

CWA Championship Wrestling – January 8, 1983: Lawler Makes This Show Much Better

CWA Championship Wrestling

Date: January 8, 1983

Location: WMC-TV Studios, Memphis, Tennessee

Commentators: Lance Russell, Dave Brown

Back to Memphis for another week of a not very interesting show. Hopefully this week is better as in theory Jerry Lawler will be back. He's coming up on a rematch with Bockwinkel where I'm sure there won't be any shenanigans afoot. I have up through the middle of February with this show so it should be interesting to see where they go. Let's get to it.

Shepherders vs. Ira Reese/Bobby Fulton

Fulton would become one of the Fantastics, my favorite NWA team from the 80s. This is Luke and Jonathan Boyd instead of Butch. Boyd pounds Fulton into the corner to start and it's quickly off to Luke. It's odd to see them in red. Fulton tries to speed things up but he gets double teamed almost immediately. A knee drop gets two for Luke and it's back to Boyd. Fulto hits a shoulder and finally makes the tag to Reese. The Herders run him over too and it's time for Reese to suffer some too. Williams knees him in the back and they double team choke Reese a bit. A double knee drop gets the pin on Reese.

Rating: D. This was a long squash and not a very entertaining one. It's amazing to see how different the Shepherders were as compared to the Bushwackers as these guys were brutal and violent. When these guys (and by that I mean the Butch version) had good opponents, they could have some great bloody wars.

Video on the Fabulous Ones who were flamboyant but very popular. They were good too.

Video on the Lawler vs. Bockwinkel title match with Jerry finally getting the belt. There are clips of other matches they had in here too.

Jerry Lawler vs. The Invader

Lawler throws him around a few times and then takes out the leg for a basic hold on it. Lawler counters a headlock into a knee crusher and it's clear he doesn't really have to try here. Invader fires off some right hands in the corner but Lawler easily slugs him down and the middle rope punch gets the pin.

Rating: D. Nothing to see here but Lawler was fun back in his day. I know all most people remember to day are his weak jokes, but Lawler knew how to work a crowd like few others could. I could guarantee that if you put him in a feud today when he's in his early 60s, you could have him be a heel or a face and he would have the crowd eating out of the palm of his hand in about a week. It's an art form and Lawler is a master of it.

Lawler, who still doesn't have the belt with him as it was held up, looks at a clip from the title changing match. The referee was bumped and Bockwinkel's feet were in the ropes during the pin but the referee didn't see it. At least there's a legit issue with the title change. Bockwinkel goes on a rant about how he didn't lose and promises that this won't stand. After a break, Lawler doesn't respond to what we just saw. Ok then.

Apocalypse vs. Bill Dundee

Dundee immediately knocks Apocalypse to the floor for a consultation with the still young looking Jim Cornette. Back in and Apocalypse takes him down and splashes Dundee for two. After some more power stuff, Apocalypse

goes up and hits a middle rope headbutt to a standing Dundee for two. Dundee comes out of the corner with a cross body which draws in Cornette and his boys for the DQ.

The Cornette Dynasty destroys Dundeed post match. Jacques Rougeau and Terry Taylor finally make the save.

Video on Terry Taylor. This goes on for like three minutes.

Bobby Eaton/Sweet Brown Sugar vs. Jacques Rougeau/Terry Taylor

Rougeau is the Mid-America Champion and Taylor is the Southern Champion. Sugar is more famous as Koko B. Ware. Taylor and Eaton get going to start and things speed up, which you know is going to be at least moderately awesome. Off to Sugar who is immediately taken over in a headlock by Taylor. Rougeau comes in and things slow down a bit. We get a test of strength resulting in Rougeau monkey flipping Sugar down.

Back to Eaton who is taken down by another headlock as things slow down even more. Eaton has black hair here which is an odd look on him. The heels finally wake up and cheat to take over on Jacques. Taylor gets a quick hot tag and cleans house, only to get poked in the eye and taken down. Sugar works on his back and then the arm as the fans are WILD about Taylor. Back to Eaton with a knee drop for no cover.

