

Monday Nitro – February 26, 2001: Down The Stretch They Come

Monday Nitro #279

Date: February 26, 2001

Location: Lakefront Arena, New Orleans, Louisiana

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Scott Hudson

We had a pretty good show on Wednesday so maybe we're in for something a bit better than usual this week. The big story is Diamond Dallas Page as the latest great hope against the Magnificent Seven and at least the big match should be better than the mess of Steiner vs. Nash. Let's get to it.

We open with Kronik having been laid out in the back and Doug Dillinger accusing Totally Buff and Team Canada of being behind it. Ric comes in to tell Doug that he's got this. Tony doesn't seem convinced.

Scott Steiner beats up a backstage worker for not knowing where Diamond Dallas Page is. As luck would have it, Page is in the arena and calling Steiner out at the same time. Steiner hits the ring and calls out Page with some insults to the fans. Page is still in the crowd and says he's just playing mind games. One of those guys Steiner beat up and put in the hospital is on his way back here tonight to get a piece of the champ. Page says there's only some Cajun Crazies in between him and Steiner so come get him. Good stuff here from Page as he's easily the best of all the good old boys at this point.

We get the brackets for the Cruiserweight Tag Team Title tournament.

Rey Mysterio Jr./Kidman

Johnny Swinger/Jason Lee

Evan Karagias/Shannon Moore

Jamie Knoble/Scotty O.

Elix Skipper/???

Air Paris/AJ Styles

Jung Dragons

Kwee Wee/Mike Sanders

Cruiserweight Tag Team Title Tournament First Round: Rey Mysterio Jr./Kidman vs. Johnny Swinger/Jason Lee

Lee was a regular in OVW and HWA but never did anything on the national stage. Swinger was in a fairly good tag team with Simon Diamond in ECW. Mysterio and Kidman get jumped as they get in the ring with Lee getting two off a sitout Rock Bottom. Kidman shrugs it off and feeds Lee into Rey but a Lionsault hits raised knees. Swinger poses over Rey and gets two of his own off a swinging neckbreaker.

A collision allows the double tag to bring in Kidman and Lee as everything breaks down. The baseball slide low blow sets up the Bronco Buster for two and Rey clotheslines them both off the apron. Not to be outdone, Kidman hits a shooting star off the top to the floor. Back in and the modified What's Up into the Kid Crusher puts Lee away.

Rating: C+. Totally watchable match here, even if the ending was never in doubt. Kidman and Mysterio are the kind of dream team that should win this whole thing or at least make the finals before an upstart heel team cheats to win. Kidman looked like his old self here, which means he was one of the most entertaining things around.

Here's a solemn Cat with something to say. Cat hates Kanyon for what he did to Ms. Jones last week and it's going to take everything to get to Kanyon with all the people he has to hide behind. It doesn't matter what it takes because Cat will fight through everyone to get his hands on Kanyon. Therefore he's stepping down as Commissioner because he can't be accountable for what he does.

This brings out Flair (Which can only refer to Ric again since that whole

“David is kidnapped” thing was dropped without any real resolution.) to say Cat is finally getting it. Cat can’t beat them or join them so all he can do is whatever Flair says. He can have Canyon at Greed so Cat tells him to get away. Flair wants to deal with Cat himself and there goes the jacket. Cat hits some horrible looking shots to an area around the collarbone and knocks Flair to the floor. Ric makes Cat vs. Rick Steiner for tonight.

Konnar, talking to someone off camera, is ready to find some soldiers to fight the Magnificent Seven.

Sean O’Haire/Chuck Palumbo vs. Mike Awesome/Lance Storm

Non-title. Before the match, Sean accuses the Canadians of attacking Kronik. Storm and Awesome aren’t afraid of the threats of murder so we’re joined in progress after a break. Palumbo jumps over Sean’s shoulders to land on Awesome’s ribs so it’s off to Storm, who is thrown down with a fall away slam.

The Canadians are smart enough to double team Palumbo in the corner to take over but Lex Luger’s entrance music plays to distract them. During the confusion, Canyon sneaks in and hits a Flatliner on O’Haire. Heel miscommunication (with Storm leaving a leg lariat short and landing at Awesome’s feet) doesn’t cause many problems as Storm grabs the Mapleleaf on Palumbo for the win.

Rating: D+. Can Lex Luger just go away? He wasn’t even here and he’s still getting annoying. I’m not sure I understand where they were going with this idea but I’m sure it’s going to lead to some faction war because that’s what WCW does these days. At least O’Haire didn’t take the loss here as it seems they have plans for him instead of just treating him like another guy.

O’Haire wants Canyon tonight.

Flair tells Canyon to go get him.

Earlier today, Page said Steiner isn’t taking his legs and talked about breaking Steiner down mentally.

Rick Steiner vs. The Cat

Non-title again. Steiner clotheslines him down for an early two and they head outside to avoid any more of this wrestling stuff. Back in and Rick kicks him in the face before hitting the chinlock. Rick rips away at the face until Cat hits some kicks and a legsweep for one. The referee goes down so Cat hits an enziguri to send Rick outside. That means it's time for our hero to choke with a cord, drawing out Totally Buff for the save. As they should as that was ridiculous cheating. Hugh Morrus comes out for the save and a Feliner puts Rick away.

Rating: D. Of all the people they could have put over Rick, they picked the Cat? I really don't get the love affair with the guy as they seem to think Cat is the greatest thing that has happened to WCW in years. He's good on the mic but at some point you have to have a good match. Not a great one, but you would think he would have at least cracked good in the years he's been around here.

Scott Steiner runs in for the beatdown and Page's save attempt fails. This brings out the returning Booker T. to go after Scott as the good guys clear the ring. After some weak insults from Scott, Booker throws out a challenge for a six man tag.

Booker T./The Cat/Diamond Dallas Page vs. Scott Steiner/Totally Buff

Did Morrus just dissolve? Flair jumps in on commentary as the good guys control to start. Things settle down with Cat uppercutting Buff in the throat and Page getting two off a Batista Bomb. It's off to Luger and Booker with the latter hitting a hook kick to the air next to Luger's face for two. Cat comes back in (not a good idea) and Luger takes him down with the running forearm.

The bad guys take turns on Cat, including Scott getting in a chair shot to the face. We hit the double arm crank minus any actual cranking which sets up missed tag. Cat finally hits a jumping kick to Luger's jaw and the hot tag brings in Page, who is cut off just as quickly. Luger's powerslam getting two doesn't agree with Flair. A double clothesline allows the real hot tag to Booker as everything breaks down.

Scott and Booker have the big slugout with Booker getting the better of it and scoring with a missile dropkick for two. We get the return of the Spinarooni but Totally Buff beats Booker down. Cat gets caught in the Recliner but there's a Diamond Cutter to Steiner. Buff gets in a Blockbuster on Page but he walks into the Bookend. A quick ax kick puts Steiner away.

Rating: B. Cat aside, this was a wrestling match which got time and stayed hot during the entire second half. It's so rare to see the wrestling actually being treated like something serious and setting up a potential challenger to the World Title. I had a good time with this match and Booker looked sharp in his return.

Back from a break and Scott is livid, wrecking everything he can find.

The good guys are proud of their win.

We recap Dustin Rhodes vs. Jeff Jarrett which seems to be more about Dusty Rhodes than anything else. Dustin turned down a spot in the Magnificent Seven so the team started going after him. This included Jarrett imitating Dusty in an unfunny segment last week to further set Dustin off. They fight tonight.

Dustin is ready to get his revenge.

Shannon Moore vs. Shane Helms

Evan Karagias is in Shannon's corner. Shane starts very fast with a TKO onto the knee and a neckbreaker for no cover. A running sitout powerbomb out of the corner (dubbed the Sugar Bomb for a stupid name) gets two on Shannon but he kicks Shane to the floor for some cheap shots from Evan. Back in and a Whisper in the Wind gets two for Shannon but the Bottoms Up is countered into the Vertebreaker for the quick pin.

Rating: C+. This could have gone longer but the short time forced them to cram in everything they could into just a few minutes. Shane is getting a lot of well earned praise around this time but Shannon has been on a very strong roll of his own. I could have done with more of this and less of Evan but we seem to be stuck with him for some reason.

Chavo Guerrero Jr. comes out for the beatdown and leaves with Evan and Shannon.

Kid Romeo is still coming.

Kanyon vs. Sean O'Haire

O'Haire sneaks in from behind and crossbodies Kanyon to the floor as this feels more like a fight. Back in and Sean slowly hammers away until Kanyon hits him low in the corner. A middle rope Russian legsweep puts both of them down but O'Haire no sells a middle rope Fameasser. Kanyon misses a top rope splash, only to grab a sitout Alabama Slam for two. O'Haire throws him up in a fireman's carry and something like a reverse AA (O'Haire slammed him back down instead of flipping him over. You might remember it as the Widowmaker in his WWE run.), followed by the Seanton Bomb for the pin.

Rating: C+. More good stuff here as this has been one of the best shows they've had in a long time. O'Haire looking good is a very smart idea as WCW desperately needed to set up some guys for the future. Sean is one of the best possible ideas as he has the look, the energy and (most of) the in ring ability. It's not like they have many other options anyway.

The post match replay shows Booker pinning Scott by mistake.

Dustin Rhodes vs. Jeff Jarrett

Ric is guest referee and we get a quick Dusty impression from Jarrett before Dustin comes out. Dustin is as mad as you would expect him to be and knocks Jarrett to the floor to start. Ric won't allow some right hands in the corner though and Jeff cheap shots Rhodes to take over. They head outside with Dustin hammering away even more, followed by a superplex for the slow two count.

Ric low bridges Dustin to the floor and we get the sleeper reversal sequence to check that box off the list. Dustin's powerslam sets up a piledriver for the next slow motion two. That's finally enough for Dustin who loads up Shattered Dreams to Flair but has to block the guitar shot. Ric hits Dustin low and the Stroke gives Jeff the pin.

Rating: D. I wasn't feeling this one with the old crooked referee stuff throughout the match. It also doesn't help that Dustin vs. Jarrett is the least interesting story they have going on the show right now. I don't know why I'm supposed to care about Dustin Rhodes and the family feud with Flair all over again but it's really not working, especially with Dustin not exactly lighting the world on fire.

Page, Cat and Booker chase the villains off to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. There's a fresh energy here and while I have zero reason to believe it's going to last, this was a very easy show to watch. The wrestling worked very well throughout with the main event alone holding it back. The cruiserweights were on point all night and the six man was one of the better matches they've done in a long time. Good show here and hopefully they can keep it up over the next month.

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Thunder – February 21, 2001: It's So Easy

Thunder

Date: February 21, 2001

Location: Von Braun Civic Center, Huntsville, Alabama

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Tony Schiavone

It's hard to believe we've got less than a month to go. The last pay per view is called Greed because the wrestling universe is funny that was. Earlier this week we found out that Diamond Dallas Page was the next challenger for Scott Steiner, mainly because there's pretty much no one left to do it. Let's get to it.

We open with Kwee Wee issuing an open challenge. Brace yourselves.

Kwee Wee vs. Kaz Hayashi

Kaz is ready to go here and kicks Kwee Wee to the floor for a big flip dive. Back in and it's Angry Alan time as Kwee Wee punches Kaz down and suplexes him into the corner. The aggression gets toned down a bit with a vertical suplex. Kwee Wee tries a German suplex to complete the trifecta but gets kicked in the chest instead. They head outside with Kwee Wee missing a dive and getting caught in a hurricanrana to send him into the steps. Back in and Kwee Wee gets crotched on the top, setting up a slingshot DDT for the upset (I think?) win.

Rating: C+. This was better than I was expecting and a very nice way to open the show. I'm very happy to see one of the cruiserweights finally get a win over anyone other than the same five people and it's not like Kwee Wee has any chance to go anywhere after losing to Mike Sanders.

Post match Kaz gets planted by a piledriver to keep things even.

The Boogie Knights agree to team up one more time to face AJ Styles and Air Paris for an easy win. I think I know where this is going.

Here's Hugh Morrus with something to say. He wants to get his hands on Rick Steiner for what happened to Lash Leroux on Monday (At least that squash wasn't completely pointless) but it's Scott coming out instead. The distraction lets Rick sneak in but a bunch of low level guys run out to chase the Steiners off. You know, like they would ever run away from anyone other than a main eventer.

The Magnificent Seven is here with Flair making some matches for later. Apparently Canyon hangs out with them now but isn't exactly magnificent.

Shawn Stasiak and Mark Jindrak jump Big Vito.

Air Paris/AJ Styles vs. Boogie Knights

Paris and Wright get things going with Alex knocking him down into the corner. An atomic drop/spinwheel kick combo puts Paris down so it's off to Styles, who is beaten down just as quickly. That means it's time for some Alex dancing and a tag to Disco, whose mere presence sends AJ over for a tag off to Paris. This goes badly too as the Knights are too much for the power of Air.

A missile dropkick Doomsday Device drops Paris again but he's able to punch Disco in the ribs and make the hot tag off to AJ. Styles gets two off a tornado DDT as everything breaks down. AJ takes both of them down with a big flip dive to the floor and Paris does the same to Wright. Back in and AJ hits a high cross body for the pin on Disco and the big upset.

Rating: C. You can tell the good guys are still young and in need of ring time but they're also exciting enough to warrant a spot in the upcoming Cruiserweight Tag Team Title tournament. Neither is really setting the world on fire yet but beating a known team, even one as inept as the Knights, will help them a lot.

Kid Romeo is still coming.

Shawn Stasiak vs. Big Vito

Despite the earlier attack, Stasiak comes out to issue a challenge here. Vito goes right after him to start and easily takes over, likely because he's facing Shawn Stasiak. The suplex and flying elbow get a quick near fall for Big but Shawn pops back up for some lame brawling. Vito kicks him in the head (always works), only to have Shawn grab a neckbreaker for the quick pin.

