Warrior Nation

Monday Night Raw – April 7, 2014

The Spirit of Ultimate Warrior Will Run Forever

Blu-ray Exclusives

WrestleMania VI – April 1, 1990

Arena Cam

Ultimate Warrior vs. Hulk Hogan

WCCW – August 22, 1986

Dingo Warrior vs. Rick Rude

Ontario, Canada – June 3, 1992

Ultimate Warrior and Undertaker vs. Papa Shango and Berzerker

Thought of the Day: It's Not the Size of the Fight In The Dog. It's The Size of the Doghouse

Shock and awe, this is about NXT. Before I get into this, let me make it clear that I've said this before too, dating back as recently as about 11 hours ago.

A lot of fans want the NXT guys to get onto the main shows so they can fix all the boring problems. Here's the thing: it doesn't matter what the guys are capable of. Do you really think a lot of the guys on the main roster couldn't be competitive with people like Zayn and Neville as far as work rate etc? NXT works because of the workers there, but arguably even more because of the atmosphere they've developed down there.

If the rosters were flipped, you would see the NXT guys cut

off at the knees and the WWE guys getting to show off. The Divas would go from tearing the house down to three minute matches centered around stupid concepts and lame pranks. This assumption that it's just the talent dragging WWE down doesn't hold, no matter what people want to think.

Monday Night Raw – February 16, 2015: The Response To The Acceptance For A Challenge To Talk

Monday Night Raw

Date: February 16, 2015

Location: Amway Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Booker T.

It's the go home show for Fast Lane and the main story here is the implosion of Reigns and Bryan. They've gone from respect to attacking each other in the span of a week, meaning it's almost time for them to either win the Tag Team Titles or respect each other again so the story stops making any sense. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Here's Cena to address Rusev attacking his bad eye last week. Cena knows you have to be extra aggressive to deal with something like Rusev. This Sunday it's not going to be the smiling Cena because he's coming to Fast Lane to fight for respect and to win the United States Championship. Notice that Cena makes winning the title sound like it means something to him. Ambrose has been doing the same with the Intercontinental Title and it's a nice touch that we haven't gotten in a long time.

Cue the Russians with Lana talking about how everyone has fallen to Rusev and Cena will be no exception. There is no coming back from this Sunday and Cena will be crushed. Rusev promises to destroy everything Cena has, including his will to live. Cena goes right after him and takes Rusev down on the stage, including throwing him face first into the wall like Rusev did last week. The fans are WAY into this beatdown and even count along with ten right hands to Rusev's head.

Dean Ambrose vs. Luke Harper

Dean brings out a signed contract for an Intercontinental Title shot at Fast Lane, just waiting for Barrett's signature. Ambrose takes him down with a headlock to start but Luke writhes out of it and headbutts Dean into the corner. Back up and Dean hammers away before hitting a nice middle rope back elbow to the jaw. They head outside with Dean's suicide dive being easily blocked in a move you don't see all that often. Harper kicks him in the face and we take a break.

Back with Dean caught in a headlock until he bites Harper's hand to escape. He throws Luke to the floor but Harper pops back in, only to get caught in a tornado DDT to put both guys down. The standing flying elbow drop gets two but Dean walks into the superkick for the same. The rebound clothesline is countered into a sitout Boss Man Slam for two for Harper. Luke misses the discus lariat and Dirty Deeds is good for the pin at 11:06.

Rating: C+. Nice match but it's a shame to see Harper as just another jobber to the stars. He didn't get an entrance here and was just there as a plot device so Ambrose could pin another former Intercontinental Champion. The match was fun stuff at times though with some nice sequences, but you knew Harper wasn't going to have a real chance here.

Quick chat about the Dust Brothers imploding. Bringing in Dusty is the only logical step from here.

The Authority is in the back where Big Show and Kane argue over the ending of Tag Team Turmoil and the Royal Rumble. Kane blames him for everything and they're about to fight again. Big Show keeps saying February 13, which would be last Friday. HHH cuts them off because he's

tired of how these two make him look. They have big singles matches tonight and HHH wants solutions instead of excuses.

Bray Wyatt has what looks like a nail in his hand and talks about there is fear inside of us all. It's coming. They're giving themselves extra time before revealing Undertaker, presumably to make sure he can actually go.

The Dust Brothers are in the back with Dusty Rhodes and Stardust is being his usual insane self. Dusty says he's here to tell Cody that none of the stars and galaxies mean anything without family. He loves them both no matter what happens so get it together. The brothers shake hands and Dusty is pleased.

New Day vs. Goldust/Stardust

Woods and Stardust get things going with Xavier hitting a knee to the ribs, sending Stardust over for a tag to his brother. The brothers start taking over on Woods as we see Dusty watching in the back. Woods enziguris Stardust down and makes the tag to Kofi as everything speeds up. Everything breaks down and Kofi takes a good while to get the fans into his clapping. The brothers nearly collide again, allowing Kingston to hit Trouble in Paradise for the pin on Goldust at 2:58. Not really noteworthy here but Cole confuses Woods and Kingston because he's a moron. If he can rip on people for basic errors, so can I.

Stardust and Goldust hug post match, but Stardust lays him out with Cross Rhodes.

Roman Reigns says he has to deal with Daniel Bryan and Brock Lesnar at the same time. The Authority hasn't been trying to set anything right but rather stop Reigns from riding the fans' momentum. Bryan took the opportunity he had but Reigns is going to take that opportunity back.

Stardust rips into Dusty in the back, saying this family stuff is nonsense. He declares Cody dead and Dusty looks heartbroken.

Kane vs. Roman Reigns

Bryan is on commentary and starts us a YES chant as Reigns runs Kane over

to start. Kane sends him into the middle buckle to take over, which Bryan says is on Reigns instead of him. We're already in the chinlock as Cole brings up the possibility of Bryan getting disqualified on Sunday. Bryan: "Why would I have to worry about that? I'm the better wrestler."

Back up and Kane boots Reigns in the jaw for two and we get what sounds like a YOU CAN'T WRESTLE chant. Who exactly are they talking about there? Reigns fights back and gets two off a Samoan drop, followed by another YES chant. Kane kicks him in the face again and they head outside with Kane loading up the announcers' table, only to eat a spear to give Reigns the countout win at 6:18. If anyone can come up with a reason why that wasn't a pinfall win for Reigns, please let me know so I can tell you why you're wrong.

Rating: D. Boring match here and again, why in the world does WWE have no problem having people like Miz and Mizdow both get pinned going into their match but Kane only has to lose by countout? This protection of the giants astounds me as they're both made men and can lose every match for the rest of their careers and not have their legacies hurt, but they're protected like Fort Knox.

Bryan starts another YES chant and Reigns offers him a chance to get in. Daniel walks away instead.

Post break, Bryan says Reigns is going to have to deal with a lot more YES chants Sunday than he did tonight. If he wants to be World Champion, he has to be mentally tough. This is at least somewhat interesting.

