

XWF Episode 3: Going Out With A Yawn

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Date: November 14, 2001

Location: Universal Studios, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Jerry Lawler

It's the final episode after what feels like months. The fact that I've less than two hours of this promotion over about five days should tell you everything you need to know about them. There were some very moderate improvements last time but given how low they started that isn't saying much. The only thing of note is a promised Hulk Hogan match tonight. Let's get to it.

Knobbs does his usual welcome to the show, saying that Jimmy Hart is out scouting for new talent. So each of the discs are made at different times?

Intro with a quick recap of last week.

Gene brings out Rena Mero with her security guards, two of whom appear to be Tugboat and Barbarian. She won't directly address Roddy Piper's actions and writes them off as growing pains for the XWF. Mero says she's happy with everything that's happening around here and is off to ask Piper what the main event is here tonight. Gene goes with her for some reason.

Jim Duggan chants XWF.

The South Philly Posse (Public Enemy) talk to the woman they annoyed last week. Apparently it's Jasmine St. Clair, their new manager.

Drezden vs. Marty Jannetty

Drezden looks like the Wall (from WCW) crossed with Neo from the Matrix crossed with an S&M enthusiast. He runs Marty over as this has squash written all over it. A slam puts Marty down again but he avoids an elbow,

only to dive into a bearhug. Drezden easily lifts Marty up for a nice powerbomb and the pin.

Greg Valetine still wants a match but Piper doesn't care. To be fair Piper can't hear because of Valentine so can you blame him?

Horace Hogan vs. Josh Matthews

Josh is thrown around like the rookie that he is and Horace drops an elbow to the back. They head to the floor with Josh being rammed into various objects while getting in no offense at all. Back in and Josh's sunset flip is countered into a chokebomb for two as Horace pulls him up. As you would expect, Josh grabs a small package for the fast count pin.

Jimmy Hart promises to take us to Hail and back.

Shane Twins vs. South Philly Posse

Mike pounds on Rocco in the corner to start before throwing him onto Grunge. Off to Todd for a double shoulder block on Rocco for two. A powerslam gets the same but Grunge gets in a cheap shot from the apron to take over. He works over Mike's leg for some psychology before waddling over for a few kicks to the face. Rocco comes off the middle rope with a headbutt to the knee as the fans are drowning out the commentary again.

Another headbutt has the knee in trouble and it's back to Grunge for a knee to the knee. A double back elbow drops Mike and it's back to the knee. Choking ensues as this match is actually getting some time. Rocco nearly breaks his own shoulder on a missed Lionsault and it's a double tag to bring in Todd and Grunge. Everything breaks down and the Nasty Boys come out but Mike rolls up Grunge for the pin before they can interfere.

Rating: D+. The match was the junk you would expect, but I'll give the XWF points for pushing the Shane Twins like they have. They've been put over all three of the established teams in a row and came out looking like they could mean something soon. That's a good sign, but it's not like any of those three teams meant anything at this point.

The Wall, looking WAY different than he did in WCW, says people are going

to run into him.

Gene brings out Jimmy Snuka and his son as you can see the coconut references from here. Why they come out to an instrumental version of Marilyn Manson's The Beautiful People is beyond me. Jimmy puts over the fans when Roddy Piper comes out to call them both coconut heads and sing about a lovely bunch of coconuts.

Gene tries to get Piper to come fight Snuka but Piper makes fun of Gene's hair instead. More coconut references ensue but Piper says Rena Mero won't let him fight. She comes out and says go ahead because she's a big Snuka fan. Piper claims an arm injury and makes Buff Bagwell/Vampiro vs. Ian Harrison/Curt Hennig.

Knobbs recaps the first half of the show, calling Josh Matthews the winner of the first match because it's too hard to remember the Drezden squash from 20 minutes ago. He confirms that the bodyguards were Tugboat, Barbarian and 4x4 who you likely won't remember from 1999 WCW.

Cruiserweight Title: Kid Kash vs. AJ Styles

Jobber entrance for the challenger AJ. Styles works on a hammerlock to start as the announcers talk about Piper taunting Snuka. Kash is taken down to the mat and we get some decent technical stuff. Back up and AJ blocks an O'Connor Roll by grabbing the ropes. Well at least he was supposed to as Kash was already rolling backwards before AJ was touching them but the idea was there.

They trade armdrags, hiptosses and legsweeps to get us to a standoff. Styles and Kash go nose to nose before Kash gets the crowd on his side. AJ misses a spinning kick to the face but gets two off a superkick. A dropkick mostly misses and the fans loudly boo Styles' efforts. We hit a chinlock on the champion but Kash quickly fights up and gets two off a middle rope clothesline. Kash runs up the corner for a spinning cross body before the double underhook piledriver is enough to retain the title.

