

# Monday Nitro – August 14, 2000: Somebody Help Me Out Here

## Monday Nitro #253

Date: August 14, 2000

Location: Skyreach Place, Kelowna, British Columbia, Canada

Commentators: Scott Hudson, Tony Schiavone, Mark Madden

We've gotten through New Blood Rising and now it's time to get ready for another of WCW's grand pay per views in Fall Brawl. Booker T. is still World Champion and now gets to defend against Kevin Nash, who survived the totally real triple threat last night. I'm not sure why but I have a feeling this show is going to be bad. Let's get to it.

We open with Russo and Tank Abbott in the ring with Vince in full on heel mode, ranting about getting rid of someone a month ago. That piece of censored has been gone ever since and now Russo is going to make another example out of another piece of censored on live TV. Russo is here tonight to fire Goldberg on live TV.

However, Brad Siegel won't let him do that because the fans love him. Well screw the fans and screw Goldberg. Hudson: "He doesn't need the practice." Tank is here to beat Goldberg up once and for all and Russo yells at some more fans. Apparently Goldberg doesn't know the script or the storyline because he doesn't come out. Since no one comes out, Russo tells production to go to a break. Good grief. I mean...good grief man. This is how they open the show? That's their best idea?

We come back with a camera on the announcers and Russo demanding that they show the clip. That sends up to a video of Goldberg coming out to fight Tank during the break. Wait or is this live? Goldberg easily gets the better of it and threatens to break Tank's arm as Russo freaks out AGAIN and demands that we go to a second break inside of twelve minutes.

Apparently Russo has booked Nash vs. Steiner tonight because last night's

match didn't count. Again I say: whatever. Oh and Booker vs. Jarrett again.

### Shane Douglas/Reno vs. Big Vito/Kidman

Before the match, Shane promises to hurt Kidman again. It's a brawl to start of course with all four fighting on the floor and Madden freaking out over the chance of someone attacking the table. Vito easily fights out of a double team because Reno and Shane aren't the best fighters in the world. Kidman finally stops chasing Torrie around and cross bodies both of them down. As usual we have no tagging as Vito clotheslines Shane out to the floor. Kidman gets crotched on top but Vito is able to drop a top rope elbow for the pin on Reno.

**Rating:** D. Total mess here as is almost the case when WCW tries to put together a match. The idea of having two feuds put together into one match is usually a good idea but the Shane vs. Kidman feud is getting tiresome and Reno vs. Vito isn't really a feud yet. It might be nice if we were told why they were fighting in the first place but I doubt WCW knows yet.

Shane pulls out some handcuffs but gets tied to the turnbuckle for his efforts. This brings out Jindrak, O'Haire and the Perfect Event to beat down Kidman and Vito. Reno leaves with them.

The Filthy Animals want to keep up their relationship with the Cat and offer him a personal assistant named Miss Jones. I think you get the implication here.

David Flair is still covered in mud from last night. Major Gunns comes up to ask if Miss Hancock is ok but David just walks away without saying anything.

We look back at the mud match from last night as David is in the ring. He rambles about what happened last night and how scared he is. Gunns is freaking out in the back while the Misfits play cards. As David keeps going on about being scared, Gunns comes out crying, saying it's her fault because she kicked Hancock in the stomach. David really should know that already shouldn't he? He yells at Gunns a lot until Hancock comes

out, apparently just fine after last night. Again, shouldn't David know that Hancock is here and fine? Hancock of course says she's pregnant and Davis is so thrilled that he struts.

Here's Lance Storm for a match but first up he gets to address his home country. Storm says it's good to be home and wrestling in front of some real wrestling fans. WCW has thrown people at him left and right but he keeps making them tap out to the Maple Leaf. Cue the Cat to insult the Canadian fans quite a bit. It seems that a lot of the people in WCW really don't like Canada. Cat rips on Storm for using the Canadian rule book last night and grants Mike Awesome a rematch tonight with himself as guest referee.

#### US Title: Mike Awesome vs. Lance Storm

Storm is defending and Cat is referee in the first rematch from last night. Awesome charges to the ring and gets dropkicked down in the first ten seconds for a very delayed two count. A splash gets two for Mike as the fans are all over the USA. Mike drops a slingshot splash to the back for two more as this is one of the most all over the places face/heel dynamic I've ever seen. Storm dropkicks him down again but stops to argue with Cat, allowing Awesome to grab a German suplex.

The Awesome bomb plants Storm but Jacques Rougeau comes in to attack Cat. Mike goes to beat him up too but Carl Ouellet, as in Quebecer Pierre, comes in to double team Awesome. The Cannonball (their old team finisher) sets up the Maple Leaf. Cat gets back up but here's Elix Skipper of all people comes out and lays him out. Ouellet grabs Mike's unconscious hand to make him tap out with Rougeau calling for the bell.

**Rating:** D. So the people who are usually heels cheated to beat the cheating faces who are acting as heels with the help of a bunch of guys who may or may not be Canadian after cheating like crazy to face reactions last night. All this happened during a mostly lame match which featured a newly formed heel stable. You can add Storm to the list of things completely overlooked in Russo's world.

Post break Storm officially forms Team Canada and hands Ouellet the Hardcore Title. Skipper gets the Cruiserweight Title, which is actually a

clever way to get the titles off Storm without jobbing him (again). Cat runs in with a ball bat and says the new champions are defending their titles tonight.

#### WCW World Title: Jeff Jarrett vs. Booker T.

Booker is defending in another rematch from last night despite there being no real reason for Jarrett to get another title shot. No hype or anything here of course, making it feel less important than a house show main event. Booker starts fast with a clothesline but Jeff kicks him low to break up a sleeper. Jeff's high cross body is rolled through for two, only to have him kick Booker right in the face.

We hit the chinlock on the champ for a bit before the clotheslines have Jeff in trouble. Booker's side kick doesn't hurt the knee (not a factor so far) so he picks up the guitar, only to hit the referee by mistake. Here's another referee so Booker can hit the ax kick but Jeff hits him in the knee. The Stroke knocks Booker silly but here's Goldberg to go after Jeff for the DQ.

**Rating:** C-. Well done on making the champion look like a loser in a match that didn't mean anything because it didn't need to be here on a nothing show. This could have been anyone against Jeff, or at least could have come later in the show after a few quick promos from both guys. Why do that though when you can fly through it as fast as you can?

Goldberg says that's one down and two to go, implying Russo and.....who actually?

Scott Steiner literally puts his finger in Pamela's mouth and threatens to destroy Goldberg tonight.

#### Hardcore Title: Carl Ouellet vs. Norman Smiley

Carl is defending and Norman wants nothing to do with hardcore anymore. They quickly head outside with Ouellet doing as much stuff as you can do in a hardcore match. Hudson actually tries to keep track of the hardcore rules as Norman stops Carl from setting up a table. Tony one ups him by bringing up Storm's hardcore rules from last week.

A trashcan to the head puts Norman down again and the table is set up in the corner. Norman's comeback is quickly stopped as the announcers actually suggest that Goldberg might come out during this match. That's so stupid I can't even make fun of it. The table is pulled out of the corner but Norman avoids the cannonball and falls on Carl for the pin and the title.

**Rating:** F+. Well so much for the false hope of Norman having something new. Instead we now get to see him as the reluctant champion because it's going to lead to comedy. Heaven forbid someone talented and over gets to move on to something important because he can still get to do something "funny" instead. At least Carl, who looked like he was in sweats sitting around the house, didn't keep the title that long.

Nash says there's no second chance for Steiner until Scott Hall gets his second chance.

#### Tag Team Titles: Filthy Animals vs. Dark Carnival

Muta and Vampiro are defending after winning the titles in an impromptu match last night. Konnan challenges Kronik for no apparent reason so here they are to do commentary. Great now we can almost guarantee a Harris Brothers appearance. It's Juvy and Rey challenging for the titles here. The Twins jump Kronik during the champs' entrance so we lose commentary.

Rey gets beaten down to start as the Animals take Kronik's place, allowing Konnan to ramble on about Mexican strategy. Muta kicks Rey into the corner before it's back to Vampiro so we can keep things dull. A Muta cheap shot stops Rey's comeback bid and it's Disco trying to fire him up. They head outside with Rey staying in trouble until Vampiro kicks Muta by mistake.

The hot tag brings in Juvy to clean house as everything breaks down. Juvy gets misted and there's the dragon screw legwhip to put him down. We're not done with the interference though as Sting comes out (Tony to Konnan: "Was this part of your strategy?" Konnan: "Let's see if it works and then I'll tell you.") and destroys Vampiro and Muta, allowing Disco to put Juvy on Muta for the pin and the titles.

**Rating:** D. This was actually one of the better matches tonight until the screwy finish. That's the story of the night: something that could be interesting is ruined by whatever overbooked nonsense that Russo has for us. At least it might mean we're done with Vampiro and Muta as anything important, at least for the time being. That being said, was there any reason to not have the Animals win the titles last night and cut out a bunch of extra stuff?

Post break Demon wants Sting in a four corners match along with Muta and Vampiro. Cat: "Aren't you supposed to say trick or treat?"

#### Cruiserweight Title: Elix Skipper vs. Kwee Wee

Skipper is defending and grabs some early rollups for two as Madden promises to deal with Gene Okerlund later tonight. Kwee Wee grabs a nice belly to back and stomps away as he's already going angry. A suplex into the corner sends Skipper back first into the buckle (that looked good) but he's still able to sidestep a charge and send Kwee Wee crashing out to the floor. Hudson makes sex jokes about Madden as Skipper does the Matrix move to a big reaction.

The champ gets two each off a dragon suplex and a middle rope cross body as the fans are way into Skipper here. Kwee Wee tries a suplex but Skipper kicks his feet to fall backwards, rolling into a DDT. With the referee conveniently looking away, Skipper loads up a ring, only to get caught in a Blue Thunder bomb for two. Elix finally gets in a ring shot to knock Kwee Wee cold and retain the title.

**Rating:** B-. Well that was a surprise. Sometimes you find a pairing that just has a good match and that's exactly what you got here. Kwee Wee is much more character than anything else but at least he had one good match to his name here. Skipper is a great option as a high flier, especially after the division has completely died in the last few months. Match of the night by far here.

Post match Kwee Wee beats up the referee before settling back down into his normal self.

#### Sting vs. Demon vs. Vampiro vs. Great Muta

Officially a four corners match. During the entrances, Madden issues a challenge to Okerlund for a one on one match. Vampiro and Muta wait on the apron to start as Sting beats on the Demon. Sting takes Demon down so the other two come in with Vampiro stomping the mat, only to have Sting actually sell it. As in there was at least a foot between Vampiro and Sting but he sold it anyway. Sting fights back, gives Muta a Stinger splash and puts on the Deathlock. Demon offers to make the save but hits Vampiro with a kendo stick instead, leaving Muta no choice but to tap. Nothing match but it was more shenanigans.

Vampiro cleans house with the stick and take Sting away.

Post break Vampiro is about to stab Sting because we haven't ripped off Undertaker's embalming stuff yet.

#### Kevin Nash vs. Scott Steiner

This is yet another rematch but Nash brings out something in a box. We've got less than five minutes to go in the show as Nash grabs a mic. He's seen a lot of Scott Hall signs around here lately and stops for a mostly non-existent Hall chant. Everywhere he goes, Nash has been asked what Hall is up to.

That brings him to the box, which contains a Hall cardboard cutout which says "hey yo." Nash makes fun of it for wearing an NWO shirt and does a survey about wanting Hall back. Enough of that though as it's time to call out Booker T. Cue the champ but Steiner runs out and blasts Booker with a pipe. Goldberg pops up on screen, holding Midajah by the hair. He loads her up for a Jackhammer through a table but the screen cuts off. Steiner runs to the back to find Midajah through the table to end the show in another bait and switch.

**Overall Rating:** F+. So we had a bunch of nothing matches, five title matches, four title changes (two of which actually took place in a match), the setup for Goldberg vs. Steiner and a big SHOOT out to open the show. This was another week with way too much going on because the idea of just letting stories advance as they would naturally is unthinkable around here. I'm running out of names to call the same Russo problems here and I have a feeling that's going to become an even bigger

problems as we get to even dumber stuff.

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<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B0188BJRGU>

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

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## New Blood Rising (2015 Redo): Exactly As Advertised

### New Blood Rising

Date: August 13, 2000

Location: Pacific Coliseum, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

Attendance: 6,614

Commentators: Scott Hudson, Tony Schiavone, Mark Madden

I'm really not sure what to say about this one. It's borderline legendary in how horrible it is due to the levels of Russo pumped into it with one match in particular. I've seen this show a few times before and every time I watch it I can't believe what I'm seeing. There's no way around this so let's get to it.

First and foremost: is there a reason this show is named after the New Blood when they haven't been a thing in about a month at least?

As I load this up on the Network, I keep expecting some warning to pop up



telling me it's not worth it.

The opening video shows Jeff Jarrett breaking a bunch of guitars over various people. Then we cover the real main event of Goldberg vs. Kevin Nash vs. Scott Steiner in what is being teased as a shoot. As opposed to all the other matches which are worked shoots you see. This one is going to be a REAL shoot.

In an odd camera shot, we see the New Blood Rising logo in the corner of the arena but it's quickly covered by pyro from one of the ring corners. Who shoots from there?

### 3 Count vs. Jung Dragons

This is a double ladder match for 3 Count's recording contract as well as their gold record. Tank Abbott is with 3 Count and has a shirt with the nipple areas cut out for no apparent reason. So 3 Count wants the record because it's theirs and the Dragons want the contract so 3 Count can never record again. I'm not even going to try to make sense out of this mess. Oh and you have to tag in a ladder match.

Jamie and Shane get things going but everyone realizes that this is a ladder match so they sprint up to the entrance to make this interesting. Shannon makes a quick save on Yang as Tony thinks he's going for the gold record because the ladder is hung underneath it. Ignore the fact that the contract is on top of the record so he's under both of them. Yang gets crotched on a ladder in the corner as the fans are way more quiet than they should be for a six man ladder match.

Shannon splashes Yang and covers for a second because no one understands the rules of this mess. Three straight splashes crush Yang against a ladder in the corner as Scott asks the stupid question of what label is on the contract. Yang gets up again, only to be down onto the top rope. This hasn't been his night so far.

3 Count goes outside so Jamie can hit a huge dive for a good reaction. We get a second ladder so Shannon can pull Yang off with a sleeper drop. Shane neckbreakers Jamie off as well, leaving Evan to suplex Kaz down to put all six on the mat in a heap. Yang gets a ladder superkicked into his

face but the Dragons come back with a pair of spinwheel kicks to get one of their only advantages.

Kaz charges into a powerslam on the ladder as Evan seems to have a bad ankle. Shannon does a springboard over the top to catapult the end of the ladder into Jamie and Shane's faces. That always looks sick. Shannon is thrown back in and gets splashed by two Dragons, allowing Jamie to grab the gold record. Not that it matters as Tank knocks him out and steals it back, earning himself some homophobic chants.

Evan gets crushed between a ladder as Tony yells at Madden for not understanding the logic behind this match. Jamie powerbombs Shannon off the ladder but Tank shoves over both ladders to take out a member of each team. Evan climbs up and gets the contract for the win (I guess?).

**Rating:** B. Enjoy this one people because it's the last good match you're going to see for about two hours. These six guys would give the fans everything they could and then be asked to do it again week after week because WCW didn't care about any of them. I know Russo's mantra continued to be about pushing the young guys, but giving them the same matches over and over again without letting them get anywhere isn't a push. Still though, fun stuff here, even if it was nothing compared to what Edge and Christian and company were doing at the time.

Tank leaves with the record and the contract.

The Filthy Animals want to referee the Tag Team Title match. As in four referees in an eight man match. On top of that, they want a shot tomorrow night. Rey promises to make sure Cat beats Great Muta as an incentive.

#### Great Muta vs. The Cat

Cat talks some trash and hits Muta in the head with the mic to get things going. Some kicks set up a dancing elbow (I love Rock but good night I wish the People's Elbow wasn't copied so much) but Muta grabs the arm as Hudson talks about the "legitimate heat" between these two. Tony goes on about how lame "the marquee says wrestling" line is as the fans want Bret. Cat fires off some strikes but is mesmerized by the power of Muta's bald spot, allowing Muta to kick him back down.

Cue Tygress (fans: "WE WANT PUPPIES!") as Cat kicks Muta out to the floor. Back in and they hit each other a few more times until Muta snaps off a dragon screw leg whip to take over. Muta misses the moonsault but sprays green mist at Cat. This isn't a DQ for whatever reason, allowing Tygress to hit Muta with a chair for two. Instead Cat fires off a bunch of kicks for the pin.

**Rating:** D-. Standard Nitro match here (yeah a D- is pretty standard these days) with Cat showing why he should almost never be in the ring. He's a great talker but that doesn't mean he's anything more than a guy who kicks a lot. Muta continues to look bored and I still don't know why they brought him back in.

So we're just under half an hour into the show and it's been quite watchable to this point. That's about to fall apart.

Buff Bagwell can't find his mom.

#### Buff Bagwell vs. Positively Canyon

This is Judy Bagwell on a pole, which means Canyon drives her in on a forklift. See because she's a bit overweight. For reasons that I'll never understand, Canyon wanted Judy to be his Kimberly. Canyon calls her a battleax a few times until Buff finally figures out that his mom is on a freaking forklift in the arena.

Buff runs out to throw Canyon over the barricade to start the fight in the crowd. I'm assuming you win by pin here but I doubt Russo ever got past "so we put her on a forklift." They get back to the ring for the opening bell and Canyon grabs a middle rope Russian legsweep for two. Canyon cuts off the turnbuckle pad because this doesn't have enough going on yet.

Buff jumps into a sitout Alabama slam for two and we hit the chinlock. The Canyon Cutter is broken up and Buff drops him forehead first onto the exposed buckle for two. Now the Canyon Cutter connects for two....and here's David Arquette, who hits Buff with a hard hat for two. A double Blockbuster is enough for the pin on Canyon, winning Judy back for Buff....I think?