Crowbar really doesn't like what Jeff Jarrett did to disrespect Dusty Rhodes on Monday. Revenge is promised tonight. After the Terry Funk feud, this really does feel like something Crowbar would do.

Video on Hugh Morrus.

The Cat/Diamond Dallas Page vs. Canyon/Buf Bagwell

Kanyon brags about Canyon Cutting Page and Miss Jones because he's that awesome of a heel. Cat runs out with a chair to clear the ring before introducing Page like he's a surprise, even though Page was already announced as being in this match. Page and Canyon get things going though Page pauses to hit Bagwell in the face first. Cat comes in to get two off Page's clothesline before Bagwell easily pounds him down in the corner because Cat just isn't that good.

It's back to Page who has some better luck due to being Diamond Dallas Page but the double arm DDT gets two for Bagwell. Some simple double teaming gets two more and Canyon's slingshot elbow gets the same. Page gets in a discus lariat to put Canyon down, allowing the hot tag off to Canyon. Everything breaks down with Page sending Canyon outside and into the crowd, leaving Cat to hit the Feliner for the pin on Bagwell.

Jeff Jarrett vs. Crowbar

Feeling out process to start before a sitout hiptoss of all things gets two on Jeff. A Lionsault (not the Asai Moonsault Tony) gets the same but Jeff does the sleeper reversal sequence to send Crowbar over the top with a belly to back suplex. Crowbar comes up holding his knee because that happens to every opponent of someone who uses a Figure Four. Some shots to the knee don't do much good as Crowbar gets in some right hands in the corner, followed by a northern lights suplex for two. Not that it matters as Jeff kicks him in the knee again and grabs the Stroke for the pin.

Rating: C. This would be Crowbar's last match and it was nice to get to see him have a decent one on his way out. It's also kind of a shame that he's stuck in this role while Dustin Rhodes and Jeff Jarrett get a feud and a pay per view payday out of this because they're both veterans who aren't going to draw anything but why let that get in their way?

Jeff loads up Shattered Dreams but Dustin Rhodes comes out for the save.

Ric tells Rick and Animal to take out Hugh Morrus to keep Scott free tonight.

Long Shane Douglas video, basically saying he hates Flair because Flair wouldn't mentor him as a rookie. That's a fine reason for a face turn, especially considering their real life issues, but Shane Douglas, especially this Shane Douglas, is as natural of a heel as you'll find in WCW.

Sean O'Haire is banned from ringside for the next match. To make things worse, Buff Bagwell gives him a cheap shot.

Lex Luger vs. Chuck Palumbo

Before the match, Luger goes on a rant about how Palumbo wanted to be him and how rich he is because of his amazing abilities. A GOLDBERG chant cuts him off but Luger gets back to the point: he and Bagwell are winning the titles. Palumbo runs him over with a clothesline to start but Luger takes it to the floor to beat him down. Some forearms to the back set up the powerslam but Palumbo small packages him for the quick pin as Luger goes to pick him up for the Rack.

Rating: D-. This was barely long enough to rate and Luger was his usual self. At least Palumbo won but it would have been nice to see him get in more than two or three bits of offense throughout. This is much more acceptable as long as Luger or Buff lay down for the finisher at Greed and it's not some screwy finish where the young guys get a fluke win.

O'Haire can't wait to hurt Luger and Bagwell. As I had to ask about Goldberg: why is he slumming it with those two? Is this really supposed to be a rub? I know Luger has a great resume but can anyone honestly believe a win over him means something at this point?

Morrus locks Animal and Rick Steiner in a locker room before the main event. Smart big man.

Hugh Morrus vs. Scott Steiner

Non-title. Steiner beats him into the corner to start and calls fans white trash while firing off chops. A powerbomb out of the corner drops Morrus and the slow beating continues. Steiner is nice enough to send him outside and then right back in, only to stop to tell a fan that their

mother sucks. Those should be fighting words but Steiner is too busy yelling at a referee.

Morrus gets in a whip into the steps for a breather and a powerslam gets two. This is already far more competitive than the previous match. No Laughing Matter is broken up by an electric chair though and Scott gets in the spinning belly to belly for two. Morrus drops him again but we cut to Rick and Animal breaking out of the locker room. Scott doesn't really need the help though as he belly to belly superplexes Hugh into the Recliner (an even worse version than usual) for the knockout.

Rating: C-. Morrus is another guy that I feel a bit sorry for. He was clearly working hard and had a strong enough connection with the crowd to possibly be an upper midcard guy but he's pretty much peaked with back to back pun names. Just let him be called Bill Demott and wrestle his fast paced big man style and he would have been fine. But no, instead let's have him laugh a lot, adding a grand total of nothing to his character.

Post match Steiner loads up the pipe but stops to tell Page to come out here. That's exactly what he gets and a brawl wraps up the show with Rick helping his brother out.

Overall Rating: C. This was a really easy show to sit through as the angles were advanced and there wasn't a lot of time spent on talking. I think that's been one of the major things holding back Nitro lately: they talk almost as much as a modern WWE show and it gets really tiring sitting there waiting on the rushed matches to start up. This wasn't anything great but WCW being an easy two hours is a nice improvement for them.

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Monday Nitro – February 19, 2001: One More Funeral

Monday Nitro #278

Date: February 19, 2001

Location: Von Braun Civic Center, Huntsville, Alabama

Commentators: Scott Hudson, Tony Schiavone

At this point, I can't imagine they'll ever leave the southeast again. We're past SuperBrawl and as is far too often the case with pay per views, not a lot happened. Scott Steiner retired Kevin Nash which I'm sure means he won't be back whatsoever. We've got less than four weeks until Greed so this is the final time we'll start the build to a pay per view. Let's get to it.

We open with the pay per view recap.

There's some exclusive footage of Nash walking out and driving away from the arena last night. This is far too somber for someone who spent years trying to take over the company.

In the arena, there's a Kevin Nash RIP screen up and here are some people carrying a casket. After they get to the ring, the Magnificent Seven come out in suits (with titles of course) as it's time for a funeral. Flair says we're here tonight to bid farewell to a man who walked as a giant amidst titans. Nash was a once in a lifetime athlete and now his career has come to an end because the Magnificent Seven struck last night.

Now there's no one to stand against them at all because no one can handle

Scott Steiner. Scott says they'll do whatever it takes to succeed because he's the man making history. They're heels in case they haven't spelled it out well enough for you. We get the same list of people that Scott has destroyed and sent to the hospital but apparently they're all scared to come back. As Steiner talks about each victim, the RIP graphic changes appropriately. Scott was willing to let Nash live out the rest of his life at a nice retirement home but then Nash put his hands on the freak.

Now there's one man left for Scott to go after and he's going to show us who that is. The casket is opened and it's Canyon dressed as Diamond Dallas Page. Tonight Buff is going to beat up Cat, Jarrett is going to take out Dustin Rhodes and Canyon can hurt Page but make sure to leave Scott a little piece. Cue Page through the crowd to say he'll take care of Canyon tonight and then get his hands on Steiner at Greed.

Miss Jones congratulates Cat for becoming Commissioner again. To celebrate, Cat makes the Cruiserweight Tag Team Titles and the tournament to crown the first champions starts next week. Well they might as well give the three teams something to fight over to make it seem like they're getting somewhere.

Jamie Knoble vs. Shannon Moore

Evan Karagias is here with Knoble. They start fast with some quick headscissors until Shannon misses a charge in the corner. Jamie gets two off a northern lights suplex as the announcers actually talk about the match for a change of pace. A running leg lariat in the corner staggers Jamie and knocks him out to the floor for a big flip dive. Shannon dropkicks him into Evan, who is knocked into the steps. Like almost any wrestler would, Evan blames Knoble and decks him from behind, allowing Shannon to hit Bottoms Up for the pin.

Rating: C. More of the same here but at least they might be mixing up the teams a little bit. I can go for the idea of some new teams going into the tournament but it would be nice if they had some new talent instead of the same six guys fighting over and over again. Shannon has been growing on me in the last few weeks and his ring work has been making him stand out, which says a lot given who he has around him.

Konnan and Kidman are ready to take out Animal and Chavo tonight. They don't want Road Warrior Animal style though. Instead let's do it Filthy Animals style.

Mike Awesome vs. Bryan Clarke

Fallout from Awesome dressing up like Clarke last night, though I thought Clarke was still injured. They slug it out to start with Clarke getting the better of it, though he keeps looking over his shoulder. As you would expect, Elix Skipper runs in but gets slammed down with ease. Lance Storm comes in as well and that's enough for the DQ.

Team Canada beats Bryan down until Brian Adams comes out for the save.

After a break, Team Canada is still in the ring when Cat and Miss Jones (in a completely different outfit than earlier) come out. It's time for Storm to pay for his crimes as Commissioner so Cat is giving him a match. If Storm doesn't fight, he can go make pancakes in Canada because he'll be fired.

Kid Romeo is coming. Or coming back as he was around a little over a year ago.

Chavo Guerrero Jr./Animal vs. Konnan/Billy Kidman

Animal and Konnan start fighting in the back after Chavo has come to the ring. Kidman, in a black shirt for a change, runs in from behind to jump Chavo and we take a break with no bell. We come back to see Chavo and Kidman brawling with referees not being able to break it up. Konnan and Animal come down the ramp and the match actually starts with Chavo hitting a tornado DDT on Kidman.

I'm assuming the match started somewhere during the break as Konnan does Chris Jericho's springboard dropkick to knock Chavo off the apron. Things settle down with Kidman elbowing Chavo in the face and handing it off to Konnan for a reverse standing Figure Four with both arms tied up. That's certainly different. Animal makes a save because he's Animal and doesn't do a lot of wrestling, allowing Chavo to take over in the corner.

Konnan gets in his rolling lariat so Kidman can come back in. Everything

breaks down and some double teaming puts Animal on the floor and Konnan completely botches his faceplant on Chavo. You can hear the crowd going awkwardly silent as they seem stunned that Konnan can't sit down properly. The big guys fight on the floor as Rey Mysterio runs in for a What's Up legdrop to Chavo, setting up the Kid Crusher to give Kidman the pin.

Rating: C. Chavo continues to look good in the ring and putting him in there with Kidman is only going to produce even more great stuff. I wasn't wild on Rey coming in for the cheating as it takes some of the steam out of Kidman's win, as well as doesn't fit someone like Rey in general. Still though, not a bad match here with Konnan actually working hard to make up for Animal not even trying.

In case you thought something of Kidman there, Animal powerbombs him into oblivion. Animal never was legally in the match which keeps making me wonder why he has this spot. Was Team Canada so important that they couldn't put Mike Awesome in his same spot?

Buff Bagwell vs. The Cat

Before the match, Cat offers Bagwell a chance to leave Flair's team and come back to the good side. Bagwell considers it before hitting Cat in the face to take over. Cat comes back with some chops to the throat but gets caught in a swinging neckbreaker for two. It's already off to the chinlock but Buff stops to strut instead. We hit the second chinlock and Cat looks like he's nodded off.

Some clotheslines cut off the comeback and it's BACK TO THE CHINLOCK. We're not even five minutes in and it's already the third chinlock. At what point do you just realize Buff has nothing else to offer? Buff dives into raised feet and it's time for some kicks. Cue Canyon so Miss Jones gets on the apron, only to allow Buff to get in the double arm DDT (with Cat landing on his hands). The Blockbuster puts Cat away for the pin.

Rating: D-. Again: five minutes and three chinlocks. Bagwell gets lazier and lazier every single time he's in the ring but at least he's had some good matches before. I don't ever remember Cat doing anything above bad. If that chinlock is the best they can do, cut this off and put on a

Norman the Lunatic match instead as you might get some chuckles as a result.

Jones gets a Canyon Cutter post match. Cat fights them off but I can't imagine we'll be seeing Jones again, which is a shame.

Post break Jones is taken away in an ambulance.

US Title: Rick Steiner vs. Lash Leroux

Steiner is defending and quickly takes Lash outside for a whip into the barricade. This looks like one of those matches where Rick seems more ticked off than usual. A Steiner Line almost takes Lash's head off as the fans accurately call this boring. Steiner throws him down with a release German suplex before ripping at his face. Another Steiner Line and three Steiner Drivers complete Lash's destruction.

Rating: F. Yes we get it. Rick Steiner is the most amazingly tough wrestler of all time and we're supposed to be interested in seeing him beat people up really hard. For some reason he's the US Champion despite not drawing a dime in years and barely associating with his brother, which would be almost the only possible way for people to be interested in him.

Lash is checked out by medics post break.

Scott Steiner gives Canyon his brass knuckles to use on Page later. Page isn't making it to Thunder.

Hugh Morrus wants to fight Rick Steiner for personal revenge but his match with Storm tonight is about pleasure.

Lance Storm vs. Hugh Morrus

Team Canada is barred from ringside. Storm says he doesn't care who he's fighting tonight because he was born to wrestle. Morrus can't get him into a test of strength to start so the referee says they have 6:30. They trade chops until Morrus knocks him outside with a clothesline. Back in and a fall away slam looks to set up No Laughing Matter, only to have Storm take him down and possibly hurt the knees.

Morrus gets back up and catapults Storm into the buckle but can't follow up. A trip to the floor lets Morrus take over again and he splashes Storm in the corner for good measure. Storm superkicks him down and grabs the Mapleleaf, only to get slammed and hit with No Laughing Matter for the pin.

Rating: D+. The feud had lost any of its heat at this point but it was nice to see them actually stick with Morrus as a big deal who can win matches on his own for a change. Storm is in a really weird place at the moment as he was Commissioner for six days but is now losing most of his matches without putting up much of a fight. It could have been a worse match but Morrus winning made more sense.