Sugar comes in again and I think this is 2/3 falls. They're really bad about letting us know these things in advance. I get that it's a common thing of the era, but if you're someone like me who doesn't get to see this regularly, a little notification would help. Taylor finally gets away from Eaton and it's off to Rougeau for a quick middle rope dropkick on sugar, good for the first fall.

We start fall #2 with Sugar taking over on Rougeau. Back to Eaton as Jacques is in trouble early on. After some quick offense from Eaton,

Sugar comes back in for a fast chinlock. Rougeau misses a cross body out of the corner as Eaton ducks and gets two off of it. Jacques finally makes a comeback but doesn't tag for some reason. Eaton trips him up coming off the top, allowing Sugar to drop an elbow on him for two.

Rating: C. There's no time for a third fall so this is going to end in another draw. This wasn't bad and it was fast paced enough, but I'm not a big fan of Koko and I'm certainly no fan of Taylor. Still though, this was certainly interesting enough to keep my attention for the last fifteen minutes of the show. Not great but not bad so we'll go right in the middle.

Overall Rating: C+. I liked this show better than last week and a lot of that was due to the main event and Lawler. Last week's main event was a big mess but this one, while not the best in the world, was much more coherent and easier to follow. At the end of the day though, the important thing here though is Lawler. He's made to be the biggest thing on the show and when you don't see him there, it makes the show seem less important. He made it that much better.

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Clash of the Champions Count-Up – #15: I Apologize For This Show's Pun

Clash of the Champions 15: Knoxville USA

Date: June 12, 1991

Location: Civic Auditorium, Knoxville, Tennessee

Attendance: 5,000

Commentators: Jim Ross, Tony Schiavone

Let's get the most important thing out of the way first: that is a very dumb pun for a title. This is a weird show for WCW as Flair was on his way out due to WCW being really stupid. The main event is Flair defending the title against Bobby Eaton in a 2/3 falls match which should be awesome. This is a very old school style show in that there are a lot of matches but most of them are short. Let's get to it.

Missy Hyatt opens the show but Paul E. Dangerously (Heyman) comes out to wonder why he wasn't told they were going live.

Young Pistols/Z-Man vs. Freebirds

The Pistols are Steve Armstrong/Tracy Smothers and the Birds are Hayes/Garvin/Badstreet, who is Brad Armstrong, Steve's real life brother, under a mask. The Freebirds are US Tag Champions here and have two managers: Big Daddy Dink who is more famous as Oliver Humperdink and Diamond Dallas Page who is more famous as Diamond Dallas Page. Garvin vs. Z-Man to start us off.

Bill Alfonso, as in Fonzie from ECW, is the referee. Everything breaks down quickly and the good guys clear the ring. Smothers vs. Hayes now and Smothers takes over. The Birds beat the Pistols at SuperBrawl for the titles so there's a history there. The ring gets cleared out again and it's off to Garvin again. Badstreet comes in and Smothers evades all of them for awhile until Badstreet sends him to the floor. Smothers takes a hot shot onto the railing and Z-Man is down too for some reason. Everything breaks down again and the three good guys are thrown out twice. They come back in and hit three stereo sunset flips for the pin.

Rating: C. We'll ignore that the ending was totally illegal because it was kind of a cool looking thing. The match wasn't bad and was there to get the crowd into the show which is the whole point. The Pistols never did much of anything and Z-Man

either had just lost the TV Title or was about to get it. After that he didn't do much either. These guys had nothing else to do so throw them in a tag match. That's old school booking 103.

Enter the Great American Bash Ric Flair Sweepstakes for a chance to meet Ric Flair who was in the WWF by that time! That's the final WCW PPV I'm going to review also as it's possibly the worst show ever.

Oz vs. Johnny Rich

Oz is just what he sounds like: a character based on the Wizard of Oz. He comes out of a castle that is so real you can see it shake from the smoke machines. He has the Great Wizard (Kevin Sullivan) with him and Oz himself is more famous as Kevin Nash. You might ask why this character exists. That would be because Ted Turner's TBS station had acquired the rights to the film Wizard of Oz. Seriously, that's it. After the big slow entrance, Nash wrestles a faster version of what he usually does, totally missing the point. He finishes with an Eye of the Storm (James Storm's move) which is called the Emerald City Slam. Just a squash here.