**Rating:** F. The match itself was watchable at times but they brought David Arquette back for a two minute cameo. This was like watching a movie with a gorilla in a top hat and tails standing in the corner doing nothing. Judy on the forklift was such a distraction and really didn't change anything, making the match a combination of boring and WHAT AM I WATCHING. In other words, the Russo Special.

Arquette gets a Canyon Cutter post match.

Lance Storm arrives with a police escort. You would expect Storm to arrive on time.

Goldberg isn't here due to a motorcycle accident. And so it begins.

Tag Team Titles: Kronik vs. Perfect Event vs. Misfits in Action vs. Sean O'Haire/Mark Jindrak

Kronik is defending, Rection and Cajun are representing the Misfits and the Filthy Animals (as in Mysterio/Disqo/Tygress/Juvy are ALL guest referees). Konnan sits in on commentary to give us a ridiculous thirteen people involved with one match. Before the match Disqo threatens everyone, saying he has the authority to have them wrestling polar bears in Nome, Alaska if they step out of line.

Palumbo and Adams start things off as Disqo is the in ring referee. Chuck is quickly sent to the floor so it's off to Stasiak, who walks into a full nelson slam. Cajun vs. Jindrak now with Mark taking over via some technical stomping as the fans loudly chant....something. O'Haire comes in to punch Clark, followed by a nice spinning kick to the head for two. A hard slam drops O'Haire but Disqo counts slow.

Rection comes in and gets a slow count as well as there are far too many empty seats opposite the hard camera. Tygress gives Rection a Bronco Buster but the General raises his boot to block Rey's attempt. We get the Sting falling headbutt/low blow spot on Stasiak before it's back to Cajun for the dancing punches. That means another slow count as the announcers have no idea whose side the Animals are on.

Rection comes in and starts cleaning house as everything breaks down.

Palumbo's great right hands stagger Rection and it's off to a sleeper. Disqo checks the arm twice and slaps Rection in the face to wake him up. Palumbo superkicks Rection back down as the fans want Bret again. It's off to Cajun who is quickly sent outside as everything breaks down again.

The Seanton bomb nails Clark but here's the Dark Carnival to break up High Times to Palumbo. Clark gives Palumbo the Meltdown for the slowest two count yet so he yells at Disqo. High Times plants Palumbo again but here's Lieutenant Loco to steal Disqo's shirt and count the pin, thereby screwing over the Misfits in the process to keep the titles on Kronik.

**Rating:** D-. What in the world did I just watch? Instead of anything resembling a regular match, this was a bunch of quick segments with Disqo tying everything together (work with me here) until Chavo ran in for the completely illogical ending. I get the idea that Disqo wanted to give the Animals the easiest match possible tomorrow night but this was just WAY too much for what they were going for.

Jeff Jarrett accuses Pamela of wearing Okerlund out last night. He's been looking for Booker all day long and the champ better have eyes in the back of his head.

#### Shane Douglas vs. Kidman

Strap match with wins via pinfall. Before the match, Shane says Kidman isn't man enough to keep up with Torrie all night long (which is nothing like the story of X-Pac vs. Kane with X-Pac using the exact same line about Kane and Tori in a storyline that aired earlier in the year). Kidman ties up the legs to start and Shane is rather irritated. A legdrop gets one for Kidman as Madden goes over the benefits of having a shirt on here.

In one of the funniest and at the same time saddest moments of the show, the announcers try to make fat jokes about Torrie based on that video from Monday. How do you even keep a straight face on a line like that? Shane crotches him with the strap and chokes a bit, followed by the reverse Hennig neck snap (which is actually a cool move). Torrie gets in some choking of his own and it's off to a knuckle lock of all things.

Since it's just a knuckle lock, Kidman comes back with a hurricanrana out of the corner and the Low Down gets two. Kidman finally gets smart and takes Shane's shirt off, meaning they can actually start using the strap for a change. Torrie accidentally hits Shane in the face with a shoe for a near fall, followed by the Pittsburgh Plunge to Kidman for the same. A quick Kid Crusher (Killswitch) gives Kidman the pin.

**Rating:** D. Another match where there was no need for a gimmick because Russo doesn't get how to actually run matches. Kidman getting the win was good but the Torrie factor is really starting to drag. The stuff where she used to be with Kidman was fine but I'm supposed to care that she used to be overweight? It doesn't quite work when she's a bombshell and one of the best looking women ever in wrestling.

Kidman spansks her with the strap so Shane hangs him in the corner, drawing Vito out for the save. Reno sneaks in from behind and gets beaten up by Vito as well.

Booker arrives and Jarrett attacks him by slamming Booker's knee in the car door.

#### Miss Hancock vs. Major Gunns

Rip off the Camouflage and of course there's mud. An early slap starts the catfight and Hancock does a Muta handspring elbow. Madden gets right to the point and says he wants to see these two lose their clothes. Gunns gets a jackknife cover for two in the ring because the rules are still all over the place. Hancock rips off the top to reveal more camouflage and I'm sure you get the idea here.

After a facebuster gives us the upskirt shot, Hancock loses the bottom half of her dress to reveal camouflage shorts. A cross body gets two for Hancock but she charges into a foot to the stomach. Hancock misses a cross body and goes to the floor holding her stomach. Oh here we go.

Gunns gets posted and Hancock rips off the shorts to reveal a swimsuit bottom. They head up the aisle with Hancock losing her top. Gunns gets sent into the mud and drags Hancock with her as Madden is calling himself daddy. Hancock gyrates a bit and goes down holding her stomach again,

allowing Gunns to get an easy pin.

**Rating:** F. Do I really need to explain this one? The women looked good in their outfits but they're horrible in the ring and the ending made it even worse. This stuff stopped being interesting a long time ago because EVERYTHING is an angle. You get numb to this stuff after a while and we passed that point nearly eight months ago with Russo.

David Flair dives into the mud to check on Hancock. To get this over with as quickly as we can: yes she was supposed to be pregnant and yes Russo was probably going to be revealed as the father because in Vince Russo's WCW, he gets to sleep with Miss Hancock. Of course this is treated in the serious voices and made to be something real. Yes really real.

The Dark Carnival wants Demon to prove himself.

The announcers are all serious again and use Hancock's real name to make sure this is as shooty as possible.

#### Sting vs. The Demon

Sting repels in from the ceiling and wins with the Death Drop in less than a minute, which included a brawl in the aisle.

Vampiro and Muta come in to beat down Sting. Kronik comes in for the save as Demon walks by the brawl. For no logical reason, Kronik offers to put the titles on the line tonight.

Booker's knee is being worked on.

#### US Title: Mike Awesome vs. Lance Storm

Storm, with a bit of a mouse under his eye, is defending and gets the big Goldberg entrance. You can see that Storm is really proud to be here as he talks about getting to wrestle in the greatest country in the world tonight. The extra security is due to his hatred in America and he's worried about a terrorist attack in the back. It's not his fault that he threatens the American illusion and he defeats another American hero tonight. As for this match, he's using rule 32B of the Canadian rule book to appoint a special referee: Jacques Rougeau! As in the Mountie! And not

Bret Hart!

After a full rendition of O Canada (which is a big deal here and “not a work” according to Tony), we’re ready to go with Madden in tears. Rougeau will be the outside referee as Awesome hammers away, only to be sent shoulder first into the post. They head outside and Awesome loads up a table, drawing the required ECW chants.

Storm drives him into the barricade for a break but Awesome snaps off a belly to belly back inside. Mike slips off the top to a lot of jeering but quiets the fans down with a wicked sitout Awesome bomb for the pin and the title. That was a VERY close pin and Rougeau says no, which actually seems fair in this case.

We’re not done yet though as Rougeau has the Canadian rule book, which says you need a FIVE count. I didn’t know King Kong Bundy was Canadian. Tony: “Did this happen when we were in Toronto last year?” Awesome slams him for three before grabbing a dragon sleeper of all things for the tap out. I think you know where we’re going here.

The book says a title match is pinfall only so the match continues. Mike throws him down with a release German suplex and a slingshot shoulder gets four. You can imagine how screwy this must be for everyone involved. The Awesome splash gets give to give Awesome the pin (and Storm’s third job in about eight minutes) but this is Texas Death rules (in Canada?) so after a pin, Storm has until ten to get to his feet.

Mike throws a table in but gets chaired in the back for four. In theory wouldn’t you want the five count so you can have another eight or nine seconds to get up? Both guys go up and something like a belly to belly superplex puts both of them through the table. Rougeau rules that the first person to their feet by ten (huh?) wins. Mike is almost up first so Rougeau punches him out at seven to keep the title on Storm.

**Rating:** C-. I actually didn’t hate this as you could clearly see the idea they were going for. Now it was stupid to have Rougeau as the referee (Heidi would have actually made more sense) and to have the champ job that many times in one night, but there was at least an idea here. The bigger problem here of course is that Awesome didn’t cheat so Storm keeps



losing over and over, but the live crowd was going to eat it up anyway. It's over thinking as always, though it's nowhere near as bad as it could have been. The action itself worked too so this was actually easy to watch.

Oh and here's Bret Hart after the match for the Canadian pride moment. You know, because BRET HART would totally go for something like this. I've always thought that's why he didn't do the referee job here. Can you imagine Bret standing for something this stupid?

Nash doesn't buy Goldberg's motorcycle story and says he's going over Steiner and getting the title back.

#### Tag Team Titles: Kronik vs. Dark Carnival

Kronik is defending in case you didn't see them enough earlier tonight. Tony brings up Canadian rules and Madden slips up by saying Vampiro is from Canada, making the whole thing even screwier. Clark shoulders Vampiro for two to start and a big powerbomb gets the same. Muta gets choked in the corner and it's back to Vampiro to get powerslammed for two.

It's off to Adams and the villains start in on the leg...which goes nowhere as it's quickly back to Clark for the Meltdown. For some reason there's no cover so Muta mists the referee by mistake. Vampiro breaks up High Times but the Harris Twins of all people return to give Clark an H Bomb, setting up the moonsault for the pin and the titles.

**Rating:** D-. Good grief I can't stand Vampiro. Every time I see him in a match, cutting a promo or just being there in general I can't stand him. Now he gets a title, though given how insane this division has been lately, I can't imagine him holding onto it for that long. The worst part here is the Harris Twins vs. Kronik, which could set a new standard for horrible.

Booker says Jarrett will have to kill him to take the title. Don't hate the player, hate the game. As usual, this is a feud that is totally fine and has told a completely acceptable story of the old champion getting annoyed as the new star. The knee injury is find for a plot point to

advance the story as well. However, almost no one remembers this because of how ridiculous the rest of this show is, which is really a shame.

Quick recap of the triple threat match, which is designed to look like a SHOOT. Not a "shoot", but a SHOOT. They've been arguing over who has to do the job (using that term) and it's going over the heads of 99% of the audience who just wants to see people fight.

#### Kevin Nash vs. Scott Steiner vs. Goldberg

The winner gets the title shot next month. No Goldberg to start due to the motorcycle accident. Tony tells us to pay extra attention to see if there's anything out of the ordinary. Nash takes him outside to start and sends Steiner hard into the barricade. Here's a taped up Goldberg about a minute in to go after Nash with a chair. With Nash down on the floor, Steiner clotheslines Goldberg and drops an elbow for two.

Goldberg comes back with a flying shoulder and the Bret Killer kick, drawing Nash up from the apron for a big staredown. Hudson tells stories about Starrcade 1988 (yes 1988) when Nash was on the booking committee and put himself over Goldberg. Steiner comes back in to save Goldberg and gets two off a belly to belly. Tony interprets Steiner yelling at the referee as him not being on the same page with everyone else.

Goldberg suplexes Steiner down but Nash clotheslines them both. A big boot drops Goldberg but the Jackknife is broken up. It looked like a simple counter but IT'S A SWERVE because it's really him not following the script. Russo, in his MANLY sleeveless shirt, tells Goldberg to get back in but Goldberg walks to the back.

The announcers freak out that this is Goldberg not following the script, even though it looked like a pretty basic counter to the powerbomb. I love how we're supposed to buy Kevin Nash and SCOTT STEINER as the professionals here. Tony: "What are they going to do now? Improvise?" This is just so bizarre to hear because it's clear that they're trying to sound like they're shooting. There are shows where you can hear the raw audio and it sounds NOTHING like this, mainly because the announcers aren't very good actors.

Midajah comes out as Steiner takes Snake Eyes. The referee goes down and Midajah hits Nash low to give Scott two. Nash fails at a DDT and goes after Midajah so Steiner grabs a sleeper. That goes nowhere so Nash kicks him in the face and the Jackknife is good for the pin. And that's a shoot of course.

**Rating:** F. I can't get mad at this. I'm trying and I just can't do it. Stuff like the Hogan stuff last month and the Russo destroying Flair nonsense makes me angry but this was just.....dumb. This felt like seeing a kid do something he wasn't supposed to do and then listening to the ridiculous explanation that they come up with to try and get out of it. Instead of getting mad at them, it's almost amusing to see them trying so hard to be clever and leaving so many holes in the story along the way.

I don't think I have to explain why this was stupid and why it completely defeats the point of professional wrestling in the first place, but I really can't get mad at it. Maybe it's the shoot interviews that set it up or maybe I've just reached the point where Russo isn't worth getting annoyed at anymore. It's one thing to yell and rave about something stupid when it's clearly for one person's (namely Russo) benefit. Instead, this felt like Russo actually thought he had a good idea but he's too stupid to realize how bad it was.

After sitting through the first two hours of this show, there are so many other things to get mad at. Like Judy Bagwell on a pole for instance. That felt much more cruel and low brow than this because it was all about Judy's looks. The Hancock stuff is stupid because it's not something I'm ever going to believe. This on the other hand felt like they were trying for something interesting and just failed, which is a lot harder to get mad about. It's still stupid, but Judy Bagwell on a Pole is the far more infamous moment for a reason: that was lame and stupid whereas this was more a failure, which I can live with much easier.

Finally, this is a rare occasion where watching the TV leading up to it helps a lot. They basically said "yeah we're going to do something stupid" for the last three weeks and then this is what we got. With the Hogan vs. Jarrett mess last month they treated it seriously and then did the stupid shoot. This time they basically advertised a screwy finish and

you were watching to see how bad it was. On top of that, as lame as it was, you actually got a match. Steiner vs. Nash isn't great but it's better than "pin me, pay me." It was a lame idea and didn't work for most of the fans, but this could have been WAY worse.

Tony throws us to the recap video for the World Tag Team Title match, meaning Booker vs. Jarrett. I guess it's the Andre the Giant coming out in him. We've covered this already: Booker won the title last month so Jeff is trying to get it back by injuring Booker's knee in advance.

#### WCW World Title: Booker T. vs. Jeff Jarrett

Jarrett is challenging and Booker's knee is in horrible shape coming in. Booker fights out of the corner to start and quickly takes it to the floor to send Jeff into the barricade. Back in and the champ crotches him against the post (Madden: "That's a walk down Slapnuts Boulevard.") but the missile dropkick hurts his knee again. You know you don't have to ask Jeff to work on a limb twice so he wraps the knee around the post.

A chair shot crushes the knee even more and Booker gets caught in a half crab. That goes as far as a half crab is going to go so Booker grabs the spinning sunset flip out of the corner for two. A double clothesline puts both guys down and the knee is suddenly fine enough for an ax kick and Spinaroni. There goes the referee and Jeff blasts the knee with the guitar. Jeff grabs a bad looking Figure Four for WAY too long until Booker grabs the rope. The referee breaking the hold ticks Jeff off so we get a second ref bump.

Booker's knee is fine again and they set up a table at ringside, only to have Booker do something like a Book End off the apron through said table. Jeff hits the new referee with a chair and then Strokes Booker onto the chair for two from a fresh ref. Booker tries a neckbreaker which turns into a Diamond Cutter (to be fair how often do you see a main event swinging neckbreaker?) onto the chair for two. The Book End retains the title.

**Rating:** C. This was fine, albeit overbooked. Booker vs. Jarrett is a good example of a pairing that really doesn't need a lot of extras on the side and they would have been better just having a wrestling match. The ref

bumps got annoying in a hurry but that's the main event style of the time. Not a great match or anything, but it really needed to be something more simple.

The fans bail out immediately and pelt trash into the ring to end this mess.

**Overall Rating:** F+. I've heard this called one of the worst shows of all time, maybe even THE worst of all time and it just isn't that bad. I wouldn't even call it the worse show of the summer as Great American Bash offered NOTHING of value. This show had an entertaining opener and a totally fine main event which more than make this a better show than some of the others of this era.

Now that being said, this is another disaster on Russo's watch because he can't just leave well enough alone and let the show work. It's not a good show but for the most part everything goes by fast enough (longest match is the main event at just under fifteen minutes) that it doesn't really infuriate me. Stuff like the Judy Bagwell match and the Canadian Rules match (which at least got a really good reaction) are really more things you just roll your eyes at and move on to the next match.

The show is really bad, but its reputation is far worse than it actually is. At least with this one you have some entertaining matches and a feeling that they're trying to do something positive instead of flipping the fans off and laughing at them for not getting behind the ideas. There are still WAY more problems here that need to be fixed and this show was horrible, but somehow it's an improvement over some of the other stuff they've done this year.

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# Thunder – August 9, 2000: Three Times The Bad Tags

## Thunder

Date: August 9, 2000

Location: World Arena, Colorado Springs, Colorado

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Stevie Ray, Tony Schiavone

It's the go home show for New Blood Rising because we're just that lucky. The big story continues to be the potentially SHOOT triple threat because Goldberg, Scott Steiner and Kevin Nash, because when you think of Kevin Nash, you think of a shoot. Oh and the World Title is in there somewhere too. Let's get to it.

