

Monday Nitro – February 19, 2001: One More Funeral

Monday Nitro #278

Date: February 19, 2001

Location: Von Braun Civic Center, Huntsville, Alabama

Commentators: Scott Hudson, Tony Schiavone

At this point, I can't imagine they'll ever leave the southeast again. We're past SuperBrawl and as is far too often the case with pay per views, not a lot happened. Scott Steiner retired Kevin Nash which I'm sure means he won't be back whatsoever. We've got less than four weeks until Greed so this is the final time we'll start the build to a pay per view. Let's get to it.

We open with the pay per view recap.

There's some exclusive footage of Nash walking out and driving away from the arena last night. This is far too somber for someone who spent years trying to take over the company.

In the arena, there's a Kevin Nash RIP screen up and here are some people carrying a casket. After they get to the ring, the Magnificent Seven come out in suits (with titles of course) as it's time for a funeral. Flair says we're here tonight to bid farewell to a man who walked as a giant amidst titans. Nash was a once in a lifetime athlete and now his career has come to an end because the Magnificent Seven struck last night.

Now there's no one to stand against them at all because no one can handle Scott Steiner. Scott says they'll do whatever it takes to succeed because he's the man making history. They're heels in case they haven't spelled it out well enough for you. We get the same list of people that Scott has destroyed and sent to the hospital but apparently they're all scared to come back. As Steiner talks about each victim, the RIP graphic changes appropriately. Scott was willing to let Nash live out the rest of his life at a nice retirement home but then Nash put his hands on the freak.

Now there's one man left for Scott to go after and he's going to show us who that is. The casket is opened and it's Kanyon dressed as Diamond Dallas Page. Tonight Buff is going to beat up Cat, Jarrett is going to take out Dustin Rhodes and Kanyon can hurt Page but make sure to leave Scott a little piece. Cue Page through the crowd to say he'll take care of Kanyon tonight and then get his hands on Steiner at Greed.

Miss Jones congratulates Cat for becoming Commissioner again. To celebrate, Cat makes the Cruiserweight Tag Team Titles and the tournament to crown the first champions starts next week. Well they might as well give the three teams something to fight over to make it seem like they're getting somewhere.

Jamie Knoble vs. Shannon Moore

Evan Karagias is here with Knoble. They start fast with some quick headscissors until Shannon misses a charge in the corner. Jamie gets two off a northern lights suplex as the announcers actually talk about the match for a change of pace. A running leg lariat in the corner staggers Jamie and knocks him out to the floor for a big flip dive. Shannon dropkicks him into Evan, who is knocked into the steps. Like almost any wrestler would, Evan blames Knoble and decks him from behind, allowing Shannon to hit Bottoms Up for the pin.

Rating: C. More of the same here but at least they might be mixing up the teams a little bit. I can go for the idea of some new teams going into the tournament but it would be nice if they had some new talent instead of the same six guys fighting over and over again. Shannon has been growing on me in the last few weeks and his ring work has been making him stand out, which says a lot given who he has around him.

Konnan and Kidman are ready to take out Animal and Chavo tonight. They don't want Road Warrior Animal style though. Instead let's do it Filthy Animals style.

Mike Awesome vs. Bryan Clarke

Fallout from Awesome dressing up like Clarke last night, though I thought Clarke was still injured. They slug it out to start with Clarke getting

the better of it, though he keeps looking over his shoulder. As you would expect, Elix Skipper runs in but gets slammed down with ease. Lance Storm comes in as well and that's enough for the DQ.

Team Canada beats Bryan down until Brian Adams comes out for the save.

After a break, Team Canada is still in the ring when Cat and Miss Jones (in a completely different outfit than earlier) come out. It's time for Storm to pay for his crimes as Commissioner so Cat is giving him a match. If Storm doesn't fight, he can go make pancakes in Canada because he'll be fired.

Kid Romeo is coming. Or coming back as he was around a little over a year ago.

Chavo Guerrero Jr./Animal vs. Konnan/Billy Kidman

Animal and Konnan start fighting in the back after Chavo has come to the ring. Kidman, in a black shirt for a change, runs in from behind to jump Chavo and we take a break with no bell. We come back to see Chavo and Kidman brawling with referees not being able to break it up. Konnan and Animal come down the ramp and the match actually starts with Chavo hitting a tornado DDT on Kidman.

I'm assuming the match started somewhere during the break as Konnan does Chris Jericho's springboard dropkick to knock Chavo off the apron. Things settle down with Kidman elbowing Chavo in the face and handing it off to Konnan for a reverse standing Figure Four with both arms tied up. That's certainly different. Animal makes a save because he's Animal and doesn't do a lot of wrestling, allowing Chavo to take over in the corner.