PN News is coming. Oh dear. He's a guy the size of Mark Henry and a very white rapper.

Dan Spivey vs. Big Josh

Josh is a lumberjack that danced with bear cubs. Are you starting to get why this period was AWFUL for WCW? Spivey is really tall so this is power vs. power. Neither guy is very good and this is almost all punching. Spivey gets a big boot but walks into a suplex. They miscommunicate on something and Josh gets a German for no cover. Here's Kevin Sullivan still in his Wizard stuff to break a crutch over Josh's back and a German suplex pins him. This was nothing.

The WCW Top Ten:

1. Lex Luger
2. Great Muta
3. El Gigante
4. Bobby Eaton
5. Nikita Koloff
6. Sting
7. Arn Anderson
8. Barry Windham
9. One Man Gang
10. Steve Austin

All are under Flair of course.

Here's the Danger Zone which is Dangerously's talk segment. He brings out Jason Hervey because that little fungus has to be on every WCW show EVER. Heyman won't let him say anything other than like one word. They talk about the Wonder Years and Dangerously says Hervey is dating Missy Hyatt who Dangerously feuded with forever. Hervey gets mad and gets hit with the phone so Missy comes out for the save.

Terrance Taylor vs. Dustin Rhodes

Rhodes is REALLY young here and not that good. Taylor is the Computerized Man of the 90s and part of the York Foundation. He has Alexandra York with him who is more famous as Terri Runnels plus Mr. Hughes. Rhodes is undefeated which I'm sure has nothing to do with his fat daddy booking things. There's going to be a new member of the Foundation tonight.

Dustin beats the tar out of him to start but misses a charge in the corner and hits the post. Isn't that always the way for overly perky faces. Taylor gets a bottom rope suplex of all things back in for two. Gutwrench powerbomb gets the same. Dustin fights back and hits the Flip Flop and Fly to take over. He hits the bulldog but Hughes gets up on the apron. Ricky Morton is here for some reason and the match is thrown out. Morton beats Dustin down and he's the new member of the

Foundation.

Rating: D. This was nothing other than a way for Morton to come in for the turn at the end. Rhodes and the Foundation feuded for a long time as Robert Gibson was recovering from a knee injury. This wasn't a very good match as Dustin was the boss' son and that's about it. No one was interested in it but the turn at the end was a nice touch.

Big Josh makes the save.

Johnny B. Badd is coming. His character is gay but we're not going to say that because it's 1991.

We recap Nikita Koloff jumping Sting by mistake at the first SuperBrawl to end the classic tag match. This set up a huge feud which is being blown off here.

Sting vs. Nikita Koloff

I remember these two having a chain match later so maybe this isn't the blowoff. Sting runs to the ring and is pounded down quickly. No one ever accused Sting of being the brightest guy in the world. Koloff hits a flying tackle and Sting is in big trouble. Out to the floor and Sting goes into the railing. Out of nowhere Sting hits a piledriver but Koloff is up first.

Koloff drops him on his head with a tombstone for two. He kicks at the ribs and blocks a sunset flip. The second attempt works and Sting gets two. Koloff hammers on the ribs again and the extended squash continues. Nikita even throws in an evil laugh because he's foreign and foreign people are bad. Out to the floor and Sting manages to reverse Koloff into the barricade. Back inside Sting hits a tombstone of his own and makes his comeback. He fires away with that unique style of offense of his but the Splash misses and Koloff loads up the Sickles but Sting ducks and grabs a rollup for the pin out of nowhere.

Rating: C. The crowd was WAY into this but the match was pretty dull. Koloff just didn't care anymore at this point as his wife had passed away a few years before and he wanted out of wrestling to run his gym. He would be gone pretty soon after the Bash and would come back for a summer run in WCW before retiring for good. The crowd carried this a lot and it helped keep the match from being worse than it should have been.