Tag Team Titles: Kronik vs. Mark Jindrak/Sean O'Haire vs. Perfect Event

Right now, someone tell me who Kronik is defending against on Sunday. I'd be shocked if most of the regular fans of this show could answer that at this point. This is the result of Kronik wanting both teams to come out here for a fight which of course means let's have the challengers lose again before their REAL title shot on Sunday.

After some stalling (of course) it's a quadruple team on Adams early on. Stasiak gets in a jumping back elbow but Adams shrugs it off and hits a quick gutbuster, allowing the tag off to Clark. It's off to O'Haire for two off a clothesline as this is acting more like a handicap match than a three way tag.

Clark gets in a quick DDT and brings in Adams for a full nelson slam. A piledriver gets two on Stasiak and everything breaks down. The tilt-a-whirl slam gets two on O'Haire as Jindrak gives Clark a nice hurricanrana

out of the corner. Sean pops up for a Seanton bomb but Stasiak wants the pin. That earns Shawn a Meltdown and High Times with Adams running interference so Clark can get the pin.

**Rating:** D. I've watched the match and I'm still not sure whether or not this was a three way or a handicap match. It was mentioned as a title match, but there was no indication of how many opponents Kronik had here. You have a title match here but WCW really didn't care enough to explain who was challenging. Just....dang man.

Muta and Vampiro come out for a distraction, allowing Juventud Guerrera to run in and steal the belts again.

Mike Awesome and Heidi come in to Cat's office so Cat can put him in a flag match against Lance Storm later. The Dragons appear, have their heads rammed together, and are thrown out.

Daffney has made a Watch Crowbar Wrestling shirt to wear at ringside. Crowbar wants to tell her something but changes his mind.

Jeff Jarrett has a guitar with Booker's name on it.

#### Crowbar vs. Elix Skipper

Elix, ever the rookie, accepts a handshake and gets pulled into a German suplex. Crowbar sends him to the floor for a dive, followed by the apron splash. I've missed Crowbar being around here as he has more energy than half the people on these shows. Cue Smooth with flowers for Daffney, who doesn't seem to mind.

Crowbar tries a standing Lionsault but Skipper Matrixes away from it in an awesome looking counter. A Death Valley Driver puts Skipper down but Crowbar goes outside and yells at Daffney about the flowers. Skipper dives on Crowbar and destroys the flowers in a truly evil move. Back in and Crowbar can't hit a hurricanrana, allowing the Overdrive to give Elix the pin.

**Rating:** C. These were two hidden gems near the end of WCW and you could see them having fun out there. Sloppy fun, but still fun. Like I said, Crowbar looked like he was actually trying every single time out there

and that's an effort you can't ignore. Skipper on the other hand was an athletic freak who could do things most people just can't do. That made for a fun match with an angle that actually made sense as everyone could see Crowbar loved Daffney so it was easy to exploit. In other words, my guess is Russo/Ferrara had nothing to do with this.

Jarrett asks Jimmy Hart where Booker is. The answer is not here so Hart gets a guitar. At least he could probably give us some good music with that thing.

Okerlund and Bagwell talk about Canyon, who appropriately comes in and issues a challenge for a tag match tonight. That means it's time for a mystery partner, which can only end badly. Like only. As in there is no other option.

Tank Abbott and 3 Count are here to perform their old song because Tank's new single isn't ready yet. I heartily approve of the classics.

### 3 Count/Tank Abbott vs. Misfits in Action

Shane gets in trouble to start with Rection doing a little dance before dropping a leg. A pop up powerbomb is countered into a hurricanrana as the announcers try to explain the double ladder match on Sunday.

Everything breaks down with Shane getting destroyed. Karagias gets in an argument with the fans on the floor and it's Flair/Hancock here to go after Hancock. Tank cleans house with right hands and here's a ladder for no logical reason. Shane and Shannon put it on the top for a top rope splash/legdrop combo for the pin on Cajun.

**Rating:** F. I have no idea what the point of this was, much like I have no idea if they remember that the Dragons and 3 Count are fighting on Sunday as they haven't had any contact in at least a week. This felt more like an angle than a match and it says a lot when Hancock can't save things.

Post break Rection yells at the Misfits and a mixed tables match is made later with Gunns/AWOL vs. Flair/Hancock.

Crowbar yells at Smooth about the flowers (how did he know Smooth gave them to her if he didn't see the delivery?) but Smooth says he's an



operator.

The Dark Carnival attacks the Jung Dragons because they're just jobbers for midcard acts. Cat makes the save and puts himself in a tag match against Muta/Vampiro with a mystery partner. So to recap that's two mystery partners and one mixed tag.

Video on Sunday's triple threat.

Okerlund hopes Pamela isn't the mystery partner because she's nuts about him.

Cat gets a mystery partner, even though the partner doesn't like his fashion.

#### Mike Sanders vs. Norman Smiley

Sanders is now Above Average, meaning he's on top of the B list at 49%. That's not how above average works but whatever. Let's make this a hardcore match just because of reasons. Smiley declines because he's retired from hardcore wrestling (thank goodness), only to get a chair to the back. Norman whips him over the barricade so Mike hits him with a ladder.

They head backstage where Sanders puts a trashcan over Norman for a beating with a broom. There's a stretcher here for no logical reason so Sanders throws Norman on top. Both guys being thrown through tables, only to have Jarrett pop up and nail Norman with a guitar. Apparently the pin has to take place in the ring though so here's a wheelbarrow to bring them back to the ring. Sanders tries a chair shot from the middle rope....and knocks himself out to give Norman the easy pin.

**Rating:** D-. So what was the point here? Norman being dragged back into hardcore? That's the best they've got for these two? Sanders can clearly talk but people aren't going to care if you have him lose a match he challenged Norman to. At least he can talk though and that's the best thing you can have, especially here.

The Dark Carnival broods in the back. Demon shows how much depth he has by growling.

### Mike Awesome vs. Lance Storm

Non-title, which is actually the right move for a change. Storm gets in a good line by saying Mike better be a good fat chick thriller because he's horrible as a career killer. They brawl on the floor to start with Mike getting the better of it as you might expect. Storm tries grabbing a chair and gets it punched into his face, setting up a very quick Awesome splash.

Mike goes for the flag but Heidi, the woman we've known for like a week, turns on him by hitting him with the American flag. She takes off her shirt and shows off a new one saying "Canadian and Proud of it!". The Maple Leaf goes on and Heidi hands Storm the flag for the win. As usual, this is too much character development and something that could have been done at the pay per view instead of the big mess they wound up doing instead.

Kidman challenges Shane to a strap match, which Torrie can teach him a thing or two about. Pamela finds that way funnier than it should be and Kidman steps to the side to kiss Syren (Reno's girlfriend/Nitro Girl).

### Sgt. AWOL/Major Gunns vs. David Flair/Miss Hancock

Tables match to make sure this is as bad as possible, or to make sure that David Flair or Sgt. AWOL doesn't have to job. The guys slowly brawl to start with Wall having to figure out how to make David look threatening. While this is going on, the women yell at each other a lot. Hancock takes over with choking as David sets up a table in the ring. Wall kicks him in the face but gets his eyes raked by Hancock, only to have Gunns choke her. Hancock whips her through the table for the win a few seconds later, making this one of the shortest table matches in history.

Wall chokeslams David through another table post match.

This Week in WCW Motorsports. Do we have any proof that those teams have actually been shut down? It really wouldn't surprise me if they were still around to this day.

Kanyon is talking to his partner.

Doug Dillinger tells Cat that "he's here".

### Kidman vs. Reno

Kidman starts fast with a headscissors to send Reno outside, setting up a nice plancha (are any of Kidman's dives ever bad?) to drop him again. Back in and Reno gets smart by grabbing Kidman for a pair of quick suplexes. When all else fails, throw the guy around. A third suplex stops Kidman's comeback but he grabs a quick Low Down for two. Not that it matters as Reno Rolls the Dice, only to hammer on Kidman instead of covering.

Cue Syren, allowing Reno to bring in a chair. For some reason Reno tries a powerbomb onto the chair and you know what that means. This brings out Torrie for another distraction, allowing Shane Douglas to come in with the chain to knock Kidman out. The referee actually sees it for a change though and it's a DQ.

**Rating:** D+. I like both guys and you had Syren and Torrie in the same match so it's kind of hard to get mad here. Reno is a good power guy and has a nice selection of suplexes to go with a cool look, which is why he never went anywhere in wrestling. The Kidman vs. Shane feud needs to wrap up soon but I can tolerate it as long as Torrie is around.

Vito runs out to make the save for no logical reason. Reno and Vito seem to know each other. Like, aside from working together.

The Artist, now in street clothes, finds Paisley and I believe Papaya from Nitro giving Kwee Wee a massage, leading to a brawl. I still have no reason to care about the Artist.

Jarrett comes out again and makes Penzer read a message, basically saying that it's Booker's fault for everyone getting hurt tonight. Jeff is going to keep screwing with stuff until the end of the show and there's a guitar shot for Penzer. He guarantees a title win on Sunday. So Jeff is now stealing Kanyon's schtick?

Here's your weekly shoot style interview, this time with Booker T. Bash

at the Beach was the greatest day of his life because he finally reached his top goal in wrestling. It meant a lot to him to see the company give him the shot and the fans accept him with everybody raising the roof. Booker talks about coming up through the Dallas territories and how much it means to come all the way to the top over all the years.

Tony brings up Russo talking about the old guard being shoved aside so people like Booker can rise up. Booker doesn't feel any pressure because he's at home in the middle of the ring. His knee is still banged up and will probably never be the same but he's still going to be defending the title every night. The fans have paid their money and Booker is going to give them his best every single time.

This wasn't a shoot and felt a lot more like a talk with the man outside the ring. In other words, it was far easier to sit through than the usual nonsense that didn't tell us anything we would want to hear about. That being said, this wasn't exactly riveting stuff but at least it didn't make me go nuts sitting through it. As usual, Booker is the voice of reason around here.

#### Buff Bagwell/Gene Okerlund vs. Positively Kanyon/???

Kanyon's partner is....oh sweet goodness it's Mark Madden. Let's get this over with. Judy sits in on commentary as I'm assuming this is supposed to be funny. Madden and Gene start things off but Gene actually decks Kanyon off the apron. It's off to the actual wrestlers with Bagwell in control until Madden knees him in the back. Buff goes after him as Judy's voice has me begging for this to end even more.

Back in and Buff gets two off his double arm DDT but another Madden cheap shot lets Kanyon run him over. Kanyon misses a splash though and it's hot tags Gene and Madden. Everything breaks down and Madden's low blow has no effect (with Tony pointing out that Gene didn't sell it). Apparently Gene is wearing a cup, which winds up on Madden's face. Of course it does. Buff throws in a Blockbuster to give Gene the pin.

**Rating:** D. This could have been a lot worse as they had the wrestlers do most of the work. I get the idea here and it was cute at times but giving this five and a half minutes was just a bad idea. Hopefully this ends the

story with the announcers and leaves us with serious material....like Judy Bagwell on a forklift.

Kanyon takes out Buff with the Kanyon Cutter but Stevie saves Gene, while also holding Judy back.

### Sting/The Cat vs. Great Muta/Vampiro

Not a bad mystery partner if you don't mind a lack of mystery. It's a big brawl to start of course with Sting sending Vampiro into the announcers' table, much to Stevie's approval. Tenay: "Do you think Sting will ever forget being set on fire by Vampiro?" Cat gets dropped and it's time for some double teaming inside. Muta's power drive elbow sets up some choking as we're a far cry from the classics these two had ten years earlier.

It's off to a front facelock from Vampiro and the referee actually doesn't allow a tag he didn't see. So this is a rare match with rules. The Stinger splash hits Vampiro's raised boot but a double clothesline puts both guys down. Cat comes in off the lukewarm tag and gives Muta a really bad looking hiptoss. Sting stands around while Cat fights both guys and here's Demon (who Tony calls Disciple for the second time in the match). The mist takes Sting down but Cat kicks Vampiro in the head for the pin.

**Rating:** D-. Cat really doesn't belong in the ring and the story isn't working either. It's basically Sting fighting a bunch of guys who look like evil clowns and are doing a lame Ministry impression. That's the best you can do for one of your biggest stars of all time? Lame main event, but you kind of had to expect that given who was involved.

Muta gives Cat the red mist and Demon puts Sting in the Scorpion Deathlock to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D-. There were some better efforts here but just too much bad to overcome. With the same mystery partner angle running twice and a cooky mixed tag tables match thrown in, there's only so much something like Skipper vs. Crowbar can do. That means it's time for New Blood Rising though, meaning I'd probably want to watch this show three times over instead.

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# Monday Nitro – August 7, 2000: These Guys Can Only Do So Much

## Monday Nitro #252

Date: August 7, 2000

Location: Pepsi Center, Denver, Colorado

Commentators: Scott Hudson, Tony Schiavone, Mark Madden

It's the go home show for New Blood Rising and the show has gone off a cliff again. In this case there's the issue of a missing Russo interview from Thunder, which is likely going to be a major plot point because Russo continues to be the star of the show despite not actually being on it. Let's get to it.

We open with a video on the three way which is the real main event on Sunday.

The three of them (Goldberg, Scott Steiner and Kevin Nash) arrived earlier. Oh wait Goldberg was just arriving.

There's a mud pit by the stage. Oh geez just get it over with already.

### Jung Dragons vs. Dark Carnival

There's a ladder next to the ring. It's going to be one of those kind of shows isn't it? Tank Abbott sits in on commentary and it's Vampiro vs. Jamie to open things up. Since Vampiro isn't very good, he starts with a release Awesome bomb and clotheslines Jamie out to the floor. The announcers discuss Tank recording a song with the Dragons as everything breaks down. The ladder is brought in so Yang can dive onto Muta, only to have Demon throw Yang to the floor. Kaz eniguris Muta as things settle again, allowing Yang to hit Muta low for two. Everything breaks down and Muta mists Yang, setting up the moonsault for the pin.

**Rating:** D. We had three breakdowns and a ladder along with green mist in a five minute match. As usual, almost everything on these shows are so overbooked that I lose track of what the match is supposed to accomplish. The action was fine while it lasted, but there was way too much stuff going on for it to work.

Post match Sting comes in and cleans house with the bat. Sting says that's three out of four and the only one left on the list is Goldberg. He wants Goldberg out here right now but we go to a break instead.

Back with Nash, Steiner and Goldberg being held apart by security backstage. Steiner gets away and comes to the ring to face Sting. A challenge is issued and Steiner destroys him with a pipe.

Here's Cat to yell about Nash, Steiner and Goldberg. We get a semi-infamous line here as Cat says he would send them home but someone might pay them, which is a reference to Scott Steiner refusing to do a job and getting a paid vacation over the Fourth of July weekend. As for tonight, if any of them mess with things, they're going to jail. Steiner is going to face Sting in a pipe on a pole match (Cat: "I'm going to put that pipe in the middle of the ring and hang it from a pole.") because the fans want to see it.

That means it's time to dance but here's Lance Storm to interrupt. He's won three titles in three weeks so Cat needs to make Storm vs. Booker T.

for the World Title tonight. Cat agrees because booking that match for a pay per view in Canada with Booker fighting against all odds pales in comparison to a Jeff Jarrett match.

Kidman comes out for commentary and says he's going to be holding a Torrie Wilson Appreciation Night.

#### Tag Team Titles: Kronik vs. Sean O'Haire/Mark Jindrak

Kronik is defending. It's a brawl to start with Sean superkicking Adams while Clark beats up Jindrak on the floor. Cue the Perfect Event for commentary (of course) as Clark takes out both challengers with a flip dive off the apron. Back in and Jindrak gets two off a springboard clothesline before handing it off to Sean.

That goes badly as well with O'Haire walking into a belly to back suplex and it's back to Adams for a full nelson slam. High Times gets two on Jindrak with O'Haire making the save. The Meltdown gets the same, making me think Jindrak is the worthless half of the team. The Seanton bomb gets two on Clark but here's the Perfect Event for the DQ.

**Rating:** C-. Actually not bad here, even though the high fliers as the heels is a really weird idea. Kronik are fine as the muscle headed champions but they've had the titles long enough at this point. That being said, they definitely don't need to drop them to Perfect Event as they're one of the least interesting teams I've seen in a very long time.

Jindrak and O'Haire help the Perfect Event beat Kronik down with the exercise bars. The Filthy Animals come out to beat the champs down as well. Now the Misfits in Action hit the ring as well to go after the Animals, who run off with the belts. Yay for faction wars!

Post break the Rection sends the troops out to get the belts back to Kronik. Gunns on the other hand wants to throw Hancock in the mud and strip her clothes.

Kanyon tells Torrie to go be his partner in a mixed tag. Torrie: "I'm not just another blonde bimbo in a D-cup bra." Instead Kanyon kidnaps Pamela Paulshock to be his partner.



## Buff Bagwell/Judy Bagwell vs. Positively Kanyon/Pamela Paulshock

The guys start and Pamela stays on the apron for absolutely no logical reason. Buff takes over but stops to strut and pose. Pamela won't tag in (Madden: "Hey she wants it. They all want it.") so Kanyon takes Buff down on his own instead. A clothesline puts Buff on the floor and Hudson suggests he tags in his mom. Kanyon shoves Judy off the apron and loads up a Kanyon Cutter on Pamela. Now brace yourselves for this: Gene Okerlund runs in for the save and kicks Kanyon low, setting up a Blockbuster for the pin.

Now we get the Russo interview because we're just that lucky. Tony promises that Russo will be shooting from the hip here and you can feel Russo's temperature rising at those insider terms. Apparently this is a different version because some of the stuff couldn't be said on Thunder or here tonight.

Russo says we'll hear the truth about what happened at Bash at the Beach someday but for now you would have to talk to the lawyers. Tony brings up Russo leaving the WWF and Russo talks about ratings, including quoting numbers and saying the company has plateaued since he left (wrong). He knows there's a group here who can thrive if they can get around the politics backstage.

