

Wrestler of the Day – September 28: El Gigante

Today is a guy that could look down at Great Khali: El Gigante.

After being introduced to the crowd at Great American Bash 1990, Gigante would have his in ring debut at Great American Bash 1990.

Dudes With Attitude vs. Horsemen

It's Orndorff/JYD/El Gigante (making his debut) vs. Sid/Barry/Arn (TV Champion) and this is more of the Sting's guys vs. Horsemen war. Arn vs. Paul gets us going. Sid comes in instead so Paul hip tosses everyone. He can't backslide Sid though, or at least not until the JYD headbutts Sid down. Arn comes in to pound on Paul but he fights out of the corner. El Gigante comes in and everyone named after a Horse runs.

The Horsemen have a huddle but Orndorff pulls him back in for a beating from JYD. Gigante pulls back a fist and Anderson runs very fast as his eyes bug out. Windham comes in and JYD gets down on all fours to headbutt him a few times. Arn punches the Dog a few times and brings Barry back in. Windham DDTs Dog and hey he has a hard head. That's a new one from him.

A not hot tag brings Orndorff in and he cleans a few rooms. The Dudes were never in any real trouble so there's no heat on the tag. He loads up the piledriver on Anderson but Barry comes in off the top to break it up. The fans want Sid so he comes in for a chinlock. Everything breaks down and a lot of people are thrown over the top. The Horsemen run from Gigante and somewhere in there the Dudes win via DQ.

Rating: D. There was no point here other than to showcase Gigante. The problem with that is he's just there for his look rather than anything resembling skill. Very boring match here and the fans didn't care at all other than wanting the eternally popular Sid. This wouldn't end anytime soon that I remember.

Off to Japan for a bit at the 1991 WCW/NJPW Supershow.

Big Cat Hughes vs. El Gigante

This is out of order for some reason as this is supposed to be the Steiners tag match. Hughes is for once not the bodyguard character. Gigante is more commonly known as Giant Gonzalez and is about 3-4 inches taller than Khali. He also has about 1/3 of the talent. To give you an idea of his size, when he's on the floor his head is over the top rope. When he's in the ring his tights (half shorts) nearly go above the top rope. Where the top turnbuckle would be is the height of his crotch, as in about the chest/shoulders of a guy the height of Cena.

Fonzie of ECW fame is the referee. This is more or less a squash as Hughes is about 315lbs and Gigante slams him with one arm after holding him up for awhile. He sets for a suplex and literally, as in I timed it, holds him in a front facelock while playing to the crowd for 34 seconds before doing anything. Hughes couldn't step on his foot or something in 34 seconds? Really? A jumping boot sets up the Claw Hold to end it.

Well he's had two matches so here's a gimmick match at the first SuperBrawl.

El Gigante vs. Sid Vicious

This is a stretcher match, which means regular rules but the loser gets taken out on a stretcher. Sid was leaving after this to head to the WWF so the ending is about as much of a given as possible. Sid is of course from anywhere he darn well please which is always funny. Gigante was bigger than Khali but with less talent. He was just a freaking monster but he was incredibly over.

Later he would be known as Giant Gonzalez which he's a bit more known for. And it's a 2 minute match. GOOD FREAKING NIGHT WILL YOU CUT THIS OUT? One Man Gang waddles out and does

nothing but get his teeth kicked in, as does Kevin Sullivan. Thanks for that guys. Sid gets the goodbye song as Gigante rolls Gang out on the stretcher but hey, Sullivan has powder. Sid is gone by the way. That was completely pointless.

Gigante almost got thrown out of the company at Clash of the Champions XV.

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

Whoever takes the fall leaves WCW. This is fallout from WarGames where the Horsemen injured Pillman and Gigante had to come out and submit for him. Pillman gets a quick backslide for two on Windham and Barry heads to the corner. Barry comes back in with some chops but walks into a spinwheel kick for two.

Barry gets a quick DDT for two of his own and it's off to Anderson. Arn goes up top for no apparent reason and gets dropkicked down, followed by a nice plancha from Brian. Gigante grabs Anderson by the throat before letting Brian get on his shoulders for a very high cross body on Windham. Everything breaks down and Barry shoves Pillman off the top before kicking him in the face for the pin out of nowhere.

Rating: C. That came out of nowhere. Pillman looked great out there and Gigante did as minimum as possible while still being alive. This was a strange period for Anderson as he really didn't do much other than wrestle in tag teams and dominate the TV Title, meaning I often forget he's on the card at all.

From one of the worst PPVs ever, Great American Bash 1991.

El Gigante vs. One Man Gang

Gang is in a freaky monster look here with insane hair for no apparent reason. His manager Kevin Sullivan talks forever on the way to the ring about a death wagon. Gigante has four midgets with him for no apparent reason. Sullivan and Gang cut Gigante's hair prior to this. The small guys get on Gang's nerves until Sullivan hits one and we're ready to go. Gang runs to the ramp but is quickly thrown back in.

Gang rams into Gigante and that goes nowhere. Gigante hiptosses him and hits the worst shoulders in the corner you'll ever see. Gang avoids a corner charge and hits a middle rope clothesline to put Gigante on the ropes. Gang finds a wrench from somewhere and beats on Gigante with it which goes nowhere either. He rams the wrench into Gigante over and over but the giant won't go down.

FINALLY some knee shots put him down and Gang works on that a bit. A splash gets two and Gigante throws Gang to the apron on the kickout. Gang gets slammed off the top, suplexed, rammed into Sullivan, has powder kicked into his face and gets clotheslined in the back of his head for the pin.

Rating: F. You know, I used to love El Gigante as a kid, but he makes Great Khali look like Daniel Bryan. I know that sounds like it's way over the top, but I kid you not he was that bad. This was a terrible match as Gigante can't sell anything, he has a bad arsenal, and even he couldn't get the fans to wake up. Remembering that he was probably the second biggest face in the company at this point, that says a lot.

Take a giant, put him in a battle royal. From Clash of the Champions XVI.

Battle Royal

Z-Man, Thomas Rich, Bobby Eaton, Ranger Ross, Tracy Smothers, Oz, P.N. News, Sgt. Buddy Lee Parker, Steve Austin, Dustin Rhodes, Terrance Taylor, Big Josh, Barry Windham, One Man Gang, El Gigante

This is called the Georgia Brawl. Rich has recently joined the York Foundation, Austin is now the TV Champion and Rhodes, Josh and Z-Man are now the Six Man Tag Team Champions. It's almost impossible to call a match like this in the early going as there's just too much going on. We're about three minutes in already with no eliminations so far. Oz and Gigante choke at each other against the ropes while the smaller guys double team all of the giants and monsters.