PN News and the chicks from Salt N Peppa are here to rap. This is.....well let's go with William Regal will win a grammy for best rapping before this guy. Johnny B. Badd and Teddy Long appear and talk about how they're tired of being held down or something. Badd leaves and this is worthless.

Diamond Studd is coming. In a year or so he would imitate Al Pacino from Scarface and call himself Razor Ramon.

Barry Windham/Arn Anderson vs. El Gigante/Brian Pillman

Whoever takes the fall is out of WCW. Brian vs. Arn to get us going in a future battle of the Horsemen. Off to Windham who pounds him down but a spin kick gets two for Pillman. Back to Arn and I guess we're waiting on the hot tag to Gigante, kind of like when Giant and Sullivan beat up Anderson and Benoit in 96. They can't beat Gigante so avoid him at all costs. He gets his hand in on Anderson but Windham makes the save.

They do the Andre/Snuka spot for a cross body for two on Windham. Gigante and Anderson go to the floor as Pillman is shoved off the top and Windham kicks him in the face for the pin. Not long enough to rate but Pillman was back in a mask by the PPV which was one of those things where everyone knew who he was but it was a joke or something.

Great American Bash report, which was a tour but there was a PPV for one night of the show.

We get a clip from the ending of Bash 90 with Sting taking the

title off Flair. Also stuff from the Steiners beating the Freebirds.

Clip from the WCW/New Japan Supershow where the Steiners won the IWGP Tag Titles.

IWGP Tag Titles: Steiner Brothers vs. Hiroshi Hase/Masahiro Chono

Hase vs. Scott to start and Hase hits an enziguri (called a karate kick) to send Steiner to the floor. Steiner takes a beating so it's off to Rick who is more popular here. Chono comes in and hits the Mafia Kick and then a second one. A third one can't put Rick down so he hits a Steiner Line instead. Off to Scott and the Steiners hit a move that would have been a cool finisher for another team but for the Steiners it's just another move. Scott sets for an Outsider's Edge and Rick drops a top rope elbow at the same time to drive Chono down.

Off to Hase and the American hits a German on the Japanese dude. Rick's headset is coming off. But how will he know when to breathe without the voice telling him when to inhale? (Why else would he wear that thing?) It's off to the rookie Chono which is weird to say. He recently had a match with Lou Thesz of all people and hooks in an STF to prove it. Scott and Hase fight on the floor as Rick has been in the hold about 30 seconds. Scott gets to the apron and comes off the top, missing completely to the point where he has to break it up again.

Scott comes back in and runs over Hase so he can hit a butterfly bomb for two. There's a belly to belly off the top for two and Hase is about dead. Chono saves and a dragon suplex gets two. This is getting a lot better as it goes on. The Japanese try an Irish on the American but Rick pulls Chono out so Scott can hit a Frankensteiner on Hase for the pin. JR's American spirit pops out as he FREAKS about the Steiners

retaining.

Rating: B. Very good match here as the Japanese team was all over the place with cool suplexes and the Steiners were more than capable of hanging with them, which gave us something that you almost never saw in America at this point. Hase would team with Muta to take the titles from the Steiners later in the year.

Post match, the Hardliners, Dick Slater and Dick Murdoch, come out and beat up both teams. During the beatdown they legit injured Scott's arm. He had to have surgery and wasn't ever really the same. Keep in mind that this was when WCW basically had the world title on standby for him whenever he was ready to break up the Steiners, so this was a pretty big deal.

Diamond Studd vs. Tommy Rich

Total squash and Rich's only offense is some basic stuff after getting his knees up on a Vader Bomb. Razor's Edge ends it. This lasted about 90 seconds.

A kid won a Sting look-a-like contest. He gets to meet Sting. The kid freaks out so this is kind of cool. Koloff jumps him, setting up the rematch at the Bash. That's where the chain match was. I knew it happened somewhere.

