

Took in the Ric Flair 30 For 30 Documentary

I just finished watching the ESPN 30 For 30 documentary on Ric Flair and...I have no idea where to start. The more I think about it, the more appropriate that seems. If there a one line that sums up the entire film, it's Ric Flair doesn't know who Ric Fliehr is. The crux of the film is about Flair's Nature Boy persona, but the underlying theme throughout is Flair not knowing who he was because he spent so much time living his gimmick. There's a lot to get through though.

The film goes through the life and career of Flair, looking at everything from his childhood to his training to the NWA to the WWF to WCW to TNA and most points in between. The thing is, it doesn't really go into depth about a lot of what was going on. It's understandable when he was an active or semi-active wrestler for forty years, but it always seems like he's getting interested in talking about something and then cuts it off because we need to move on to something else.

Unfortunately this leaves you wanting more, which is one of the flaws of the movie: I wanted to see more. This easily could have gone on for another hour or more and it wouldn't have gotten dull. If nothing else just more stories of Flair's life and career with all of the insanity that came with it. That's what a lot of the focus is on though, and it's not always in the best way.

The main word for the film is excess. As you probably know, Flair lives every day of his life to the hardest degree and didn't seem to look back a single day. While Flair talked about his life though, it seemed that he knew he missed a lot of things and it bothered him. However, that was just another day of drinking and partying to make his troubles go away. Flair talks about the worst days of his drinking, which saw

him drink ten beers and five mixed drinks a day, every day, for SEVENTEEN YEARS. While that's probably an exaggeration, you kind of have to wonder how much of one it really is.

Over the course of an hour and a half, we see that there are clearly two sides to Flair: the Nature Boy and the man himself. While Flair is an incredible performer and one of the biggest stars in wrestling history. However, at the same time, his personal life is often in shambles, including the gut wrenching story of the death of his son Reid. It's a story that can't be done justice but some of the details will make your head spin.

On a brighter front, the film also has interviews from a ton of people who have played a part in or been along for the ride for Flair's career (though unless I missed him, there was no Vince McMahon for reasons unclear. Of all people, Hulk Hogan had some of the greatest praise for Flair, which is one of the last things you would have expected given some of their previous issues. As a bonus, you even get an ultra rare out of character interview from Undertaker, who seems to be a big fan as well. It's worth seeing the whole thing just for the sake of hearing so many takes on Flair.

Overall, the film is definitely worth checking out. It might not offer anything hardcore fans haven't heard before but it's incredibly well put together (with some animations of a lot of Flair's stories) with Flair front and center the whole time. There are a lot of lessons to be learned from Flair's often tragic stories, but at the same time there is so much to celebrate about him that it almost makes you forget about a lot of the things he's gone through (often brought onto himself). That's what the whole thing comes down to in the end: there are two parts of Flair's life. One of them is a lot of fun, but the other is a very dark and scary place.