That wasn't benefiting WCW but now a lot of those people are gone and WCW is improving. The first time Russo was here, he took the ratings from a 2.8 to a 3.4 but then he left. He's back to do the right thing for the young guys now and Booker T. as champion is proof of that. Tony brings up Russo being on screen in a bunch of angles (his word) and Russo seems very pleased with his Flair feud. He's happy with never being on TV again, even though he's shooting (his words) about knowing Flair has a receipt for him.

Russo is from New York and has his eyes on Starrcade which is taking place in Long Island (no it's not). He wants John Rucker in the ring at Starrcade to give him a beating. For those of you not familiar with 2000 sports references, Rucker was a pitcher for the Atlanta Braves who went on one heck of a rant against New York, making sure to insult almost

every group of people you can imagine in the process.

Russo doesn't care what the ratings are and doesn't care what Nash, Goldberg and Steiner are talking about doing in the three way on Sunday. They don't like people they work for but Russo doesn't like some of the people working for him. "And that's a shoot." The finish will be what's best for the company and that's that.

I'm almost to the point where I can't even get annoyed at these things anymore. The worst part is looking back at these interviews and statements that he makes on national television and wondering how so many people gave him job after job over the years. At least here he's just a year removed from working in the WWF and having real success. After that though it's been one disaster after another with stuff like this making Russo look like the most out of his mind writer ever.

On top of that, we're just supposed to forget about Russo being all evil to Ric and accept him as the savior of the company who is standing up for the young guys, apparently none of whom got where they are on their own. No, only Nash, Goldberg and Steiner are actually doing anything on their own. Just as it was before: the old guys are the stars and the young guys are given whatever Russo hands them. What a mess this company is and what a maroon Russo really is.

### Sting vs. Scott Steiner

Pipe on a pole match with Sting going off with a chair to start. They head inside with Sting nailing a dropkick but diving into an overhead belly to belly (not a t-bone Tony). Scott takes over with his usual and gets two off the bicep elbow. The announcers aren't exactly clear on how you win here because they're not all that bright. Sting tries a clothesline but the referee gets decked, drawing out Rick Steiner. Rick grabs the pipe and throws it to Scott, which apparently counts as a win.

**Rating:** D-. So the referee didn't know how to win either? And we had a run-in and a ref bump? On top of that there was barely any reason for the pipe and pole rules as neither guy showed any interest in going for it. This is another great example of how off the wall everything they're doing right now really is.

Scott hits Sting with the pole and chokes him until Nash runs out with a chair for the save. Security breaks everything up.

Post break, Nash/Sting vs. the Steiners is made.

Mike Awesome and his friend Heidi are out for commentary.

WCW World Title: Lance Storm vs. Booker T.

Booker is defending. Before the match, Storm says he's going to become an all time Canadian great like Wayne Gretzky, Donovan Bailey, Doug Flutie (American who played in Canada) and Warren Moon (same). Booker starts fast with a spinning kick to the face as Heidi has ham sandwiches delivered. This causes an argument as she wanted donuts but she'll settle for the sandwiches. Storm sends Booker to the floor for a dive as Madden makes Mama Cass jokes.

Back in and Lance can't get the Maple Leaf on the bad leg and a superkick is blocked as well. Booker's two kicks get a near fall but Storm spins out of a German suplex attempt and grabs the Maple Leaf. The chants of USA get Booker over to the ropes and he comes back (with his leg seemingly fine) with a spinebuster for two. A missile dropkick gets the same on Storm but the Book End is enough to put him away and retain Booker's title.

**Rating:** B. That might be high but I was having a good time with this, sandwiches and bad comedy aside. Storm has been on a roll since he got here and this was the logical payoff for his angle. I do kind of wish they had built it up more though and not done the whole thing in the span of a month but it's been fun while it's lasted.

Post match Jeff Jarrett runs in and goes after Booker's knee again, including breaking the Canadian flag over the leg. Storm will have none of that and decks Jarrett, only to have Jeff take it to the floor. The guitar hits Heidi though and Awesome is furious. Mike chases Jeff back inside and right into a Book End.

After a break, Jarrett wants a match with Awesome tonight.

A-Wall goes looking for the Filthy Animals and finds the Nitro Girls by

mistake, earning him a beating with shoes.

It's time for Torrie Wilson Appreciation Night. Kidman comes out and apologizes for everything he's done to Torrie in recent weeks and offers chocolates and champagne to make up for it. We see Shane and Torrie arguing in the back over whether this is legit or not. Here's Torrie to accept the flowers but she looks a bit confused.

Kidman talks about her sweet sixteenth birthday party and we've got another tape. The video shows a good sized woman eating cake as fast as she can, not even waiting for the candles to be blown out. Photos of Torrie at 16 rain down from the ceiling and here's Shane for a failed save attempt. Instead Reno comes out and drops Kidman with the Roll of the Dice.

MIA and the Animals are brawling in the back but the Animals get into a car with the titles. They open a door and find Kronik waiting with sledgehammers, because that's where those two stand all the time. Disco surrenders the belts and gets chokeslammed onto the hood of the car.

Major Gunns drags Tygress out to the mud pit but Miss Hancock comes out to jump Gunns, leaving all three of them in the mud. Gunns gets the worst of it.

#### Mike Awesome vs. Jeff Jarrett

Awesome starts fast and throws Jeff down with a suplex. A Stinger splash in the corner sets up some right hands to Jarrett's head until he elbows Mike out to the floor. Mike gets in a chair to the back and it's already table time. Jeff hits him in the ribs with the chair to save himself and they head back inside. Awesome runs up the corner for a back elbow to drop Jarrett again. Ignore the fact that he missed Jeff by a few feet and took him down with the wrong elbow.

Cue Lance Storm with the broken flag for a distraction but Mike clotheslines Jeff's head off anyway. Storm offers another distraction so Jeff can rip a chain from around Awesome's neck to knock him down for two. Mike knocks Storm onto the table but walks into the Stroke to give Jeff the pin.

**Rating:** D+. Not terrible here and it was much more about the storyline development than the match itself. Storm vs. Awesome could have been fun if they had just let them have a match but I'm sure you know how that's going to go. Fun enough match here though, despite there being way too much going on.

Kwee Wee insults Pamela's clothes and tells everyone that they won't like him when he's angry. There's a woman with him named Papaya, who Kwee Wee refers to as his wife.

#### Kevin Nash/Sting vs. Steiner Brothers

Before the match, Steiner threatens to put his foot so far up one of them that they'll be flossing with his shoelaces. I wonder if we'll have any mention of Sting and Nash being former World Tag Team Champions. Brawl to start of course with the Steiners being sent out to the floor, meaning it's time to stall a lot.

Rick and Nash start things off with Big Kev getting in his stuff in the corner. Nash shrugs off some right hands in the corner and slams Rick down to set up a top rope splash from Sting. A rake to Sting's eyes allows for the tag off to Scott and it's time for the Tree of Woe choke. It's back to Rick for two off a belly to belly as the announcers talk about the backstage issues leading into the triple threat.

Sting fights back and dives over for the hot tag behind Scott's back. Everything breaks down and Sting is tagged back in, only to get suplexed by Scott. Nash powerbombs Rick onto but not through the announcers' table. Cue Goldberg to break up the Recliner, giving Sting the pin on Scott.

**Rating:** D-. Yeah what else were you expecting here? No one was really interested in doing anything and it was more about setting up the triple threat than any issues these guys happened to be having. Rick Steiner continues to just be there despite no real reason for having that spot. Well other than being the brother of a crazy man that is.

Post match Goldberg kicks Sting down and stares Nash down to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D. There was some good stuff in here but not enough to save it. The problem continues to be either the over thinking or the flat out nonsense that they throw in and unfortunately you know it's only going to get worse. Guys like Booker and Storm can only do so much so enjoy them while you can. Otherwise...egads this place is a mess.

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# Thunder – August 2, 2000: If I Can Have Some Serious Wrestling For A Minute

## Thunder

Date: August 2, 2000

Location: Hulman Center, Terre Haute, Indiana

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Stevie Ray, Mike Tenay

New Blood Rising is almost here and these shows just get worse and worse. Monday was another show where it felt like WCW was mad at us for watching them and were trying to get rid of as many remaining fans as they could. I don't want to imagine how bad Thunder could get. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Here's Lance Storm to open things up. Just like he did with the other titles, he's renaming the Cruiserweight Title to the Canadian 100 Kilograms and Under Championship. That brings out the Cat to say that Storm is defending a title tonight. Storm: "Which one Cat? I've got a bunch of them." Cat thinks the fans want to see title matches so tonight Storm is defending the Cruiserweight Title against Juventud Guerrera, the Hardcore Title against Norman Smiley and the US Title against the Cat himself. It's time for the first title defense because why not have it now when you could build it up for later?

#### Cruiserweight Title: Lance Storm vs. Juventud Guerrera

Storm is defending and Cat dances to the Filthy Animals' music before leaving. We're still not ready to go though because Storm has a rule booklet saying that this has to be under Scientific Rules. Therefore, the rest of the Animals have to head to the back. On a side note, shouldn't this be Chavo getting his rematch instead of Juvy? Storm jumps Juvy to start but gets caught in a bad looking hurricanrana to send him outside. A big flip dive over the top takes Storm down again but he avoids a high cross body back inside.

Not that it matters as Juvy drops him again and gets two off a falling springboard splash. He loads Storm up on top for a hurricanrana, which Stevie describes as "setting up a move here." Storm stops a charge with a boot in the corner, only to walk into a bulldog for no cover. Instead it's something like White Noise for two on Storm but he quickly counters a hurricanrana into the Maple Leaf to retain.

**Rating:** B-. Storm really can do no wrong at this point but I haven't seen Juvy going this hard in a long time. This was a really fun fast paced match with some good looking high flying and a solid ending as Storm continues to be the best thing going in WCW at this point. How he avoided being screwed up for so long is beyond me but he pulled it off.

The announcers show us a clip from after Nitro with Kronik running in to save Booker and Sting. As in the Sting WHO WAS LIT ON FIRE and seems to be fine.

General Rection yells at MIA as he always does.

Booker arrives and Tony is shocked to see him limping.

Smooth the limo decides Skip Over needs a better name.

Here are Miss Hancock and David Flair with something to say. Hancock asks if she's the kind of woman who would roll around in mud for a dollar. She thinks the mud might make Major Gunns look better, so here are the Misfits to interrupt.

#### David Flair vs. Sgt. A-Wall

Wall starts fast with a powerslam and some stomps. David tries chops and stops to strut with the expected result of being launched out to the floor. A chair doesn't make things any better as Wall punches it into David's face. Back in and a chokeslam through the table ends David quick.

The Nitro Girls are here (because of course they are) when an unnamed man (soon to be named Reno) comes in to yell at Siren. She says she was with the girls on Monday but here's Shane Douglas to tell him where she really was. We can't hear what he says but Reno isn't happy. See, if you insist on using the Nitro Girls in stories, this is the better way: have them as plot devices to advance stories instead of having them be the story.

Skip Over gives Terry Taylor a piece of paper and Terry says he'll make it happen.

Jeff Jarrett wants to talk to Vampiro about their elimination tag tonight but Vampiro isn't all that interested.

Tank Abbott has written a new song for 3 Count. Freaking sweat!

#### Kidman vs. Elix Skipper

Apparently the paper was the new name, which also includes the moniker "Prime Time Player." Kidman isn't a fan and baseball slides him out to the floor. Back in and Kidman sends him into the turnbuckle but Skipper debuts the Matrix move to avoid a cross body. A headscissors puts Kidman down, only to have him come back with a dropkick to the face. Cue Shane and Torrie as Kidman grabs the BK Bomb, only to have Reno come in and lay him out with a rolling cutter (Cross Rhodes). Skipper adds the Rocker



Dropper for the academic pin.

Cat promises Mike Awesome a title shot at New Blood Rising if he wins the title tonight. Point for tying up a potential loose end at least.

Shane is in the back again and calls Judy Bagwell a redneck. Bagwell attacks and they're pulled apart.

#### Sean O'Haire vs. Shawn Stasiak

Chuck Palumbo sits in on commentary and we look at him as the match starts in the ring. We finally start watching as O'Haire nails a superkick, only to miss a charge in the corner. That means it's time for generic heel offense a go-go from Stasiak as he chokes and elbows while Stevie talks about ballet for some reason. Stasiak's Death Valley Driver is countered into a DDT but his comeback is cut short as he's sent out to the floor.

Palumbo loads up the exercise bar but Stevie pulls him back into his seat. Stasiak gets two off a PerfectPlex (northern lights suplex according to Tony because he's too distracted arguing with Tenay over Stevie's level of coolness) as Jindrak and Palumbo fight at ringside. O'Haire pops back up with a spinwheel kick and the Seanton Bomb for the pin.

**Rating:** D+. O'Haire has talent but he's certainly still best as part of a team at this point. Stasiak on the other hand would be better off as a driver's education teacher somewhere in Oklahoma. The guy simply does not have it in the ring and it's getting more and more annoying to watch him every time he gets in the ring.

Gene Okerlund is in a neck brace while talking to the Bagwells. Buff wants Shane tonight and makes jokes about his performance issues from last week. Judy swears a lot because it's funny.

#### Hardcore Title: Lance Storm vs. Norman Smiley

Storm is defending and Big Vito comes out for commentary. The Canadian flag comes down again but the music stops halfway through, allowing Norman to come out with the American flag. We're not ready yet though as

the Canadian rulebook says the title has to be defended with no weapons and the match can only end via submission. Storm isn't pleased with his dancing challenger so they trade wristlocks instead. A pinfall reversal sequence doesn't go anywhere so Norman elbows him in the face.

Norman stops to dance though, allowing Lance to come back with a nice dropkick. Vito sounds annoyed that Norman is wrestling in a shirt but Smiley's splash hits knees. The swinging slam sets up the Big Wiggle but the referee gets bumped, allowing Storm to hit Smiley with the American flag. The Maple Leaf retains Storm's title.

**Rating:** C-. See, this is a story that makes sense and is being played out logically. Storm is a guy capable of winning any single match on his own but he needs to cheat when he has so much to do. That's a logical, well written character and it makes for a good story. As I said before, Storm is one of the best things going today and the simple storytelling is a big reason why.

Vito comes in to break up the hold.

Torrie threatens to sue Judy if she gets in her face tonight.

#### Shane Douglas vs. Buff Bagwell

Bagwell starts fast by hammering away in the corner and grabbing a swinging neckbreaker. A Vader bomb gets two on Shane so Torrie trips Buff, allowing Shane to get in an atomic drop. Shane snaps (work with me here) off Three Amigos and a powerslam, followed by the Pittsburgh Plunge for two. Torrie throws in a chair so here's Judy to start a catfight. Kidman runs in and dropkicks the chair into Shane's face, setting up the Blockbuster to give Buff the pin.

**Rating:** D. These two just do not have very good chemistry together, though there's far worse out there. The Kidman and Torrie stuff helps but Shane really isn't the most interesting guy in the world. It doesn't help that Buff is almost even less interesting and it's probably about time to turn him heel again because he's been a face long enough now.

Post match Torrie goes after Judy again but here's Kanyon to help beat

down Mama Bagwell. Buff makes the save but walks into a Canyon Cutter onto the chair. Mike Awesome makes the real save.

After a break, Buff gets off the stretcher and says he wants to fight Canyon tonight. Awesome says he'll do it himself. Apparently Mike thinks Judy is good looking.

Sting tells Booker that he doesn't have to fight on that bad leg but Booker wants to take out that sucka.

The Vince Russo interview will not air tonight because "WCW management" won't allow it. One of the few things they actually build up and then oh forget about it because we've changed our mind.

#### Mike Awesome vs. Positively Canyon

Awesome has one of his women with him. More interestingly though, Tony says that tickets are going on sale for Nitro on August 28 two days from now. They're only starting to sell tickets 24 days in advance? Tickets sold for that event: about 4,600 out of about 13,000 seats. I'm sure there's no connection there. Before the match, Mike reiterates that Judy is good looking.

Canyon actually charges in so Awesome runs him over with a clothesline. Commentary goes silent for a bit and comes back talking about the three way at New Blood Rising. Stevie actually brings it back to focus as Canyon hits Awesome low to slam him out of the corner. A sitout spinebuster gets two for Canyon and a neckbreaker out of the Tree of Woe (not a Canyon Cutter Tony) gets two more.

Canyon lays out the referee for no apparent reason and gives a photographer (As in a guy holding a camera and taking pictures. Stevie: "Is that a photographer?") a Canyon Cutter. Some more production guys get the same but here's Judy with a loaded purse to knock Canyon silly, setting up the Awesome Bomb to give Mike the pin.

**Rating:** D+. Not the worst match here but Awesome's gimmick is killing him. Canyon's cutters all over the place continue to be entertaining but they need to have Page come back and Diamond Cut him in half at some

point. Given that this is WCW, I'd bet on them joining forces because Page respects him now or something.

#### US Title: Lance Storm vs. The Cat

Storm is defending one more time. Cat interrupts the national anthem one more time and kicks Storm in the face. Back in and they slug it out with Cat taking over before taking Storm down with a low blow. That's rather lame of him. Storm's sunset flip is broken up by dancing, a crotch chop, and a shot to the face. You can't say Cat is just going through the motions out there.

They head outside with Storm superkicking him to take over, followed by the springboard missile dropkick (looks great as always) back inside. Cat comes back with a Feliner to knock Storm into the referee, allowing Great Muta to run in and give Cat one of the best looking dragon screw legwhips I've ever seen. The Maple Leaf gives Storm the easy submission.

**Rating:** C-. It was clear that Cat hadn't wrestled that often and that he really shouldn't be very often these days. He wasn't going to be able to last much longer and that really shouldn't be the case just four minutes into a match. Storm wrestled three matches tonight and was in better condition than Cat who wrestled once. That really shouldn't happen but Cat didn't wrestle much at this point so it's a bit more understandable.

The good guys in the main event promise to win because the other four guys are player haters.

WAY too long video on Gunns vs. Hancock.

Vampiro tells Demon he's on his own at New Blood Rising and that he wants nothing to do with Jarrett after tonight.