Konnan gets in his rolling lariat so Kidman can come back in. Everything breaks down and some double teaming puts Animal on the floor and Konnan completely botches his faceplant on Chavo. You can hear the crowd going awkwardly silent as they seem stunned that Konnan can't sit down properly. The big guys fight on the floor as Rey Mysterio runs in for a What's Up legdrop to Chavo, setting up the Kid Crusher to give Kidman the pin.

Rating: C. Chavo continues to look good in the ring and putting him in there with Kidman is only going to produce even more great stuff. I wasn't wild on Rey coming in for the cheating as it takes some of the steam out of Kidman's win, as well as doesn't fit someone like Rey in general. Still though, not a bad match here with Konnan actually working hard to make up for Animal not even trying.

In case you thought something of Kidman there, Animal powerbombs him into oblivion. Animal never was legally in the match which keeps making me wonder why he has this spot. Was Team Canada so important that they couldn't put Mike Awesome in his same spot?

Buff Bagwell vs. The Cat

Before the match, Cat offers Bagwell a chance to leave Flair's team and come back to the good side. Bagwell considers it before hitting Cat in the face to take over. Cat comes back with some chops to the throat but gets caught in a swinging neckbreaker for two. It's already off to the chinlock but Buff stops to strut instead. We hit the second chinlock and Cat looks like he's nodded off.

Some clotheslines cut off the comeback and it's BACK TO THE CHINLOCK. We're not even five minutes in and it's already the third chinlock. At what point do you just realize Buff has nothing else to offer? Buff dives into raised feet and it's time for some kicks. Cue Kanyon so Miss Jones gets on the apron, only to allow Buff to get in the double arm DDT (with Cat landing on his hands). The Blockbuster puts Cat away for the pin.

Rating: D-. Again: five minutes and three chinlocks. Bagwell gets lazier and lazier every single time he's in the ring but at least he's had some good matches before. I don't ever remember Cat doing anything above bad. If that chinlock is the best they can do, cut this off and put on a Norman the Lunatic match instead as you might get some chuckles as a result.

Jones gets a Kanyon Cutter post match. Cat fights them off but I can't imagine we'll be seeing Jones again, which is a shame.

Post break Jones is taken away in an ambulance.

US Title: Rick Steiner vs. Lash Leroux

Steiner is defending and quickly takes Lash outside for a whip into the barricade. This looks like one of those matches where Rick seems more ticked off than usual. A Steiner Line almost takes Lash's head off as the fans accurately call this boring. Steiner throws him down with a release German suplex before ripping at his face. Another Steiner Line and three Steiner Drivers complete Lash's destruction.

Rating: F. Yes we get it. Rick Steiner is the most amazingly tough wrestler of all time and we're supposed to be interested in seeing him beat people up really hard. For some reason he's the US Champion despite not drawing a dime in years and barely associating with his brother, which would be almost the only possible way for people to be interested in him.

Lash is checked out by medics post break.

Scott Steiner gives Kanyon his brass knuckles to use on Page later. Page isn't making it to Thunder.

Hugh Morrus wants to fight Rick Steiner for personal revenge but his match with Storm tonight is about pleasure.

Lance Storm vs. Hugh Morrus

Team Canada is barred from ringside. Storm says he doesn't care who he's fighting tonight because he was born to wrestle. Morrus can't get him into a test of strength to start so the referee says they have 6:30. They trade chops until Morrus knocks him outside with a clothesline. Back in and a fall away slam looks to set up No Laughing Matter, only to have Storm take him down and possibly hurt the knees.

Morrus gets back up and catapults Storm into the buckle but can't follow up. A trip to the floor lets Morrus take over again and he splashes Storm in the corner for good measure. Storm superkicks him down and grabs the Mapleleaf, only to get slammed and hit with No Laughing Matter for the pin.

Rating: D+. The feud had lost any of its heat at this point but it was

nice to see them actually stick with Morrus as a big deal who can win matches on his own for a change. Storm is in a really weird place at the moment as he was Commissioner for six days but is now losing most of his matches without putting up much of a fight. It could have been a worse match but Morrus winning made more sense.

Here's Jeff Jarrett dressed as Dusty Rhodes (including a very stuffed shirt and jeans) for a bad comedy impression. Jeff, in a borderline good Dusty, talks about how he's here to save WCW and says no one can beat Dustin when his daddy is in his corner. Unfortunately there's no way he can beat the Chosen One because Dustin (the fruit of his loins, which Jarrett says about ten times) just isn't good enough.

Jarrett calls in some young wrestlers for an exhibition, which means slow motion elbows. Jeff falls down and can't get up as the announcers treat this as some horrible idea. One of the guys gets Shattered Dreams until Dustin comes out, only to have Rick Steiner follow and beat Dustin down. Jeff guitars him and the villains stand tall. This went on and on and wasn't that funny, mainly because it's about Dusty Rhodes in 2001.