Austin and Eaton fight to the apron but get back in as there are still no eliminations. Josh is sent over the top but skins the cat and pulls Taylor and Ross out with him but gets eliminated in the process. Rich and

Parker are thrown out off camera as a bunch of people splash Gang in the corner. Z-Man is tossed as Oz chokes News into the corner. Austin backdrops Tracy to the floor and Gang THROWS Eaton onto the ramp for an elimination.

News seems to dive over the corner to eliminate himself. Austin and Windham go out at the same time, getting us down to Oz, Gang, Rhodes and Gigante. Gang crushes Dustin in the corner as Gigante is blinded next to the ropes. He manages to get his Claw hold on Oz but Gang makes the save. Oz and Gang eliminate Dustin but Gigante clotheslines them both out at the same time for the win.

Rating: D. Battle royals are always hard to grade but this was just bad. There was no story to it at all and the eliminations came so fast that none of them had any kind of impact at all. The lack of drama hurt too as Gigante was a fairly clear winner once it got down towards the end. It also shows how extensive yet shallow the midcard was. Most of these guys, while different, didn't really offer anything special at this point.

Another big gimmick match Halloween Havoc 1991.

Cactus Jack/Abdullah The Butcher/Diamond Studd/Big Van Vader vs. Steiner Brothers/El Gignate/Sting

Oh boy it's the Chamber of Horrors. Now if you've never heard of this, clear some room off your list of absurd gimmicks. This is inside a cage similar to the Cell, although there's no top on it and the holes in the cage are bigger. Inside are coffins, skeletons and a few weapons. The idea of the match is that everyone is fighting at once and at some point during the match, an electric chair will lower from the ceiling. Someone must be placed in the chair, strapped down and someone from the other team has to throw a switch, "electrocuting" them. And somehow, it'll be even dumber than it sounds.

Oh and Gigante is replacing the injured Windham and Cactus is replacing Oz, although Oz will be in a match later and apparently Oz replaced Jack in that match. No idea why they made the switch. Jack comes out with a chainsaw minus the chain. Sting is US Champion here and yes, this is really what they're using him for. Cactus jumps Sting on the ramp and

Abdullah helps, but Rick comes out for the save. This is before we're even in the cage. Well Rick was but he left because it's just a cage so why should it be hard to stay inside?

In the ring Scott kills the Studd with a Tiger Driver while Gigante fights Vader. Sting gets a kendo stick to pound away on everyone he sees. Well everyone that isn't on his team that is. Or the referee either. Speaking of the referee, he has a camera on his head here which is really more annoying than anything else. That could be an interesting idea for an angle but it never went anywhere.

People in masks pop out of those caskets. They don't do anything but they pop out anyway. Sting clotheslines Vader to the floor and Gigante pulls Studd off of the cage wall. The Steiners hit their top rope DDT on Cactus as the chair is lowered. Vader knocks Rick into the chair but Rick clotheslines his way out of it. Sting throws a casket lid up in the air so it lands on Cactus' head.

Now we have ghouls coming out with a stretcher. Again they don't do anything but they're there. Scott shatters a kendo stick over Cactus' head, breaking him open. Cactus and Sting climb the cage and ram each other into it, which is one of the few actual clear brawls in the match. The rest of it is too hard to call because of the awful camera work. Sting has the stick now and stabs Hall with it.

It's pretty much impossible to call this match as everything is all over the place and it's just random brawling. Sting is busted open, as is Abdullah. Cactus goes for the switch as Rick is put in the chair, but the future Freakzilla makes the save. The heels get Rick into the chair for a second but he fights out of it pretty quickly. He gets put in there again and Cactus goes for the switch. Steiner suplexes Abdullah into the chair instead and after Cactus takes FOREVER to stand next to the switch, he throws the lever and Abdullah gets "electrocuted."

Rating: W. As in wow, what were they smoking, or why. You can pick whichever you like and I think it'll be fine. This was a huge mess but to me, this is pure nostalgia. I haven't seen this match in years but I still remember about 80% of the commentary word for word. The match is

terrible and incredibly stupid but it's a fond memory for me so I can't hate it.

A one off tag match at Starrcade 1991.

Dustin Rhodes/Richard Morton vs. Larry Zbyszko/El Gigante

Morton is part of the York Foundation, Zbyszko is part of the Dangerous Alliance and Gigante is 7'7. Larry has to climb the ropes to try to talk to Gigante, who is from Argentina and speaks limited English. Rhodes is half of the tag champions here and he starts with Larry. As is his custom, Larry stalls a lot before getting taken down by a headlock takeover. We get a crisscross with Dusty elbowing Larry down.

Off to Morton vs. Gigante but since Morton is nearly two feet shorter, he tags Dustin right back in. Dustin is much taller as he's only 13 inches shorter than Gigante. Rhodes can't do much here at all and is slammed down with ease. Off to Larry again for a front facelock and some other really basic offense. Dustin fights out of the corner with some elbows like his daddy (Dusty if that didn't click) but Larry counters the bulldog. Back to Gigante but Larry slaps him for not listening to his instructions. Gigante snaps and throws Larry into a double dropkick, allowing Rhodes to get the pin.

Rating: D. This was just dumb. The idea was that the Larry/Gigante team couldn't get along, and if you didn't get that by me telling you it's ok, because the match pounded it into our heads. Morton was in the match for all of eight seconds, meaning this was mainly Rhodes vs. Zbyszko. Nothing to see here but at least it was short.

Another battle of the giants back in Japan at WCW/NJPW Supershow 1992.

El Gigante vs. Big Van Vader

No mask for Vader here and he's a much bigger deal in Japan than he is in America at this point. There were two matches between the Rhodes' match and this: Tony Halme vs. Scott Norton and Shinya Hashimoto vs. Bill Kazmaier with the former winning both times. Halme is more famous as Ludvig Borga.

This is of course a clash of the titans match which is rather interesting. Ross points out that Vader could be a monster in America if he tried to be a dominant singles wrestler and he's absolutely right. If you don't believe me just ask Sting. Dang that was a great feud. Nothing but clubbing blows here and we get the Claw by the giant. It's weird seeing Vader as a face. He goes to the ramp and we get a double countout.

Rating: D. Bad match, but if you expected anything else other than a big brawl you're an idiot. Vader looked great here and Gigante was very popular in Japan so this worked rather well. Nothing good at all but a fun brawl so all is fine. Sometimes you just need to have big guys beat on each other for a few minutes.

Gigante would head to the WWF as Giant Gonzalez, who started off in a feud with Undertaker. Before that though, we have a few squash matches to get through, starting on All American Wrestling on March 14, 1993.

Jim Powers vs. Giant Gonzalez

Powers' right hand to the ribs has the effect you would expect it to and a big headbutt drops him. Gonzalez nails a big boot and chokeslam for the pin. Total squash.

Next up is Superstars, April 3, 1993, the day before Wrestlemania.