The Bellas steal Paige's clothes so she can't have a match tonight. Cameron won't let her borrow any gear so Paige grabs one of the Rosebuds, who I believe is played by indy star Mia Yim. Again, this is an acceptable use of the Divas, but there's no room for people like Charlotte and Sasha Banks to have an awesome match because it's not what fans want to see. No, they want to see pranks like you would see at a summer camp from "reality TV stars".

Summer Rae vs. Paige

Paige is dressed as a fairy princess because that's supposed to be

entertaining. She runs Summer over and drives knees into Summer's chest, only to take a spin kick to the face (clearly didn't connect), setting up a full nelson with the legs. Paige rolls out and hoots the PTO for the win at 2:45.

Post match the Bellas come out but Paige cuts them off and says she doesn't need an outfit to make her look good. This Sunday, she'll look even better because she'll be wearing the Divas Championship.

Sheamus return video.

Here's Rollins for his match with Ziggler but first he rips on the idea of Presidents' Day because it's about the past. That's a waste of time because the future is right here in front of you. He's the most talented performer in the world and could do anything he wanted. Maybe he should run for President even though he isn't old enough. Or he could host the Daily Show and make it watchable. Or maybe he should just become World Champion and main event Wrestlemania.

Instead he's stuck dealing with people like Dolph Ziggler, who cuts Rollins off. Dolph says Rollins had a bad Valentine's Day. Did the Stooges get him the wrong chocolates? Maybe HHH screwed up the talk about the birds-uh and the bees-uh. Rollins calls Ziggler a nothing but Dolph says he raises the bar every time he's in this ring. If he can't keep the Authority gone, the least he can do is take care of their golden boy. Ziggler knocks Rollins to the floor and the opening bell is after a break.

Seth Rollins vs. Dolph Ziggler

The match is joined in progress after a break with Ziggler fighting out of a chinlock. The Stooges get caught interfering and earn an ejection for their troubles. Ziggler eats a forearm to the jaw but sidesteps a charge to send Rollins into the post. The buckle bomb is countered into a sunset flip for two and the running DDT gets the same. Rollins starts hammering away but misses the top rope knee. A superkick to the ribs looks to set up the Curb Stomp but Ziggler scores with a superkick of his own. The Zig Zag has Rollins beat but the Stooges run in for the DQ at 5:18.

Rating: C. The match was decent enough but my goodness can we get some better motivation here? Yeah there are some lame matches and stories, but it's hard to always blame the wrestlers for the results. Look at this one for example. Why were Rollins and Ziggler fighting? Over who is the best? Well ok fine, but that's not what their promo set up. Why didn't their promo set that up? Because it was clearly just there to fill in time rather than to set up their match. You can't pin that (or Kane for that matter) on the wrestlers, at least not all of it.

Rowan and Ryback come in for the save and lay out Noble.

Here's HHH to address Sting's actions from last week. First up we get a video recapping Sting helping get rid of the Authority at Survivor Series and helping the three fired guys get their jobs back. HHH says the word on the street is that he's afraid of Sting. This Sunday, the unthinkable is going to happen when WCW and WWE are in the same ring. I'd try to forget the Invasion too boss. Before he can get too far though, here's Ric Flair to interrupt.

Flair says he's here because he respects and loves HHH. This is the same town where HHH inducted Flair into the Hall of Fame and said Flair should have his own wing. HHH politely cuts him off to say he already knows how good Sting is, but Flair don't put yourself in a position to fail. HHH talks about how Sting took Flair to the limit at the first Clash of the Champions and then lived off that reputation for years.

If Sting had shown up here over the years, HHH would have done whatever it took to get rid of him on principle alone. If Sting is WCW, then HHH is the WWE. Flair tries to cool HHH down by bringing up him not being a full time wrestler now (as opposed to Sting of course). HHH needs to be careful that he doesn't get caught up and lose to Sting.

In a good line, HHH says he may not be Flair in the ring, but when it comes to taking care of Sting, Flair is no HHH. Flair says don't let Sting shove you down again, so HHH shoves Flair down and rants about how important WWE is to him. This worked a lot better than I was expecting, despite all the HHH's nose sized holes in the idea.

Darren Young/??? vs. Ascension

Young's partner doesn't even get an entrance. The beating is on before the bell with Konnor crushing the nameless guy (even the announcers are referencing the fact that they don't know his name) until Titus O'Neil comes in for the save. So the Prime Time Players are back together and Slater Gator is done?

Miz and Barrett agree to take care of each others' problems.

Preview of the Destruction of the Shield DVD.

Damien Mizdow vs. Bad News Barrett

Non-title. Barrett stomps away in the corner to start but Mizdow stomps him down, only to have Miz ring a bell, meaning to stop. He needs Mizdow to come buff his shoe, allowing Barrett to kick him down off the apron. Mizdow takes over again but another bell (potential smudge on sunglasses) distracts Mizdow so the Bull Hammer can give Barrett the pin at 2:31.

Ambrose hits the ring post match and ties Barrett to the post. Ambrose demands that Barrett sign and puts a pen in his hand, literally forcing Barrett to sign. Bad News: "GET A KNIFE! THIS IS ILLEGAL!" Ambrose says that makes it official and the match is on for Fast Lane.

Bray pounds the nail into a board and shouts to find him before he finds whoever he's talking to.

Jimmy Uso/Naomi vs. Natalya/Tyson Kidd

The Usos defend against Cesaro and Kidd on Sunday. Kidd bails to the corner to tag in Natalya instead of fighting Jimmy. After a few armdrags, it's back to the guys as Kidd actually fights for a change. Jimmy stares back at him and it's back to the girls. Natalya throws Naomi down and hits a quick basement dropkick but Kidd still doesn't want to come in. Naomi flips Natalya over into a nice pinfall reversal sequence with a sunset flip getting the pin on Natalya at 2:55.

Kidd blames Natalya for the loss.

Daniel Bryan vs. Big Show

Reigns is at ringside. Bryan kicks away at Show's leg but gets shoved down. JBL: "It's like Jack and the Beanstalk, except the Beanstalk doesn't fight back." As in the story where JACK FACES A GIANT, meaning the entire analogy is completely overthinking the idea and missing the point? Show throws him around but gets caught in a sleeper as Reigns gets up and starts signing autographs. It doesn't seem to bother Bryan as he takes Show down to his knees. Show fights out as Reigns is taking pictures with fans. Bryan gets thrown down as we take a break.

Back with Reigns sitting again and Bryan fighting out of a chinlock. Show puts him in a bearhug but gets guillotined on the top rope as JBL tells Booker to stop talking about fairy tales. Big Show is finally pulled over the top rope but Reigns starts throwing out t-shirts. Daniel is thrown into Reigns so Show spears Roman down for some reason. They get back inside and Bryan knocks Show into the corner. He counters a chokeslam into the YES Lock but Show makes the ropes. Here come the YES Kicks for two but Bryan gets launched off the kickout. Bryan goes up top but Reigns Superman Punches Show for the DQ at 14:38.