Jarrett calls Gene a broke neck slapnut.

#### Booker T./Sting/Kronik vs. Great Muta/Vampiro/Demon/Jeff Jarrett

Elimination tag. Booker is limping badly on the way to the ring. It's a brawl to start with the good guys cleaning house and Booker's knee being strong enough for a side kick to the face. Muta sneaks in and goes after

Booker as we hear about Sting being on Vampiro with a chair. Of course we can't see that but we do get to see Adams cleaning house inside.

High Times eliminates Muta in just over a minute. Again: why did he bother to come back? Cue Cat to go after Muta as the referee breaks up High Times to Jarrett through the table. That's fine with Kronik as they chokeslam the referee instead, earning themselves a double elimination. Sting gets triple teamed by Jarrett, Demon and Vampiro as the match actually settles down.

Jarrett lures Booker in so they can....not cheat in the slightest. It's off to Vampiro to stay on Sting until a double clothesline puts both of them down. Booker comes in to pound on everyone, including an ax kick to Demon. Jarrett bails and gets counted out, followed by double finishers to give Sting and Booker the double pin to wrap it up.

**Rating:** D-. Leave it to WCW to give us a six minute Survivor Series match with one person walking out, two people getting disqualified and three pins. As usual, the match went by so fast that it didn't have time to mean anything and the action that we got was mainly chaos with a quick wrestling portion at the end. Of course they couldn't cut ANYTHING else out to give this more time either.

**Overall Rating:** D+. This wasn't their worst show ever and amazingly enough it was a show centered around a wrestler wrestling. It also helps that the Russo interview didn't air, which was false advertising but probably a lot better than whatever nonsense Russo would have gone on about in his talk. The less said about the upcoming triple threat the better and it made for a much easier show this week. Not good mind you, but easier.

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# Monday Nitro – July 31, 2000: That's Some High Level Background Noise

## Monday Nitro #251

Date: July 31, 2000

Location: FirstStar Center, Cincinnati, Ohio

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mark Madden, Scott Hudson

I made the mistake of believing that things might be turning around and this is what I get for it. The whole place has gone nuts again with Russo's ideas turning it into more of a circus than a wrestling show and no one seeming to know the difference anymore. The main event tonight is Sting challenging Booker T. for the World Title. Let's get to it.

We open with an In Memory Of graphic and a ten bell salute for Gordon Solie. That's always a bit sobering.

Video on Booker becoming champion and having to fight all comers. Jeff Jarrett has injured Booker's knee and beat him in a hardcore match on Thunder because WCW does stupid things like running the World Title match on Thunder before the pay per view. Or pushing Jeff Jarrett as a World Title contender.

Earlier today, Booker came to work.

Pyro.

Here's a limping Booker to open things up. He talks about his wife being here and she doesn't seem to like him saying that he'll die before he gives up the title. The people here are the reason he got the title shot

because they would not be silenced. Last week the fans voted for Sting vs. Booker T. but Bill Goldberg interrupted. Tonight however, the fans are getting what they wanted to see. That's what they're getting tonight because it's time for war. Actually I'm pretty sure it's because Cat booked it on Thunder but no one watches that show.

This brings out Jeff Jarrett because we haven't been bored enough yet. Jarrett: "Let me drop the bomb on your mom!" Jeff doesn't think there's going to be a title match tonight so Booker corrects the catchphrase and starts the fight in the aisle. They get in the ring and Jeff gets in a shot to the bad knee and a chair shot to the head. We get a JARRETT SUCKS chant from what sounds like a crowd roughly three times the size of the audience here as Jeff puts on the Figure Four over the apron.

Sting comes in for the save with the ski mask on, which he thankfully pulls off after throwing Jarrett out. He helps Booker up and says he'll take that title shot if Booker is still ready later in the night. Jeff says we'll have Slapnuts Theater and blasts Booker's wife with the guitar. Again: THE MATCH WAS ALREADY BOOKED! Stop acting like this is some spontaneous thing.

Post break Sting tells Booker to go to the hospital while he deals with Jeff.

### Buff Bagwell vs. Big Vito

Judy comes out with Buff as they continue to set up the Judy Bagwell on a Pole match, which has been officially set. I keep wanting to think that's a bad dream that I'll wake up from one day but it's really happening. Judy is even sitting in on commentary here to make things even better. Buff starts fast with his normal offense, including a dropkick and swinging neckbreaker.

Vito gets in a cheap shot as Buff looks at his mother because Buff is dumb enough to keep bringing her out here. They head outside for a bit and Buff thinks a production guy is Kanyon in disguise. That just earns him a Mafia kick back inside but Buff pops back up with the double arm DDT for two. An innocent cameraman goes to get a shot of Judy so Buff goes for the save, allowing Vito to get a breather. Back in and Buff's

sunset flip is countered to give Vito the pin.

**Rating:** D. This is another Russo trope: stories that don't work unless one of the people involved is just plain stupid. There is no reason for Judy Bagwell to be out there as she could just stay at home but in order for this story to work, she has to be here every week. Nothing match here but it's nice to see Vito do something other than hardcore nonsense.

Kwee Wee asks Cat for the match but completely snaps when he gets turned down. Cat gives him the match to get rid of him, calming Kwee Wee right back down.

Kanyon wants Judy Bagwell as his valet so she can be his Kimberly. If she's good, she can be a Nitro Girl. He loads up a Kanyon Cutter on Pamela but Gene Okerlund of all people tries to make the save, only to take the cutter himself (off camera of course).

After a break, Buff runs in and finds Kanyon, giving him a double arm DDT on the floor. For once, a wrestling move actually makes sense.

#### The Artist vs. Kwee Wee

Artist is in a t-shirt and jeans to prove his manliness to Paisley. It's a brawl in the aisle to start as Madden makes unfunny jokes about Kwee Wee's non-existent wife. Artist pounds him down to start but Kwee Thesz presses him down and fires away. A nice dropkick and backdrop put Artist down and it turns into a slugout. Artist lifts him up by the hair and drops him back down, only to have Kwee pound away again. Madden: "This Kwee Wee is like a flamboyant Lou Thesz!" A tilt-a-whirl into a sitout faceplant is enough to put Artist away.

**Rating:** D. That's it for Artist in the ring and I don't think many people are going to miss him. The story never worked and the wrestling wasn't much better, making him one of the lamer people WCW had on its roster for a long time. Kwee Wee ranges somewhere between stupid and offensive (much closer to the former) but this was a very different time and in Russo's mind, this was comedy.

Post match Kwee Wee, in a much deeper and more serious voice, says people



won't like him when he's angry.

A ticked off Scott Steiner breaks into Cat's office with a pipe. Cat clears off his own desk before Cat can do it. Steiner doesn't want to hear that Booker isn't here so he makes a pipe match with Booker in the back for later.

Norman Smiley actually hits on Midajah and gets destroyed by Steiner. This was a five second segment.

The MIA declare war on Team Canada. Rection isn't pleased with Loco's war face.

### Cruiserweight Title: Lieutenant Loco vs. Lance Storm

Before the match, Storm talks about hardcore wrestling being garbage. Therefore, he's renamed the Hardcore Title as the Saskatchewan Hardcore International Title. On top of that, he wants this company to be named World Canadian Wrestling. This time O Canada is cut off by the Misfits' theme and we're ready to go in a hurry.

Storm snaps Loco's throat across the top rope as Rection and Cajun join commentary. Back in and Loco grabs a quick spinning DDT (Cajun: "MISFIT STYLE!") but tries to flip out of the corner and twists his ankle. Storm loads up a powerbomb and Loco tries to counter, only to get pulled down into the Maple Leaf to give Storm his third title.

**Rating:** C-. No time to go anywhere of course but the idea of giving Storm a third title is interesting. They've certainly made him feel like something special, but now comes the obvious problem of how to get them off him without making him look like a loser. Loco needs to get back in the title hunt though as I was digging his title reign with the safe and well done matches after months of Artist putting everyone to sleep.

Since Storm is young and successful, here's Kevin Nash to interrupt. Storm gets in his face so Nash drops him with a big boot. Back from a break and Nash is still in the ring, making that attack completely pointless. Nash talks about two people working themselves into a shoot and brings up Goldberg's comments about him last week. There's only been

one time in this business where he hasn't been professional and it was the night after someone refused to lose to him in Montreal.

Yeah he played basketball and then he was a bouncer. There were some nights on the job where the NFL players came in and had to be beaten into place. When they get to Vancouver, there's no guarantee that he's going to be a professional. Finally, he's going to get Scott Hall back here no matter what. Cue Scott Steiner to say he doesn't care about Goldberg or Nash. The fight is on already and security quickly hits the ring.

Post break, Nash demands a match with Steiner. Cat just happens to have a straitjacket so go have a straitjacket match.

### Jeff Jarrett vs. Sting

This is called impromptu even though they've been talking about it all night. Sting wins an early slugout but misses the Stinger Splash. That's not a major problem though as he clotheslines Jeff out to the floor and follows him up the ramp with a chair. Much like all the criticism and snores from the audience during his matches, promos, appearances and everything else, Jarrett shrugs the shots off and crushes Sting's knee against the post with the chair.

We hit the Figure Four over the apron until the referee does his job and breaks it up. Here's Sting's comeback until Jeff kicks the referee low and hits Sting in the head with a chair. The referee, having just been kicked low, actually counts the cover for two. Why have referees at this point? Sting flips out of a reverse suplex and grabs the Death Drop "onto" the chair for the pin.

**Rating:** D+. Horrific refereeing aside, that's a loss for the World Champion and a loss for the #1 contender in the span of five days. Of course we now get even more weeks of Jarrett challenging for the title because he was hand picked as the challenger whether we're interested in it or not. Lame match because as usual, WCW does a bunch of stupid stuff instead of letting them have a match.

Booker is back and isn't happy that Jarrett was sent out in an ambulance.

## Tag Team Titles: Kronik vs. Vampiro/Great Muta vs. Mark Jindrak/Sean O'Haire

Kronik is defending and comes out first while Perfect Event is on commentary. Jindrak and O'Haire are smart enough to let everyone else fight. The painted ones are knocked to the floor and it's Clark vs. Jindrak to get things going. The champ takes over with a hard clothesline until Mark nails a high dropkick. Clark plants him with a Rock Bottom but Vampiro breaks up the pin and takes Jindrak's place.

A top rope clothesline puts Clark down, leaving Muta and Vampiro to pound away at the same time for no logical reason. Clark fights them off again and makes the hot tag to Adams so house can be cleaned. Muta goes after Adams knee but Clark hits him in the back with a chair to break it up. Everything breaks down and O'Haire drops the Swanton on Vampiro, only to have Adams get in a quick pin on Muta a half second before, keeping the titles on Kronik.

**Rating:** D+. It's another mess of a match as is so often the case in WCW but at least the ending was pretty hot. There are way too many teams going after the belts at this point though and it's getting to be too much to take. Just let them fight one at a time and put the titles on whoever you want to put them on.

Muta and Vampiro mist the champs and take the belts.

Cat gives Shane Douglas a Viagra on a pole match against Kidman tonight.

Jindrak and O'Haire say this isn't over.

## Kidman vs. Shane Douglas

Viagra on a pole. Seriously. Before the match, Shane thinks this is stupid. Well at least he still gets the obvious. Shane goes after Kidman to start but gets backdropped out to the floor, followed by a baseball slide into the steps. Back in and Shane kicks him down as Madden talks about Viagra on a pole matches from years past.

Shane rolls some suplex and puts on a chinlock as we're waiting on the first attempt to go up. The Pittsburgh Plunge drops Kidman and Madden

stays on the sex jokes. Kidman gets up though and hits a quick Kid Crusher (Killswitch), allowing him to get the bottle. Torrie offers a distraction though and Shane grabs a Franchiser, allowing him to steal the bottle for the win. I'm assuming that means he also deals with the legal issues of handing out what were probably prescribed pills.

**Rating:** D. As usual, this was a big mess with the pole only being an excuse to let them have a lame match. I still don't know why I'd want to see these two fight again but the match was pretty generic stuff. These two could have a good match if you just, you know, let them, but that's out of the question.

Booker asks Sting if they're still on. Sting is ready and Booker says this is for the people.

Miss Hancock and Major Gunns get in a food fight in the back to start their "hardcore match". In the ring, A-Wall beats up David Flair until the women come in. I guess this is a match now.

#### Major Gunns vs. Miss Hancock

Hancock throws her into the table Wall set up for a pin. I have no idea how long this actually was and I really don't think anyone cares. Well Russo does as I'm sure this is another fantasy of his for whatever reason.

The Nitro Girls like Kidman after the Viagra match.

#### Scott Steiner vs. Kevin Nash

Straitjacket match meaning you put your opponent in a straitjacket and beat on them until you get tired of it. Those are Cat's official rules. Nash gets in a quick side slam for a cover but there's no referee as there are no covers. Instead Nash goes with the boot choke but Midajah gets on the apron, allowing Steiner to hit Nash low. The belly to belly sets up the pushups as the announcers plug an interview with VINCE RUSSO on Thunder.

They head outside with Nash being sent into the barricade (I think they're shooting here!), only to pop up and fire off right hands back

inside. Steiner takes a chokeslam and a Midajah chair shot has no effect on Nash. That earns Midajah a Jackknife (Madden: "Her head is between his legs!") but Nash has to kick Rick Steiner in the face. Scott hits Nash with the chair and the straitjacket goes on. Scott puts on the Recliner for the win.

**Rating:** D-. What do you expect from Scott Steiner vs. Kevin Nash in a gimmick match with Rick interfering? They kept it short but that doesn't mean it's something interesting. I'm still annoyed at Nash for beating Storm down earlier tonight though so I approve of him taking a beating.

#### WCW World Title: Booker T. vs. Sting

Booker is defending and limps to the ring as the announcers plug Russo's interview again. Note that Goldberg and Nash's interviews weren't plugged but they're just not as important. They trade shoulders and hiptosses to start and Sting can't get either early Deathlock attempt. It's time to go outside with Sting sending him into the barricade, only to have his top rope splash hit knees. Thankfully Booker sells the knee, only to pop up for an ax kick for two.

They hit heads and Sting falls to the floor, only to have someone pull him under the ring. Someone who appears to be Demon (Sting's opponent at New Blood Rising) shoves a bloody Sting back out and he elbows Booker in the face a few times. Sting gets two off a DDT but the Death Drop is countered into the Bookend to retain Booker's title.

**Rating:** C. Imagine that: you give two of the most talented guys in the company a few minutes and they have one of the better matches of the night. They're doing a really good job of building Booker up as a main event star as he's pinned Goldberg and Sting in back to back weeks. Of course he lost to Jarrett in the middle but you can't win them all, even if you're World Champion.

Post match Sting goes after Demon but Vampiro makes a save. Jarrett comes out to blast Booker with a guitar before tying a rope around the knee to hang Booker upside down. At the same time, Sting is put in a coffin which Demon sets on fire with a torch. Jarrett cracks another guitar over the knee to end the show WHILE STING IS BEING BURNED ALIVE. Yeah that's just

background noise now. In WWE it sets up a Wrestlemania showdown. In WCW it sets up Jeff Jarrett attacking Booker T.'s bad knee.

**Overall Rating:** D. If Sting being burned alive not closing the show isn't enough to sum this show up, I don't think anything is going to. You couple that with the Viagra on a pole match and a food fight between the women and it's clear that Russo is back at his Russoiest. There's just too much stuff going on here and little of it is worth seeing. One of the few things that was worth seeing was Lance Storm but Nash literally threw him out of the way so we could set up a straitjacket match as part of the reality angle that the world is clamoring for. There's your latest reason why WCW has less than eight months to go.

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

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B0188BJRGU>

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

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## Thunder – July 26, 2000: More Painful Than A Shovel To The Head

### Thunder

Date: July 26, 2000

Location: Wheeling Civic Center, Wheeling, West Virginia

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mike Tenay, Mark Madden

The Russo style is back in full force, meaning it's time for this show to fall through the floor all over again. We're coming up on New Blood Rising and other than the main event, it's hard to say what kind of nonsense is going to take place there. These shows are starting to make less and less sense every week but you have to expect that when a nitwit is on top. Let's get to it.

The Cat is standing by his limo when the Jung Dragons attack, this time with a sledgehammer. Yang smashes the window by mistake and Smooth the limo driver freaks out. Cat gives him a 3-1 match later tonight.

### 3 Count vs. Juventud Guerrera/Rey Mysterio

Evan is out with a knee injury but before we get going, Tank wants a dance contest against Konnan and Disco. It's just a ruse though and the fight is on quickly. Shannon gets two on Rey off a springboard cross body but here are the Jung Dragons to interfere. We settle down to Juvy....possibly countering a German suplex. He was supposed to flip over and land on his feet but didn't get all the way over, making it unclear if he got hurt or not.

Rey springboards in with a clothesline for two as Tony talks about Latino style being very hot in popular music. Shannon drops Rey with a sleeper drop for two but the Animals come back with something like What's Up, only with a legdrop instead of a headbutt. Everything breaks down and a Samoan drop/neckbreaker combination gets two on Rey, only to have Shannon take the Juvy Driver and 450 for the pin.

**Rating:** C+. So we have these two fun teams but we're getting people like the Perfect Event in the title match. The Animals may be incredibly annoying but at the same time they can still go this well in the ring. On top of that, why are none of these guys going after the Cruiserweight Title? Why are we stuck with the nonsense we've had to see for all these months? We'll go with "because WCW" and move on.

Here's Booker T. with something to say. He doesn't like Goldberg but after Monday he has to respect him. However, Goldberg needs to save the

trauma (yes trauma) for his mama. These are his people here and he'll die in this ring to defend his title. Cue Jeff Jarrett to say he wants a lights out, unsanctioned match against Booker tonight with the title NOT on the line to protect Cat's pay per view main event. The fight is on and Tony says there's no holding them back as security holds them back. So we have Goldberg, Scott Steiner and even Kevin Nash waiting to challenge Booker but we're getting Jeff Jarrett? Really?