Giant Gonzalez vs. Virgil

Virgil tries to hide but gets caught on the corner. He climbs to the bottom rope and is maybe three inches taller than the Giant. Gonzalez tries a test of strength and is in trouble even from the top rope. The normal sized man comes back down to the mat and is quickly chopped on the back. A dropkick is shrugged off and Gonzalez chokeslams him (with almost no height) for the pin.

Here's his most famous match from Wrestlemania IX.

Giant Gonzalez vs. Undertaker

Gonzalez is a legit 7'7 and is working for Harvey Wippleman for revenge on Undertaker after Undertaker got rid of Kamala. Taker comes out in a chariot and carrying a vulture. Undertaker literally only comes up to Gonzalez's chest. Some uppercuts stagger the Giant but he grabs Taker by the throat to stop him cold. Taker climbs to the second rope and grabs Gonzalez by the throat, only to get hit low to stop him again.

Old School staggers the Giant a bit but he comes back with a clothesline to take over. Taker is thrown across the ring and we get a standing chinlock by the monster. The famous one fights up but gets thrown to the outside with ease. Taker is sent into the steps and we head back inside. Gonzalez pounds away a bit more but Taker slugs away, knocking Gonzalez down to one knee. Wippleman throws in a rag, which apparently the announcers can smell a chemical on from twenty feet away in an outdoor arena with over 15,000 people in it. Apparently it's ether or something, earning Taker a DQ win.

Rating: D-. Gonzalez was AWFUL which really hurt things a lot. The main issue Undertaker had at this point was no one had any idea what to do with him. They just had him fight monsters for years on end which you can only watch for so long. This story would be reused about 12 years later with Undertaker playing Undertaker, Daivari playing Wippleman and Great Khali playing Gonzalez.

We'll go with a match I vaguely remember on Superstars, May 15, 1993.

King of the Ring Qualifying Match: Tatanka vs. Giant Gonzalez

Tatanka starts the warpath early on but Gonzalez chops him right down. Some clubbing forearms have Tatanka in trouble and a big boot drops him again. Tatanka fires off some kicks to the ribs and scores with a top rope chop, only to jump into a choke. Gonzalez fires the referee across the ring and that's a DQ.

We'll wrap it up with the blowoff match against Undertaker at Summerslam 1993.

Giant Gonzalez vs. Undertaker

This is a Rest in Peace match, which means No DQ and No Countout, or a street fight as we would call it. Gonzalez has been tormenting Undertaker all year and lost to him via DQ at Wrestlemania. Gonzalez is a legit 7'7 and his manager Harvey Whippelman has stolen the Urn. Paul Bearer is absent for reasons that aren't quite explained. The Giant pounds on Taker to start but Taker comes back with some clotheslines. A single elbow takes the Dead Man down and they head outside with the Giant in control.

Gonzalez hits some of the weakest chair shots you'll ever see before whipping Taker knees first into the steps. Back in and Undertaker hits some uppercuts but keeps reaching for the Urn. Taker is still down when the gong rings and Paul Bearer makes his return with a black wreath. Whippelman goes after him and gets decked, allowing Paul to get the Urn back. The Giant stares down at him, Undertaker sits up, hits five clotheslines and a sixth from the top for the pin. Seriously, that's it.

Rating: G. As in I long for Great Khali. You often hear bad wrestlers said to be as bad as Giant Gonzalez and there's a good reason for that: the guy is HORRIBLE. I understand the idea of the guy being huge and not needing to do much, but Gonzalez couldn't do even the most basic stuff without screwing it up. Having seen a good deal of both, I can safely say that Gonzalez makes Great Khali look like Bret Hart.

El Gigante is a good example of an attraction instead of a talent. There's something about a guy that big that makes you want to come and see him. His matches were disasters at best and the worst of all time at worst, but there's something about a true giant that plays into the carnival aspect of wrestling. I was a fan as a kid and I kind of miss those days of liking the character instead of thinking about his work.

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Wrestler of the Day – September 21: Curtis Hughes

Today is a guy that found a character and ran with it for his entire career: Curtis Hughes.

Hughes got started in 1988 in the indies before making it to WCW as the generic monster Big Cat. We'll pick things up at Clash of the Champions XIII.

Big Cat vs. Brad Armstrong

Big Cat is a large muscular man who would eventually become a bodyguard named Mr. Hughes. He wants Lex Luger in the near future. Cat runs Armstrong over with a shoulder and Brad isn't sure what to do with him. Brad scores with a quick dropkick but runs into a backbreaker with two more thrown in as a bonus. Another hard shoulder block puts Brad on the mat and we hit the bearhug. That goes nowhere so Cat picks Brad up in Luger's Torture Rack for the win via referee stoppage.

Rating: D+. Just a squash here to set up the Big Cat vs. Luger match. Cat had a good look and a lot of power but he felt like a monster of the month for Luger or Sting to vanquish down the line. It wasn't a bad match and it did its job well enough, but there's only so much quality you can pack into a four minute squash.

Hughes and his buddy Motor City Madman made the mistake of ticking off Sid Vicious. Here's his punishment at Starrcade 1990.

Motor City Madman/Big Cat vs. Skyscrapers

The Skyscrapers are Sid Vicious, a Horseman at the moment, and Dan Spivey, who are two monsters who liked to destroy people. The Madman and Big Cat went after Sid on a recent Clash of the Champions, so tonight it's a reunion with Spivey to hurt the annoying guys. It's a big brawl to

start with the Madman being sent to the apron. A double backdrop puts Cat down and a double powerbomb ends the Madman after about a minute. Total and complete domination here.

He would get a shot at the meaningless Six Man Tag Team Titles at WrestleWar 1991.

Six Man Tag Titles: Junkyard Dog/Ricky Morton/Tommy Rich vs. Stage Patrol/Big Cat

Where do I even start? Ok so odds are you haven't heard of these titles before, and there's a good reason for that: they were only around for less than nine months. The titles were first won seven days before this show at a live event. Now one might ask why they didn't have the first champions crowned here on PPV. It's WCW in 1991. There's your answer and it'll answer most of your questions. The State Patrol is Sgt. Buddy Lee Parker and Lt. James Earl Wright, who is most famous for being one half of the State Patrol. Big Cat is Mr. Hughes and he's one of the challengers here.

Cat and Dog start things off. I think you can see JYD's gut expanding from here. He hits Cat with some headbutts and it's off to Morton and Wright. Morton speeds things up with armdrags and it's off to Rich. Rich slams him down and hooks an armdrag followed by an armbar. Off to Parker who gets the exact same treatment. Back to Morton for some atomic drops and then back to the same armbar again.

The Dog comes back in to crank up the fat levels of this match. Big Cat comes in again and wants a test of strength. That goes nowhere so it's back to Morton to face the State Patrol on his own. The numbers catch up with him and it's time for Morton to start selling. Parker drop toeholds him down and Cat hits an elbow for two. Dropkick gets two. Morton slugs back against Parker but gets powerslammed down for two.