Here's Jeff Jarrett dressed as Dusty Rhodes (including a very stuffed shirt and jeans) for a bad comedy impression. Jeff, in a borderline good Dusty, talks about how he's here to save WCW and says no one can beat Dustin when his daddy is in his corner. Unfortunately there's no way he can beat the Chosen One because Dustin (the fruit of his loins, which Jarrett says about ten times) just isn't good enough.

Jarrett calls in some young wrestlers for an exhibition, which means slow motion elbows. Jeff falls down and can't get up as the announcers treat this as some horrible idea. One of the guys gets Shattered Dreams until Dustin comes out, only to have Rick Steiner follow and beat Dustin down. Jeff guitars him and the villains stand tall. This went on and on and wasn't that funny, mainly because it's about Dusty Rhodes in 2001.

The announcers pay tribute to Dale Earnhardt, who passed away the day before.

Kanyon vs. Diamond Dallas Page

Page goes right after him to start and knocks Kanyon outside, meaning it's time for a brawl in the crowd. That only leads to some brawling before they get inside again with Kanyon bailing to the corner to avoid a Diamond Cutter. Kanyon comes back with a middle rope faceplant for two and a Russian legsweep gets the same. Page is sent into the corner for a middle rope Fameasser and it's off to the chinlock. The fans chant for Page in one of the few genuine reactions of the night.

Page fights up and gets a belly to back suplex to put both guys down for some of the loudest spot calling I've heard in a long time. The discus lariat drops Canyon but he's still able to get out of the Diamond Cutter. The Canyon Cutter gets two and the Positively Page book (which clearly has a brick inside) gets the same. Canyon loads up the knuckles but walks into the Diamond Cutter for the pin.

Rating: C+. I know Page doesn't have the best reputation around this time but he's by far and away the most consistent main event star of this last year. He just has good matches with anyone you put him out there against and that's so valuable to have. Above all else though the fans still care about him and that's more important than almost anything anyone can do in the ring.

Post match Scott Steiner leads the troops out but Page is smart enough to bail into the crowd to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. That middle portion is the usual death but there was enough good stuff in here to easily carry things for a week. Greed has some potential but the big story would seem to be who comes after Page to challenge Scott for the title. The announcers were talking about the Cat and Dustin Rhodes, who are somehow two of the top three faces in the company at this point. This place needs star power and it needs it in a hurry. I still think Sean O'Haire could have been something but he's just too young at this point. Maybe in fifteen years or so.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book on NXT: The Full Sail Years Volume II at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01FWZZ2UA>

And check out my Amazon author page with cheap wrestling books at:

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SuperBrawl Revenge (SuperBrawl 2001, 2016 Redo): One More Time

SuperBrawl Revenge

Date: February 18, 2001

Location: Nashville Municipal Auditorium, Nashville, Tennessee

Attendance: 4,395

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Scott Hudson

I'm still not sure what the REVENGE subtitle is referring to but it might be due to the fact that we've seen several of these matches on TV in recent weeks. The main event is Kevin Nash challenging Scott Steiner for the World Title in a match we saw just six days ago on Nitro. Let's get to it.

The opening video looks like something out of a serial killer movie with someone cutting out pictures of Ric Flair and cutting words like PSYCHO and GREED out of magazines and newspapers. No idea what it meant but at least it looked cool.

Jamie Knoble vs. Evan Karagias vs. Kaz Hayashi vs. Yang vs. Shannon Moore vs. Shane Helms

Elimination match for the #1 contendership. Helms is a replacement after Animal attacked Kidman so we can have these six opening ANOTHER pay per view. Thankfully there are tags here so it won't be as insane to keep track of. Well at least to start because there's no way the tags last. Jamie and Shannon start things off but Shane comes in with Shannon tossing Jamie into a powerbomb for two.

Even sends 3 Count to the floor with the Dragons hitting stereo Asai Moonsaults (which the camera mostly misses). Back in and the Dragons

double team Jamie, followed by Kaz headscissoring him into the middle turnbuckle. Jamie fights back and it's off to Evan to beat on Yang. I know it's not exactly a surprise but it would have been nice to not have a three way tag for a change.

Karagias plants Yang with a full nelson slam and then almost completely misses a springboard dive. Shane tags himself in and goes nuts on Evan before getting spun around into a rollup by Yang. Things are starting to speed up a bit with the Samoan Drop/neckbreaker combination getting two on Yang as Kaz makes the save. Tony says anyone could have made a save and Hudson talks about how anyone should have because he doesn't know the rules of this thing.

The tags start getting much faster until Kaz starts cleaning house, only to have Evan drive him into the corner. Shane pops up with a top rope superplex to drop Kaz, followed by FIVE straight missed top rope moves to put all six down. Hudson: "The first man to his feet has to be the legal man." No Scott, that's not how wrestling works.

Kaz springboards into a kick to Evan's head, only to get kicked into an X Plex from Shane. Evan hits a good looking springboard dive to take out Shane and Yang on the floor. We get the parade of dives with Jamie going last and being the only man standing. Back in and Evan gorilla presses Kaz into a spinebuster for two, followed by a powerbomb/missile dropkick combo but Jamie and Evan fight over who gets to cover. Guys don't listen to Scott Hudson. It just destroys your career. In the melee, Yang grabs an over the back piledriver on Evan for the first elimination.

Jamie slips back in and grabs a tombstone to get rid of Yang to get us down to four. 3 Count's double team doesn't work as Jamie dropkicks Shannon into the barricade, only to have Shannon come back in with a super Bottoms Up for the pin on Noble. So we're down to Shannon, Shane and Kaz with the team looking down at Hayashi. Hudson tries to say there are no teams here because he thinks we might believe him. In a fairly scary looking spot, Shannon backslides Kaz and Shane adds a guillotine legdrop at the same time.

Shane calls for the Vertebreaker but Shannon gives him the Bottoms Up in

a quick turn. We get a ref bump on the save (STOP DOING THAT!) so Shane can kick out but Shannon low blows him right back down. Kaz and Shannon double team him for a bit before Kaz throws Moore outside. Shane gets back up and hits the Nightmare on Helm Street to eliminate Shannon and we're down to two. Kaz rolls through a top rope sunset flip and kicks Shane in the face for two, only to get caught in the Vertebreaker to give Shane the title shot.

Rating: B. The match was the fun you would expect from these six but it's getting really tiresome to see WCW putting them against each other over and over again. It's cool to see them get some time like this (over seventeen minutes, the longest match on the show) but of course it's the opener and the match is likely to be forgotten in about an hour because that's where these guys belong.

Earlier today Chavo Guerrero was with Animal and Ric Flair but we can't hear what was said. Chavo was upset though.

Hugh Morrus says General Rection did a lot of good things for the Wall in WCW but then Rection (he's speaking like Rection is a different person) felt Wall's betrayal. Tonight it's Hugh Morrus, who has nothing but hatred in his heart.

Ric gives Scott Steiner an envelope that contains Kevin Nash's future. Scott is very pleased by this.

Commissioner Lance Storm tells Kronik (arriving half an hour into the show) that Clark has to be seen by the company doctor before he can wrestle tonight. The Brian/Bryan's don't seem to mind.

Hugh Morrus vs. The Wall

Grudge match following the split of the Misfits in Action. Wall hammers away to start and gets an impressive looking shoulder to knock Morrus outside. Morrus comes back with a hard shot of his own and sends Wall into the steps, which he uses to crush Wall's head up against the post. They get back in after a few minutes on the floor with Hugh dropping a top rope elbow for no cover.

Wall comes back with some big chops, followed by headbutts in the corner. Morrus avoids a top rope legdrop and both guys are down again. A spinebuster plants Morrus and keeps up the string of hard hitting moves. Back up and Wall gets flajacked so we can have another double breather. They slug it out from their knees, which Hudson describes as not wrestling of any type. Then why exactly am I watching? Morrus gets up first and hits a German suplex to set up No Laughing Matter for the pin.

Rating: D. This started off well with them beating on each other with heavy shots that looked like they did a lot of damage but then the ridiculous amount of laying around after big spots got annoying in a hurry. Cut this match down by about two or three minutes and it's actually a fun power brawl but it was clear that they were out there too long. Wall didn't look as horrible here, which is high praise in his case.

Konnan goes after Animal for what he did to Kidman.

We recap the battle of the Thrillers, which is basically about who has the Tag Team Titles, which set up a rivalry over who were the stars of the team.

Tag Team Titles: Sean O'Haire/Chuck Palumbo vs. Mark Jindrak/Shawn Stasiak

O'Haire and Palumbo are defending. Before the match, both teams say they're awesome and promise a win. A quick brawl breaks out at the bell before Stasiak clotheslines O'Haire to start. Sean sends Jindrak throat first into the ropes though, allowing Palumbo to get in a dropkick to the face. The champs take over with Palumbo jumping over his partner to land on Mark's ribs before grabbing a sleeper.

Stasiak actually does something right for a change as he distracts Palumbo so Mark can get in a clothesline to take over. A double clothesline into a double nipup into a double elbow drop let the challengers show off a bit, only to have Palumbo hit that insanely hard right hand on Stasiak's jaw. It's not enough for the tag though as Jindrak takes him back into the corner for more stomping.

Mark grabs the chinlock on Palumbo as they're doing the smart thing here by waiting on the hot tag to O'Haire, who is by far the most interesting of these four. Back to Stasiak for an armbar before Jindrak grabs a tilt-a-whirl slam for two. They're certainly giving Stasiak and Jindrak a bunch of offense.

Shawn misses a top rope splash (which would have overshoot Palumbo by three feet anyway) and the hot tag finally brings in O'Haire to a moderate pop. That's not bad considering there's no reason to cheer the champs, who never have done anything to turn face. Everything breaks down and Stasiak has to pull his partner away before the Seanton Bomb can launch. Not that it matters as Palumbo Jungle Kicks Shawn down, setting up the Seanton to retain.

Rating: B-. Not bad at all here and the clean finish did a lot of good here. Sometimes you just need one side to come off as the better team and that's what happened in this match. O'Haire looks like a star and I'm really surprised he didn't become a bigger deal in wrestling due to his look and athleticism alone. The other three were average at best (Palumbo) and a warm body at worst (Stasiak) with all four of them really needing personalities and/or characters.

Dustin Rhodes blames Ric Flair for keeping him out of WCW. Tonight he's drawing first blood on his team. After that, you will never forget the name of Dustin Rhodes.

Cruiserweight Title: Rey Mysterio Jr. vs. Chavo Guerrero Jr.

Chavo is defending after Rey won a gauntlet match earlier in the month. Rey starts fast with a running clothesline as you can see far too many empty seats in the upper deck. The champ sends him to the apron for an attempted sunset bomb which is countered into a hurricanrana to send Chavo flying. Back in and Chavo drapes him ribs first across the top rope.

Going after Rey's ribs has worked for years so there's no reason to not go for it again. Rey gets tied up in the Tree of Woe to work on the knee but Chavo stays on the ribs. Now that's just versatility. It's time for the Gory Special for a bit with Chavo teasing the Gory Bomb (not Gory

Buster, no matter how many times the announcers try to refer to it as such). Rey escapes and tries a springboard, only to dive into a dropkick to the ribs. This has been all Chavo as he keeps countering everything Rey throws at him.

There's an STF of all things before Chavo sends him outside. Rey comes up holding his knee which is quickly sent into the steps. Chavo steals a fan's Mysterio mask and puts it on Rey before grabbing a chinlock. Back up and Rey crotches him on the turnbuckle, setting up a hurricanrana as the mask comes off. Chavo takes a breather outside so Rey flip dives over the top to take him out as he FINALLY starts acting like himself. Another springboard goes badly for Rey though as he bangs up his knee, also just like himself.

It's time for a chair because....well I have no idea actually. Rey sends Chavo into the buckle and tries a hurricanrana, which finally sends Chavo outside after two botches. Hudson praises Rey's execution, which Tony says is appropriate since he almost killed Chavo. That was far too close to being amusing. Cut it out Schiavone. Back in and the Bronco Buster hits Guerrero as Rey is way too healthy in a hurry. Rey goes for a chair so Chavo finds another one to crack Rey in the head, setting up the brainbuster to retain the title.

Rating: B+. What is with this show tonight? We're almost halfway in and there has been one bad (and not even that bad) match so far. Chavo was basically wrestling himself for most of this match, which you really don't expect out of Rey. To be fair though there's a good chance that Mysterio is injured or at least banged up as he was so often. Chavo on the other hand is looking like the best champion in years and his matches are getting better and better every time.

Commissioner Storm moves up Kronik's match, meaning Clark might not be tested in time.

We recap Dustin Rhodes vs. Rick Steiner, which is basically "Dustin is back and was here ten years ago so therefore he's awesome" and Rick Steiner is here because he has to be.

US Title: Rick Steiner vs. Dustin Rhodes

Steiner is defending after Dustin pinned him on Nitro. Dustin starts fast with a DDT and clothesline as we hear about the Rhodes vs. Flair feud. A missed crossbody sends Dustin outside and it's time for the brawling. Rick slowly pounds away and rakes the eyes, making sure he has as little wrestling involved as possible.

We hit the chinlock for a bit before it's off to a half crab. It's off to another chinlock until Dustin gets a jawbreaker (more like a Diamond Cutter) to escape. A clothesline puts Rick down again but he won't sell a faceplant. Dustin's bulldog sends the champ outside but the referee takes a chair away from Rhodes. During the argument, Rick takes the turnbuckle pad off and a hotshot onto the steel retains the title.