Post break Cat makes the match but threatens to beat up Booker and Jarrett if they don't calm down.

Miss Hancock wants to arm wrestle Major Gunns tonight.

### The Artist vs. Skip Over

That would be Elix Skipper and for reasons I've never been able to explain, I've always been a big fan. Artist superkicks him at the bell as Tenay calls Skip part of the new blood (not the New Blood of course). Over spin kicks Artist in the face and hits a nice looking missile dropkick. Artist grabs a northern lights suplex for two of his own, followed by an Angle Slam.

Since this is a meaningless match against a rookie, Artist needs a chair. Skip baseball slides it into his face but Artist pops right back up. Paisley tries to hand him the chair but Kwee Wee comes out to lure her away. So much for that idea. Back in the ring, the chair has disappeared and Over takes Artist down with a springboard spinwheel kick. The Overdrive (That ridiculous spinning Fameasser thing. I'm still not sure how that's supposed to be a finishing move.) gives Over the upset.

**Rating:** D+. Fun little match here but as usual it's bogged down by all the other stuff going on at the same time. The Paisley/Kwee Wee stuff needs to go somewhere already. Not that it's been a long, drawn out story but more along the lines of the faster that happens, the faster we can get Artist off TV.

MIA is in the back and Gene looks at Major Gunns' chest. See it's funny because he's old.



Judy Bagwell drags Buff Bagwell away by the ear so they can go find the Cat. I guess this is supposed to be funny too.

### M.I. Smooth vs. Jung Dragons

As usual, Mark keeps saying “last night” to refer to Monday, as in two days earlier. During the entrances, Tony says Goldberg can’t make his scheduled appearance. Instead: Lance Storm and Mike Awesome. Oh I’m sure the fans are going to be thrilled. Like all three of them who show up. Smooth is in a shirt and tie and the Dragons stomp him down for three straight near falls. Jamie and Kaz are sent to the floor, leaving Smooth to powerslam and full nelson bomb Jamie for the pin.

So let’s stop for a second here and look at what we’re supposed to just accept here: Smooth, a non-wrestler (yes I know he was Ice Train but that’s never mentioned here) just happened to debut here, wore street clothes, had theme music, knew wrestling moves, and beat a team in a featured pay per view match completely clean in under two minutes.

We’re supposed to just go with this and then pay to see the Dragons, who are more guys who should be in the Cruiserweight Title hunt, at New Blood Rising. You can blame a lot of things for WCW going under, but this is the kind of thing that really should be near the top of the list. These things happened WAY too often around here and the fans are just supposed to go with them. At some point the fans are going to get tired of having their intelligence insulted and watch something else. WCW reached that point a long time ago and it’s a big reason why they’re not around today.

The Bagwells come into Cat’s office and Judy says she can be the solution to the ratings problem. Cat gives her the match she wants, whatever that is. Another reason this company is a mess right now: middle aged women coming in off the street and talking about ratings like they’re something people discuss in casual conversation. I write about wrestling for a living and I barely discuss ratings with my wrestling friends, let alone some random person I strike up a chat with at Wal-Mart. As usual, Russo and Ferrara or whoever is writing this show has no idea how normal people talk in real life and it sounds really awkward.

It’s time for arm wrestling and I’ll let you fill in most of the details

here. Hancock is in a red shirt here and takes off the jacket for a change. David Flair is guest referee for the sake of comedy and makes sure to cheat to help Hancock win. Gunns freaks out so Hancock sprays hairspray in her face. There goes Gunns' top but the Wall, now in MIA gear, comes out to chokeslam Flair. He talks to the blind Gunns and says "it's me, it's me" (that D-O-Double G?) to calm her down.

Kanyon says he needs to find a Kimberly. Judy is feeling the BANG tonight though.

The MIA rename the Wall as A-Wall (that's actually kind of clever) and shave his head.

Muta and Vampiro have beaten down Kronik.

#### Great Muta/Vampiro vs. Sean O'Haire/Mark Jindrak

This is the result of Muta and Vampiro issuing an open challenge. O'Haire starts with Muta and takes him down with a dropkick off those long legs of his. Vampiro and Jindrak fight on the floor before coming in, which I guess counts as a double tag in this match. Jindrak kicks him in the face and brings Sean back in for a clothesline.

It's already back to Jindrak so Muta comes in and kicks him a few times before officially coming in off the tag. The refereeing sucks around here. The heels pound away on Jindrak for a bit until he snaps off a powerslam and tags in Sean to clean house. Muta will have none of that and snaps off a dragon screw legwhip before twisting on the knee to make Sean tap. Too short to rate but it was energetic while it lasted.

Post match Demon comes out to help with the beatdown but Kronik makes the save and hurts people.

Judy puts Buff in a room and tells him to stay there. What in the world did Buff do to deserve this story?

Big Vito wants a rematch with Lance Storm.

#### Judy Bagwell vs. Kanyon

After Judy comes out to Buff's pyro and Madden reminds us that she used to be a World Tag Team Champion (gah), Kanyon says he's Diamond Cut her already. Tonight though, it's going to be the Kanyon Cutter so Judy needs to leave before this gets bad. The match starts and it's a bunch of shoving and slapping until Kanyon grabs her for the Kanyon Cutter. This brings out Buff, who is told to stay in the aisle or his mom gets hurt. Kanyon wants a match at New Blood Rising and if Judy wins, she's Kanyon's Kimberly. Buff agrees and the camera cuts away as Kanyon lays her out (thanks to TBS).

Shane Douglas and Torrie Wilson talk about the G-rated tape from Monday.

Kidman has another tape.

Kanyon is driving away, gets out and Kanyon Cuts a guard, then leaves. Funniest thing on the show by about a mile so far.

Here are Torrie and Shane with Torrie being annoyed at Kidman for what he did on Monday. Torrie: "Do you know what kind of a position you put me in?" Shane says play the new tape and it's the two of them sitting on a bed. Shane apologizes over and over again for "performance issues" and they storm out of the ring.

Storm says he'll give Vito a Hardcore Title match with no weapons allowed.

Shane leaves to get some air when Kidman comes up to laugh at Torrie. This is of course stupid and Shane beats Kidman down.

#### Hardcore Title: Lance Storm vs. Big Vito

Vito is challenging and jumps Storm during O Canada, sending Madden into hysterics again. The usual low level offense sends Storm outside and it's a superkick and kind of fall away slam for two on the champ. A good looking top rope elbow gets two for Vito and the referee gets bumped, allowing Storm to hit Vito with a chair for two. Vito comes right back with a German suplex and clothesline but Storm calmly grabs the Maple Leaf for the submission to retain. Again too short to rate but Vito comes off as a guy who tries when he's out there.

Awesome runs in and lays out Storm.

Just like last week with Nash, here's a sitdown interview with Goldberg. First up is Hall blaming Goldberg for Scott Hall being gone but Goldberg really doesn't care what Nash says. The Outsiders wanted Goldberg on their side because they knew he was going to be a big deal. Nash has no appreciation for the fans but Goldberg does everything he does for the fans. As a heel remember. Hudson: "For the last few months you've played the heel for World Championship Wrestling." Goldberg says he hasn't been comfortable with it because that's not who he is.

Someone thought turning him heel was a good idea that might help the ratings but it's totally against what Goldberg is. With his eyes bugging out but in the same voice, Goldberg wants to refute what Nash said last week. The last thing he thought he was going to do was be a wrestler because he wanted to be a pro football player. Now he has a chance to give back to the fans. He can shake a sick kid's hand and give them a smile which is worth more than anything else he could get. Goldberg: "Nash is right. I don't love this sport."

Hudson calls the work with the kids paying his dues. Goldberg says Nash has "paid his dues" for fifteen years and he won't ever be in the spot Goldberg reached in three years. Amen brother. Goldberg brings up Nash breaking the Streak two weeks after Nash got on the booking committee. Hudson brings up the three way at New Blood Rising and Goldberg says his immediate goal is to make Nash suffer for all the damage Nash has done to his career.

What Goldberg is doing right now is taking one for the team instead of what he wants to be doing. When a promoter is looking at a card, he doesn't care about paying dues because it's all about who is going to draw the most money. All it means is that he's the right character and the right person to see this through. Hall and Nash didn't pop the business like he and Hogan did. Hogan, Flair and Arn Anderson made this business what it is today. I love Arn but that's more of a stretch than I can handle.

The only way Nash is winning in Vancouver is to put himself back on that

booking committee because Goldberg is going to kill him. Nash saying he doesn't care what the bookers say sounds like a challenge because Nash can't run away on those old knees of his. Goldberg recommends ice and Advil because Nash is going to need them. That wraps things up with no mention of Booker T. and Monday's match whatsoever.

.....WOW. Just like last week, this would have been one heck of a shoot interview. If this had been from RF Video or something like that, it would be really entertaining to listen to. The problem is THIS IS A MAJOR WRESTLING SHOW. Think back with me to CM Punk's Pipe Bomb. Punk ranted about how Cena was just an act and how he was being held back, but it was all building to a wrestling match, not some scripted deal where they may or may not do what the bookers (more on that in a second) told them to do.

This brings us to the big problem that was there last week: how many fans knew what was going on? Serious question: how many fans watching this heard the word "booker" and thought they were talking about Booker T.? I know it sounds stupid today but is it really that much of a stretch?

This is more of Russo trying to make himself sound smart and thinking that EVERYONE is on Meltzer's mailing list in July 2000 because he reads that stuff every five minutes. This probably went over the heads of 98% of fans and it's really annoying to sit through these ten minute interviews to set up a match that is going to suck because Nash is involved and can barely do anything. But hey, they're WORKING US and that's what matters, even if no one but them cares.

Madden: "So no matter what the creative committee tells Nash, Goldberg and Steiner, they're just going to do what they want?" Oh screw off WCW. Good grief man. Like I said: Punk vs. Cena came together in a wrestling match, not some thing where they were going off script. Mainly because THEY NEVER SAID THEY HAD A SCRIPT because that's the stupidest thing you can do in a wrestling promotion.

### Booker T. vs. Jeff Jarrett

Non-title and anything goes. Jeff has a Sting style trench coat on for no logical reason. Cat is on commentary and says he's not Commissioner at

this point, though he insists Madden call him Commissioner. This is billed as a Bunkhouse Brawl because we're all cowboys who love to ride horses. They brawl into the crowd to start with Booker in control until Jeff hits him in the head with a shovel. Tony tries to call it but Cat cuts him off to announce Sting vs. Booker T. for the title on Monday.

Amazingly enough Booker isn't dead after BEING HIT IN THE HEAD WITH A SHOVEL so Jeff puts him in a wheelbarrow and rams him into the barricade. Back in and Booker chokes with a bullrope but Jeff hits him in the face with....something made of metal. A middle rope guitar shot misses (Tony: "This pales in comparison to being hit in the head with a shovel." I actually stopped the video and shouted "WHAT???" at the screen when Tony said that. Ignoring that it's a breakaway guitar, METAL IS A LOT HARDER THAN WOOD YOU STUPID STUPID MAN!) but Jeff starts choking with the bullrope.

Cat stays on his ratings kick as Jeff chokes Booker with a rope for two arm drops. Booker fights up and hits the spinning forearm as Tony admits that Booker is a superhero. The ax kick and a Spinarooni connect but Jeff guitars the bad knee and puts on the Figure Four with Booker hanging over the apron. Booker passes out from the pain. Well in theory at least as he was still conscious and didn't say he gave up but the referee stopped it anyway.

**Rating:** D. It's not often in my life as a fan that I'm disgusted by how stupid something is but that's what happened here. This was giving away what wasn't going to be an interesting main event in the first place and having them use a bunch of weapons before we get the boring version in a few weeks. Oh and make sure the champion loses because that's going to draw interest in the rematch.

I looked at Jeff after the match and my goodness the level of not caring went through the roof. He's just so uninteresting in this role and unfortunately we're stuck because Russo, the undisputed king of insanity and over the top booking, thinks the most generic heel in forever is worth pushing on top.

**Overall Rating:** F. Let me make this clear: there was good stuff on this

show. The opener was fun and some of the Kanyon stuff was amusing. If you take those parts on their own, you would have had a pretty entertaining show and WCW would have come off looking a lot stronger than they did coming into this week. However, there was a lot of other stuff this week too.

I know I often talk about WCW acting like its fans are stupid. However, in this case, it felt worse than ever. This actually felt like they wanted me to be angry at them and walk off, never to watch again. Between the Goldberg shoot, a shovel to the head not putting someone down for more than twenty seconds, Kanyon suddenly wanting Judy Bagwell as his valet, everyone (and their mother in this case) talking about ratings and a man having performance issues, I felt like I was watching the kind of show that non-wrestling fans pretend all wrestling is to make fun of it.

That's what Thunder and WCW as a whole have become: juvenile, unfunny people making fun of wrestling because they want to laugh instead of trying to take this seriously. This felt like a parody of a wrestling promotion but it still wasn't funny. What is there on here that makes me want to come back? I'm not seeing it anywhere and I really don't want to see where things go from here.

It's not funny anymore and I don't know why people would think it's going to get any better from here on out. More than anything else, that makes me sad, because it feels like the people in charge are glad it's going under because it makes them feel better about whatever is going on in their lives. This really is a case of people treating this place like a playground and not caring at all what happens to anyone as long as they get a good laugh at our expense. Enjoy what you're getting WCW, because this is all on you.

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

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# Monday Nitro – July 24, 2000 (2015 Redo): The Rube Goldberg Machine of Wrestling

## Monday Nitro #250

Date: July 24, 2000

Location: CSU Convocation Center, Cleveland, Ohio

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Scott Hudson, Mark Madden

The shows have been a lot better lately but you know the bad has to be coming at some point. In this case the big story has been Scott Steiner going insane, along with the return of Kevin Nash. New Blood Rising is coming soon enough and I'm sure you've all heard of the reputation that show has attained. Let's get to it.

No recap from last week this time as it's Lance Storm kicking things off. We get 0 Canada with the Canadian flag being lowered above the ring. Storm gets in a few jabs at America for being weak and promises to defeat Mike Awesome again at New Blood Rising. He needs to be at his best for that match so let's have a warmup right now. This brings out Hardcore Champion Big Vito, who I guess is now a face. Vito wants a fight but Storm wants to make it title vs. title. Terms accepted and Storm hits him before the bell.

US Title/Hardcore Title: Lance Storm vs. Big Vito

Storm takes over to start but Vito grabs a Japanese armdrag and clotheslines Lance down. We get the cone between Storm's legs and it's



already table time. Vito takes too long though and gets superplexed for two as Madden continues to cheer for Storm. A quick arm trap suplex (and a good looking one too) sends Storm flying and Vito's top rope elbow gets two. The implant DDT (not jumping Tony) gets a delayed two, which is even more impressive when you consider Vito just grabbed the leg and wasn't over Storm's chest. They trade superkicks but Storm grabs the Maple Leaf for the submission and both titles.

**Rating:** C. Not a bad match here as Vito is totally fine when you have someone there to walk him through everything. Storm being a double champion is interesting and it's a good sign to see someone showing up and getting pushed to some early gold. Also, how nice is it to start with a match instead of a bunch of talking?

Here's Booker T. with something to say. He thanks the fans for having his back because without them, he wouldn't be the World Champion. Booker is tired of hearing about Jeff Jarrett running around in the back talking about how he should be the champ, so at New Blood Rising, he's taking Jarrett to school. Don't hate the player, hate the game. I still don't really get how that applies to most of his promos.

Instead of Jarrett, here's Goldberg to a big face pop because it was really stupid to turn him heel. Last week Booker put his hands on him (it was his foot actually) so tonight, Booker is next. Booker says it's on so here's the Cat. It's not so simple as just handing the title shot to Goldberg, because we're going to put the vote up to the fans, who can go to WCW.com and vote for Goldberg or Sting. Goldberg lays out the Cat but Booker makes the save, drawing out security. In case you didn't know who WCW wanted in the title match of course. Cat promises that he owes Goldberg some payback now.

We go to the commentary table, where Mark Madden is billed as "TV's Best Looking Man." Kidman is here for some reason and he's one of TEN options to face Booker for the title tonight. Here are the options:

Goldberg

Sting

Billy Kidman

Lance Storm

Mike Awesome

Positively Canyon

Buff Bagwell

Shane Douglas

Stevie Ray

Vampiro

Miss Hancock/David Flair vs. Lieutenant Loco/Major Gunns

Kidman is on commentary for no apparent reason and has a birthday present for Torrie Wilson: a sex tape of the two of them together. Why he's here during this match isn't clear but he promises to play the tape later tonight. The guys start as the announcers change the rules of the ROTC match by making it a Boot Camp match in the mud. I don't even want to know how that is supposed to work. Hancock slides in a chair so Gunns chases her around the ring as Loco stomps Flair down in the corner. Everything breaks down and Hancock cross bodies David by mistake. A lot of yelling allows Gunns to roll her up for the pin.

Gunns loads up mouth to mouth on Loco but David pulls her away so Hancock can rip off Gunns' top. Loco gets up to make the save.

Jarrett comes in to Cat's office and demands that he get his title shot tonight. Cat tells him to get out so Jeff knocks stuff off the desk. Jeff gets a title shot but against Kronik.

Sting, still under a mask, says it's really him (and it certainly sounds like him). He doesn't care what the booking committee says because the mask is coming off tonight. Dang it Sting you're better than that.

Goldberg is sure the fans will pick him but if not, their pick is leaving in a body bag.

Brian Adams is ready to go to the ring but a thud is heard and Brian Clark is found with a guitar broken over his head.

#### Tag Team Titles: Jeff Jarrett vs. Kronik

Jarrett is challenging and is out here very quickly if he was the one to hit Clark. In other words, this is a singles match for the Tag Team Titles, at least to start. Tony: "We're going to see action." Madden: "No. We're going to see Torrie Wilson DOING IT DOING IT DOING IT!" Jarrett goes right after him to start but Adams punches him down with ease. A very fast piledriver gets two on Jeff but they're quickly to the floor where Adams is sent into the steps.