The State Patrol keeps up the double teaming, hitting a bulldog for two. Back to Parker as I'm seeing why this team never went anywhere. Cat comes back in for a big old backbreaker for two. Parker misses a charge and there's the hot tag to JYD. He hits the Thump (powerslam) but Cat makes the save. In a smart move, Morton immediately dives on Parker and gets

the pin to retain.

Rating: D. Technically this was barely passable but what in the world was the point to this match? On second thought what was the point to these titles? The match wasn't any good as it was in essence just a bad TV main event, which doesn't exactly fire me up for the rest of the show. This was an odd choice all around.

Around this time Big Cat would become Big Cat Hughes and start wrestling in a nice shirt, suspenders and sunglasses. His character was a bodyguard, which he would stick with for the rest of his career. We'll start things off in Japan at the WCW/New Japan Supershow I.

Big Cat Hughes vs. El Gigante

This is out of order for some reason as this is supposed to be the Steiners tag match. Hughes is for once not the bodyguard character. Gigante is more commonly known as Giant Gonzalez and is about 3-4 inches taller than Khali. He also has about 1/3 of the talent. To give you an idea of his size, when he's on the floor his head is over the top rope. When he's in the ring his tights (half shorts) nearly go above the top rope. Where the top turnbuckle would be is the height of his crotch, as in about the chest/shoulders of a guy the height of Cena.

Fonzie of ECW fame is the referee. This is more or less a squash as Hughes is about 315lbs and Gigante slams him with one arm after holding him up for awhile. He sets for a suplex and literally, as in I timed it, holds him in a front facelock while playing to the crowd for 34 seconds before doing anything. Hughes couldn't step on his foot or something in 34 seconds? Really? A jumping boot sets up the Claw Hold to end it.

Back to America for a Lethal Lottery tag match at Starrcade 1991.

Big Van Vader/Mr. Hughes vs. Rick Steiner/Nightstalker

Nightstalker is a big man who did nothing of note for years until he

became Adam Bomb in the WWF. He's also subbing for the injured Diamond Stud here. Hughes is Big Cat from last year and now a big security guard in a suit. Vader is a monster, weighing 400lbs and running through everyone he ever faces. Rick and Vader start which is probably the best solution for everyone. Vader pounds him upside the head and clotheslines Steiner down before running him over with ease.

Rick gets back up and pounds away with right hands and a Steiner Line to send Vader to the floor. Back in and Steiner somehow manages to suplex Vader down but hurts himself. Hughes, the smaller man on the team at 6'8 and 375lbs, gets the tag. Steiner easily backdrops him down but is hesitant to tag in Nightstalker. A belly to back suplex puts Hughes down but Nightstalker reaches over and tags himself in. He doesn't pay attention to Vader and is run over by a clothesline. Rick doesn't realize he was tagged and Vader splashes Nightstalker for the pin.

Rating: D+. I'm a sucker for the Steiners throwing big people around and that's what we got here. The match was nothing of note, but it was more along the lines of setting up a match between the Steiners and Hughes/Vader, which I don't remember ever actually happening. Nightstalker was clearly in over his head here, but to be fair he was a replacement.

Here's that same formula on steroids at Clash of the Champions XVIII.

Steiner Brothers vs. Mr. Hughes/Big Van Vader

Vader makes his Clash in ring debut here and looks like a total monster. He's about 6'4 and weighs over 400lbs, making Mr. Hughes the smaller member of the team. Scott and Hughes get things going with Hughes wrestling in a suit and suspenders. Hughes is easily taken down twice in a row but gets in a shot to the ribs to take over. He runs Scott over with a shoulder block but Scott comes back with a great looking overhead belly to belly suplex, sending Hughes out to the floor.

Vader comes in and easily throws the Steiners to the floor, so the Brothers come back in with a double clothesline from the same corner to fire the crowd up all over again. Off to Rick with a headlock on Vader but the monster easily slams him down. A quick suplex drops Rick again

and Vader just pummels him in the face. Vader easily picks him up for a gorilla press but Rick comes out of the corner with the Steiner Line and a belly to belly suplex.

Another Steiner Line puts Vader on the floor, only to have him come back in with a hard clothesline of his own. Vader goes up top but Rick nails him with a right hand and a belly to belly superplex to bring Vader down. Back to Scott for a German suplex as the crowd is just amazed by these throws. Vader catches a charging Scott in a powerslam before sitting on his chest to break up a sunset flip attempt.

Hughes comes in again but misses a charge into the corner, allowing Rick to come back in off the tag. One of the highest backdrops you'll ever see puts Hughes down again and everything breaks down. Vader accidentally nails Hughes with a clothesline and Rick hits the top rope bulldog for the pin.

Rating: B. The Steiners continue to do things that should not be humanly possible with those suplexes. Seeing Scott easily throw Vader and Hughes around like that is something that almost has to be seen to be believed and Rick's were hardly anything to look down on. Awesome stuff here and a great way to wake up the crowd early on.

One more WCW match at WrestleWar 1992.

Mr. Hughes/Cactus Jack vs. Ron Simmons/Junkyard Dog

No idea why Hughes is there instead of Abdullah but whatever. Cactus jumps JYD on the way to the ring and beats the living tar out of him. And people wonder why I love Foley. Being this insane wasn't done back in the day so Jack was definitely a scary character back then. Simmons was a hot thing back then and would be world champion in the fall. JYD gets taken off so this more or less becomes a singles match.

Mr. Hughes vs. Ron Simmons

Officially isn't a handicap but Jack is acting like a manager here. You could really tell they were getting the idea of how

useful Foley could be around this time and it worked. Simmons beats them both up and I'm sure this had nothing to do with the racial issues going on behind the scenes at this point. I always liked him back then though as he was kind of a Rock like character as he was a beast athletically but not much on the mic at all.

We get a Bill Watts reference but I don't think he had taken over yet. Hughes was a guy that I never got the appeal of but he did his job very well as a big monster that anyone could bring in for a quick feud with a face. This is a glorified squash for Simmons as there was no way he was going to lose here. Simmons hits a spinebuster and after Cactus comes in a shot to the knee ends it. Kind of weird.

Rating: D+. Nothing that special here but it was a way to get Simmons over which was the idea here. It was also less than six minutes long which was a good thing for them here as Hughes was never really that good. Jack vs. Simmons would turn out to be a decent little match and feud but it never went anywhere due to Watts and the NWA screwing it up.

Hughes would sign with the WWF as the monster bodyguard in 1993. Here's one of his first Raw matches on May 31, 1993.

Mr. Hughes vs. Bert Centeno

Hughes throws Bert around with ease before hammering away at his back. A big boot gets two with Hughes pulling him up at two. Mr. chokes on the mat and finishes with a Boss Man Slam. Total squash.