Rating: D. Rick Steiner sucks and I'm not sure I need to go much further than that. It doesn't help that Dustin is such an uninteresting character with his clotheslines and bulldogs as we wait on the latest chapter in Dusty vs. Ric. This is probably the best example of WCW's biggest problem: old guys hogging spots with no one else ever getting a chance. I'm no fan of his but Shane Douglas has been tossed aside in this whole thing for the sake of Steiner and that's a downgrade at this point. At least Shane can cut a good heel promo.

Post match Rick beats on him even more but Dustin fights back and hits Shattered Dreams.

Ric tells Storm that everyone not on their team needs to be out of the building after their match. Also, Kronik vs. Totally Buff is now a #1 contenders match. Storm says consider it done. This has been your most recent plot advancement.

Diamond Dallas Page gives Cat a pep talk.

Totally Buff vs. Kronik

Before the match, Totally Buff has to laugh that Goldberg is gone. After getting through that, Buff says Clark hasn't been medically released so this is a handicap match. Clark comes out but gets blasted in the head by a Buff chair shot to really make this two on one. Bagwell keeps moving to break up a full nelson slam and it's an early double teaming to keep

Adams in trouble. A double back elbow gets two and it's off to Luger to stay on the back.

Adams makes a big comeback with some clotheslines and throws Bagwell at Luger. The super Blockbuster is broken up and here's Clark into the ring as....Bryan Clark comes out to the stage. IT'S A SWERVE as the Clark who was laid out earlier (when Kronik's mood lighting was still on) was actually Mike Awesome in disguise. Mike lays out Adams with a German suplex, setting up the Blockbuster for the pin and the title shot at Greed.

Rating: D-. When I have to sit and try to figure out how many parts there were to a swerve, it might be a bit too complicated. It also doesn't help that this is a match we've seen so many times already in recent weeks that all the novelty or interest in it has gone away. Bad on so many levels, not the least of which is Luger getting a title shot at the next pay per view.

The announcers talk about the swerve with Hudson pointing out that Storm must have been in on it, not realizing that Tony JUST SAID THAT. Bobby Heenan used to do that as a gag with Monsoon. Hudson does it because he's not that bright.

Storm ejects Kronik from the building but they beat up security.

Lance Storm vs. The Cat

Winner is Commissioner, though if Cat wins it doesn't take effect until midnight. Before the match we get a quick fan poll to decide who the people want as commissioner. Storm rides him to the mat to start and slaps him in the back of the head for fun. A spinning kick to the face sends Lance outside but he sends Cat into the barricade. Cat's leg is bent around the ropes to start the build towards the Mapleleaf. Hudson says Cat won't give up that easily because he wants that corner office back.

Storm kicks the leg out to break up a comeback bid but he takes too long going up and gets slammed back down. The leg is wrapped around the post though and Cat is down again. That lasts all of ten seconds before he

comes back with his dancing offense, including the elbow drop. There's a kick to the head but cue Mike Sanders, who is quickly taken down by Miss Jones (who is looking great tonight). The Feliner puts Storm away and makes Cat Commissioner again.

Rating: D. Thank goodness our six day international crisis is over. This could have been a lot worse but the key thing here was keeping it short. Cat is only going to be able to do so much in the ring, even with a technician like Storm out there doing most of the work for him. This was more of a spectacle, but Storm really should have been out of power longer.

Quick recap of Jeff Jarrett vs. Diamond Dallas Page, which is mainly over Jarrett having Page arrested (went nowhere) before bringing Page's old enemy Canyon back to feud with Page again.

Cat is the new Commissioner but Ric has thrown him out of the building.

Jeff Jarrett vs. Diamond Dallas Page

Not so fast because Jeff brings up Page saying he would fight Canyon anywhere anytime.

Diamond Dallas Page vs. Canyon

Canyon sneaks in from behind but Page is ready for him with the discus lariat. They head outside with Canyon going into the barricade a few times. Canyon sends him in as well though, followed by a Fameasser from the apron onto the steps. Page has some blood on his eye as Canyon suplexes him from the bottom rope back in for two. Another Fameasser (which Tony calls innovative) gets two more for Canyon and we hit an innovative chinlock.

Back up and Canyon uses Page's swinging neckbreaker for two as there is a lot more blood in a hurry. Page fights back with a swinging Rock Bottom, only to eat a sitout Alabama Slam for another near fall. Canyon hits the Cutter but the referee goes down, allowing Jarrett to come in with the Stroke. A Flatliner puts Page away.

Rating: C+. These are two guys who are going to have a good match with

almost anyone you put out there and that's what we got here. The Canyon Cutter should have finished the match but at least the right person won here. Canyon should have been a big deal but all the heel turns and time off really held him back.

Post match Canyon introduces Jarrett for the original match.

Diamond Dallas Page vs. Jeff Jarrett

Tony is saying Page just went "Ten, fifteen, twelve minutes" against Canyon because just over eight minutes is close enough to twelve or fifteen. They fight into the crowd with Jarrett rocking the staggered Page with right hands. Back to ringside with Page sending him into the announcers' table, only to be hit in the ribs with a few chair shots. Jeff drops some slow shots to the head but gets caught by the discus lariat. Sleeper, counter sleeper, jumping DDT from Page for a change of pace instead of the belly to back.

Back up and Page keeps slugging away with Jarrett going face first into the buckle over and over. Cue Canyon, who Tony wants knocked out with a ball bat. Now come on Tony. You know it's the ball bat that sets up the finisher which knocks people out around here. Jeff chairs Page down for two but the guitar hits Canyon by mistake, setting up the Diamond Cutter for the pin. Hudson: "THAT IS A PERFORMANCE FOR THE HISTORY BOOKS!" For having back to back long TV matches?

Rating: C+. Despite a lot of the flack Page gets, he's always going to give you a good match if he's allowed the chance. It probably won't be the best thing in the world but at least you're guaranteed something totally watchable at worst, which is something WCW is severely lacking at this point.

We recap Scott Steiner vs. Kevin Nash. Basically Nash is standing up for WCW but Steiner hit him in the knee with a pipe on Nitro.

Ric Flair comes out for commentary on the main event.

WCW World Title: Kevin Nash vs. Scott Steiner

Steiner is defending but before we have the match, let's look at the Sid

Vicious injury to show how bad Scott can be to people. Ric has an announcement to make: the loser has to retire, which apparently was the ruling in the envelope. Nash is wheeled out with some good looking nurses and the leg in a cast. It looks like a countout but Nash stands up and we're ready to go. A belt shot to Steiner's head pins him in 12 seconds.

Of course that's not it as Flair says it's 2/3 falls and no DQ. We cut to the back to see Totally Buff lay out Page in the back as Nash beats on Steiner at ringside. Nash slowly hammers away before clotheslining him out to the floor. Midajah offers a distraction so Steiner can hit Nash in the head with a pipe. Flair makes it falls count anywhere so Steiner pins him on the floor for the second fall.

Some brass knuckles shots have Nash in even more trouble as the crowd is groaning as they're far from impressed here. Both guys are bleeding and Steiner keeps hammering away at the cut on Nash's head. The push-ups elbow gets two followed by the t-bone suplex for the same. Another knuckles shot is blocked with Nash hitting a side slam to put both guys down.

Midajah pulls the knuckles away from Nash but Flair sends in a chair so Nash can be knocked out (Tony: "He's dead!"). The Recliner is broken up (with Tony acting like Nash is the new Goldberg as a result) and Nash gets two off a chokeslam with Midajah making the save. The Jackknife connects but Midajah interferes AGAIN, earning herself a side slam. Flair pulls the referee out and punches him in the jaw, allowing Steiner to get in a low blow, knuckles shot, chair shot and the Recliner to retain.

Rating: F. Nash isn't exactly the new Goldberg because it didn't take this much to put Goldberg down. You could see what they were going for as soon as Nash pinned him off the belt shot and it was just a bunch of Tony treating Nash like the greatest thing that ever lived for the rest of the match. Nash actually wouldn't wrestle in WCW again so for once they did something right, though I'd be surprised if he wasn't on Nitro tomorrow.

Overall Rating: C+. This is a good example of a show where you knew exactly what you were going to get out of each match. Six man cruiserweight elimination? Good stuff. Lance Storm vs. The Cat? Waste of

time. Kevin Nash vs. Scott Steiner? Oh please. The big surprise though was how much good stuff there actually was and the show was very nice as a result. I can't imagine anything else they'll have will top this but at least it was nice to have one more easy show to sit through.

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<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01FWZZ2UA>

And check out my Amazon author page with cheap wrestling books at:

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

Thunder – February 14, 2001: An Acceptable Valentine's Day Present

Thunder

Date: February 14, 2001

Location: Mississippi Coast Coliseum, Biloxi, Mississippi

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mike Tenay

This show is the equivalent of going to the gas station and buying your significant other transmission fluid for Valentine's Day. It's also the final show before SuperBrawl and believe it or not there's something advertised for this week. Tonight we'll be seeing Hugh Morrus/Rey Mysterio vs. Chavo Guerrero Jr./The Wall as two feuds are combined into

one. Let's get to it.

Nitro montage opens things up.

We see an exclusive clip of Kevin Nash being loaded into an ambulance after Nitro went off the air.

Opening sequence.

Commissioner Lance Storm is here in a suit and tells Mike Awesome he'll be wrestling tonight. Scott Steiner comes in and demands a match so he can hurt someone.

Jamie Noble/Evan Karagias vs. Air Paris/AJ Styles

Well this is a bit more interesting. The winners are in the #1 contenders match on Sunday. AJ drives Noble into the corner to start as Tenay talks about how great he's heard Styles is. Believe it or not, Tenay points out that his finisher, the Shooting Styles Press is in fact named after himself. AJ dropkicks Jamie into the corner as everything breaks down and the newcomers clear the ring.

In a somewhat dangerous move, AJ backdrops Paris over the top onto both guys with Paris slightly banging up his knee. Back in and it's Evan vs. Paris with the rookie grabbing a sitout spinebuster. Styles comes in and gets a cheap shot on Noble but gets decked from behind to change control.

Something like a Trash Compactor gets two on AJ before Jamie grabs a surfboard. Noble can't get a tombstone as AJ grabs a pop up powerbomb for the hot tag off to Paris so everything can break down. Evan hits a great looking springboard plancha to take Styles out, setting up a Doomsday Device on Paris.

Jamie and Evan actually get in a fight over who can cover though, despite both of them moving on if they win. The delay lets Styles get back in but he takes a 450. Paris makes a save and the fans (along with me) are surprised that wasn't the finish. AJ busts out his Shooting Styles Press to the floor (meaning it's not actually a press) but takes out his partner by mistake. Back in and a powerbomb/missile dropkick combo puts Styles away.

Rating: B. Now that's how you debut a team. Above all else, Styles and Paris were allowed to control for a long time which helped the match seem like a bigger win for Noble and Karagias. It's also clear that AJ was the better prospect of the team as Paris was more of your run of the mill indy guy who happened to get a shot on TV.

Storm gives Mike Sanders Kwee Wee for later tonight.

Sean O'Haire tells Mark Jindrak to look into his eyes and fear what he sees.

We run down the SuperBrawl card.

Sean O'Haire vs. Mark Jindrak

At least it's not Stasiak. Jindrak gets annoyed when Sean shoves him around so O'Haire punches him in the face. A running knee makes things even worse and then Sean just drops him out of a suplex. Apparently bored with beating Mark up this badly, Sean just kicks him out to the floor. To keep things going, O'Haire hits the Seanton Bomb from the apron for a nice variation on the move. He takes too long setting up the real one though and Jindrak kicks the rope to break it up.

A super hurricanrana takes Sean down for two as the fans are starting to get into this. Mark sends him to the ropes and....they presumably botch the heck out of something as we go to a shot of the crowd. Sean gets in a DDT to send Mark outside as Stasiak comes out to watch. No man, leave them alone and let them be entertaining for a change. Back in and O'Haire kicks him down to set up the Seanton Bomb for the quick pin.

Rating: C+. This was a total one man show from O'Haire as Jindrak, an athletic freak in his own right, just wasn't keeping up with him. Sean should have been a big deal and probably put into singles action in a hurry (picture him as the super face to take down the monster Steiner down the line) but instead he's stuck dealing with the rest of the Thrillers who are just beneath him. Like Stasiak for instance.

Jeff Jarrett and Rick Steiner want a match tonight and Storm smiles.

Kwee Wee vs. Mike Sanders

Kwee Wee jumps on him for some right hands as we're in Angry Alan mode. A way too early piledriver attempt is countered with a backdrop but Sanders punches the mat by mistake. Instead they head outside with Kwee Wee hurricanranaing him down. A sunset flip off the apron....does nothing because it's on the floor so Kwee Wee throws him back inside but gets caught in a suplex for two. Kwee Wee gets in a suplex of his own and sends Sanders into the corner for some right hands. A Regal Roll gets two but Sanders grabs a rollup and the tights for the pin.

Rating: D. And so much for Kwee Wee. To be fair they had to have him lose here before he started getting too popular against their will and that just couldn't happen. Sanders had almost no offense here and Kwee Wee did all the work but which one is getting the push? Sanders of course, mainly because he wasn't given a dead end gimmick by WCW's amazing braintrust.

Bryan Clark is taken out of the building as he can't wrestle tonight. Brian Adams rants until Totally Buff beats him down. Konnan comes in for the save.

Mike Awesome promises to break the Cat's bones so he can't land on his feet.

Mike Awesome vs. The Cat

Awesome starts fast by throwing Cat into the corner and just mauling him with forearms. Cat's comeback is easily shoved away as there's no answer for the power so far. A sleeper of all things slows Cat down until he comes back with....a wristlock? That earns him a low blow for general stupidity and they head outside. Cat tries choking him with a cable but for once the referee actually does his job and breaks it up. How convenient. Mike misses a charge but Cat kicks the post by mistake, again likely due to general stupidity. Back in and a chop block sets up the Awesome Splash for the pin.