Back in and Jeff keeps control by poking an eye (I miss that so much) and gets two off a faceplant. The full nelson slam plants Jeff but Adams opts for a big boot and legdrop (Madden: "That move never wins!") for two instead. Adams goes after the referee for no apparent reason, allowing Jarrett to poke him in the throat with the guitar.

That's only good for two though and Adams gets the same off a gorilla press into a gutbuster. Cue Clark with a broken guitar to lay out Jarrett, followed by the Meltdown. Clark isn't done though as he wants High Times through the table. The referee says no so he takes it instead, drawing the no contest/DQ, whichever it is when the referee is out cold.

**Rating:** D. Yeah imagine that: Jeff Jarrett vs. Crush isn't the best match in the world. I thought they were going somewhere with the mystery attacker on Jarrett unless they're going to pull something else later tonight. I'm not sure what the point was in having Jarrett get back out there so quickly but the match didn't work. Thankfully they didn't change the titles though.

Vampiro surprises Cat in his office and wants to take out Great Muta. They'll do it together because Cat is a ninja.

Torrie admits that the tape is real.

We get an update on the poll: Sting has 35%, Goldberg has 30% and Vampiro is the only other person in double figures with 10%.

### Vampiro vs. Great Muta

Cat is referee after Muta sprayed mist in his eyes on Thunder. Vampiro kicks the Cat down so Cat beats up the Insane Clown Posse. Muta kicks Cat and we've got a heel stable. Demon runs out and helps in the beating. The Cat fights up and beats up the Clowns because no one can look bad in this company.

Booker promises he'll retain.

### WCW World Title: Booker T. vs. ???

The challenger is.....Sting. Well in theory at least as Goldberg jumps Sting in the aisle and gives him the Bret Killer kick. Sting is stretchered out and Goldberg says he wants the shot. Booker is in and gets taken down by an early clothesline and World's Strongest Slam. The champ bails outside and gets kicked in the face again, followed by a ram into the steps to bust him open. A cross armbreaker sends Booker bailing to the ropes but here's Stevie Ray to throw in the towel. Goldberg throws it out before the referee sees it so Cat comes out and says Goldberg gets the win. The title doesn't change though since Goldberg didn't beat him.

So Goldberg just destroyed Sting in ten seconds and squashed the World Champion in three minutes. No he didn't give up or get pinned, but this was totally one sided with Goldberg not giving up a thing. Booker is still champion because he didn't give up, but he looks like the biggest lame duck in history. Well done WCW. It only took that much to get GOLDBERG over again. Oh and well done again on dangling a carrot in front of the fans with the poll and then saying HA! We still get what we want! Why do the poll then?

Post break Booker tells Cat to restart the match or he's out of the company. Cat actually agrees.

### Buff Bagwell vs. Positively Kanyon

Buff has his mom with him AGAIN. Why do you think this is a good idea? Even Mark Madden (now saying "sex tape" in almost every sentence) thinks it's stupid to keep doing this. No Kanyon for some reason so Judy swears

about wanting him to come out here. Buff declares himself the winner but the cameraman jumps him, revealing himself as Canyon in a good looking wig. No match, again.

Buff fights him off at first but walks into a Canyon Cutter. Canyon chases Judy to the back (she's not as fast as you would think) and throws her in the back of a car before driving away.

Post break, Bagwell gives chase.

Kidman brags about the tape again.

### Shane Douglas vs. Mike Awesome

Before the match, Shane says he and Torrie (Looking great again this week. Like better than she usually does.) are used to the finer things in life so they're getting out of this town as fast as possible. Mike brings three of his women with him to even things out. I'm not sure how the math works on that but most of WCW doesn't work at this point. Mike clotheslines him a few times to start and goes to the top for a springboard shoulder out to the floor. Madden: "Break out the Oreos girls! Mike wants to party down!"

Torrie rakes the eyes to give Shane a breather and we hit the neck crank because Shane is already out of offense I guess. It doesn't last long Awesome fights back and hits the splash (not the Awesome splash but just a splash from Awesome) for two. Now he loads up the Awesome splash (which is also a splash from Awesome) but Torrie grabs the leg, allowing Shane to get in some chain shots to the ribs. He loads up something off the top but it's time for the sex tape on the big screen. In the distraction, Awesome hits him with a weight (where did he get that?) for the pin.

**Rating:** D-. Weights, Oreos, Mike's gimmick and a sex tape. How did we get from Shane Douglas to Mike Awesome to all those things in a single match? This would be another good example of the entertainment (allegedly) overtaking the wrestling (which wasn't the best in the first place) and neither working.

Kidman comes out with a pair of Torrie's underwear.

Shane attacks a production guy over the tape.

Here's Kidman again (third time tonight) to say he made copies of the tape. We cut to the back where various people are watching. The Jung Dragons are having a really good time. Hudson: "I guarantee you they're not watching Starrcade." We cut to the truck where Shane promises to kill Kidman when he gets his hands on him. As in the Kidman currently in the ring. Speaking of Kidman, he throws the underwear to the crowd.

And now, Caged Heat is lowered. The build for this earlier in the night: Tony mentioning the cage was above the ring.

Mark Jindrak/Sean O'Haire vs. Filthy Animals vs. Perfect Event vs. Corporal Cajun/General Rection

Remember that this is inside Caged Heat (Hell in a Cell). The idea here is you have to escape the cage but it's under elimination (I guess?) rules and the last team left in the cage is not in the four way match at New Blood Rising. Let me repeat that: it's a four team elimination Hell in a Cell match to qualify for another four way Tag Team Title match with only one of them actually not qualifying. Normally I would make a joke here but I think this writes itself.

Palumbo goes for the door to start as Konnan talks about avocados. The Misfits clear out the ring, which would seem to put everyone else on the advantage wouldn't it? Everyone brawls on the floor with the cameras all in extreme closeups, meaning you can only see a few people at a time. Mysterio and Juvy throw Jindrak and O'Haire out, sending Jindrak and O'Haire to New Blood Rising.

Perfect Event gets away and walks out, finally leaving us with a match that I can keep track of. Juvy breaks up No Laughing Matter so Rey can hit the Bronco Buster....as Perfect Event locks the cage. Never fear though as Konnan just happens to have bolt cutters. Does this surprise anyone? Cue Disco on top of the cage to try and break in, allowing Juvy and Rey to pull out a ladder.

The speculation is that the Animals were in cahoots with the Perfect Event.....which makes no sense as the Perfect Event could have just let them

out the door when they had the advantage but whatever. This also ignores the BOLT CUTTERS that could have let the Animals get out since they had the advantage. Rey and Juvy dive off the ladder instead of climbing out, only to have the Misfits get up almost immediately.

Rection and Mysterio get on the roof as Juvy and Cajun go through the door at the same time. Tony: "I think Juvy went out first so MIA won it." Even the announcers have no idea how the rules work. Tony: "Does being on the roof count as being out? We're completely lost." Now Konnan sets up a table at ringside as Disco helps beat up Rey on the roof.

Cajun gets Juvy on the table as Rection teases an elbow off the cage, only to have Rey break it up. Konnan and Juvy throw Cajun through the table and the other two get back inside. Rey tries to drop off the roof into a hurricanrana but Rection catches him in a powerbomb and leaves for the win. Well co-win.

**Rating:** R. For Rube Goldberg Machine. I don't remember the last time I saw something so complicated for the sake of such an easy task as "get the Filthy Animals out of the pay per view match". This came out of nowhere and was such a mess that the announcers had no idea what was going on.

I mean.....wow. They threw out a huge gimmick match with no warning, no story, no reason for this to be happening, a goal that is far easier to accomplish and a plan that has absolutely no logic behind it. This is also the longest match on the show tonight and the World Title match (as in the second one tonight, in theory at least) is going on with less than six minutes to go in the show, including entrances.

We immediately cut to Booker telling Stevie he has to do this.

With five and a half minutes to go in the show, we need to see Stevie asking Goldberg to not do this and get thrown through a window for his efforts.

Oh and then a replay.

Stevie is loaded into an ambulance with Booker by his side.

## WCW World Title: Booker T. vs. Goldberg

Booker is defending for the second time tonight. Goldberg gets the full backstage entrance but thankfully Booker charges down the aisle to jump him from behind, meaning we'll have 3:16 to go at the opening bell. Goldberg knocks him down but Booker hits a quick ax kick with a brace on his knee as they get inside. It doesn't seem to matter as Goldberg snaps him down with a powerslam and goes after the cut on the forehead.

Cue Jarrett with a chair to Goldberg (apparently this is No DQ, which the announcers seem to think we knew coming in), earning himself a spear, which he sells almost as well as anyone I've ever seen. This brings out the Cat in a referee shirt to knock Goldberg down with a kick to the face (oh please) and the Book End gives Booker the pin at a whopping 2:27.

Goldberg pops up (good) and hits the two moves on Booker to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** F. Oh geez do you think Russo is back in charge yet? We had a match that was so complicated that I was confused before it even started, Booker vs. Goldberg twice with Goldberg getting pinned in less than 150 seconds and a string of matches that either didn't have a finish or didn't have time to get anywhere because we needed to give Russo's big idea ten minutes, or nearly double what anything else had all night. So much for the string of good shows.

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# Monday Nitro – July 18, 2000: The Way To Make Russo Work

## Monday Nitro #249

Date: July 18, 2000

Location: Palace of Auburn Hills, Auburn Hills, Michigan

Commentators: Mark Madden, Stevie Ray, Tony Schiavone

As is so often the case in WCW 2000, I can barely remember what happened last week. It took me a bit before I could remember that Jeff Jarrett won the #1 contenders match while Scott Steiner is on a rampage. I really shouldn't forget the whole story in the span of just a week but almost nothing has a lasting impact around here. Let's get to it.

This show is on a Tuesday because of a TV movie. It's not even the NBA anymore.

We open with a recap of Scott Steiner being all insane lately, including the attack on Tenay which we can't see in full (though we can see a package of stills which show you everything you need to know). Apparently Steiner has been suspended again.

Cut to Scott Steiner in the parking lot, attacking Booker T.'s new car with a pipe until Rick Steiner talks him down.

Nitro Girls. I didn't know they were still a thing.

Here's the Cat to open things up and he brings the Nitro Girls with him. Cat gets right to the point by announcing a one night tournament for the US Title. He runs down the brackets but before we can get to the first match, there are some rules for the fans. They can't get too loud and the fat people need to stay in their seats to make sure people behind them can see.

We see the Steiners ripping up everything in the back on the way to the

ring, sending the Girls running off. Here are Rick and Scott (who walk past the Girls, whose hiding place was RIGHT NEXT TO THE ENTRANCE) with Scott choking Cat and demanding a title shot. Booker hits the ring so here are Rick and Stevie to follow, triggering a huge brawl. Security breaks it up and Cat makes Scott vs. Goldberg for tonight.

Buff and Judy Bagwell are here with Judy in a neck brace. Why did Buff bring her again? Can't he make his sandwiches by himself already?

The announcers talk until Jeff Jarrett jumps the barricade and guitars Stevie. Jeff calls that a warning shot.

#### US Title Tournament First Round: Positively Kanyon vs. Mike Awesome

During the entrances, Madden dubs Awesome the Fat Chick Thriller. So much for Awesome ever meaning anything again. The Bagwells come out to do commentary as Awesome takes over to start with a top rope clothesline. A nice fireman's carry flapjack puts Mike down but he punches Kanyon out to the floor for a big plancha over the top. Guys his size should not be able to do that. Like....they just shouldn't. It's already table time but Kanyon drives him through it with a Kanyon Cutter off the apron.

Kanyon goes over to Buff though, allowing Judy to go after Kanyon instead. She gets thrown down again (more man on woman violence so you know Russo is back in charge), allowing Buff to grab a quick Blockbuster and letting his mom just deal with the attack on her own. That's STILL not enough for the pin though so Awesome grabs a release German suplex and the Awesome Bomb for the pin to advance.

**Rating:** D. Under five minutes and we had guest commentators, a table spot (which wasn't a DQ of course), Kanyon beating up Judy Bagwell again, interference, and a near fall off the interference. Oh and it's in a tournament. This is back to WCW's old stuff back in the spring because.....yeah I'm tired of ripping on Russo for the same stuff. I'm sure you get it by this point.

Post match some large underwear are thrown into the ring for Awesome. This is sad. So sad.

Pamela Paulshock hits on Lance Storm but he is too focused on the tournament.

Buff sends Judy away with his brother, who doesn't ask why she's here in the first place.

#### US Title Tournament First Round: Buff Bagwell vs. Lance Storm

Before the match, Storm yells at the fans for not respecting his national anthem and not understanding that Canada is just better than the United States. Buff won't stand for this Canadian national anthem nonsense and jumps Storm from behind to start. Storm comes back with an elbow but quickly gets backdropped down again. The Blockbuster is loaded up but we cut to the parking lot where Judy is being helped into her car. Lance uses the distraction to grab the Maple Leaf for the win. I won't say submission as Bagwell didn't tap and he didn't look to say he gave up but whatever.

Buff limps to the back as we hear screaming, despite the video not airing on the video screen.

Cat has one of the Nitro Girls in his office when the Jung Dragons appear again. Stevie Ray comes in to help but Cat says they're friends. As confused as that makes him (how can you tell with Stevie though?), Stevie just wants Jarrett tonight. Cat says ok, as long as Stevie lets him play with the Dragons.

We see security footage of Canyon Cutting Judy Bagwell in the parking lot. Well grabbing her and dragging her off camera but you get the idea.

Scott Steiner is sitting by the door with a pipe in his hand.

#### US Title Tournament First Round: Great Muta vs. Vampiro

We actually see some clips from Muta's run in the early 90s, which continues to make me wonder how WCW reached this point. They used to be awesome. Speaking of things that used to be awesome, this in no way applies to the Insane Clown Posse who return with Vampiro here. Muta kicks all three of them down to start but the numbers, including the Demon, are too much for him and it's Vampiro taking over with some kicks.

A top rope flip dive misses though and it's Muta coming back with the Power Drive elbow. Muta starts in on the arm and shrugs off a quick Rock Bottom. There's the dragon screw leg whip but Muta has to deal with Demon. The distraction doesn't work though and the moonsault puts Vampiro away.

**Rating:** C-. It's hard not to like Muta at least a little bit as the guy is just good at any age. Vampiro was better here as he kept things moving instead of doing all his stupid over the top nonsense that doesn't go anywhere because Undertaker and Kane haven't done enough lately for Russo to copy. This was another match too short to mean much but that's what you have to expect when there are seven tournament matches plus other stuff to get through in two hours.

Post match Vampiro and the Clowns beat up the Demon. So they're split again?

Scott beats up Norman Smiley and Ralphus. Steiner: "TAKE IT LIKE A MAN!"

#### US Title Tournament First Round: Shane Douglas vs. Billy Kidman

Before the match, Shane says he and Torrie (in lingerie here) have been getting to know each other lately and he's exhausted. Shane asks if it's worse to have a woman like Torrie and lose her to a franchise or never have one at all. Torrie feels sorry for Kidman because she had to fake it every night and then she played him for everything he had. Wait what did he have? She played him for some undershirts?

Shane takes over to start with a gordbuster and reverse Hennig neck snap. Kidman comes right back and baseball slides him into the barricade but stops to go after Torrie. Back in and Torrie trips Kidman to set up the Pittsburgh Plunge for two. Kidman sends Shane into Torrie for the same, followed by Torrie hitting Kidman in the head with a chair for two more (and with Kidman's leg being halfway under the rope).

Shane tries a gorilla press and Kidman was supposed to turn it into a bulldog but Kidman mostly missed his head. To be fair though, Shane's head only got about a foot away from the mat anyway so both are at fault. Back up and a quick Franchiser gets.....the pin after the referee wasn't

sure if it was three or not.

**Rating:** D+. Again, way too much stuff going on here but at least some of the near falls were good and Torrie looked amazing. Kidman continues to be one of the best gems on the roster who unfortunately isn't going anywhere because WCW has no idea what to do with anyone right now.

Here are the updated brackets:

Mike Awesome

Great Muta

Lance Storm

Shane Douglas

Torrie and Shane make out in the ring but we cut to 3 Count carrying a ladder, followed by cutting to Goldberg arriving. This happened in the span of ten seconds.

Steiner is still waiting for Goldberg.

Here's Tank Abbott to say N'Sync is playing to no one down the road in the Silverdome because the real deal is here. 3 Count brings out their ladder and there's a gold record hanging above the ring. Tony: "At New Blood Rising, 3 Count is signed to face the Jung Dragons in a ladder match." 3 Count dances but the Dragons climb the ladder and a match is on.

### 3 Count vs. Jung Dragons

Yeah remember the ladder match announced for the pay per view? Well here it is almost a month before the show. 3 Count puts the ladder on the top rope but Yang dropkicks it out from under Shannon for a big crash. Shannon gets superplexed off the ladder, setting up a top rope splash from Jamie.

Shane comes in with a top rope Fameasser for Jamie and now it's Evan with the ladder around his head for the helicopter spot. Tank wants the match to be over so it's time to dance. He can't wait any longer and goes to

get his square. Evan goes up but the ladder gets shoved over, landing him right next to Tank for a bad looking crash. In the melee, Jamie goes up and gets the gold record for the win.

**Rating:** C-. Unless TNA broke it later, that's the shortest ladder match in history, clocking in at 3:18. What am I supposed to say about a ladder match that doesn't even break 200 seconds? There were some good looking high spots (nothing approaching what the WWF had been doing in the past 11 months of course) but what can you do in less than three and a half minutes? Oh well, maybe the rematch in a month will be better.

Goldberg comes into the building and Steiner misses a pipe swing. The fight is on until security and wrestlers break it up.

Back from a break and Scott is ticked off with Rick trying to calm him down.