Off to the 1993 King of the Ring.

First Round: Mr. Hughes vs. Mr. Perfect

Perfect gets a very nice pop. Heenan being sick of Perfect is great too. Savage keeps referring to this as the finals for some reason. Hughes beat Kamala and Perfect had to beat Doink three times to get here. Heenan goes on a rant about how he

made perfect and Ross just says wrong. That was great. Hughes is of course dominating but he's just not that good at all.

He's very limited in the ring but to be fair for someone his size there's only so much he even has to do. Perfect bumps on a level that is usually only reserved for Shawn and Flair. Bret is shown in an inset about who he'd rather face and he actually gives an answer, saying he would rather fight Perfect.

That's not something you hear that often. Perfect makes his comeback and actually hits a backdrop on Hughes. It kind of sucked but there we are. In a very stupid ending, Hughes just grabs the urn and blasts Perfect with it. Well ok then that's one way to end it. That was dumb.

Rating: D+. This was just bad. Hughes just flat out wasn't interesting at all as he was such an incredibly bland character. I mean seriously, he's a bodyguard for hire. At least with Diesel they weren't mercenaries but were characterized as the main guy's friends. Hughes was the main guy and that's just a failure. Perfect did everything he could out there, but he can't make a good match out of nothing, and that's what he was asked to do here.

Hughes wouldn't last long in the WWF as he would head to ECW soon after as Shane Douglas' bodyguard. Here's a match from some point in 1994.

911 vs. Curtis Hughes

They stare each other down and talk a lot of trash to start before a collision goes nowhere. Hughes hammers away to take over before hitting a pretty good chokeslam for two. 911 Hulks Up but a low blow puts him right back down. Curtis Hughes loads up the Boss Man Slam but 911 just stops him cold. A HUGE chokeslam (and remember that Hughes is probably about 400lbs) gives 911 the pin.

Rating: D+. That chokeslam at the end brought this way up. This was basically a battle of the bodyguards so the match was only going to be so

good. It's also a good thing that they kept this really short instead of letting them bore everyone to death. 911 wasn't much to see but when he started beating people up, he could be very fun.

After several years on the indies (and some time as HHH's bodyguard where he didn't wrestle on TV), Hughes would return to the WWF in 1999. Here he on Raw, September 13, 1999.

Chris Jericho vs. Gotch Gracie

Gotch is in a mask. Jericho has only been around for about two weeks at this point. He's feuding with Ken Shamrock to start, so this is inside a cage against a Gracie. You MMA fans will get the joke. Jericho quickly takes him down to start and cranks on the leg to make Gracie tap. That's not enough for Jericho though so he puts on an abdominal stretch and lets it go before Gracie can tap. A brainbuster gets the posing cover for two before the Liontamer gets the real submission. Total joke of course but I chuckled.

Gracie would unmask as Mr. Hughes, setting up this match on Smackdown, September 16, 1999.

Curtis Hughes vs. Ken Shamrock

Hughes now wrestles in a shiny blue shirt with no sleeves. Jericho brings out El Dopo to referee, which may or may not be Jericholic Howard Finkel under a mask. Shamrock charges the ring to double leg Hughes and hammer away. Hughes backdrops him out to the floor and sends him into the barricade.

It doesn't have a ton of effect though as Shamrock throws him into the post and steps. He makes the mistake of chasing Jericho though, allowing Hughes to take over. Jericho chokes with a rope as Dopo watches on. Back in and Hughes drops an elbow but gets caught in the ankle lock. Curtis grabs the ropes and Dopo DQ's Shamrock after about half a second.

Rating: D. More angle advancement here with Jericho ticking Shamrock off before their showdown at Unforgiven. There wasn't much to the match but there wasn't supposed to be. Hughes did his thing here and there's

nothing wrong with a guy there for one single idea, especially when he looks as tough as Curtis.

Jericho and Hughes would team up on Heat, October 10, 1999.

Dudley Boys vs. Chris Jericho/Curtis Hughes

The Dudleys are brand new here as well. D-Von and Hughes get things going with the Dudley nailing a big shoulder block. Hughes comes back with a clothesline and brings in Jericho to face Bubba. Chris hammers him down and hits the Lionsault for no cover. Back to Hughes who walks into a sidewalk slam for two as the announcers talk about some mud wrestling from Raw. Hughes runs over D-Von until Bubba trips him up to take over. Jericho calls Hughes an idiot and I don't see this ending well for him. Curtis goes over for a tag and Chris walks out. The 3D ends this quick.

Rating: D+. This was the beginning of the end for Hughes but it's not like he was going to last long either way. That's the kind of character he has: someone you bring in for a few weeks to advance a character and then let him go. The Dudleys were still getting things together in the WWF but they would take off soon.

From the next night on Raw.

Headbangers vs. Curtis Hughes/Chris Jericho

Mosh launches Jericho into a hotshot to start before throwing him into the Tree of Woe. Off to Thrasher who gets caught in a butterfly backbreaker before Hughes comes in for a headlock. The Headbangers take him into the corner for some stomping but Hughes comes back with a clothesline to Mosh. Back to Jericho who grabs the Walls but Thrasher makes the save. A double flapjack plants Jericho and Hughes tries to make a save, only to hit his partner. Jericho decks Hughes and walks out again, setting up the worst Stage Dive (powerbomb/legdrop combo) I've ever seen for the pin.

Rating: D. I think we've covered this already.

Here's the blowoff on Smackdown, October 14, 1999.

Chris Jericho vs. Curtis Hughes

They slug it out in the aisle to start with Jericho sending him into the steps before the bell. A missile dropkick gets two but Hughes hammers away in the corner. Jericholic Howard Finkel slides in a chair and offers a distraction so Jericho can blast Hughes in the head for the pin.

As I said, Hughes is a guy that took a very basic character and ran with it for years. He's still on the indies (minus about 150lbs) as the same character and it's going to work until he retires. It's such a basic character that you can work it into a ton of stories and that's something very good to fall back on. His matches weren't great but he played his role very well and looked intimidating.

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WrestleWar 1991: One of the Scariest Botches I Have Ever Seen

WrestleWar 1991

Date: February 24, 1991

Location: Arizona Veterans Memorial Coliseum, Phoenix, Arizona

Attendance: 6,800

Commentators: Jim Ross, Dusty Rhodes

I'm running out of WCW PPVs to do, but before I get done with them I still have one last WARGAMES to get through. Oh that makes me feel better. Tonight's main event is in the double cage and we have Sting's team vs. the Horsemen. Well three Horsemen and Larry Zbyszko who is subbing for an injured Arn Anderson. I would usually say what else is on the card, but screw that. This show has WarGames. Let's get to it.

The arena looks much more modern, partially because it isn't in half darkness as it had been for most of the 80s.