Rating: D. Miller is just not very good in the ring and it's getting clearer every time he's out there. Now that he's not the Commissioner (which I'm sure he never will be again ever) there's no hiding his uselessness and it was clear that Awesome had to tone it down again so Cat wouldn't get squashed. Well not as squashed that is.

Diamond Dallas Page and Dustin Rhodes are ready for Rick Steiner and Jeff Jarrett tonight. Now that's a main event worth calling your friends about. They might watch it otherwise.

Chavo Guerrero Jr./The Wall vs. Rey Mysterio Jr./Hugh Morrus

Combining two feuds into one though Morrus doesn't like either opponent in the first place. Rey and the monster start things off and for some reason, Rey tries a sunset flip. Maybe he's been watching Cat matches to try something that stupid. It goes as badly as you would expect so Morrus comes in with a drop toehold so Rey can add a legdrop. Morrus powerslams Wall before handing it back off to Rey, who charges into a tilt-a-whirl slam. That's better than you would expect to see from Wall.

Chavo comes in and gets caught in a quick Bronco Buster but comes back with a Gorybuster (wrong Tony) for two. Wall chokes a lot and it's back to Chavo for a chinlock. That goes as far as a chinlock is going to go and Rey gets a breather off a hurricanrana. The hot tag brings in Morrus as everything breaks down with Rey splashing Chavo from Hugh's shoulders. A clothesline looks to set up No Laughing Matter but Chavo makes the save, leaving Rey to springboard into a chokeslam for the pin.

Rating: C. Believe it or not the Wall was one of the best parts of this as he played the power role really well. Sometimes you just need a big guy around to throw a smaller person around the ring and that was where Wall excelled. Chavo vs. Rey should be good if Mysterio is ready to go while Wall vs. Morrus....will likely me want to go make a sandwich.

Wall and Chavo beat the losers down post match.

Totally Buff make fun of Latinos before Buff faces Konnan.

Video on Nash vs. Scott Steiner.

Konnan vs. Buff Bagwell

After some Konnan rambling in what barely resembled English and Buff's dancing, we're ready to go. Buff chokes a lot and yells at the ref a bit before walking into a DDT for two. Back up and Buff forearms him a bit, meaning it's time for more dancing. It's almost like his entire offense

is one move and pose. How very Justin Credible of him. A Buff chinlock slows things down even further and here's Lex Luger for some nefarious reason. Konnan makes his comeback with his usual stuff but Luger sneaks in with the forearm to break up the Tequila Sunrise. Buff grabs a Blockbuster for the pin.

Rating: D+. Actually not horrible here with Buff working on the neck to set up the neckbreaker but you can only go so far when Buff's offense is almost the same as it was when he debuted ten years ago. There's something to be said for getting on the crowd's nerves with posing etc. but that's more than half of what Buff does in a match. It's ok to actually wrestle every now and then.

Brian Adams was trying to limp out for the save but couldn't get there in time.

Scott Steiner destroys catering because he wants Nash. Like he'd ever work back to back Thunders.

Diamond Dallas Page/Dustin Rhodes vs. Rick Steiner/Jeff Jarrett

So just last week's match with Rhodes swapped in for Nash. That might actually be a downgrade for once. Jarrett says this is the world's largest inbred family reunion and tonight is Page's last stop. It's a brawl to start (of course) with all four heading out to the floor. We settle down to Dustin missing a charge at Jarrett and getting beaten down by Steiner.

Page gets the tag and comes in with a top rope clothesline and neckbreaker for two. It's back to Dustin but Jeff knees him in the back so Steiner can get in a belly to belly suplex. The double teaming continues until we get the sleeper/belly to back sequence with Jarrett. Page comes in and cleans house with the clotheslines until Steiner decks him from behind, setting up the Steiner Bulldog. A bonus Stroke is enough to put Page away.

Rating: D+. They were smart to keep this one short but the match worked well enough with three good workers and Rick Steiner there to fill in a fourth spot. It's also a good idea to combine two feuds into one match as

if nothing else you don't have to hear Mike and Tony talk about these feuds twice. I still don't know what WCW saw in this version of Dustin but I'm sure it's something about being a cowboy.

Post match Scott Steiner comes in with a pipe to go after Page's knee but everyone else comes out for a brawl with security breaking it up until Scott breaks a guard's leg to end the show.

Overall Rating: C-. This show was actually one of their stronger entries with a really strong first half hour and bad matches going short enough that they didn't drag the whole thing down. I'm sure the fact that Nash and Flair weren't on the show had nothing to do with it of course. It's not that they're playing their roles well (especially Nash actually) but the story isn't interesting when it leads to Nash getting ANOTHER title shot on Sunday. Anyway better show than usual this week though that's not exactly saying much.

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Monday Nitro – February 12,

2001: Not This Again

Monday Nitro #277

Date: February 12, 2001

Location: Mississippi Coast Coliseum, Biloxi, Mississippi

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Scott Hudson

It's the go home show for SuperBrawl and it's probably not a good sign that they're in Mississippi for the second week in a row. We're set for the pay per view and the card isn't exactly thrilling but you can see how we got there for the most part, which is a lot better than some of the shenanigans we've put up with from WCW over the years. Let's get to it.

Rick Steiner vs. Dustin Rhodes

This is joined in progress as the show opens and I'm assuming the title isn't on the line. The Cat has allowed Dustin to wrestle here and it's very strange to see him in a singlet. Flair comes out and says this isn't happening. Ric threatens to have security take him out but it seems to be an excuse to have Steiner jump him from behind. I don't think you can really call this a match and the "action" wasn't even a minute long.

Dustin is told to leave because he'll never work here again. Ric gets in the ring with Rick, Animal and Sanders to brag about how much power he has. Cue the Cat for the same argument these two two have every single week. Apparently Dustin is reinstated (Was he ever instated in the first place?) but Flair makes Cat vs. Lance Storm for the Commissionership right now with Sanders as guest referee. Thank goodness he has a referee shirt under his suit.

Before the match we go to a break and come back with Chavo Guerrero Jr. yelling at Flair about the El Nino stuff last week. Ric promises that he'll get revenge before SuperBrawl.

The Cat vs. Lance Storm

Cat kicks him down to start and does a little dance before uppercutting Sanders for fun. He loads up the dancing elbow but Sanders decks him

instead, only to have Cat DDT them both at the same time. An elbow drop gets two with Cat making Sanders slap the mat but he's not the Rock so an elbow doesn't work. The Feliner drops Storm and Cat tries to steal the referee shirt, allowing Storm to hit the superkick and put on the Mapleleaf for the quick non-submission because that's the only screwy thing in this match.

The Magnificent Seven comes down to celebrate and they all get together to beat on Cat. Before anything can happen though, Nash pops up on screen to say he wouldn't do that. Ric says he has all the bases covered but Nash isn't so sure. The camera pans back to show a beaten up David Flair with tape on his mouth. Wait we're doing the Flair father/son thing again?

Since he's in charge tonight, Nash wants Storm vs. Cat for the commissionership at SuperBrawl. Flair agrees, so Nash wants Dustin Rhodes vs. Rick Steiner for Dustin's job tonight, and if Dustin wins then Nash gets a World Title shot against Scott Steiner tonight. The threat of a left hand to David forces Ric to make the matches and he promises to smooth this over with Scott.

During the break, Ric sends Sanders to find Dustin.

Totally Buff offer O'Haire and Palumbo spots on the team so the Magnificent Seven (thereby making it nine) so they can have all the gold.

Sanders finds Dustin but he's not interested in saving David's skin.
Dustin: "Now go on, git! GIT!"

Lash Leroux vs. Yang

The winner is in the #1 contenders match at SuperBrawl. Yang's kicks confuse Lash to start so it's time for the Crane Kick to knock Lash around even more. Lash is sent into the corner for another running kick to send him outside but Yang holds off on the dive. The second attempt takes Lash down though, followed by a moonsault to floor Lash again. Back in and Lash powerslams him for two, only to miss a frog splash.

A quick ankle scissors puts Lash on the floor but he comes right back in

with a slingshot clothesline (looked good too) for two. Lash drives in a knee lift and you can see how dark the top of the arena really is. Yang comes back with a tornado DDT but can't cover. Instead it's Lash up first with a pumphandle into a sitout powerbomb for two more. Whiplash gets the same so Yang runs to the top for a moonsault press and a near fall of his own. A Regal Roll sets up Yang Time (which mostly hits Lash's head) to give Yang the pin and the spot on the pay per view.

Rating: B-. Lash was in over his head here but he was able to hang in there well enough to make this work. Above all else though, this got an unthinkable nine minutes, giving it a chance to actually go somewhere. Yang winning was the right call though it's getting more and more obvious that we're heading towards the Dragons vs. 3 Count again in that six way on Sunday because that's where they belong, likely opening the show again as well.

Sanders tells Ric that he's negotiating with Dustin but that's not what the boss wants to hear.

Dustin agrees to the match tonight if he gets a title shot against Rick on Sunday if he wins.

Shawn Stasiak says he's going to prove he carried Palumbo to the titles.

Diamond Dallas Page gives Cat a pep talk.

Ric has Animal hold Sanders up by the throat until Sanders says it's taken care of. Dustin's demand isn't mentioned.

Video on the Steiner Brothers reuniting.

Dustin Rhodes vs. Rick Steiner

Non-title. It's a slugout to start and Tony is SHOCKED that Rick was dropped with a flying clothesline. Like, how could a former US Champion do damage to Rick Steiner? The Steiner Line gets two on Dustin which is a lot more realistic of course. They head outside with Rick being sent into the barricade but he doesn't have time to sell. Back in and Rick slaps on a reverse chinlock before ripping at Dustin's face and ripping open his nose.

We hit a chinlock because Rick is already spent after so much effort. Even that looks lazy but it still manages to get two armdrops, only to have Rick blast him with a Steiner Line for two. Back up and Dustin accidentally headbutts the referee, meaning there's no one to count the cover off Dustin's bulldog. Cue Animal to knock Dustin into a belly to belly but here's Shane Douglas to hit Rick with his cast. Dustin grabs a DDT for the pin and the title shot.

Rating: D-. Rick Steiner is just so bad and it's getting harder and harder to watch him every single week. Dustin was Dustin Rhodes instead of the interesting character he was capable of being but that doesn't make for anything interesting. Shane Douglas becoming a face isn't the most interesting idea either, which is likely why we're seeing it happen.

Post match Rick and Animal break Shane's good arm with Dustin's save attempt failing.

Scott Steiner isn't happy with what Ric has done and says he's doing things his way.

Billy Kidman vs. Elix Skipper

This should be good and it's another qualifying match for Sunday's six way. Kidman dropkicks him into the corner as we get a graphic saying SuperBrawl is in six days. I've always liked that as WWE would have you believe that the pay per views are on Monday when Cole says the show is in two or three weeks on Raw.

Skipper takes over to start and stomps a bit as the fans chant USA. Kidman's cross body misses completely as Skipper pulls out the Matrix move for a sweet counter. Skipper heads up top and gets powerbombed back down for two and both guys are a bit gassed. A reverse suplex gets two for Kidman and he reverses the Overdrive (Play of the Day) into the Kid Crusher for the quick pin.

Rating: C+. As usual the cruiserweights are putting on the best matches of the night and for a change they're actually getting a bit of time. Unfortunately it doesn't matter if this doesn't lead anywhere because it's the same cruiserweight stuff we've seen for years with no one

actually being elevated. That's one of so many of WCW's problems over the years and this is no exception.

Hugh Morrus is told he gets the Wall at SuperBrawl so he issues a challenge for a tag match on Thunder: Morrus/Mysterio vs. Wall/Chavo. I know it's not much but that's a simple, logical story and a match that makes sense.

Scott Steiner beats up a backstage worker for not knowing where Nash is.

Ric is on the phone with his wife and promising to find David.

Video on Kanyon and Diamond Dallas Page.

Shawn Stasiak vs. Chuck Palumbo

It's a bad idea to have Palumbo be the one that is going to be carrying the match. Stasiak is knocked to the floor to start and a fall away slam gets two for Chuck back inside. A not great looking gutwrench slam gets two for Stasiak and Palumbo gets the same off a small package. Stasiak bulldogs Palumbo onto his leg (another botch as Stasiak isn't great in the ring) sets up a neckbreaker for two.

We hit the choking for a few seconds as the announcers speculate about where David Flair might be held hostage. Stasiak charges into a boot and gets caught in an Alabama Slam for two more. Chuck tunes up the jungle but gets caught and turned into an awful looking rollup with the referee not being sure if he should count or not. Clearly that was going to be the ending as Stasiak grabs a quick rollup and hooks the trunks for the pin.

Rating: D. This right here summed up the issue with the Natural Born Thrillers in a nutshell: they were generic wrestlers and not very good in the ring. Neither guy here did anything special to make them stand out and they were both just guys in trunks. It also doesn't help that neither has anything resembling a character or a personality and it shows more and more every time. Oh and there were several botches here because they weren't much to see in the ring either.

Post match Stasiak says that proves he carried Palumbo.

Here's Diamond Dallas Page in a Sopranos shirt with something to say. He's ready for Jeff Jarrett at SuperBrawl but he has to talk about Kanyon. Page isn't happy with Kanyon stealing all of his stuff so it's time for Kanyon to learn that no one steals nothing (his words) from DDP. He's ready for Kanyon anywhere, anytime. Instead here's Jeff Jarrett to say he's ready for Sunday. Page wants to fight right now but first he has to fight off a sneaking Kanyon. The distraction lets Jeff come in with a guitar shot and the Stroke to leave Page laying.