Rating: C+. That would mean Big Show beat Bryan and Kane only lost via countout. Only in WWE. Anyway, this was actually a pretty decent power vs. speed match and the Reigns stuff was a nice addition to everything. We'll call this a pleasant surprise more than anything else. We'll also call the tag match on Thursday, where Bryan and Reigns cleaned out the tag team division, not meaning anything a pretty obvious non-surprise.

Post match Bryan dropkicks Reigns down and the fight is on. Referees eventually break it up but the fans wake up to shout LET THEM FIGHT. Instead they begrudgingly shake hands before fighting again, much to the fans' delight. Bryan kicks him to the floor and hits the FLYING GOAT but Reigns sends him into the crowd to keep the fight going. A chair is brought in but

they're eventually dragged away to end the show. That was a really good closing segment and I was getting into it by the end.

Overall Rating: C. This is what you call "OH SNAP THERE'S A PAY PER VIEW ON SUNDAY AND WE HAVEN'T DONE JACK!" All night long they were flying through everything they could in an attempt to hide the fact that Fast Lane doesn't need to exist. The wrestling was ok at best, but they did a decent job of setting Sunday up. The US Title match feels a lot bigger all of a sudden but I don't think Cena walks out with the title. Other than that, the Flair/HHH segment was good enough if you can ignore some of the lame motivation.

That's this show's biggest takeaway for me: the lack of logical motivation all over the show. Look at Ziggler and Rollins for example. They had an issue three months ago, but both guys have moved on since then. Are they really just fighting because of what happened at Survivor Series? All we heard from them was some lame stuff about Valentine's Day, which makes me think there was no given reason for the two of them to be fighting. That's a far too common problem in this company and it's really starting to show.

Results

Dean Ambrose b. Luke Harper – Dirty Deeds

New Day b. Goldust/Stardust – Trouble in Paradise to Goldust

Roman Reigns b. Kane via countout

Paige b. Summer Rae – PT0

Dolph Ziggler b. Seth Rollins via DQ when Jamie Noble and Joey Mercury interfered

Bad News Barrett b. Damien Mizdow – Bull Hammer

Jimmy Uso/Naomi b. Natalya/Tyson Kidd – Sunset flip to Natalya

Big Show b. Daniel Bryan via DQ when Roman Reigns interfered

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<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

TNA One Night Only – Rivals: A Rivalry With My Sanity

Rivals

Date: February 6, 2015

Location: Royal Palace Theater, Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina

Attendance: 400

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Taz

For the love of all things good and holy don't tell me that these shows are going to become even more frequent now. These things continue to be some of the least interesting shows produced, but the worst part is they're just kind of there. Some of the matches are watchable, but they're clearly just there to fill in requirements based on the lack of effort in setting up the shows. Let's get to it.

I think the theme here is obvious.

Standard music video opening showing us some of the stuff we'll be seeing tonight.

JB is walking down the ramp towards the ring to fire up the crowd. If there's a more under appreciated guy in TNA, I don't know who it is.

We recap Gail Kim vs. Taryn Terrell, which is built up over some of their legitimately great showdowns on PPV over the years.

The lights are very low again to make sure you can't see how small the crowd is.

Taryn Terrell vs. Gail Kim

Both seem to be faces here. Tenay suggests that they focus on the rivalries instead of anything else, which I give about five minutes. Taryn takes her down with a hammerlock but gets caught in a headlock for a counter. The announcers are already onto medical info they've found online which has nothing to do with anything going on at the moment. They actually got to about two minutes of staying focused before flying off the cliff.

Taryn gets two off a running flip neckbreaker and the same off a snap suplex. A high cross body misses though as Taz calls Terrell one hot possum. Gail gets in some kicks to the ribs and Taryn is bleeding from the mouth. Off to the knee as Tenay mentions being in dental school at one point. A Brock Lock has Terrell in trouble as the commentary goes from phones to Rollie Fingers (baseball player).

Taryn finally kicks Gail out to the floor and throws her off the stage into the dozens of people in the crowd. She hits a cross body to take Gail down again but bangs up the knee even worse. Taz thinks they're in Roanoke, Virginia as Taryn gets two off a middle rope clothesline. Off to a dragon sleeper, drawing out a bunch of Japanese wrestling references. Yeah I talk about the commentary on these shows a lot, but there isn't much to talk about with the wrestling or stories so what else am I supposed to cover?

Gail wraps the bad knee around the post for a four count from the referee but she walks into an RK0 for two with the knee slowing up the cover. Kim rolls through a high cross body for two and blocks another RK0, setting up Eat Defeat for a close two. Taryn avoids a missile dropkick and another RK0 is good for the pin at 12:33. Taz: "WHAT IS GOING ON HERE?" It's not the biggest upset in the world. Taz on the blood in Taryn's mouth: "Go see Isaac Yankem."

Rating: B-. These two always have good matches together and this was one of the better matches I've seen on this series. The knee work could have played into the finish more but at least it played a factor at all. At least Taryn won, but unfortunately it led to even more of Taz's annoying commentary. That's the running problem with most of these shows as they go from boring to insufferable almost every time.

We recap Gunner pinning Mr. Anderson to win a future World Title shot last year with an unintentional assist from James Storm. That led to a really lame feud which gets to continue here tonight.

Mr. Anderson vs. James Storm

Taz: "Everybody likes bullropes!" In a funny bit, there's no mic to drop from the ceiling so JB sneaks up behind Anderson and puts a mic in his hand. "If it works it works right?" We're finally ready to go after some cowboy stalling. By ready to go I mean ready to circle each other for a good bit until Anderson runs him over with a shoulder. Storm comes back with some right hands and chokes on the ropes, only to be sent out to the floor for more stalling.

Now James starts going after the leg because why not do the exact same thing that was done in the previous match? A chop block has Anderson in even more trouble and it's time to talk about football. Storm mixes it up with an armbar but goes right back to the leg. Now they talk about Ed Sabol, who passed away the week after this show first aired. What it has to do with this match is beyond me but Anderson starts fighting back with right hands to FINALLY bring the commentary back to the match.

Storm misses a charge in the corner and gets caught in the rolling fireman's carry for two. Cue Sanada for a distraction so Storm get hit a middle rope DDT (cool move actually) for two. Sanada gets a bit more direct by kicking Anderson in the head, setting up the Lat Call for the pin at 8:27.

Rating: D+. I know he's trying but Anderson's matches just don't do it for me. They can be decent if he has the time to get them there, but a basic match like this has never been his strong game. I'll try to hold back on the commentary rants, but they were worse here than I've heard

them in a long time. I mean they might have talked about the match for maybe three minutes of about eight and a half. That's pitiful.