#### US Title Tournament Semi-Finals: Mike Awesome vs. Great Muta

Awesome runs him over to start and pounds away in the corner until he misses a charge. Muta dropkicks Awesome out to the floor as Madden says these two are very similar. A trip to the announcers' table goes nowhere but Muta sprays the mist in Awesome's eyes. Back inside and Mike gets kicked into the corner again, followed by a top rope hurricanrana. A quick clothesline and the Awesome Bomb send Mike to the finals in a finish as quick and sudden as it sounded.

**Rating:** C-. Another not great match here due to the amount of time it had. Muta vs. Awesome could be good if they were allowed to do something but instead they had to fly through it and put WAY too much attention on Madden being freaked out over the brawling at the announcers' table.

Madden wobbles off to change his shirt.

Bagwell goes after Smooth for helping with the attack on his mom but Canyon jumps him from behind.

Madden tries to get Kiwi to clean his shirt but Kiwi is too busy. Paisley comes in and tries to get her skirt repaired but again Kiwi is too busy.

### US Title Tournament Semi-Finals: Shane Douglas vs. Lance Storm

This would be the heel vs. heel match after the face vs. face match in the other semi-final. Storm backdrops him to the floor to start so Torrie jumps on Lance's back to give Shane an opening. An atomic drop into a low blow has Storm in trouble and a neck snap gets two. Madden is back on commentary as Shane gets two more off two suplex into a falcon's arrow.

Kidman is watching on the stage as Storm kicks at the leg to make his comeback. Lance gets two off a superkick but walks into a belly to belly. The knee gives out though and Shane's delayed cover only gets another two. Storm pokes him in the eye (that's rather out of character) and grabs the Maple Leaf (and a rope) for the submission.

**Rating:** C. What is with Shane having back to back good (in WCW terms) matches here? Storm going forward is the right call and it's cool to see him cheat like that so he can brag about being such a great pure wrestler. Shane and Kidman are likely going to have a bad match at the pay per view but if it means I have to look at Torrie more and more, so be it.

Post match Kidman comes down with a chair and tries to spank Torrie but has to dropkick the chair into Storm's face instead.

### Jeff Jarrett vs. Stevie Ray

Stevie is halfway down the aisle by the time his music starts. A powerslam puts Jeff down and Stevie hammers away in the corner. He's still wearing the NWO colors, likely because he's barely had a singles match since his version of the team split up. They head to the floor for a bit with Jeff taking over and punching him down back inside. Stevie comes back but here's Rick Steiner for a distraction, allowing Midajah to come in and dive on Stevie, allowing a quick Stroke to give Jeff the pin.

Booker comes out to save his brother. Now in a smart world, we would get Steiners vs. Harlem Heat one more time out of this.

### US Title: Lance Storm vs. Mike Awesome

Awesome breaks up the national anthem by calling O Canada a censored

name. They start in the aisle with Awesome whipping Storm into the barricade about five times in a row. There's a chair to Storm's back and Awesome smiles at the overweight women in the front row. They get in and Storm hits a chair shot of his own to take over. Storm chops away in the corner but Awesome no sells, only to have Storm poke him in the eye (that's straight out of Sting vs. Flair).

Storm's hurricanrana is countered into a sitout powerbomb for two but the Awesome Splash hits knees. Mike grabs the rope (I think) to block a tornado DDT and loads up a super Awesome Bomb. Since that might kill Storm, he counters into a superplex for two. The regular Awesome Bomb is countered into the Maple Leaf to give Storm the title completely clean.

**Rating:** C+. Best match of the show by far and also the longest, though I'm sure there's absolutely no connection there whatsoever. Storm winning clean is interesting as it lets him look like the better man instead of having him cheat to win. Then again, that could be due to Russo not knowing how to write characters.

Mike's women come in to help him up, making sure the focus is completely off Storm and the title for the sake of unfunny comedy.

### Goldberg vs. Scott Steiner

Cat is guest referee and Booker comes out to do commentary. Steiner knees him into the corner to start and drops Goldberg with a single clothesline to a big reaction. Back up and Goldberg suplexes him into the corner but has to put the brakes on when Steiner avoids the spear. Instead a flying shoulder drops Steiner, followed by the gorilla press into the powerslam for no cover. An overhead belly to belly sets up the Recliner but Steiner punches Cat instead of sticking with the hold. We'll say that's enough for a no contest, leaving this too short to rate but fun while it lasted.

This draws in Booker to go after Steiner but Goldberg spears Scott down. Booker kicks Goldberg in the face and here's Kevin Nash in his big return. There's a Jackknife to Goldberg and another one for Steiner. Booker stares Nash down to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C-. This is proof that a few tweaks to Russo's formula



could have made something happen. In this case, it was cutting down on the amount of stories and ideas that he had going on every show and only focusing on a handful of things. With the tournament and the impending Goldberg vs. Steiner showdown, I could focus on a few ideas and they actually sunk in for a change instead of flying from one story to the next with nothing making an impact. The show still isn't good, but this was the kind of thing that could work with some more fine tuning.

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# Thunder – July 12, 2000: How To Book A Bad Show Version II

## Thunder

Date: July 12, 2000

Location: North Charleston Coliseum, North Charleston, South Carolina

Commentators: Bobby Heenan, Tony Schiavone

It still feels weird to say that Booker T. is the World Champion but it's a nice feeling to have. For once things feel fresh and with the addition of the newcomers in the tag division, there's an actual youth movement going on around here. Now unfortunately there's no reason to think this is going to last but at least we can enjoy it while it's around. Let's

get to it.

On a side note, at some point around this time, Ed Ferrara took over Thunder's booking. Therefore, Russo isn't to blame in case this is awful, though Ferrara was Russo's right hand man.

Opening sequence.

We open with the usual clips from Nitro.

Smooth gives Kanyon advice about something we aren't privy to.

Apparently Scott Steiner beat up and injured Mike Tenay so it's a two man booth tonight.

Here are Tank Abbott and 3 Count to say they're going to dance and the Dragons aren't going to do anything. That's an official warning and you know what's coming. Tank heads outside to dance and here are the Dragons for a surprise attack. Muta jumps Tank and we've got a match.

### 3 Count/Tank Abbott vs. Jung Dragons/Great Muta

Yang tries to pound on Tank but gets thrown across the ring. A wheelbarrow slam into a double facebuster has Yang in even more trouble but Muta makes a save and cleans house. Tank uses the circle to block the mist and the big right hand knocks Yang silly to give Evan the fast pin. So they bring Muta in for a two minute match where his team loses?

Kanyon gives Cat a copy of his book in an attempt to get Jarrett tonight. That's fine with Cat as Jarrett's original opponent, Buff Bagwell, is late. Cat gives him the match in exchange for an autograph.

The Perfect Event attacks the Misfits in the back. For reasons unclear, they hand Major Gunns their exercise bar and she hits Palumbo low. Stasiak laughs, so Gunns kicks him low for good measure. So they're bad wrestlers and stupid?

Stevie Ray is joining commentary. This could be good.

### The Demon vs. Major Stash

Stevie thinks Vampiro and Demon are bizarre and doesn't get why they're together. In other words, Stevie either doesn't watch or doesn't understand the stories either. Stash starts with a big boot but charges into a boot in the corner. You would think he would have learned something like that. Demon gets thrown off the middle rope but comes back with a wristlock. Yeah a wristlock from a guy named DEMON. Stash avoids a clothesline and hits a quick ax handle, only to walk into the Love Gun for another quick pin.

Post match Sting (right) appears and points the bat at Vampiro and Demon.

Kidman asks Lance Storm about being serious. Storm says he's always serious and walks off. After Kidman leaves, Kanyon takes out a cameraman with a Kanyon Cutter.

David Flair tells Hancock that he'll do anything for her. Hancock knows that already.

#### Kidman/Lance Storm vs. Mark Jindrak/Sean O'Haire

The Canadian national anthem plays so Kidman reads the paper and dances behind him. Lance finally catches on but doesn't seem to mind as he and Kidman try stereo baseball slides to the floor. That goes as badly as Kidman's dancing as Jindrak and O'Haire press them over the top and back inside. Kidman tags himself in for a Bodog to Jindrak so it's off to Sean for some right hands. Everything breaks down and O'Haire superkicks Storm, leaving Jindrak to plant Kidman with a tilt-a-whirl slam. The Seanton Bomb gives Sean the pin, making me wonder why they got pinned by Morrus and Leroux a few weeks back.

Storm nails Kidman post match, I'm assuming to cement his heel turn.

Vampiro promises to rip off Sting's ski mask. I'd like to see who is actually under there.

Vito talks about how awesome he is.

Hancock tells David to go win her some gold so he attacks Vito and it's time for a title match.

### Hardcore Title: Big Vito vs. David Flair

Vito is defending of course and David is in a suit minus the jacket. He pounds Vito into the arena with whatever he can find as this is one sided so far. Vito remembers that he's fighting David Flair and takes over with right hands, only to get suplexed into the ring for no cover. Cue Hancock (with blue trim instead of white this time) as Vito comes back again with a suplex and top rope elbow. He stops to kiss Hancock though (perk of being a champion), followed by the safety cone to the crotch. The impaler DDT through the table retains Vito's title.

**Rating:** D. I'm assuming these are supposed to be serious matches, which continues to prove that the people running WCW don't understand how wrestling works. They're certainly not funny matches but there's nothing setting them aside that makes them entertaining. That black hole of charisma Steve Blackman is Hardcore Champion in the WWF right now and he's a dozen times more interesting than this. Vito isn't bad or anything but there's nowhere to go with this division.

Jarrett tells Cat that if he's not fighting his scheduled opponent, he's not wrestling. Cat says oh yes you are.

Perfect Event was posing in the ring earlier today (as in before the fans were here) when Kanyon attacked another production guy. It's still funny, but is this going anywhere anytime soon?

### Perfect Event vs. General Rection/Corporal Cajun

Palumbo and Rection get things going with the General scoring off some splashes in the corner. Cajun comes in and gets beaten down due to reasons of not being very good. Things slow down with Stasiak doing one of his only moves (a slam) before stopping to pose. Palumbo's top rope shoulder drops Cajun for two again as Stevie is being the voice of reason against all of Perfect Event's stalling. A gorilla press doesn't work though and the hot tag brings in Rection to clean most of the house until the Jungle Kick slows him down again.

Stasiak gets two off a sitout powerbomb and the fans are actually getting into this. It could be due to it being the longest match of the night,

even though we're not five minutes in yet. Cajun comes in for his dancing punches and a clothesline for two. Whiplash gets two more and everything breaks down. Rection hits his moonsault but Stasiak nails the referee with the exercise bar. He throws it off to Cajun though and the referee sees him holding it for the DQ. Yeah he said Rection had the match won but Cajun broke up the pin for no apparent reason. Egads this company is stupid at times.

**Rating:** D. The match wasn't bad until the ridiculous ending. Rection and Cajun aren't the best tag team in the world but then again this isn't the best tag division in the world either. Palumbo is the most interesting out of all these people and he's just ok at best. The ending hurts this even more though as it comes off again like someone doesn't know how wrestling works.

Here's Booker T. with something to say. Booker talks about how great Jeff Jarrett is in the ring but he fails as a man. This title can be defended anywhere anytime and he'll take on anyone that wants to come after it. As for Scott Steiner, save the drama for your mama. This brings out Rick Steiner to congratulate Booker but it's a ruse (does it could if everyone knows it's coming?) and Rick beats him down. Cue Stevie to get up from the table for the save but Rick beats him down, grabs the title and puts it on. Good night what a horrifying visual. Mike Awesome runs out and makes the save before handing the title back to Booker.

Daffney asks Crowbar if she looks fat in her gear. Crowbar says she's pretty and clearly has a thing for her.

Shane Douglas assures Torrie that she won't have to do anything in the mixed tag.

Cat tells Kidman that if he doesn't interfere in the upcoming match, he can have Lance Storm later tonight.

#### Torrie Wilson/Shane Douglas vs. Crowbar/Daffney

Before the match, Shane says Torrie isn't a wrestler and has no business in this match. Torrie apologizes to everyone in the back but she LOVES being franchised. Crowbar quickly dropkicks Shane to the floor, leaving

Daffney to go after Torrie. We get the catfight for all of ten seconds before it's back to the guys. That goes nowhere so it's back to Torrie who gets caught by Crowbar. Back to Daffney for some lame hair drags (read as Torrie rolls while Daffney touches her hair) and a jawbreaker to Shane.

Crowbar comes back in to beat on Shane even more, including a nice bite to the head. Shane avoids a moonsault and grabs a powerbomb, but just stops as he's got Crowbar in the air. It looked closer to a jackknife but Shane stopped moving instead of letting him go. In other words, it looked awful. Shane loads up another and Crowbar lands on his feet (there's your answer), only to walk into the Franchiser (landing on his feet instead of his knees) for the pin.

**Rating:** D-. Instead of a match, this was much more like a series of quick segments cobbled together. As usual, the women have little business being in a ring and it shows even worse each time. Daffney is a great character but not very good in the ring here and certainly not good enough to carry Torrie. Shane.....I still don't get it. Not at the actual wrestling at least.

Daffney takes a Franchiser (and takes it better) after the match.

Cat gives Awesome Rick Steiner tonight, even though Booker wanted the match.

Here's a sitdown interview with Scott Steiner. He doesn't want to talk about Bash at the Beach but Tenay keeps at it until Steiner says Nash isn't his friend. What Scott did felt right at the time and he doesn't care about Scott Hall's family or the fans out there. Steiner goes on a rant about Booker getting the title and then about Tenay calling the Frankensteiner the hurricanrana. Scott doesn't like Goldberg either and would have beaten him up if Goldberg was smart enough to get into the University of Michigan.

Tenay says Steiner has a lot of hatred bottled up and asks if it dates back to his childhood. That's enough for Steiner and he chokes Tenay out. Tenay deserved that as he was flat out badgering Steiner here and trying to sound all tough. Then you bring up the guy's childhood? You earned

that beating.

The Dragons try to go after Cat again but this time he ducks and lets them hit each other. Kaz gets put in a fireman's carry and spun around so he hits his partners. Funny but just like the Canyon Cutters: is this going anywhere or is it another joke for Russo and Ferrara's amusement?

#### Lance Storm vs. Kidman

Kidman jumps him in the aisle but gets caught in the corner with some dropkicks. Heenan: "You know a lot of people are talking about this Lance Storm." Stevie: "I haven't heard them." Storm loads up a chair in the corner but gets small packaged for two instead. A hurricanrana staggers Storm but he backdrops Kidman out to the floor. Storm's northern lights suplex gets two and a superplex gets the same. Kidman tries a rollup but gets kicked into the chair for his efforts. Like most of the schnooks in this company, Storm tries a powerbomb and eats a faceplant for the pin out of nowhere.

**Rating:** C-. The match was fine but really uninteresting as you had two guys doing moves to each other and then one guy won. Certainly not bad or anything but I never cared about what happened. Then again I'll take not caring over wanting to jump off a bridge any day on this show.

On a side note, one of the people that could actually powerbomb Kidman was La Parka. I know he's been gone for awhile, but that powerbomb got me thinking about the people who aren't around at this point. You can really see the cost cutting coming into play as a lot of names who had been around for a long time have just disappeared.

Buff Bagwell and his mom Judy finally arrive. Buff leaves her in the car (dude come on) and here's Canyon to volunteer to show her around. You can see a look in his eye.

Back from a break and Judy is in a neck brace and being taken away in an ambulance. Oh I would have loved to see her take that move.

#### Rick Steiner vs. Mike Awesome

Awesome elbows him off the middle rope to start and there's a BIG section

of empty seats opposite the camera. As in like twenty of them. That's just horrible. After a quick trip to the floor, Rick kicks him low (which the referee could clearly see) and shouts a lot. Steiner loads him onto his shoulder and rams him into the buckle, followed by a German suplex for two. Mike grabs an Alabama Slam for two and the camera reveals even more empty seats in the corner. A belly to belly superplex gets two for Rick and he yells at the referee a lot, allowing Mike to grab a rollup for the pin.

**Rating:** D. Awesome was trying and Rick looked better than he had in a long time but he's still a horrible excuse for a wrestler who can barely do anything without looking like he has no idea what he's doing. I'm hoping Rick isn't in for a full time return here as I was just getting over watching him help screw this company up last year.

Rick stays on him post match until Booker makes the save.

#### Positively Kanyon vs. Jeff Jarrett

Booker is on commentary and this is now the #1 contenders match all over again. Jeff gets an early two off a backslide and Kanyon gets the same off a small package. Kanyon is annoyed at the pace of the count (a very common complaint tonight) and has to settle for a top rope Fameasser. Jeff bails to the floor so Kanyon points at Booker, allowing Jarrett to get in a suplex on the outside. Both guys are whipped into a variety of metal objects with Kanyon getting the better of it.

The sitout Alabama slam gets two but the swinging book misses, allowing Jeff to DDT him onto the book (Heenan: "I've seen the book kill a lot of guys.") for two. The referee won't let Jeff use the guitar and a book shot gets two with Jeff going to the ropes for the break. Now it's Jeff's turn to go after Stevie and Booker, triggering a brawl. Bagwell comes out to attack Kanyon but security pulls him away, allowing the Stroke to put Kanyon away and send him to New Blood Rising (again).

**Rating:** C. As usual when you let talented guys have a match, it usually winds up being entertaining stuff. This was one of the better matches of the night (again due to having some time) and the ending made enough sense, but it's still nothing that I've going to remember in a few



minutes, which is another one of the major problems with this era.

Jeff and Booker yell at each other a lot to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D. This was a weird one with a lot of the Russo tropes coming out but at a much slower pace. That leaves you with a very odd show that isn't really interesting but feels more like a collection of bad matches. I'd put this above the Russo shows due to more coherence....and that's about the end of its positives. Neither guy knows what they're doing and it gets more and more clear every time I watch one of their shows. I'll take Ferrara over Russo for now, but Terry Taylor and Kevin Sullivan are sounding a lot better every single day.

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