WCW World Title: Scott Steiner vs. Kevin Nash

In case you just couldn't wait to pay for it on Sunday. Nash is challenging and brings David Flair out with him for a right hand to the face. Ric comes out to get his son but Nash powerbombs David first. They start fast with Nash sending him into the turnbuckle before the bell rings. A clothesline gets two and unfortunately Scott puts together the fact that Nash is getting a shot in Nashville.

We cut to the back to see Ric sending the troops out despite promising that there would be no interference. Steiner posts Nash to take over and it's time to choke and shout a lot. Cue the two factions to fight on the way to the ring as things stay even. A side slam gets two for Nash and there go the straps but Ric comes in for the DQ.

Rating: D-. No surprise here as they kept promising no interference and you always go with what they promise not to happen. I've never gotten the idea of having a match on Monday and then asking people to pay for it on Sunday, especially when it's the same match we're going to be seeing with no changes whatsoever. They could still change something on Thunder, or knowing WCW, they'll change it at the pay per view and blame the fans for being annoyed.

Ric takes the Jackknife but Steiner destroys Nash's knee with a pipe to end the show.

Overall Rating: D. The cruiserweights tried tonight and almost pulled off the minor miracle of saving this show. However, there's only so much you can do when you're up against this much bad. The David Flair stuff isn't interesting as he and Ric have turned on each other so many times over

the years that it's hard to care about. Page vs. Kanyon is good, partially due to Page's natural charisma and ability to make anything seem somewhat interesting. Other than that though, this is another show where you can see a lot of the holes that need filling in a hurry.

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Thunder – February 7, 2001: Yul Brynner Would Be Disappointed

Thunder

Date: February 7, 2001

Location: Bankcorpsouth Center, Tupelo, Mississippi

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mike Tenay

Amazingly enough, we're coming in off a surprise heel turn this past Monday as Rick Steiner joined up with Flair's group to reunited with his brother yet again. They really aren't even hiding the fact that this is another NWO clone and I really don't think anyone minds at this point. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Scott Steiner's rough night, which means he wrestled about ten minutes over three matches.

Shane Helms vs. Kaz Hayashi

This is a qualifying match for a six man elimination #1 contenders match at SuperBrawl. Kaz flips out of a wristlock to start and runs over Shane with a shoulder. Shane flips up and it's an early standoff. Kaz gets smart and kicks at the leg but his springboard DDT is countered into a northern lights suplex over the top. Helms hits a big cross body to the floor but bangs up his knee in the process.

Back in and Kaz moonsaults over and before headscissoring Shane right back to the floor. Kaz gets in a dive of his own but can't hit a top rope hurricanrana. A good looking superkick puts Kaz down and a running neckbreaker does it again. Shane wants the Vertebreaker but here's Chavo Guerrero for a distraction, allowing Kaz to grab a German suplex for the upset.

Rating: C+. This was a nice surprise and I can dig the idea of Chavo being worried about facing Helms again in the future and taking him out here. Kaz winning is a bit odd but there's not much of a chance of him adse corner before breaking up an enziguri with another right hand. Smiley jumps over him in the corner and does a bit of dancing but stops to look for Glacier. A clothesline sets up the Seanton Bomb for the easy pin.

Post match Mark Jindrak comes in as a distraction so Shawn Stasiak can come in for the beatdown. Something is edited out as O'Haire came back in from the apron and kicks both guys down. The beatdown is on again until Palumbo makes the save.

Flair gives Sanders Konnan tonight.

Team Canada comes out with Storm picking Elix Skipper to face Cat.

The Cat vs. Elix Skipper

Cat superkicks him to start but Skipper pops up and starts hitting on Miss Jones. At least he has good taste. Skipper takes him to the floor for a whip into the barricade. Back in and Cat starts firing off the kicks, followed by a running ax handle and the Feliner for the quick pin.

Rating: D. Nothing to see here as usual as being the Commissioner (which may have been on the line here but it wasn't clear) doesn't mean a ton aside from just opposing Flair. Skipper should be in the Cruiserweight Title hunt and Cat should be doing almost anything other than being a regular wrestler but at least he has a personality.

Post match Storm offers a distraction so Mike Awesome can take Cat out.

Totally Buff is ready for Kronik. They should be after facing them so many times.

Chavo Guerrero asks Wall to take out Rey Mysterio tonight. Hugh Morrus is heard laughing.

Kwee Wee asks a few jobbers (one of whom is Chris Harris) to fight him later tonight. One of them doesn't take kindly to this and seems game later.

Flair tells Scott Steiner to worry about Nash and ignore everything else.

Lex Luger vs. Brian Adams

Adams sends him head first into the announcers' table to start and drops him onto the barricade for good measure. They get inside for the first time with Adams raking his boots across the eyes, followed by some choking in the corner. Luger pulls him outside and sends Adams head first into the steps before a whip sends him into "the rail of pain." Back in and we hit the posing, followed by a backbreaker for two.

Lex stays on the bad back with a suplex and even more posing. Now we go old school with a bearhug until Adams powers out and hits a backbreaker of his own. Cue Buff Bagwell but Adams drops him with a single right hand. The full nelson slam puts Luger away clean in a bit of a surprise.

Rating: D-. It's rarely a good sign when the best thing you can say about a match is that it had a clean ending. Adams winning with a simple full nelson slam was a surprise but at least the interference didn't mean anything. Also it's nice to see Luger putting people over instead of fighting Goldberg on three straight pay per views as it seems he's FINALLY learning his place.

Bryan Clark runs in for the post match save.

Rey Mysterio Jr. vs. The Wall

Wall has Chavo with him. As usual the announcers act like Rey is going to die because they've never watched Mysterio vs. a bigger guy. Rey goes after the knee to start but springboards into a one armed gorilla press. A sleeper has a bit more success on the big man until he drives Rey back first into the corner. Wall throws him outside so Chavo can get in some cheap shots.

Rey's knee goes into the steps and Wall chokes him while standing on the announcers' table. A hard whip sends Rey chest first into the buckle as the announcers think the match should be stopped. Wall misses a top rope legdrop and Rey hits the springboard seated senton with Chavo making the save. That earns him a big flip dive but here's Hugh Morrus to electric chair Wall off the top and hit No Laughing Matter to give Rey the pin.

Rating: D. So to clarify, the greatest cruiserweight of all time has to get beaten down for five minutes and then saved by Hugh Morrus to set up a match between Morrus and Wall at SuperBrawl. Naturally they had no choice but to put these feuds together and have Mysterio look like a goon whose career was saved. At least he won though and that helps a lot. It was a rough way to get there but the right guy won and that helps a lot.

Mysterio and Morrus clean house post match.

Here's Kwee Wee for his usual "I'm all man" speech. Tony: "Is it just me or is his hair crooked?" And that's your latest reason why Kwee Wee is going nowhere. Kwee Wee calls out a fan and it's time for a fight.

Kwee Wee vs. ???

A few right hands give Kwee Wee a pin.

Here's the guy Kwee Wee called out earlier tonight with a missile dropkick and we have another match.

Kwee Wee vs. Johnny Dodson

Kwee Wee beats him down with ease and ends Dodson with a piledriver in just over a minute. It would be nice for this to go somewhere but I doubt Kwee Wee is considered important enough to get such attention.

Konnan vs. Mike Sanders

For some reason I can't picture the Mississippi crowd being that into Konnan's odd way of speaking. Tony: "Word." Konnan gets two off a rollup to start but Sanders rolls into a crucifix for two of his own. The mat work goes to Konnan as he grabs something like a standing figure four but sitting on the leg instead of pulling back on it.

The announcers talk about the new owners doing something about Flair as Sanders drops a knee on Konnan's chest. A clothesline puts Konnan down for no cover because Sanders is busy yelling at the crowd. Sanders puts on a cobra clutch for a bit before Konnan comes back with the rolling lariat. The X Factor sets up the Tequila Sunrise for the clean submission.

Rating: D+. Sanders is someone who looks like he has potential but doesn't seem like he's going anywhere. Konnan is actually not the worst worker in the world as his normal stuff is entertaining enough though it's hard to get into whatever nonsense he says before the match. It's also amazing how much better he is when he's just being himself and not pulling "pranks" with the Filthy Animals.

Don Harris says he now has a manager's license. Normally I would ask how bad the commission that issues licenses must be but it seems that they're avoiding Harris Brothers matches so they're smarter than I am.

Jeff Jarrett/Rick Steiner vs. Insiders

The Insiders clean house to start and thankfully they're not wasting the "big" match of the Insiders vs. the Steiners on a nothing show like this. Page and Jarrett get things going with Jeff taking a hard clothesline (with authority according to Tenay) before getting crotched against the post. Rick comes in and blasts Page in the face because he's Rick Steiner and therefore gets to beat up anyone he wants.

It's time for the heels to take turns beating on Page before Steiner slaps on a chinlock about two minutes in. That's never a good sign which is why it's standard Rick Steiner procedure. Jeff puts on a sleeper because he's a master of the hold according to Tony. Don't you have to win a match with it to be a master?

Page escapes with the belly to back (a master wouldn't allow that) but Rick comes in with a belly to belly to prevent the hot tag. Page finally punches Jarrett down and it's Nash coming in for a bunch of right hands and boots. The Jackknife puts Steiner away and for once that's a bad ending as you don't want a new champion losing when Jarrett is right there.

Rating: D+. This was fine, albeit the same boring main event you would expect on Thunder. Page is always going to be solid and Jeff can be his normally dull self but the other two are clearly just there because they're paid to be and aren't going to put in any effort above the minimum. The clean ending was nice for a change, though it should have been Jarrett.

Scott Steiner, Totally Buff and Kronik come out for the standoff to end the show.

Overall Rating: D-. Just a bunch of bad wrestling and more of the same boring stable vs. stable feud that has been dominating the company for weeks now. It's not the worst story or anything but it's so repetitive at this point because WCW has done it so many times in the last few years. So many of the stories are stuck in limbo and it's getting rough to sit through every single week. At least Rick Steiner lost though and that's always a good thing.

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Monday Nitro – February 5, 2001: After All This Time

Monday Nitro #276

Date: February 5, 2001

Location: Bankcorpsouth Center, Tupelo, Mississippi

Commentators: Scott Hudson, Tony Schiavone

Things are starting to build up towards SuperBrawl and the unbelievably fresh MEGA SHOWDOWN between Scott Steiner and Kevin Nash because that's what's going to get the young'uns talking about WCW as they walk through the airport. If nothing else maybe we can go a full week without Animal squashing two cruiserweights for the sake of....what was the point of that again? If pushing Animal is their idea of drawing money, close the doors now. Let's get to it.

On a side note: I've been doing this series for about five and a half years, have a month and a half to go and NOW they're being put on the Network? Hopefully they at least get the rest of them up before I wrap this show.

We actually open with Flair and Animal in the ring, yelling at Nash in the aisle. They insult each other and Flair tells Nash to come say that to his face. Animal comes to meet Nash in the aisle and is quickly beaten down, leaving Flair all alone to take a big boot. As luck would have it, the rest of the troops arrive in the back with Mike Sanders telling them what's going on.

Nash keeps beating on Flair and starts ripping his clothes off because that's what you do to a man in his 50s. Flair's pants are ripped off, revealing University of Florida underwear. Nash takes down the straps and loads up the Jackknife as the troops come out. They back off due to the threat of Nash breaking Ric's neck but Nash says he has a negotiator with....the Cat.

Nash cranks on Ric's neck as Cat says he's running the show tonight. Ric makes some weird noises which translate to Cat being in charge here. First up, Steiner will be fighting four cruiserweights in one match tonight. Once he gets done with that, he can fight Diamond Dallas Page. If THAT'S not enough, Steiner can defend the title against Kevin Nash and a mystery partner. If Nash wins, Flair has to resign at midnight tonight. Got all that?

After a break, Flair is still leaving the ring.

Scott Steiner vs. Jung Dragons/Noble and Karagias

The beating is on quickly as Steiner is in street clothes. Yang dares to break up the push-ups with a springboard Fameasser and all four combined finally get in some offense on the champ. Steiner kicks out of a four man cover and it's time for the suplexes. Everyone is out so Steiner puts three of them on top of each other for a triple Recliner for the win.

Rating: F. If this is the new direction for the cruiserweights, they might as well bring back Oklahoma and Madusa to fight over the title instead. If nothing else it might be a bit less embarrassing and one sided than going through this kind of a mess again. Steiner just beat up four people, one of them a former Cruiserweight Champion, in three minutes. Those are four of the people who worked hard and put their bodies on the line at Starrcade in a ladder match and this is their reward about six weeks later. Why would those people want to stick around at this point if this is as good as it gets for them?

Flair rants about what happened tonight.

The good guys are ready and Cat gives Brian Adams a match with Buff tonight.

Rick Steiner is ready to win the US Title. Wasn't the rule that Flair couldn't know about it?

Gene asks Adams about Animal hitting Brian Clark in the head with a chair last week on Nitro, which now apparently has blue ring skirts that say Thunder and has replays with a THUNDER graphic in the corner. Anyway the point is Kronik is tough.

Buff is WAY too fine with this match and Flair is all happy. Totally Buff vs. Kronik is made for SuperBrawl because let's have them go four times in about six weeks.

US Title: Rick Steiner vs. Shane Douglas

Shane is defending and has a big cast on his hand. A few shots to the head and back have Rick in trouble but the referee takes a chair away from the champ. Rick pops back up and sends Shane outside for a ram into the announcers' table but Douglas gets in a shot on the way back in.

The reverse Hennig necksnap has Rick in trouble for all of five seconds before he starts coming back with the usual. The Steiner Bulldog is knocked out of the air with a cast shot, only to have Rick suplex him a few more times. Shane might as well just quit now as Steiner clearly isn't going to sell a thing for him. The Steiner Driver gives us a new champ in a clean pin.