The announcers pay tribute to Dale Earnhardt, who passed away the day before.

Kanyon vs. Diamond Dallas Page

Page goes right after him to start and knocks Kanyon outside, meaning it's time for a brawl in the crowd. That only leads to some brawling before they get inside again with Kanyon bailing to the corner to avoid a Diamond Cutter. Kanyon comes back with a middle rope faceplant for two and a Russian legsweep gets the same. Page is sent into the corner for a middle rope Fameasser and it's off to the chinlock. The fans chant for Page in one of the few genuine reactions of the night.

Page fights up and gets a belly to back suplex to put both guys down for some of the loudest spot calling I've heard in a long time. The discus lariat drops Kanyon but he's still able to get out of the Diamond Cutter. The Kanyon Cutter gets two and the Positively Page book (which clearly has a brick inside) gets the same. Kanyon loads up the knuckles but walks into the Diamond Cutter for the pin.

Rating: C+. I know Page doesn't have the best reputation around this time but he's by far and away the most consistent main event star of this last year. He just has good matches with anyone you put him out there against and that's so valuable to have. Above all else though the fans still care about him and that's more important than almost anything anyone can do in the ring.

Post match Scott Steiner leads the troops out but Page is smart enough to bail into the crowd to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. That middle portion is the usual death but there was enough good stuff in here to easily carry things for a week. Greed has some potential but the big story would seem to be who comes after Page to challenge Scott for the title. The announcers were talking about the Cat and Dustin Rhodes, who are somehow two of the top three faces in the company at this point. This place needs star power and it needs it in a hurry. I still think Sean O'Haire could have been something but he's just too young at this point. Maybe in fifteen years or so.

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<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01FWZZ2UA>

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Thunder – February 14, 2001: An Acceptable Valentine's Day Present

Thunder

Date: February 14, 2001

Location: Mississippi Coast Coliseum, Biloxi, Mississippi

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mike Tenay

This show is the equivalent of going to the gas station and buying your significant other transmission fluid for Valentine's Day. It's also the final show before SuperBrawl and believe it or not there's something advertised for this week. Tonight we'll be seeing Hugh Morrus/Rey Mysterio vs. Chavo Guerrero Jr./The Wall as two feuds are combined into one. Let's get to it.

Nitro montage opens things up.

We see an exclusive clip of Kevin Nash being loaded into an ambulance after Nitro went off the air.

Opening sequence.

Commissioner Lance Storm is here in a suit and tells Mike Awesome he'll be wrestling tonight. Scott Steiner comes in and demands a match so he can hurt someone.

Jamie Noble/Evan Karagias vs. Air Paris/AJ Styles

Well this is a bit more interesting. The winners are in the #1 contenders match on Sunday. AJ drives Noble into the corner to start as Tenay talks about how great he's heard Styles is. Believe it or not, Tenay points out that his finisher, the Shooting Styles Press is in fact named after himself. AJ dropkicks Jamie into the corner as everything breaks down and the newcomers clear the ring.

In a somewhat dangerous move, AJ backdrops Paris over the top onto both

guys with Paris slightly banging up his knee. Back in and it's Evan vs. Paris with the rookie grabbing a sitout spinebuster. Styles comes in and gets a cheap shot on Noble but gets decked from behind to change control.

Something like a Trash Compactor gets two on AJ before Jamie grabs a surfboard. Noble can't get a tombstone as AJ grabs a pop up powerbomb for the hot tag off to Paris so everything can break down. Evan hits a great looking springboard plancha to take Styles out, setting up a Doomsday Device on Paris.

Jamie and Evan actually get in a fight over who can cover though, despite both of them moving on if they win. The delay lets Styles get back in but he takes a 450. Paris makes a save and the fans (along with me) are surprised that wasn't the finish. AJ busts out his Shooting Styles Press to the floor (meaning it's not actually a press) but takes out his partner by mistake. Back in and a powerbomb/missile dropkick combo puts Styles away.

Rating: B. Now that's how you debut a team. Above all else, Styles and Paris were allowed to control for a long time which helped the match seem like a bigger win for Noble and Karagias. It's also clear that AJ was the better prospect of the team as Paris was more of your run of the mill indy guy who happened to get a shot on TV.

Storm gives Mike Sanders Kwee Wee for later tonight.

Sean O'Haire tells Mark Jindrak to look into his eyes and fear what he sees.

We run down the SuperBrawl card.

Sean O'Haire vs. Mark Jindrak

At least it's not Stasiak. Jindrak gets annoyed when Sean shoves him around so O'Haire punches him in the face. A running knee makes things even worse and then Sean just drops him out of a suplex. Apparently bored with beating Mark up this badly, Sean just kicks him out to the floor. To keep things going, O'Haire hits the Seanton Bomb from the apron for a nice variation on the move. He takes too long setting up the real one

though and Jindrak kicks the rope to break it up.