Eric Young says he and Abyss used to be best friends and now they're going to have a Monster's Ball match. Well of course they are. Abyss brought out the monster in Young and it brought him the World Title, so tonight Abyss is getting his best.

Kenny King vs. DJZ vs. Great Sanada vs. Samoa Joe

Elimination rules. All three try to jump Joe on the floor to start but he turns around to only see DJZ. Joe eventually kicks DJZ down before staying on the floor with him, leaving Sanada and King to fight inside. King scores with a dropkick as Joe can be seen destroying DJZ. They switch spots but King stops Joe from nailing DJZ, earning him a right hand of his own.

Kenny loads up a suicide dive but runs into King's boot. Sanada goes after Joe for what could be an interesting match as Taz still can't remember where they are. Oh yeah we've got a running gag. Back in and a triple boot puts Joe down and DJZ adds a Lionsault. A springboard spinning legdrop gets two for King and three straight elbows in the corner have Joe reeling.

The commentary kind of stays on the match by comparing Joe to Andre the Giant in battle royals, bringing them to a discussion of Haystacks Calhoun. Joe starts fighting back and catches DJZ in a Muscle Buster for an elimination. Another double team doesn't work that well as Joe punches both guys away but walks into a springboard Blockbuster from King for two.

Sanada goes after King but gets caught in the Clutch to get us down to Joe vs. King. King immediately goes up for the missile dropkick but Joe just walks away. I still love that spot. The release Rock Bottom out of the corner looks to set up the Muscle Buster but Sanada mistis Joe (with the referee CLEARLY LOOKING AT IT) to give King the pin.

Rating: C. Eh not terrible and I liked the idea of throwing the win to King instead of just having Joe run through everyone in his sight. That

being said, HOW DID THE REFEREE NOT DQ KING FOR THE MIST??? Even Taz, the barren wasteland of intelligence on commentary, saw what happened and wanted to know how the referee couldn't call anything. Stuff like that drives me crazy, especially after a quick enough and decent match.

Roode says he and MVP have hated each other since MVP sat foot in this company because they both want the World Title. Tonight MVP learns why it pays to be Roode.

Recap of Bram vs. Abyss in their hardcore series.

Bram vs. Gunner

When were these two rivals? From what I can find they only had a single match at No Surrender last year which was more about Samuel Shaw and Gunner. Bram bails from Gunner to start before running into a shoulder block for two. A headlock of all things slows Gunner down as the announcers talk about where they're going for a post show party.

Tenay even brings up the Aces and 8's but Taz laughs it off. Bram sends him into the buckle for the expected results as they're still on this after party while throwing in a discussion of Bobo the cameraman. They head outside for a bit with Bram pulling him into the post to take over for the first time.

We hit the chinlock on Gunner until he fights up and rams Bram into the corner as the talk is back to football. They slug it out from their knees until Bram has to escape an F5 attempt. A Rock Bottom works a bit better for Gunner and the fans chant USA. Gunner gets crotched on the top rope but tries a sunset bomb, only to have Bram sit on top of him for the pin at 8:50.

Rating: D+. This would have been so much better if they had let them brawl. Gunner can get in a fight when he needs to and this would have been the perfect option. However, why let a new hardcore guy like Bram showcase himself when you can have Abyss do it again after all those years of doing the exact same thing?

We look back at EC3 injuring Angle's knee and still being undefeated.

Here are Carter and Spud to say Ethan can't face his rivals because he's beaten them all. He goes over the list of everyone he's beaten and sent away, meaning he's the greatest wrestler in the world. This brings out Austin Aries, who doesn't like the sound of that moniker. Carter can't call himself that until he faces Austin Aries in this ring because he brings greatness out of people. "Let's start a rivalry right now."

Ethan Carter III vs. Austin Aries

Aries goes right for the brainbuster but settles for an armdrag and the Last Chancery. Carter bails to the floor and takes a big dive as it's all Aries early on. He makes the mistake of chasing Spud though and gets caught by a big clothesline to give Carter his first offense. Back in and my goodness the crowd being blacked out is distracting. It's like they're wrestling in an elementary school gym with a big black curtain behind the three rows of fans.

Aries is rammed face first into the mat for two and we hit the chinlock. Spud gets in a few cheap shots when Aries is sent to the floor again but Carter follows him out and eats some chops to the chest. Now we're talking about wrestlers' real names and football careers. Back in for all of ten seconds before Carter dumps him again. Spud has to adjust the ring skirt so you can't see the wood underneath the ring.

We hit another chinlock on Austin before he avoids being sent all the way to the floor. Carter gets sent into alternating buckles about ten times in a row but is able to come back with a powerbomb for two. The 1%er is countered but Aries can't hit the running corner dropkick. Instead he snaps Carter's neck across the rope and hits the missile dropkick. The brainbuster is loaded up but Spud pulls the foot and plays Bobby Heenan at Wrestlemania V to give Carter the pin at 8:30.

Rating: D. WAY too much stalling in this one as they had to go outside or to the chinlock almost every other minute. I don't think anyone thought Carter was going to lose here but that doesn't mean they can't give the fans something to get excited about anyway. Spud and Carter were such a great pairing and they're still entertaining now that they're feuding.

Spud takes a brainbuster post match.

Abyss says Eric Young is his rival. Joseph Park brought out the best in him and then Young won the World Title. Tonight is just a regular match so Abyss can't hurt him too bad, but it's still going to hurt.

Video on Abyss embracing his dark side. The Joseph Park stuff feels like an eternity ago.

Eric Young vs. Abyss

Before the match Abyss grabs the mic and just make it a Monster's Ball match already. Abyss says it's been a long time and this show is about rivals. He can't help but think about the time when they were friends. Eric and Joseph Park brought out the best in each other and Young wound up winning the World Title. However, Abyss is Young's fault and Eric is lucky that this isn't a hardcore match. Young is tired of being blamed for Abyss' mess, so let's get nuts and make this Monster's Ball. I'm stunned.

Young fires off right hands to start and scores with his spinning forearm to the head. Abyss gets tired of getting punched in the face and throws Eric to the floor before getting some toys. Back to the football stuff with Taz acknowledging that they're talking about it a lot tonight. Young finds a hockey stick and throws more weapons into the ring but runs into an elbow to the jaw.

It's already table time as Taz finally remembers the Oakland Raiders line about cheating being encouraged. The table is set at ringside for later as Young is sent hard into the corner. Abyss cracks him in the head with a trashcan lid for a loud smack but the follow up trashcan shot doesn't sound as good. The fans want tacks but get a chair to Young's ribs instead. We hit the neck crank for a bit before Abyss crotches himself on a chair. The fans aren't exactly thrilled by what they're seeing here. Tenay asks if there's such a thing as Yambag Scrabble to make my headache even worse.