Rating: D-. Sure why not. I mean you're pushing Scott to the moon so why not give his less talented brother the midcard title? This was basically wiping Shane out as Steiner took everything he had and just shrugged it off, as he does to everyone else around here. Bad match of course, but then again when is the last time Rick had a good one?

Steiner does his catchphrases post match.

Flair tells Chavo Guerrero Jr. that he has a special opponent for him from Mexico.

Here's Dustin Rhodes to say Ric Flair will never forget his name. Ric comes up on screen and says Dustin is fired, meaning his mic is cut and we abruptly go to a commercial.

Scott Steiner vs. Diamond Dallas Page

Non-title. They start fast with Steiner hammering away but running into a swinging Rock Bottom for two. The fight heads outside as the announcers talk about how Page's mission is to hit a Diamond Cutter. Not beat Steiner or any nonsense like that, but just hit his finisher to soften Steiner up for Nash. You know, our real hero.

Steiner takes over and puts Page in the Tree of Woe for the upside down choke, followed by a suplex. We hit the elbow into the push-ups but Steiner spends too much time posing, allowing Page to come back with right hands. The spinning belly to belly gets two so Steiner shoves the referee. Page gets in a Diamond Cutter out of nowhere as the referee calls for the DQ.

Rating: D+. The time really hurt this one but I could picture these two having a strong match if they were allowed to actually go somewhere. Page doing his big comebacks against the monster Steiner has potential though I really can't imagine Page pulling it off. The formula would be similar to the famous Goldberg match though and that works just fine.

Page leaves through the crowd but he gets beaten down by Jeff Jarrett and a returning Kanyon.

Back from a break and Page can barely walk.

Jarrett and Kanyon run off in a limo.

Chavo Guerrero Jr. vs. El Nino

Non-title and Nino is a pretty small guy under a mask. Chavo quickly takes him down to start as the announcers point out how few Mexican cruiserweights are left. Chavo runs him over and gets two off a suplex to start. A springboard cross body is countered into a backbreaker for two before Chavo starts firing off chops. Nina sends him to the floor for a nice plancha but stops for a lap around the ring.

The delay lets Chavo suplex him on the floor but Nino snaps off a top rope hurricanrana. Chavo takes him down again and puts on a chinlock as the announcers finally start paying attention again. Nino snaps off a

headscissors but takes an ax handle to the back. Back up and Nino does the 619 around the ropes, followed by a sitout bulldog. The springboard seated senton gives Nino the big upset.

Rating: C+. I'm not really sure what the point was in having Mysterio (they weren't exactly hiding it) win here, or why Flair would give him this match in the first place but it's not like Chavo is a champion who shouldn't be losing here or anything. The match was fine and I'm looking forward to seeing what they can do with some more time, though I'm not wild on having them fight this close to the pay per view.

Of course it's Rey Mysterio.

Lance Storm/Mike Awesome vs. Chuck Palumbo/Sean O'Haire

Non-title. Before the match, Storm promises to become the first Canadian Commissioner at SuperBrawl. Awesome and O'Haire get things going for a chop off until Awesome throws him down with a German suplex. O'Haire rolls to the floor so Mike takes him down with a plancha over the top. In the meantime, Storm missile dropkicks Palumbo down as I'm not sure who I'm supposed to be cheering for as the Canadians are definitely wrestling like good guys.

Back in and O'Haire blasts Storm with a clothesline before Palumbo gets two off a powerslam. Awesome gets drawn in so the champs can stomp Storm in the corner. Not that it matters as Storm hits a leg lariat and makes the tag, only to have Awesome get caught in a hot shot.

Not that it matters as Awesome comes back with a slam on Sean to set up the Awesome Splash with Palumbo making the save. Everything breaks down and it's time to fire off some big kicks. Storm gets poked in the eye and grabs the Mapleleaf on Awesome by mistake. He eventually realizes what's going on but gets sent outside, setting up the Jungle Kick into the Seanton Bomb for the pin.

Rating: B-. If he had even the slightest bit of charisma, Storm could have been money as a face. Awesome on the other hand could have been amazing no matter what role you put him in, save for a fat chick thriller or That 70s Guy. There aren't many names above Awesome on the "What if"

list in WCW and it's a shame that he never did anything in WWE either.

Jindrak and Stasiak think that was luck.

Buff Bagwell vs. Brian Adams

There's no bell as Adams superkicks Buff in a surprising bit of offense. The gorilla press and a clothesline put Bagwell on the floor as the announcers hype up a No Substitution match at SuperBrawl, which is apparently going to lead to a handicap match because Clark is out with an injury. Back in and Buff scores with a dropkick before we hit the chinlock less than three minutes in.

Another chinlock keeps things slow, which is probably best given Buff's questionable motivation from week to week. Back up and a double clothesline lets them lay around even more. You know, in case two chinlocks didn't cover their resting quota. Cue Luger but Clark comes out to intercept him. Buff gets two off a double arm DDT until Animal decks Clark from behind. Adams comes back with a full nelson slam but the bell rings....for a time limit draw....at 5:44.

Rating: F. For five minutes and forty four seconds. Fine enough if WCW just has to have TV time limits back (as if any WCW TV match ever comes close to ten minutes at this point) but how in the world do you get it THAT wrong? I can understand even up to like two minutes but this felt more like a five minute time limit where they forgot to cut the time. I know WCW thinks its fans are the stupidest people on the planet but I think they can tell time. The match was what you would expect from Bagwell vs. Adams anyway so the time was hardly the only problem here.

Adams gets racked post match.

Flair tells Scott Steiner that there's no interference in the match tonight. Steiner doesn't care and goes to the ring. I'm glad Flair's neck is fine after nearly having it broken an hour and a half ago.

Adams says these attacks just make Kronik stronger. He wants Luger on Thunder.

WCW World Title: Scott Steiner vs. Kevin Nash/???

Steiner is defending and the mystery partner is....Rick Steiner because Kevin Nash is a stupid man. I'm assuming Nash gets the title if Rick pins Scott. Rick suplexes him into a right hand from Nash and it's time to go outside. Scott sends Rick into the crowd but gets pulled back in by Nash. The champ begs away until he can hit Nash low and spit at his brother. A backbreaker gets two on Nash but Rick forearms Scott in the back, knocking him into a side slam. Snake Eyes and a big boot set up the Jackknife but Rick comes in and turns on Nash because of course. Scott pins Nash to retain.

Rating: D. You knew it was coming because, again, WCW thinks its fans are going to fall for the same stuff time after time. I know I've said it before but here it is again: no one cares about Rick Steiner, who somehow got to work twice tonight and picked up the US Title in the process. If nothing else though, I'm scared of who will be the next face to help fight Flair and company, though I'm sure it's likely to be Dustin or Dusty because COWBOYS ARE AWESOME.

The Steiners go to celebrate as Nash says he's got some more left. Cue Page with a chair to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. There was some good wrestling in the middle but having four Steiner matches in a night is a bit too much for me. They're making Scott look like a monster but can anyone explain to me why the cruiserweights had to get squashed? You can't throw the Mamalukes, as in the designated jobbers of the tag division, out there to get beaten up? It's not like they're doing anything else or putting on awesome matches when they're in the ring like the cruiserweights are doing.

I'll give them this though: there's a goal in mind here with getting Scott over as a monster. While it may not be the best story long term, at least it's something and could build up to a big moment when someone takes the title off of him. That's a lot better than proving Vince Russo's MANLINESS or having Sting turn heel despite not really being a heel or whatever else was going on a year or so ago. Now if they can get rid of Rick Steiner and actually have Scott as the top heel instead of sharing the spot with Flair we might get to a more interesting story, but this is a good enough step.

Unfortunately it's not a great show because as usual WCW has no idea how to cut back on the focusing so much on the same story. The stable war thing is getting annoying as WCW has done it so many times but the bigger problem is how they keep hammering that story home. It's by far the biggest thing going on here and if you don't like that, don't bother watching. That's a WCW/Bischoff trope and it has never worked for me, much like it doesn't here.

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Thunder – January 31, 2001: I Think I Feel A Stupid Plan Coming On

Thunder

Date: January 31, 2001

Location: Baltimore Arena, Baltimore, Maryland

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Tony Schiavone

I'm running out of things to say about these intros. We have less than two months to go in this company and it's most likely a skippable B-show with a main event between two midcarders who don't have an interesting

feud. Or maybe a tag match with two members of a heel stable against a semi-regular tag team. I would offer a suggestion of a great cruiserweight match with two people being elevated to new heights but that's not the WCW way. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Monday's events, including a big focus on the return of the Rhodes Family.

Cat is willing to give Rick Steiner a US Title shot at SuperBrawl, provided Ric Flair doesn't find out about it. Good thing he's just the CEO and doesn't watch the show or look at the pay per view card. It's always cool to see wrestlers act like a fan.

Opening sequence.

Billy Kidman vs. Shane Helms

Helms goes straight at him to start until charging into a raised boot in the corner. Kidman tries a wheelbarrow suplex but gets flipped out to the floor, allowing Shane to hit a good looking dive off the top. They head into the crowd with Kidman hitting a quick dive off the barricade before taking Shane back inside. Helms grabs a fireman's carry into a facebuster before a running neckbreaker drops Kidman again.

A middle rope fist drop ala Jerry Lawler gets two for Shane and for some reason Kidman reaches out under the bottom rope for a tag. Helms' front facelock slows things down a bit and a chinlock makes it even worse. Back up and Kidman grabs a belly to back suplex into a side slam for two.

In a change of pace, Shane grabs a double underhook and pulls back on the arms for a submission attempt. The hold is broken with Kidman scoring off a dropkick and backdrop for two. Kidman's superplex is broken up though and Shane gets two off a top rope sunset flip (that's always cool looking). The Kid Crusher is countered into the Vertebreaker but Kidman flips out of that as well. He takes Shane into the corner where Shane flips out again, setting up the Vertebreaker for the big upset.

Rating: B. As usual the cruiserweights are just awesome around this time and it almost never gets boring watching them. I've been digging the heck

out of Chavo lately but it's really time for someone to take the title off of him and turn the belt into something more valuable. Helms is the best bet and I'm almost sure this is the launching pad for him to move up to the title scene.

Here are Scott Steiner and Midajah with the champ insulting everyone he can think of but focusing on Dustin Rhodes, who was stupid for not taking the sure thing on Monday. Steiner even rips up Dustin's contract, which is at least better than eating it. Cue Kronik to ask about a fight but Totally Buff jump them from behind. Rick Steiner tries to make the save but gets guitared by Jeff Jarrett. Kronik takes the real beating and I'm sure this means Luger/Bagwell vs. Kronik for the third time this month on Thunder.

Post break, Flair makes Jarrett vs. Rick Steiner and Totally Buff vs. Kronik.

Ron Harris vs. Lash Leroux

Don has a doctor's note but the referee has a solution to prevent more twin magic (which implies that someone actually watches these matches, which makes me skeptical): drawing an X on Ron's hand with a marker....which the Harrises take away before the bell rings. Ron pounds Lash with the intensity you've come to expect from a Harris Brother match.

Lash quickly dropkicks him to the floor and it's already time for the switch as Don throws the marker back in with the referee thinking it fell out of his pocket. Well to be fair the referees are often rather stupid so play it up a bit. Don gives him the H Bomb for the pin. Now why do I have a feeling no one is going to watch this and say, suspend Don from ringside?

Some guy laughs at Kwee Wee and tells him to crawl back into the closet he crawled out of.

Chavo Guerrero says he needs a better challenger than Rey Mysterio. As he's talking, Hugh Morrus sneaks in and jumps Wall.

Norman Smiley wants to make sure Glacier will have his back and is given an affirmative.

Chuck Palumbo and Sean O'Haire think Mark Jindrak and Shawn Stasiak are just jealous of the Tag Team Titles.

Ric Flair gives Mike Sanders a match with Konnan and tells him to come up with something dirty.

Norman Smiley vs. Bam Bam Bigelow

There's no Glacier to start so Norman is even more freaked out than usual. Norman makes the mistake of trying to work on Bigelow's arm but actually takes him down. Unfortunately there's not much of a way around Bigelow's power as he shoves Norman to the floor, allowing him to look around for Glacier. Back in and the beating continues as Glacier comes out, just in time to see Norman take Greetings From Asbury Park for the pin.

Post match and post Bigelow leaving, Glacier says he'll always have Norman's back.

Jeff Jarrett vs. Rick Steiner

Jeff wants the countout like he got over Page on Monday but Steiner is, you know, here. Steiner takes it to the floor to avoid having to wrestle, only to have Shane Douglas come out in a hurry. The chain shot hits Jeff by mistake and Steiner gets in a bad looking Death Valley Driver for the fast pin.

Kwee Wee vs. Scotty O

Scotty is a Power Plant guy who would wind up in OVW for a long time and the person who laughed at Kwee Wee earlier. Kwee Wee slaps him in the face and it's Angry Alan time with something like Dalton Castle's Bang-A-Rang planting Scotty. A jawbreaker doesn't get Scotty out of trouble as Kwee Wee folds him in half with a belly to back. Some hard shots to the head and a face plant set up a German suplex as this is a total squash. A piledriver puts Scotty away.

Rating: D. Kwee Wee continues to be an interesting “what if” case as he certainly had some in ring abilities and good charisma but he’s stuck with one of the gimmicks that are just going to cripple your career. Even a regular haircut and dark tights would have done him a world of good but there was no way this was ever going to be taken seriously.

Sean O’Haire/Chuck Palumbo vs. Mamalukes

Non-title. Palumbo and Vito, in street clothes instead of his gear, get things going before Johnny comes in for a quick double team to take over. A double spinebuster plants Sean for two with Palumbo making the save. Vito grabs a swinging neckbreaker followed by a gorilla press from Johnny to send O’Haire flying but he hot shots the Bull to take over for the first time. It really is amazing what happens when you get rid of Jindrak and Stasiak and let the two more talented wrestlers represent the team.