US Title: Great Muta vs. Lex Luger

Luger is champion and the winner gets the title and the world title shot at the Bash. Muta spits out some mist before the match begins. There's nothing really going on as far as flow to it but it's big star vs. big star. Luger uses his power stuff but misses an elbow so Muta can stomp away. A gorilla press puts Muta down but Lex misses a charge and takes a big kick. The handspring elbow misses and Muta crashes to the floor. At least that looked cool. Back in Muta loads up the mist but Luger comes up with a counter that somehow no one else ever thought of: he covers his eyes. A powerslam ends

this five seconds later.

Rating: D. Match sucked but I'm more impressed by that block. I mean, of all people, LEX LUGER is the clever one??? Even with all these reviews I can still be surprised. Anyway Lex would go on to main event the Bash in a match I can't wait to get to for how stupid it is. Muta would go back to Japan and would only appear on occasion.

There's a guy coming to WCW. His name is Steve Austin. Wait...he'd be TV Champion at this point. I'm going to give up trying to figure out WCW. It'll add years on to my life.

Steve Austin vs. Joey Maggs

Oh ok he had won the title but the episode hadn't aired yet. Austin's manager is a chick named Lady Blossom who has a chest that is probably bigger than Trish's and still works. Austin hits the Stun Gun and we're done in about 40 seconds.

We continue the Coming Attractions thing which is what they've been using to talk about new people all night. This is for Black Blood, which is Billy Jack Haynes as an executioner.

Richard Morton is introduced as the newest member of the York Foundation. He's in a suit with the rocker hair. He talks about not having to sign autographs anymore. Gibson comes out and is medically cleared now. Morton beats him up and piledrives him. Dustin Rhodes comes out for the save. This might have lasted a minute.

WCW World Title: Bobby Eaton vs. Ric Flair

2/3 falls. Feeling out process to start and Eaton gets in a slap to tick Flair off. A clothesline puts Flair outside and they're going slow to start but they have enough time for it. Back in Flair gets him in the corner and Eaton isn't a big enough face to shrug those off. Eaton fires away on him and there's a Flair Flop. Bobby grabs a shortarm scissors and I'm

not sure if that would hurt or not.

There's a little old lady in the front row that is having a blast. Flair keeps getting a little rush of offense but Eaton counters it every time. Flair sends him into the corner and Eaton's head might have hit the post. That's enough for Flair as he goes in with his usual stuff. After working over the arm for a bit they get back up and slug it out with Eaton taking over again. Flair goes up and Ross makes a joke about how that never works.

Flair Flip in the corner and a right hand takes him down. Something like a Boss Man Slam into a backbreaker puts Flair down and a big swinging neckbreaker looks to set up the Alabama Jam. It's a top rope legdrop and it puts Eaton up 1-0. There's a thirty second rest period between falls. They slug it out again and Flair can't keep up with him.

Backslide gets two. Eaton hits another neckbreaker and goes up again but Flair pops up this time and in a smart move, Eaton comes back in instead of going up. Flair is put down again but as Eaton goes up he gets shoved off and hits his knee on the floor, causing a count-out to tie things up.

Back in Eaton hits a superplex but can't capitalize because of the knee. Eventually the cover gets two and Flair sets for the knee crusher. For absolutely no apparent reason he picks Eaton up for it...and suplexes him instead. He has the knee held back too so it was clearly that move. Anyway Flair goes after the knee and gets the Figure Four after two failed attempts. After a few moments in there, Flair grabs the ropes and Eaton blacks out from the pain for the pin and Flair retains.

Rating: B. It's a good match and the first fall is by far the best. Eaton was a very good hand for WCW and you could throw him in for a quick TV title shot like this and get a good result like this. Flair working on the knee makes sense and after sitting through a show this long and boring, this was

probably a bit high but I don't care at this point. The show is over and that's all that matters.

JR and Tony wrap it up.

Overall Rating: D+. The main event is good and the tag match was good, but MAN the rest of this show is dull. These new guys that were being brought in had no real stories to them or anything like that and as a result, no one was all that interested in them. This all led up to the Bash which is absolutely dreadful. Anyway this was another weak show but 91 wasn't a kind year to WCW. Sting vs. Koloff was a huge feud but this match was nothing worth seeing. Bad show but it has its moments.

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