Young scores with a missile dropkick for two and starts swinging the kendo stick. Somehow this turns into a discussion of Paul Bunyan chopping down trees with jujitsu. Taz: "With the edge of his hand!" Abyss throws Young through the table at ringside but only gets two back inside. It's

Janice time but Young crotches him with a cheese grater. The top rope elbow is good for the pin at 10:54.

Rating: C-. Another “well, that happened” match as we’ve seen these two have weapons matches so many times that it’s really hard to get excited about it again. The fact that this was just a by the numbers Monster’s Ball match doesn’t help either, but that’s the case for almost every special match in this series.

Long recap of Madison Rayne vs. Angelina Love, dating back to the original Beautiful People days. If nothing else we get to look at Lacey Von Erich again.

Madison Rayne vs. Angelina Love

Madison cranks on the arm to start and mocks Angelina’s entrance, earning her a forearm to the head. Back in and a quick rollup gets two for Madison, followed by the scissors stomp. Angelina doesn’t appreciate that and takes it outside to send Rayne into the barricade. A big forearm gets another two for Angelina as this is really dull so far. She follows up with a basement dropkick and a second dropkick to send Madison back to the floor.

Back in and Tenay and Taz babble on about whatever their latest stupid topic is. Madison makes her comeback with a forearm and an enziguri, followed by a northern lights suplex for two. The Rayne Drop is countered into Lights Out (downward spiral) for a near fall. Another Rayne Drop is countered and Love grabs a rollup with a handful of trunks for the pin at 7:59.

Rating: F+. The only good thing here is how well they look in their outfits. Other than that, this was one of the least interesting matches I’ve seen in recent memory. It was clear that neither of them was interested in doing anything outside of just the basics and that’s not a good thing after a show this dull so far.

MVP says Bobby Roode is rewriting history because he wasn’t scared to fight Bobby for the title. The rivalry is because MVP is one of the best of all time and Roode just thinks he is. If Roode wants to test himself

against the best then MVP is fine with beating the heck out of him tonight.

We recap Lashley beating Eric Young to win the World Title and hurting his arm until Bobby Roode made the save. This led to MVP being fired as the boss and Kurt Angle taking the job.

And now, just so they don't have to do even more new stuff, here's Roode vs. Lashley for the World Title from Impact on October 24, 2014.

TNA World Title: Lashley vs. Bobby Roode

They have a ton of time for this, Lashley is defending and Kurt Angle is guest referee. MVP and King are nowhere in sight. Lashley powers Bobby into the corner to start and easily takes him down with an amateur move. A hard shoulder to the ribs has Roode in even more trouble but Bobby comes back with a clothesline and tells Lashley to bring it on. The champ is all fired up but his clothesline is countered into the Crossface, sending Lashley out to the floor.

We take a break and come back with Lashley holding a reverse wasitlock until Bobby fights up with forearms. A quick Blockbuster gets two but Roode charges into a spinning spinebuster. Lashley ducks another shot but clotheslines Angle (first time he's meant anything in the match) by mistake. The Roode Bomb is countered and Lashley nails the spear with no one to count the pin. Another spear hits Angle to knock him to the floor, allowing Roode to enziguri Lashley to the floor.

Bobby follows and avoids a spear, sending a ring attendant flying. A Roode Bomb on the ramp puts both guys down but there's still no Angle to count anything. Instead Brian Hebner comes in to count the near fall and Bobby is frustrated. Lashley hits Roode low and gets the belt but Hebner says no.

That earns him a knockout clothesline, allowing Lashley to hit Roode with the belt. Angle comes in to count two and is finally back to his feet. The Roode Bomb is countered and Lashley snaps Bobby's throat across the top rope. Another attempt is countered into a sunset flip attempt but Roode falls on top for the pin and the title at 17:49.

Rating: B. The match got going near the middle but I really don't see why Angle needed to be out there. Any regular referee could have played his role to the same degree but maybe they're setting up Lashley vs. Angle down the line? The important part though is Roode being made into a bigger deal than he was before, but now he needs to have a very solid title reign to make it even better. TNA is really needing a top face and if Roode is that guy then so be it.

Bobby Roode vs. MVP

The announcers of course discuss sushi. Roode charges the ring and hammers away before sending MVP into the buckle. Another clothesline sends MVP bailing to the floor but he comes back with a kick to the face. Roode gets punched on the floor as we hear about Masahiro Chono influencing MVP's offense. Back in and MVP misses a running boot in the corner but Kenny King comes in for the DQ at 2:28.

Eric Young runs out for the save and let's have a tag match, because WE NEED MORE ERIC YOUNG!

Eric Young/Bobby Roode vs. MVP/Kenny King

Young and King get started with Kenny slugging him down in the corner. Eric comes back with a wristlock and makes the tag to Roode for a double hiptoss. Off to MVP for some shots to Bobby's ribs and forearms to the head. For some reason this warrants a talk about the original Sheik as Roode scores with a suplex for two. Bobby follows it up by falling out to the floor and getting stomped by King. MVP covers with one finger for two because he's a cocky heel that knows how to annoy a crowd.

We hit the chinlock on Roode and somehow find more football stuff to talk about. Roode fights up with a sunset flip and the referee has to slow down because MVP misses his save. A good looking spin kick to the head drops Roode and MVP cancels the Ballin Elbow and just covers for two. Back up and the spinebuster plants King and it's the hot tag to Roode. Eric cleans house and the fans just do not care for the most part. A belly to belly gets two on King but Kenny comes back with a kind of reverse AA to plant Eric. MVP is "injured" but of course is playing possum, setting up the Black Out kick for the pin on Eric at 8:03.

Rating: C-. Who in the world thought we needed to see Eric Young twice in one night? Thankfully it was Roode in there most of the time to keep things from getting horrible, but this really wasn't the most interesting thing in the world. I like that they mixed it up a bit as you can only see so many singles matches in a row, but this really didn't do it for me. Then again that might be all about Eric Young.

Magnus talks about beating Jeff Hardy to win the World Title for the first time at Final Resolution to win the World Title. Who thought that Jeff Hardy could lose a ladder match? Edge and Christian perhaps? Tonight he gets to face Hardy one more time and he'll enjoy getting to see the teenage girls weeping. It's the same story it always is between these two.

We recap the tournament for the World Title with Magnus eventually beating Jeff in a Dixieland match for the title.

Jeff Hardy vs. Magnus

Jeff goes into the crowd with his home state fans before the match. We even get big match intros to kill even more time. Magnus shoves him down to start and tells the painted one to bring it. Hardy's arm work doesn't get him anywhere so Magnus stomps him down in the corner. A clothesline sends Magnus to the floor and Jeff follows him out with a nice dive. Back in and the mule kick gets two and Jeff calls for the creatures. A slingshot is countered with a European uppercut and Hardy falls back out to the floor.

Back in and Magnus gets too cocky and earns a right hand to the face. They head right back outside with Hardy getting rammed into the barricade and ripping down the ring skirt in the process. The announcers debate bad commentators named Mike over the years as Magnus powerbombs Jeff down. Time for some chinlockery until Jeff jawbreaks his way to freedom. He can't follow up though and gets caught in an abdominal stretch.