Rating: C-. Bad botches aside, there just wasn't much here. This is as token of a cruiserweight division as you can get, though based on how

green AJ looked out there it isn't hard to see why. Styles needed more seasoning and a short term All-Star company like this is the place to get it.

The XWF Girls give Rena ideas. Literally it's just her saying they gave her good ideas and throwing the cameraman out.

Jimmy Snuka Jr. vs. Vapor

Vapor wrestled for a brief stretch in the WWE as Sakoda and Snuka Jr. was Deuce of Deuce and Domino. Snuka dominates to start and sends Vapor into the corner for some kicks to the chest. A forward belly to back suplex puts Vapor down to the floor but he comes back with kicks to the leg. They trade chops in the corner before Vapor gets in a gutbuster for two.

We get a bad looking botch as Jimmy was supposed to get a boot up in the corner but Vapor just had to collide with him instead. Vapor's manager Sonny Onoo's interference doesn't work and Jimmy gets two off a neckbreaker. Jimmy Sr. and Sonny get in and the heels are whipped into each other. Stereo Superfly Splashes crush the Japanese contingent and Jr. pins Vapor.

Rating: D+. Vapor had a good look but nothing more than that. It's pretty clear to see why Snuka Jr. never went anywhere, even though he got better as Deuce Shade in OVW. Jimmy Sr. coming in at the end was a nice moment but it made the ending about him rather than his son, which defeats the purpose of Sr. being down there.

Curt Hennig/Ian Harrison vs. Vampiro/Buff Bagwell

Hennig and Vampiro get things going but it's quickly off to Harrison before any contact is made. Harrison easily wins a slugout and choke bombs Vampiro down for no cover. Back to Hennig for more right hands as the fans don't seem to understand he's on the heel team. Bagwell and Vampiro double elbow Hennig down before Buff sends him out to the floor.

Heenan nearly runs into Harrison and looks terrified, even though he's managing Harrison tonight. Back in and it's off to Vampiro who comes in to a BIG cheer. Hennig takes him down with a knee lift before bringing

Harrison back in for a hard clothesline. A gorilla press (most of one at least) sends Vampiro to the floor but Bagwell clotheslines Ian to the outside as well. Everything breaks down and Hennig gets a quick small package on Buff for the pin.

Rating: D. Again no time to go anywhere and the match means nothing. I think Bagwell is supposed to be a top face here but we still haven't heard anything from him other than "I'm Buff Bagwell and I'm here." The ending came out of nowhere and really hurt whatever they had going, which to be fair wasn't much at all.

Vampiro and Buff are about to come to blows when the locker room comes out to break it up to end the show.

Knobbs talks about how the show was starting to take shape before mentioning Rocco Rock, the Wall, Hennig and Hawk all having died since this was taped. That's quite a way to go out.

Since that would be a horrible way to end this horrible set, here's a bonus match from the DVD, featuring the only Hulk Hogan match for the promotion. This is also on the Hulk Hogan Ultimate Anthology DVD.

Hulk Hogan vs. Curt Hennig

Hogan shoves him away to start and poses before running Hennig over with a shoulder. Back in and Hennig goes down to a test of strength but Curt comes back with some loud chops. Hogan won't be sent into the buckle but rams Curt's head ten times on three buckles plus the mat for good measure. Hogan does his punches in the corner as this is a total squash so far. Curt finally gets in a kick when Hogan lowers his head and the PerfectPlex gets two. I think you know the drill from here. Legdrop ends Curt.

Rating: D. This didn't have time to go anywhere and would have been a dark match at a major TV taping. Hogan looked fine but there's only so much you can do in a five minute match. Both guys would be in the WWF by February so it's not like this was ever going to mean anything.

Post match Hogan poses for awhile before Gene comes in and asks about

Hogan's future plans. Hogan says needs to get in better shape to hang with these young guys around here. As for being in the ring, he has bills to pay and thinks being XWF Champion doesn't sound bad.

Overall Rating: D. It's still horrible but things were starting to come to form by the last episode. Like I've said every time, there's no way this promotion was going to last long term. The bare minimum stories, below average action and a near complete lack of promos from wrestlers (I don't really count people saying they're here to be a promo) really bring this place down.

If we hadn't seen most of these guys doing nothing on Nitro for the last few years, MAYBE this could have worked, but the way they were going about it was destined to fail the entire time. This could have worked as a summer tour or something like that, but nothing long term. It's not the worst promotion I've ever seen by a long stretch, but there's absolutely nothing here that would hold my interest. In a word, this whole thing was dull, and that's not the kind of promotion that is going to last long term.

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