Tony runs down the card and throws it to our announcers.

Six Man Tag Titles: Junkyard Dog/Ricky Morton/Tommy Rich vs. Stage Patrol/Big Cat

Where do I even start? Ok so odds are you haven't heard of these titles before, and there's a good reason for that: they were only around for less than nine months. The titles were first won seven days before this show at a live event. Now one might ask why they didn't have the first champions crowned here on PPV. It's WCW in 1991. There's your answer and it'll answer most of your questions. The State Patrol is Sgt. Buddy Lee Parker and Lt. James Earl Wright, who is most famous for being one half of the State Patrol. Big Cat is Mr. Hughes and he's one of the challengers here.

Cat and Dog start things off. I think you can see JYD's gut expanding from here. He hits Cat with some headbutts and it's off to Morton and Wright. Morton speeds things up with armdrags and it's off to Rich. Rich slams him down and hooks an armdrag followed by an armbar. Off to Parker who gets the exact same treatment. Back to Morton for some atomic drops and then back to the same armbar again.

The Dog comes back in to crank up the fat levels of this match. Big Cat comes in again and wants a test of strength. That goes nowhere so it's back to Morton to face the State Patrol on his own. The numbers catch up

with him and it's time for Morton to start selling. Parker drop toeholds him down and Cat hits an elbow for two. Dropkick gets two. Morton slugs back against Parker but gets powerslammed down for two.

The State Patrol keeps up the double teaming, hitting a bulldog for two. Back to Parker as I'm seeing why this team never went anywhere. Cat comes back in for a big old backbreaker for two. Parker misses a charge and there's the hot tag to JYD. He hits the Thump (powerslam) but Cat makes the save. In a smart move, Morton immediately dives on Parker and gets the pin to retain.

Rating: D. Technically this was barely passable but what in the world was the point to this match? On second thought what was the point to these titles? The match wasn't any good as it was in essence just a bad TV main event, which doesn't exactly fire me up for the rest of the show. This was an odd choice all around.

Alexandra York and Terrance Taylor don't have much to say.

Brad Armstrong vs. Bobby Eaton

We hear about Armstrong's brother fighting Desert Storm, which would be Road Dogg. Eaton gets a good reaction and the fans chant for him on his way out. Bobby jumps him during the opening and takes over for a little bit. A flying headscissors and dropkick by Armstrong set up an armbar to slow things down. They get back up and a monkey flip sets up the same armbar by Brad.

Bobby gets back up and we head out to the floor. That goes nowhere so let's hit that armbar again. Off to a test of strength with Bobby taking over. Brad climbs up Eaton and goes to the corner for a spinning crossbody...and back into the armbar. Eaton finally gets tired of it and pops Brad in the face, but his slingshot suplex is countered into a regular suplex by Armstrong for two.

We hit the fifth armbar in five minutes as we see Jason Hervey here again. A backbreaker puts Armstrong down and he drops an elbow to the face. We hit the chinlock and Great Muta is here watching as well. Eaton hits a slingshot backbreaker for two. Off to a modified camel clutch to keep the pressure on Armstrong's back. Back up and Armstrong tries to hit the ropes but Eaton elbows him in the face and out to the floor.

After a beating on the floor we head back into the ring for an abdominal stretch. Eaton holds the ropes because that's just the kind of a guy he is. Anderson dives through Armstrong's legs to see the cheating in a nice touch. Eaton misses a charge in the corner and Brad hits that perfect dropkick to take over. Bobby grabs a ducked head and hits a neckbreaker followed by the Alabama Jam (top rope legdrop) for the pin.

Rating: C. This wasn't as bad as the opener but it wasn't that great either. Eaton would get a decent run as an upper midcard heel before turning into a jobber to the stars for most of the 90s. He was still popular after being part of the Midnight Express so it was good to see WCW capitalizing on that here. Also as usual, get Brad Armstrong if you need someone to look good, which is what Eaton would become later on.

Itsuki Yamazaki/Mami Kitamura vs. Miss A/Miki Handa

Itsuki was one of the Jumping Bomb Angels and Miss A is one of those chicks that Meltzer has given a bunch of 5 star matches too and that no one else has ever actually seen for the most part. This is something WCW did at times: bring in a bunch of female Japanese girls that were indeed different and good, but that no one really cared about. I think that's Kitamura and Handa starting things off but JR isn't exactly helpful here. You can imagine what Dusty sounds like.

Miss A's team jumps the others which is a good idea as she's pretty much a monster, standing nearly 6'0 and weighing about 200lbs. In other words, imagine Daniel Bryan against three AJ's. Itsuki tries to speed things up but all of her work is lost when it's off to Mami who takes some HARD

kicks from A. Mami stays in for a bit, only to have her legs beaten half to death.

Back to Itsuki who is having FAR more luck out there over her partner. The match keeps going as Dusty wants to hook JR up with Miss A. Ok then. Handa, the much smaller member of her team, gets a few rollups for two until it's back to Itsuki. A comes back in and it's time to kick. A throws Itsuki around for awhile and then double teams with Handa. Itsuki comes back with a missile dropkick to both (barely) evil ones and Mami hits a top rope clothesline on Miss A. A comes back with a clothesline of her own but gets rolled up out of nowhere for the pin by Itsuki.

Rating: C+. This wasn't bad or anything and was even good at times, but as usual with PPVs from this era: the match doesn't really mean anything. It exists because the NJPW/WCW Super Show is coming up, but other than that there's no real reason for it. It ate up about eight minutes though so I guess it has that going for it. I don't know any of these women though so I can't really care that much about the match, which was fine.

Missy Hyatt runs her mouth and says she's going to go find someone to interview. Seriously why did she have a job for so long?

Buddy Landel vs. Dustin Rhodes

This might be Dustin's WCW debut. Dustin pounds on Buddy, who is way shorter than the future golden one. Landel tries to chop away but Dustin spins him into the corner and fires away punches and elbows (think of who his daddy is) on the middle rope. Off to the armbar and then Landel gets knocked down into the corner. Dusty talks about dogs for some reason and Dustin charges shoulder first into the post.

Landel takes over off the miss and pounds away with his wide array of stomps. A forearm to the head gets two. He puts on an armbar and pounds away at the head. They seem to mess up an Irish whip and Buddy hooks a sleeper. Dustin counters into one of his own which is quickly broken.

Buddy charges into a boot and gets caught in a baboon (not high enough for a gorilla) press slam. Bulldog gets the pin.

Rating: D. This was nothing to see as Dustin was still really young and not very good at all yet. He would get a lot better, but sweet goodness his early stuff was hard to sit through. The problem he had was that he wasn't anything but Dusty's son for about a year before he started to come into his own. This was a pretty bad match but Dustin was only twenty one at this point so he probably wasn't ready for this kind of spot yet.