Jeff ducks another clothesline and starts his comeback with the legdrop between the legs. There's the Whisper in the Wind for two followed by the Twisting Stunner. The Twist of Fate gets two but Magnus counters into something like the ProtoBomb for two of his own. Magnus tries a Twist of

Fate of his own but Hardy grabs the real thing again, setting up the Swanton for the pin at 9:49.

Rating: C. That was indeed a wrestling match. I really don't know what else I'm supposed to say here. You had a face vs. a heel and the face won with his finishing combination. Magnus isn't bad but he really needs a character of some sort, which he seems to be getting with Bram. Hardy winning was obvious here and it capped off a thoroughly dull show.

Overall Rating: D-. These shows are really just boring house shows with HORRIBLE commentary. That doesn't make me want to stick around as these things are becoming more of a chore to sit through every month. When they can't even keep the concept going ("LET'S START A RIVALRY RIGHT HERE!") for three hours without using a TV match that has aired on almost every special they air, it's time for them to retool these things or stop advertising them before they become even more of an embarrassment.

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Reviewing the Review – Monday Night Raw: February 9, 2015

We have a new direction for Fast Lane now as for some reason there was a controversy regarding the Rock, which comes off more like "we're scared because the smarkiest city in the world didn't like what we were doing so

here's Fast Lane to give Bryan a shot." Other than that there isn't a ton of stuff to talk about because Fast Lane doesn't need to exist. Let's get to it.

We opened with the required Reigns/Bryan chat which didn't get us anywhere, so the Authority came out and made Reigns/Bryan vs. Big Show/Kane. The monsters wound up getting disqualified in a match longer than it needed to be which should have ended with Kane tapping out but that would be a waste of his incredible heat so they kept the giants looking strong instead. Bryan and Reigns had issues post match so HHH made a rematch with Rollins/Noble/Mercury being added to the giants' team.

Somehow, this whole thing took about half an hour and it showed the one major problem with the main event scene at the moment: IT'S REALLY BORING. We're seeing these giant fight Bryan and Reigns in every possible combination and there's no reason to see them fight all over again. Bryan vs. Reigns is being shoehorned in when Bryan was eliminated from the Rumble 100% clean.

They screwed up at the Rumble by having Bryan dumped out so early and now their solution doesn't add up either. The match should be good, but that's getting into TNA logic: if we have a good ending, the journey there doesn't matter. At this point, they're not just getting the fans to calm down but rather getting the fans to stop caring about anyone. Yeah they pop for Bryan, but this story is killing the momentum they had going. It got even worse on Smackdown when Big Show knocked out Kane, likely setting up a feud between the two. Because they're big and old you see.

Ryback beat Rollins via DQ when the Stooges interfered. Somehow, this was STILL Survivor Series fallout because that's still a thing.

Sheamus is coming back. A lot of people seem to be complaining about that, but imagine him in Kane's current role. Does that make things sound a bit easier to sit through?

Paige beat Brie Bella because WWE still thinks the Bellas are interesting. That's their major flaw: their characters are so basic as

the stuck up heels that they can't carry the division on their own. It also doesn't help that we're watching Sasha Banks, Charlotte and Bayley having great matches in addition to having just as defined, if not more defined, characters down in NXT.

One of the big segments of the show was Lana and Rusev mocking Cena for being old and past his prime. There's a story to be told about Cena needing to face the impending end of his career, but calling someone that can throw both Stooges on his shoulders at the same time and go toe to toe with Brock Lesnar over the hill is a huge stretch, especially when they still look like Cena. Just do the Hogan vs. Nikita Koloff formula (it would be an insult to Rusev to compare him to Nikolai Volkoff) and let the fans chant USA for the whole feud. As usual, why mess with something that's almost guaranteed to work?

Bray Wyatt beat Dolph Ziggler in a loss probably designed to make Ziggler eventually snap and turn heel. In theory the idea is that he's worked so hard and isn't getting anywhere because of it, which of course causes another problem: all the momentum he got from the Survivor Series win and subsequent success are thrown away for ANOTHER losing streak angle. We get at least three or four of these a year and they almost always lead to a turn. There a dozen other ways to turn someone heel, but for some reason this is the company's favorite.

On the other hand you have Bray, who is clearly being set up for a Wrestlemania showdown with Undertaker, assuming he's capable of going of course. My guess would be Wyatt wins, because there is zero reason for Undertaker to win. What is Cole going to say? "THAT'S THE START OF A NEW STREAK!"?

Wyatt being the bigger freak and overwhelming Undertaker because he's lost his identity and can't keep up with the younger generation, ultimately leading to his retirement, is an interesting story that would give Wyatt a huge rub, but unfortunately I think we're heading for an Undertaker win to make us feel better about last year's loss because WWE is afraid of hurting our feelings in exchange for thinking for the future.

Heyman and Lesnar came out to cut a basic promo on how neither Reigns nor Bryan has any chance to win the title at Wrestlemania and is just fighting for second place. There was absolutely no reason for Lesnar to be out there for this segment and it was a total waste of an appearance. I like seeing the title out there for a change, but Brock didn't need to be there for this one.

Goldust and Stardust did their usual schtick and the New Day got a pin. Get to the feud already.

Reigns and Bryan had a cliched backstage bit where they said they'll work together and then fight at Fast Lane. This is a very by the numbers feud and that's not helping things.

HHH said he wanted to confront Sting at Fast Lane. The lights flickered, a fake Sting popped up in the ring, and the words I ACCEPT showed up on screen. Somehow this took nearly five minutes.

Then we got to the stupid moment of the show, as the Usos lost to Kidd and Cesaro. Not only is this stupid because it's the exact same idea we see far too often, but it was also preceded by Cole saying he had heard a rumor that a win over the Usos could give Cesaro and Kidd a future title shot. This is the team that I believe has won two matches leading up to this past Monday, and now they're the #1 contenders? Off a rumor? This was your standard overbooked and overthought WWE mess that only they care about and no one really benefits from.

Rikishi is going to the Hall of Fame. For some reason people are complaining about this, despite him being a pretty successful midcard guy who was WAY over in 2000 with Too Cool. I have no problems with his induction.

Sin Cara beat Damien Mizdow, because WWE doesn't understand that the right move is to have Mizdow keep one upping Miz until he beats him in the showdown. Instead it's turned into a battle of who sucks less, making everyone look weaker than they should.

Bray Wyatt did his usual cryptic promo, which is about the Undertaker.

Dean Ambrose squashed Curtis Axel but was told he gets no Intercontinental Title shot. This was fine, but hearing Axel being called a third generation sports entertainer made me cringe. Does WWE really believe that anyone outside the company boundaries calls it sports entertainment? A little over a year ago in NXT, Bo Dallas was trying to sound stupid and said he had been sports entertaining around the world. Is that what we're supposed to call it? A sports entertainment contest instead of a match? That's what we're going with? Again, stop overthinking things.