O’Haire doesn’t quite jump all the way over Palumbo as he tries to land on Johnny’s back (more on Palumbo’s head) but it looked good in theory. Everything breaks down and it’s O’Haire elbowing Johnny in the face on the floor. The Jungle Kick to Vito sets up the Seanton Bomb for the pin.

Rating: C. Not bad here as the Mamalukes are really gelling as the jobbers to the stars tag team. There’s just enough there that you could buy them pulling off an upset and making this non-title made it even more possible. O’Haire and Palumbo need more seasoning as a team but you can see the chemistry there.

Post match Jindrak and Stasiak run in and want a title shot. The champs agree and get beaten down.

Scott Steiner, Jarrett and Flair are off to jail, presumably to annoy Page.

Sanders gives Reno his match against Konnan and tells him to tap out in a hurry. I think I feel a stupid plan coming on.

Totally Buff say they beat Goldberg and he beat Kronik so they can beat Kronik. You know who else beat Kronik? YOU TWO, YOU PISTACHIO HEADS!

Konnan vs. Reno

Konnann calls him Reno Riggins in a joke that probably goes over 99% of the fans' heads. They trade arm holds to start but Konnan does a nice roll over into a quickly broken ankle lock. The rolling lariat drops Reno and something like Kofi Kingston's SOS gets two. Konnan grabs the Tequila Sunrise and Reno taps before the hold is on.

Sanders comes out to say things aren't always what they seem. Reno hits a quick Roll of the Dice. Wait so they just gave up a clean submission for the sake of hitting a move after the match? Indeed, that was a stupid plan.

Totally Buff vs. Kronik

For the third time this month. Bagwell takes the heel beating you would expect him to take to start off with Kronik hitting all of their standard power moves, including a big gorilla press from Adams. He always was good at that. Luger comes in for an elbow to Clark's jaw but a tag back to Adams breaks everything down. Buff saves Lex from High Times, only to have Animal blast Clark with a chair so Adams can take the Blockbuster for the fast pin.

Rating: D. And you thought the Usos vs. the Club was overdone. This is another match that I never see again but in this case I never wanted to see it in the first place. Animal interfering wasn't shocking and it keeps him from falling asleep in his soup for another week. Bad match of course, but I do like Adams' press slams.

Flair and company arrive at the jail but Page made bail an hour ago. Ok pause for a second. WCW acknowledges that Nitro and Thunder are taped on the same nights. Now did Page get arrested on Monday and make bail Wednesday or did he get arrested and make bail less than three hours later? Anyway they go into Page's cell for no apparent reason and find a letter he's left them to end the show.

Overall Rating: C-. There's some good stuff here and the wrestling is enough to carry it over a lot of the really uninteresting storyline stuff but the show still doesn't work that well. There's only so much you can do when your main story is so all over the place and Page is leaving letters in prison while Nash is just not here. If they threw someone

younger into the main event scene it might be ok but as it stands they're destroying the other good stuff they having going on.

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Monday Nitro – January 29, 2001: The Moral Of The Story

Monday Nitro #275

Date: January 29, 2001

Location: Baltimore Arena, Baltimore, Maryland

Commentators: Scott Hudson, Tony Schiavone

It's always weird to me when we reach the last every episode in a given month but this is the final ever episode of Monday Nitro in January. Ok so maybe this is just a way to fill in an opening because there isn't much to talk about at the moment other than Nash vs. Steiner coming up in a few weeks. Let's get to it.

Elix Skipper vs. Yang vs. Shannon Moore vs. Jamie Noble

One fall to a finish. The big story for this match: WCW is bringing back TIME LIMITS. Noble and Yang do a wrestling sequence to start until Yang

grabs a neckbreaker to send Noble outside. Skipper dives out onto him and it's Shannon vs. Yang inside. Bottoms Up (Fameasser) drops Yang but Skipper has to break up Noble's German suplex attempt on Shannon. Yang gets crotched on top, followed by Noble front suplexing Skipper for no cover.

Moore is sent outside and all three hit dives in a nice sequence that you only get in cruiserweight melees. Yang drops all of them with an Asai Moonsault and it's time for a breather. Back in and Shannon slams Skipper off the top for two as Yang makes the save. Noble amps things up by tombstoning Yang on the floor before shoving Skipper off the ropes. Jamie tries a superplex on Shannon but gets reversed into a super Bottoms Up to give Moore the pin.

Rating: C+. What else were you expecting here as you have four talented guys getting to fly around the ring for a bit. Unfortunately they only had a few minutes, which is an annoying reality of this new era. These guys are on more shows but their time has dropped significantly. You can only get so far with four people involved in a five minute match but at least it's fun while it lasts.

Here are Ric Flair and Animal for a chat. First of all we get the required Baltimore Ravens insults despite them winning the Super Bowl the day before. Anyway, Flair thinks the Cat might be out of office soon and accuses Page and Nash of showing up drunk on Thunder. We see a shot of them knocked out in the locker room, presumably due to an attack by Ric Flair and/or various other villains.

Therefore, Nash has to qualify for the World Title match at SuperBrawl again tonight by beating Totally Buff in a handicap match. Nash is annoyed in the back and it gets worse as Flair says he has a new contract for another incoming star. I could go for a Tommy Rogers cameo but I was always a Fantastics fan.

We see a bit more complete clip from Thunder with the heels leaving Nash's locker room.

Jeff Jarrett doesn't want to wait until SuperBrawl to face Page.

A guy bumps into Midajah so Scott Steiner breaks his leg. Does no one understand the concept of a lawsuit around here?

Here are the Cat and Miss Jones for some dancing before Cat says he wants to fight someone. Cue Shawn Stasiak and Mark Jindrak with the latter of them being sent to the back (And called Beetlejuice for some reason. I don't see the Art Barr resemblance but I don't have my glasses on.).

Stasiak implies that he'll be Commissioner if he wins and says first up is going to be a Tag Team Title shot against Palumbo and O'Haire.

The Cat vs. Shawn Stasiak

Jones kicks him in the chest and it's time for Cat to choke a lot. Cat goes up but dives into an elbow to the jaw, allowing Stasiak to send him outside. A few whips send Cat into the announcers' table and the post before he clotheslines Cat back inside. Cat actually uses a headscissors before crotch chopping his way out of a sunset flip. The Feliner puts Stasiak away.

Rating: D-. This is a good example of two guys who need backup help to put in a good match and it's really sad to see them get stuck out there with such a horrible match. Cat defending the Commissionership isn't an interesting idea, especially when there's no way someone as worthless as Stasiak is going to take it away from him.

The Wall is outside of Chavo's locker room when Hugh Morrus comes in and beats the tar out of him.

Mike Sanders tells Crowbar that he has Lance Storm tonight.

Diamond Dallas Page was at a book signing earlier today when a fan started running his mouth and got in a fight. Page broke it up and that's about it.

A black Humvee arrives.

Luger and Bagwell have a partner for Chavo tonight.

Jeff Jarrett is ready for DDP at SuperBrawl.

Chavo Guerrero Jr./Road Warrior Animal vs. Rey Mysterio/Billy Kidman

...they're going to squash Mysterio and Kidman aren't they? Kidman and Guerrero start things off but Chavo wants Mysterio. It's just a ruse though, allowing Guerrero to get in a few kicks to the ribs to start off. That's fine with Kidman who takes over and brings in Rey for something like a double sitout chokeslam. Kidman comes back in and it's time for a baseball slide between the legs, followed by the Bronco Buster.

Rey's middle rope moonsault connects but he lets Chavo make the tag. The destruction is immediate as Rey and Kidman literally bounce off of Animal, who throws them both around like nothing. Some double dropkicks have Animal down though but a powerslam to Kidman and a powerbomb to Rey allow Chavo to pin Mysterio with ease.

Rating: D. So to recap, Mysterio and Kidman beat up the Cruiserweight Champion for about two and a half minutes before Animal, a grizzled veteran who had barely wrestled in years, destroyed them both at once with ease. That's life in WCW people and it's a big reason why you don't see them around anymore.

The Humvee doors open.

We see part of Flair's speech earlier.

Here's Ric Flair to reveal the big new talent which is.....Dustin Rhodes. Raise your hand if this actually surprises you. The announcers treat this like a huge deal as Ric thinks Dustin should be in a suit instead of cowboy boots. Dustin wants to know what's wrong with being a cowboy. Well nothing until you're about eight and then you kind of look dumb. They yell at each other a bit and Dustin turns down the offer to be on the team and the contract as well.

Cue Animal to help beat Dustin down until Dusty Rhodes makes his return (after turning his back on WCW last time) to clear the ring. So to clarify: Animal can destroy Rey Mysterio and Kidman but Dusty Rhodes can clear him out in a few seconds. To make it even better, Dusty talks about how Flair has been holding back talented people to push his friends. The Rhodes Family is here to clean up WCW and the fans seem very pleased with

the idea.

Lance Storm vs. Crowbar

Before the match, Storm says Team Canada supports Flair and company. Ever the troublemaker, Crowbar jumps Storm during the national anthem. The other Canadians help Storm with a superkick and it's an early beatdown for Crowbar in the corner. A comeback via clotheslines is cut off with a knee lift and we're already in the chinlock. Crowbar fights up and tries a Tombstone (becoming too common of a move) but has to settle for a reverse DDT for two instead.

A belly to back suplex sets up a slingshot splash for two on Lance, followed by a moonsault out to the floor. Is there a reason Crowbar never got a run near the Cruiserweight Title? It's not like he can't fly around and he has more charisma than half of the division. Storm comes back with some German suplexes but gets caught in a northern lights suplex. They head up top with Crowbar trying a hurricanrana, only to get countered into the Maple Leaf for the quick submission.

Rating: C+. Not bad here and I'm sure the fact that it's the longest match of the night so far has nothing to do with that. I'd love to see Crowbar actually go somewhere beyond just jobbing like this but I really can't imagine that happening. I mean, the guy used to work in a gas station and it's not like can just give him a new character and backstory or something like that.

Flair gives Storm the Cat at SuperBrawl for the Commissionership. Now that's better as you could imagine Storm actually pulling that off.

Jeff Jarrett vs. Diamond Dallas Page

Actually not so fast as Page is arrested for assault due to breaking up that fight at his book signing. Apparently Page accidentally bumped into a kid during the incident and the kid is the one pressing charges.

Flair thinks this is awesome.

Rick Steiner vs. Shane Douglas

Non-title. Steiner is here to do Cat's dirty work so Shane made sure the title wasn't on the line here, which translates to Steiner is going over. Schiavone thinks Steiner is one of the best WCW performers in the last ten years. Douglas gets in a few shots to the back to start before Rick just beats him down like he was Dean Douglas all over again.

Douglas begs off before throwing the referee at Steiner for a breather. The distraction lets Shane grab an Indian Deathlock though he'll be lucky if Steiner even bothers to limp. I would appear to be right as Steiner pops up and grabs a suplex before....I think a headlock takeover is botched as Shane tries to do something like a rollup.

Shane grabs a rollup with his feet on the ropes for two before the Pittsburgh Plunge gets the same. Hudson: "Rick's brother Scott would be proud." Of what? That the brother he doesn't like at the moment kicked out of the US Champion's finisher? The chain is easily broken up as the Steiner Line sets up the bulldog, followed by a Death Valley Driver to make the champ job.

Rating: D. Rick Steiner is not very good and there isn't much of another way to put it. The booking here continues to baffle me as Rick gets pushed like this every single time he comes back. I'd be stunned if he doesn't wind up with the US Title out of this because he just needs it so badly and is clearly a draw because he's reached the age where you become one without having to actually, you know, wrestle well in the slightest.

Kevin Nash vs. Totally Buffed

Before the match, Luger and Bagwell rip on the Raven. Apparently winning the Super Bowl doesn't count because the real Baltimore team moved to Indianapolis so this is a sham. I'm not sure what they were going for there but it really didn't work as the fans almost cheered. Nash comes out and pulls Buff to the floor in an attempt to make it 2-1, only to have Buff come back in.

It's Kevin Nash though so he clotheslines them both down and chokeslams Buff, only to have Luger hit him low. A lot of choking ensues until Nash sends Buff outside and hits Snake Eyes into the Jackknife on Luger. So to recap: Goldberg spends three months fighting Luger and Nash can hit his

finisher on him in three minutes with Buff Bagwell in the same match.

Bagwell pulls the ref so here's Alex Wright of all people in a referee shirt. Wright stops to dance though, earning himself a beating. Another Jackknife to Bagwell allows Cat to come in for two with Wright pulling him out. Guys it's a short Nitro main event and we're at two run-ins and three referees. Not that it matters anyway as Cat ducks Wright's punch and slides back in to count the pin on Bagwell.

Rating: D. As mentioned, this was more about all the shenanigans than anything going on during the match because Bischoff and company think that's how you build someone up. This was much more about Nash than anyone else as you want him to look strong but you shouldn't have two of your top heels losing this badly. In other words, just let Nash beat Luger, assuming Nash is old enough to do that yet.

Post match Nash wants Steiner but we're out of time.

Overall Rating: D+. You really can see the line between the generations here as the old guys suck while the young guys are working as hard as they can with the limitations they're put under. They don't get time and they're often there as cannon fodder for the old guys (Kidman and Mysterio getting treated that way by ANIMAL was disgusting) but they're putting in as much effort as they can.

That's probably a big reason why Mysterio is a multiple time WWE World Champion and Kidman had a very nice WWE run before getting a job as a producer. In other words: no matter how little time you're given out there, someone is going to see it at some point and if you're good enough and work hard enough, you'll get a break somewhere down the line.

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