Missy tries to go into the men's dressing room and finds Stan Hansen. I seem to remember her doing this at a bunch of PPVs. Hansen throws her out.

Young Pistols vs. Royal Family

The Family is Rip Morgan and Jack Victory and are allegedly both from New Zealand. They jump the Pistols to start but the Pistols counter a double Irish whip. The Family easily takes their heads off with clotheslines in a nice counter. With Smothers getting double teamed, Armstrong gets to the top for a double cross body to give the Pistols a breather. The Pistols hit a pair of dropkicks...and the lights go out. It's WCW after all.

Thankfully they put the spotlights on, but unfortunately it means we have to see more of the match. Morgan and Smothers officially start things off and it's time for the armbars. You see this a lot in matches from the late 80s and early 90s and I've never quite gotten why. Were there NO other options for rest holds to pick from? They're also annoying because there's nothing to talk about during the holds. It's one guy holding another guy's arm, then the other guy grabs the first guy's in the same hold.

So after a few minutes of that, we get the lights back. Thanks for that guys. Off to Armstrong for some dropkicks before Victory gets the tag.

Hey look: ARMBARS! Now it's a headlock just for a change of pace. Smothers comes in off a blind tag and hits a slingshot shoulder block for two. Time for another armbars, but this time there's a twist. Literally, as in Smothers twists the arm during the hold.

It's back to Armstrong and the Royal Family finally gets some offense in. They take over with what limited power they have and wear down Armstrong on the mat. A double shoulder block gets two for Morgan. I never quite got the appeal of Victory. He won rookie of the year in I think 1985 and then never did anything but wear masks to fight on Clashes of the Champions.

There's another basic double team move, this time a double clothesline for two. I can pretty easily see why the Royal Family never quite reached the Steiners' level of tag team capabilities. We FINALLY get the tag to Smothers who cleans a few rooms of the house, but the fans flat out do not care. The Family tries another double suplex on Smothers but Armstrong dropkicks Morgan, allowing Smothers to fall on top of him for the pin to FINALLY end this.

Rating: D-. Sweet merciful goodness this was dull. This is the problem you'll often see on these PPVs: these matches are here to just fill in time because most of the wrestlers don't have a ton of stories backing them up. It also doesn't help that the eight people with the top stories are in the same match at the end of the show. Either way though, this match was really boring and likely would have been with or without a good story backing it up.

DDP, the Freebirds' new manager, says the Birds have a title match tonight because he tricked Teddy Long. Long comes out and is surprised by this, and swears that Doom is still a unit.

Z-Man vs. Terrance Taylor

Taylor is part of the York Foundation which is kind of a business

organization type of heel stable. It was just starting at this point and would eventually get going in a few more months. This is No DQ after three previous matches didn't have a clean ending. The idea here is that Alexandra York (Terri) has a computer that gives Terry a perfect plan for the match. They start with some basic stuff and Terry bails to York for instructions. They try it again and Terry gets punched in the face again.

After more talking with York it's time for another punch from Z-Man and it's down to the mat. Zenk drills him again and it's time to talk to the computer. They slug it out and Zenk sends him into the ropes for a backdrop for two. Time for the headlock again as this match keeps starting and stopping which is what gets annoying about a lot of matches.

The headlock stays on even after Z-Man runs up the corner for a headlock takeover. A belly to back finally breaks the hold and Nikita Koloff is in the audience. Out to the floor and Taylor rams him into the barricade and chokes away a bit with a camera cord. Back in and a backbreaker gets two. Off to a camel clutch and let's look at Hiro Matsuda in the crowd. Ok then.

Zenk comes back with a clothesline over the top which is fine because it's a No DQ match, even though a clothesline over the top has been perfectly legal in every other match ever in WCW. They head to the floor again and Z-Man gets sent into the barricade. Z-Man comes back with a neckbreaker and superkick for two. This is before Shawn popularized the move so it looked a bit more exciting back then. An enziguri puts Taylor down for two but as Z-Man comes off the top with the cross body, York distracts the referee. Zenk yells at him long enough to get rolled up with tights for the pin.

Rating: C. This wasn't bad but it didn't get better until after they got done with the stupid computer nonsense. These feuds went on for a long time and eventually the Foundation grew into a cool and complex four way feud which almost got over huge but various things screwed it up. Decent stuff here though.

It's time for the Danger Zone and Dangerously comes out dressed in stereotypical Mexican attire, including the huge sombrero. He says that he's actually an undercover agent for the immigration offices and everyone here is under arrest. He brings out El Gigante and taunts him like a bull. Dangerously tries to get the giant to teach him English insults. Gigante says he doesn't speak English so Dangerously throws the sombrero into his face, getting beaten up as a result. This was stupid but funny in an evil kind of way.

Matsuda and Muta talk about the NJPW show. This show is basically just a commercial for that show.

Stan Hansen vs. Big Van Vader

This is a rematch of a match from Tokyo that was thrown out. They immediately start on the ramp and it's a big brawl. Vader takes him down but Hansen hits a short range lariat. Back into the ring and Vader hits one of his own to take over. Vader hits a corner splash and it's off to a quick chinlock. Out to the floor and Vader takes him down again with more punches.

In the ring Vader misses a splash in the corner, allowing Hansen to hit a belly to back suplex for two. They go back to the floor and let the weapons loose! Each guy takes a chair shot to the head and Hansen takes over back inside. That lasts about 4 seconds so we head back outside with Vader draping him over the barricade. Hansen drives a knee into Vader and they head back inside for more brawling. Randy Anderson tries to separate them and gets launched to the floor for the double DQ, getting booted out of the building in the process.

Rating: C+. This was nothing like a wrestling match but with stuff like this, having it be a total war with both guys beating the tar out of each other is the right move. The match was fun because Hansen was big enough and psycho enough to hang with Vader in a fight, which is what this was. Good stuff.

They fight to the back of course.

US Title: Dan Spivey vs. Lex Luger

The winner will be presented with a new US Title. Luger is defending of course. Lex is all fired up here, running Spivey over with a bunch of clotheslines and shoulder blocks. Lex blocks an atomic drop and hits a belly to back suplex for two. He misses a charge though and crashes into the other ring. Spivey suplexes him back into the ring and hits a tombstone for two.

After a neckbreaker it's off to a chinlock followed by a DDT for two. After a clothesline, Spivey misses a charge in the corner and gets rolled up for two. Of all things Spivey goes up top and drops a spinning elbow for two. Spivey chokes away with his legs and Luger is in trouble. This is a surprisingly good match. Big boot gets two. Spivey tries another piledriver but Lex escapes and gets all fired up. Lex punches him out of the corner but walks into a belly to belly suplex for two.