The main event saw Reigns and Bryan get beaten up until Ryback, Ziggler and Rowan interfered and took out Big Show, Kane and Rollins, allowing Reigns to spear Mercury for the win. Just like in Miz/Mizdow, why are we having the guys we're supposed to cheer for look helpless and leave us with two guys who look lame to cheer for? Oh that would be because we have to keep Big Show and Kane looking strong for reasons.

That idea of "for reasons" is something that needs to be addressed. Look at what's going on in WWE right now. Why did the Authority make Reigns and Bryan vs. five guys? I know they're heels, but what is the motivation for going after Reigns and Bryan? There's a history with Bryan so that checks out, but they don't have a clear reason to feud with Reigns. If it's still over Reigns as part of the Shield then fine, but TELL US THAT.

At the moment it's coming off as people doing things because, in the words of Mark Henry, that's what they do. The opening tag was clearly just made because it's what they wanted to do that night and they didn't feel the need to have a logical reason to do so. The same was true of the main event. There's no storyline reason for these matches to be happening and there doesn't seem to be anything for the Authority to gain from it, so why do they keep doing it?

The stories are going in circles and there doesn't seem to be an end game other than "title match at Wrestlemania", after which I would assume it's more of the same: winner vs. Authority's monster of the month. It's like they don't know where they want to go with things and just expect Wrestlemania to bail them out. I hate to say this but TNA is currently far more logical and well written than this mess. Yeah the stories can

still be messy and unnecessary at times, but there's a clear path there for them and they know how to get to their goal. I'm not convinced WWE has a goal at this point.

Oh and Reigns speared Bryan after the match and got booed. Nothing wrong with that, but they're running the risk of making Lesnar a huge face at Wrestlemania and they better have something ready to combat that or it's the ending of Wrestlemania X7 in reverse. That's not how you want the next face of WWE (again because reasons instead of common sense) coming off on his big stage.

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Thunder – September 23, 1999: Why Do These People Have Jobs?

Thunder

Date: September 23, 1999

Location: Norfolk Scope, Norfolk, Virginia

Attendance: 3,782

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Larry Zbyszko

We're coming off a very welcome week break from this show due to a hurricane last week. This past Monday's show was more of the same from

WCW as the company made sure the young and hard working guys were stuck on the other side of the show from the main event stars, who had to be there to draw the audience. Let's get to it.

After the usual opening from the announcers, we look at Chavo putting Psychosis in a hair vs. mask match against Kidman on Monday.

Lodi vs. Kidman

After a hug with his brother/I don't really want to know what else, Lodi fires off some knees into the ribs. A drop toehold puts Kidman down and Lodi gets in a quick spank for some alleged comedy. That earns Lodi a dropkick in the face and a clothesline to the floor, setting up a big dive onto both blonds. Lenny offers a distraction and Lodi takes over with a legdrop and a suplex for two. A bulldog gets the same after a failed Kidman comeback attempt and we hit the chinlock.

That goes nowhere so Kidman is sent outside for a brawl with the champ. Lodi actually dives onto both of them to take over again (was he ever out of control? Well maybe back in the Flock days). Back in and Kidman hits his Bodog and does the usual to escape a powerbomb. Lodi is no Lenny it seems. Lenny offers yet another distraction to break up the Shooting Star, drawing out Eddie Guerrero to take care of him. This brings out Chavo to talk trash and then leave. Ok then. Lenny gets on the apron but Kidman whips Lodi into him, setting up the BK Bomb for the pin.

Rating: D+. Not much to this one but that's almost always the case with the Lodi matches. That being said, it's very refreshing to actually get to the end of a match instead of just seeing Sid come down to do the same thing every single week and often times in the same show. Lenny is getting up a pretty big set of challengers to go after the belt and I'm getting into his title reign.

Harlem Heat is shown walking in the back but they turn a corner and brawling noises are heard. Sid and Steiner walk around the same corner from the other way.

We see Sid and Goldberg yelling at each other from Nitro.

Tenay (not Gene for some reason) calls out Harlem Heat but only gets Booker. Apparently Stevie is on his way to the hospital as Sid and Steiner gave Stevie a bump on the head. That's quite the speedy ambulance. Anyway, Booker wants Sid tonight to prove that this winning streak is a fraud.

Brandi Alexander vs. Mona

A lot of posing delays the start of the match as Tenay tells us to go on the World Wide Web for more information on the WCW Mayhem video game. Mona gets taken down in a test of strenght about a minute after the bell. They roll into a quick pinfall reversal sequence until Mona gets caught in a wristlock.

A dropkick puts Brandi on the floor but she pulls the blonde outside for a clothesline. Back in and Brandi stomps away before posing some more. She gets two off a gutwrench suplex but Mona backflips into a headscissors followed by some forearms to the jaw. Not that it matters as Brandi counters a monkey flip and puts her feet on the ropes for the pin. Uh...upset?

Rating: C-. The match was acceptable but these stand alone matches can only get them so far. At the end of the day, what am I supposed to think of this match? Mona beat her two months ago and now Brandi evens things up. There's no title to fight over and no one else for them to face, so there's nothing here but a decent match and a pretty Mona. Did Mona ever even face Madusa?

The split second the pin goes down, they go to an ad for Hogan and Sting videos. That was one of the fastest cuts I've ever seen.

Mayhem ad.

We see Karagias pinning Blitzkrieg to earn his title shot tonight.

Chavo Guerrero Jr. vs. Saturn

Headlock from Saturn to start followed by a hammerlock as they hit the mat for a wrestling sequence. Back up and a big clothesline drops Guerrero and it's off to an armbar. Chavo tries to get underneath Saturn,

earning him a good stomping. Sometimes that's all you need to do. Back up again and a German suplex sends Chavo flying and he rolls out to the floor for a breather. Chavo gets back in but quickly flips over to the apron. He can't ram Saturn into the buckle though and gets suplexed from the apron back inside. Other than a few quickly broken holds, it's all Saturn so far.

Chavo finally jumps over a charge in the corner and dropkicks the knee before a clothesline puts Saturn on the floor. A nice plancha gets two back inside and we hit the chinlock. Saturn doesn't like to rest though and gets up for a big t-bone suplex, followed by a forearm and another suplex. He loads up a superplex (logical next step) but Eddie runs out to swing at him. Unfortunately he misses Saturn and knocks Chavo to the mat. Somehow the referee doesn't see Eddie coming in and dropkicking Saturn, allowing Chavo to collapse head first onto Saturn's crotch for the pin.

Rating: C. Can Saturn please get a big win, or even a win in general? This wasn't much to see but Saturn's suplexes looked good. They're setting up something interesting with the Animals vs. the Revolution, even though they both should be moving up the ladder a bit. The same idea worked with the Nation vs. DX in 1998 and stealing an idea only a year old isn't bad for WCW. Would Eddie and Benoit be HHH and Rock in that analogy?