Back to the chinlock for a bit but once they're back up, Spivey charges at Lex and is slammed onto the top rope and out to the floor, which isn't a DQ because of whatever reason they have this time. A middle rope clothesline puts Spivey down but Luger's sunset flip is countered by a left hand. They clothesline each other and slug it out before colliding to put both guys down again. Luger gets up first and goes up top but Spivey slams him down, only to have Luger hold on and small package him off the top for the pin. You could argue that's because he had so much experience slamming Flair off the top actually.

Rating: B+. This was a huge surprise here as both guys were hitting on all cylinders. The ending was great and a move that I've never seen before. Luger would turn heel very soon and win the title in the summer at a show I'm sure we'll get to later. Spivey would have a total of zero other great matches. This was really good though.

Luger goes to get the new title but Koloff hits him with the belt. He says he wants the world title but had to prove his worth first.

World Tag Titles: Doom vs. Fabulous Freebirds

There's a somewhat famous story to this that I'll get to after the match is over. Before the match, DDP, the Freebirds' manager, brings out Big Daddy Dink to be their road manager, whatever that means. Simmons and Hayes get us going and Simmons hits a quick spinebuster for two. Hayes hits a left hand for the same. Both Birds take powerslams for two. Garvin and Reed come in with Reed clotheslining his head off.

Garvin hooks a sunset flip for two and it's back to Hayes. Reed looks a bit uninterested in the match for some reason. Garvin makes a blind tag but doesn't jump Reed while he's busy for some reason. A double elbow takes Garvin down and it's back to Simmons. Boring match so far. Jimmy gets sent to the floor and hammered out there before it's back to Reed in the ring. This is heel vs. heel for the most part so the dynamic is a bit off. Powerslam gets two on Garvin but Dink gets on the apron. Reed loads up his fist but hits Simmons by mistake, giving Garvin the pin and the titles.

Rating: F+. This was a horribly boring match. The whole idea here was that Doom is still having issues and would be broken up very soon. The Birds would be the subject of the story that I mentioned earlier which I'll get to in a minute. The match sucked though as it was basically a squash with a screwy ending.

Post match Reed destroys Simmons with the object. Teddy leaves with Reed.

So as for the story, the Birds had actually lost the titles before they won them. At a TV taping six days prior to this, they were taped losing the titles to the Steiners, as in nearly a week before they won the belts. That was a very different time, as whole PPVs would be spoiled at TV tapings. Can you imagine that happening today?

There's a fan here who won some sweepstakes who says his favorite team is Doom. JR: "Well I don't think they're going to be a team much longer." That was hilarious for some reason.

We see a clip from last night with Pillman's neck being injured. Remember that, because it becomes important later.

Quick recap of the rules of WarGames: each team has four people. One person from each team will start and they fight for five minutes. After those five minutes, there's a coin toss which the heels will win. The heels then get to send in a man for a two minute advantage. After those two minutes, the good team gets to send in its second man to even things up for two minutes. The teams alternate every two minutes until all eight are in and it's first submission only to win.

WarGames

Sting, Brian Pillman, Steiner Brothers

Ric Flair, Barry Windham, Sid Vicious, Larry Zbyszko

A very taped up Pillman goes into the ring first, sneaking behind his huddling partners. He starts with Windham and fires away with clotheslines and dropkicks. Pillman goes to the middle rope and head fakes him out to hit a dropkick. Remember that the match cannot end until all eight are in, making the match a minimum of seventeen minutes. A low blow slows Windham down as Pillman is all fired up.

Barry is busted open after being raked into the cage. Another big clothesline has Windham in trouble. They go into the other ring (it's two rings side by side with a huge cage over them both) and Barry is reeling. A spinwheel kick puts Windham down and Pillman works on the leg with less than a minute to go. A middle rope punch puts Barry down and the Horsemen win the toss, sending in Flair.

Pillman and Flair chop it out in the corner. I'm 90% sure they had a title match once and dang I'd love to see it. Flair is world champion here I believe. Pillman fights off the Horsemen as long as he can but gets his shoulder rammed into the cage. That's the worst part of his injuries so Pillman is in big trouble. They go back to the original ring and Sting goes in next.

Both Horsemen are there to meet him but Sting kills them both with clotheslines. The fans are WAY into this too. A bulldog puts Windham down and the pairings switch off. Another bulldog puts Naitch down as they're all in the same ring again. Flair's chops still don't work on Sting. Stinger Splash hits Flair and Larry Z is in to make it 3-2 for two minutes. Sting dives over both sets of ropes to take Larry down.

Pillman has a figure four on Barry and Flair is apparently cool with letting him be in the hold. Finally they kick Pillman in the shoulder to break it up. Rick Steiner comes in to even things up and it's Steiner Lines all around. He rakes Flair's face across the cage to bust him open too as this is breaking down, in a good way. Pillman is in the Tree of Woe and Sting is busted too.

Sid comes in as the final member of the team and the pain begins. He holds Steiner for a low blow from Flair but Pillman makes the save. Larry Z of all people cleans house but Rick pounds him down. Scott comes in to even things up and now it's first submission to win. We get the WORST camera shot ever as the camera looks at Sid and Rick as they're openly calling spots. That was like a blooper or something.

Scorpion on Flair as Scott beats on Larry's shoulder. Sid rams the shoulder of Pillman into the corner a bunch of times and the tape comes off. In an awesome looking visual, all of the Horsemen and Larry are put in Figure Fours at the same time. Every evil guy is in trouble except Sid who even Sting can't get off his feet. The Steiners FINALLY put him down but Barry and Sid double team both of them.

Flair and Pillman lay some of the hardest chops you'll ever hear into each other. Now we get to the famous part of the match as Sid grabs Pillman and tries to powerbomb him. Remembering that Sid is 6'9 and the cage roof is barely over 7'0 tall, Sid can't get him up all the way so Pillman's feet hit the top of the cage. This makes Sid DROP PILLMAN ON THE BACK OF HIS HEAD, legitimately knocking him unconscious. Sid, the nice guy that he is, powerbombs Pillman AGAIN. El Gigante is brought out to submit for Pillman who isn't moving at all. The first powerbomb legitimately made me cringe.

Rating: A. The match is great and you absolutely can't fault them for ending the match when they did. That was one of the scariest looking botches I've ever seen and Pillman is lucky to not have a broken neck. The match isn't quite as good as the bloodbath that would happen the next year, but this is certainly awesome and is totally worth checking out. This is the mother of all gimmick matches for a reason and this is a forgotten entry in the series.

We look at the US Title attack earlier on, presumably to fill in time due to the match being stopped early.

Overall Rating: B-. As usual with shows from this era, if you cut out the stuff that was cut out on the home video version, the show is much better. Still though, with two great on here, it's certainly an awesome show. Sting was on fire at this point and it was hard to not like whatever he was doing. Things would go into a BAD funk a few months after this though, with Sting feuding with Nikita Koloff and Flair going to the WWF in about three months, but we'll get to that later. Good show here.

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