Here are Sid, Steiner and Charles Robinson with something to say. Sid talks about a restraining order against Goldberg and the US Title match at Halloween Havoc is off if there's contact. Booker and Goldberg are stupid for meeting kids and doing all that other hero stuff before saying tonight, it's 100-0. Robinson even has the next sign ready. So Robinson is some freaky Ric Flair and Lodi crossbreed?

Coach Buzz Stern is going to bring Luther Biggs to Thunder. Just get it over with so this can mean nothing.

We recap Sting vs. Benoit and the fallout with Sting attacking Hogan's knee later in the night. They're really pushing that six man tag so points for trying to build to a big match.

This Week In WCW Motorsports.

Prince Iaukea vs. Van Hammer

You know, I was just starting to think this show wasn't half bad. That's what I get for even thinking for a second that this show isn't a horrible abomination. I need to stay more vigilant. The Prince jumps him from behind and actually gets two off a rollup. Hammer slams him down but gets small packaged for another near fall, followed by a headbutt. At least Iaukea is being more aggressive. He's still horrible to watch but he's aggressive. Hammer tries an Irish whip but gets poked in the eye for his efforts.

Yet another rollup gets two as dear goodness there's an actual story to this thing. Hammer gets tired of this match and kicks Prince in the face before hanging him in a Tree of Woe and choking him from the floor. When you're ripping off Rick Steiner moves, it's time to hang it up buddy. A few slams set up a few chinlocks on Iaukea but he finally fights up and kicks Hammer low. I know I said just make it legal already and it seems like they actually have. Prince hits a Samoan drop but walks into a spinebuster, setting up the cobra clutch slam for the pin.

Rating: D. Well it was a bit better than a squash but that doesn't mean it's an interesting or even good match. I did like the idea of Iaukea just going for fast wins because he can't go toe to toe with someone Hammer's size, but at the end of the day it's still Hammer and Iaukea getting five minutes on live television. There's no way this can be considered a good thing.

Hammer says he wants a US Title shot on Nitro. I can't decide if Sid vs. Hammer on live TV is worse than Hammer vs. Prince on live TV and for some reason I'm going to get to find out. I hate my life.

Revolution video.

Eddie Guerrero vs. Rick Steiner

Rick runs his mouth about Booker to start and still wants people to bite him. Eddie can't take Steiner down either from behind or by the leg and I have a bad feeling about where this is going. He gets behind Steiner again but this time Rick switches over and throws Eddie down with a

German suplex.

Steiner hammers away in the corner and starts ripping at Eddie's face. A chinlock goes nowhere so Eddie is dumped to the floor. He manages to reverse a whip for the closest thing to offense he's had so far. Naturally that's all Rick is going to give him and it's time for choking with a cord. Back in and Steiner slaps him before shrugging off right hands to the face. A spinebuster plants Eddie for two but he gets back up with a hurricanrana. Cue Sid to chokeslam Eddie off the top for the DQ.

Rating: D+. Is there an emergency button for Steiner to push when he's actually having to sell? Have we ever even been given a reason why Sid and Steiner got together? Given that we're still waiting on a reason for Nash to join up with Hogan and surrender the title when he had gotten away with everything (my goodness that sounds like forever ago), I wouldn't hold my breath. This match showed that not even Eddie Guerrero can save Rick Steiner, which is all you need to know.

Kidman makes the save and gets powerbombed. If Lenny hadn't done it recently, that would drive me a lot crazier.

CALL THE HOTLINE! SEE HOW ELSE WE'RE GOING TO SCREW THIS UP!

Cruiserweight Title: Evan Karagias vs. Lenny Lane

Karagias is challenging after beating Blitzkrieg on Nitro. Lodi's sign: "Lenny is hard to beat." Lenny takes Evan down to start and cranks on a hammerlock (popular move tonight) but has to run away from some right hands as we take a very early break. Back with the champ holding a chinlock until Evan fights up and gets sent to the apron. A springboard cross body gets two on the champ but he sends Evan into the buckle to put him down again. Lenny's rather suggestive cover gets two before he drops Evan with a gorilla press.

That's about it for the offense though as a double clothesline puts both guys down. Evan makes his comeback but gets caught up top. The champ's superplex attempt is quickly countered with a sitout superbomb for no cover. That might be a good thing as it would make Evan look pretty lame to not be able to pin Lenny after a spot that big. He heads up top again

but Lodi finally does something by tripping him to the mat to give Lenny a two count. Back up and Evan dropkicks the brothers together for two. Lodi gets back up so Lenny catapults Evan into him, setting up the Skull Crushing Finale to retain.

Rating: C. You know, Lenny isn't that bad in the ring. Yeah he's a Chris Jericho look-a-like and has a gimmick that had to be toned WAY down, but his matches are far from horrible. The division is starting to round back into some form (albeit not quite its previous glory but that's not fair to ask) and beating Lane might be a big deal when it happens.

We see Hammer's challenge for the US Champion from earlier tonight.

US Title: Sid Vicious vs. Booker T.

Booker is challenging but comes out alone while Sid has Steiner in his corner. Nick Patrick comes out and won't let Charles Robinson referee the match. If Robinson is this corrupt, how does he still have a job? Granted I could say that about so many people in WCW that this really shouldn't surprise me. Robinson stays at ringside as Booker hammers on Sid but charges into an elbow in the corner, knocking him out to the floor. Booker kicks him into the crowd and is getting in more offense than anyone has on Sid in weeks. By that I mean a few shots of course because Sid is a STAR.

They fight into the crowd and it's the walking around the arena style. Back to ringside with Sid in control and dropping Booker across the barricade. The fans chant for Goldberg but he's too important to appear on this show. Steiner gets in some cheap shots but Booker comes back with some kicks to the champ. Sid of course no sells but is nice enough to stay down for two off a missile dropkick, only to have Steiner pull Patrick to the floor. Robinson comes in, along with Steiner, as Sid chokeslams Booker, setting up a double powerbomb to retain the title.

Rating: D. Grumble grumble, star power, grumble grumble, Sid and Steiner are old. This was actually a bit better than most Sid matches as Booker was able to carry things far better than most of his opponents. However, Booker was never a real threat and the three villains made sure of it. Sid popping up after the ax kick really doesn't surprise me but it still

gets annoying in a hurry.

Sid yells for Goldberg to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. This show was a bit better than usual, but it's still nothing I'd want to see. The stories have thankfully calmed down after all those months of horrid, but that still doesn't help the mostly below average wrestling. We're just waiting on the guys to start tearing the house down but there's always something holding them back. Once they finally just start letting these stories go somewhere, WCW could potentially get hot again. That's one of the things that makes their downfall so frustrating: there are ways around some of the problems (not all of them of course) but they just kept wasting the potential.

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