A super hurricanrana takes Sean down for two as the fans are starting to get into this. Mark sends him to the ropes and...they presumably botch the heck out of something as we go to a shot of the crowd. Sean gets in a DDT to send Mark outside as Stasiak comes out to watch. No man, leave them alone and let them be entertaining for a change. Back in and O'Haire kicks him down to set up the Seanton Bomb for the quick pin.

Rating: C+. This was a total one man show from O'Haire as Jindrak, an athletic freak in his own right, just wasn't keeping up with him. Sean should have been a big deal and probably put into singles action in a hurry (picture him as the super face to take down the monster Steiner down the line) but instead he's stuck dealing with the rest of the Thrillers who are just beneath him. Like Stasiak for instance.

Jeff Jarrett and Rick Steiner want a match tonight and Storm smiles.

Kwee Wee vs. Mike Sanders

Kwee Wee jumps on him for some right hands as we're in Angry Alan mode. A way too early piledriver attempt is countered with a backdrop but Sanders punches the mat by mistake. Instead they head outside with Kwee Wee hurricanranaing him down. A sunset flip off the apron...does nothing because it's on the floor so Kwee Wee throws him back inside but gets caught in a suplex for two. Kwee Wee gets in a suplex of his own and sends Sanders into the corner for some right hands. A Regal Roll gets two but Sanders grabs a rollup and the tights for the pin.

Rating: D. And so much for Kwee Wee. To be fair they had to have him lose here before he started getting too popular against their will and that just couldn't happen. Sanders had almost no offense here and Kwee Wee did all the work but which one is getting the push? Sanders of course, mainly because he wasn't given a dead end gimmick by WCW's amazing braintrust.

Bryan Clark is taken out of the building as he can't wrestle tonight. Brian Adams rants until Totally Buff beats him down. Konnan comes in for the save.

Mike Awesome promises to break the Cat's bones so he can't land on his feet.

Mike Awesome vs. The Cat

Awesome starts fast by throwing Cat into the corner and just mauling him with forearms. Cat's comeback is easily shoved away as there's no answer for the power so far. A sleeper of all things slows Cat down until he comes back with....a wristlock? That earns him a low blow for general stupidity and they head outside. Cat tries choking him with a cable but for once the referee actually does his job and breaks it up. How convenient. Mike misses a charge but Cat kicks the post by mistake, again likely due to general stupidity. Back in and a chop block sets up the Awesome Splash for the pin.

Rating: D. Miller is just not very good in the ring and it's getting clearer every time he's out there. Now that he's not the Commissioner (which I'm sure he never will be again ever) there's no hiding his uselessness and it was clear that Awesome had to tone it down again so Cat wouldn't get squashed. Well not as squashed that is.

Diamond Dallas Page and Dustin Rhodes are ready for Rick Steiner and Jeff Jarrett tonight. Now that's a main event worth calling your friends about. They might watch it otherwise.

Chavo Guerrero Jr./The Wall vs. Rey Mysterio Jr./Hugh Morrus

Combining two feuds into one though Morrus doesn't like either opponent in the first place. Rey and the monster start things off and for some reason, Rey tries a sunset flip. Maybe he's been watching Cat matches to try something that stupid. It goes as badly as you would expect so Morrus comes in with a drop toehold so Rey can add a legdrop. Morrus powerslams Wall before handing it back off to Rey, who charges into a tilt-a-whirl slam. That's better than you would expect to see from Wall.

Chavo comes in and gets caught in a quick Bronco Buster but comes back with a Gorybuster (wrong Tony) for two. Wall chokes a lot and it's back to Chavo for a chinlock. That goes as far as a chinlock is going to go and Rey gets a breather off a hurricanrana. The hot tag brings in Morrus

as everything breaks down with Rey splashing Chavo from Hugh's shoulders. A clothesline looks to set up No Laughing Matter but Chavo makes the save, leaving Rey to springboard into a chokeslam for the pin.

Rating: C. Believe it or not the Wall was one of the best parts of this as he played the power role really well. Sometimes you just need a big guy around to throw a smaller person around the ring and that was where Wall excelled. Chavo vs. Rey should be good if Mysterio is ready to go while Wall vs. Morrus....will likely me want to go make a sandwich.

Wall and Chavo beat the losers down post match.

Totally Buff make fun of Latinos before Buff faces Konnan.

Video on Nash vs. Scott Steiner.

Konnan vs. Buff Bagwell

After some Konnan rambling in what barely resembled English and Buff's dancing, we're ready to go. Buff chokes a lot and yells at the ref a bit before walking into a DDT for two. Back up and Buff forearms him a bit, meaning it's time for more dancing. It's almost like his entire offense is one move and pose. How very Justin Credible of him. A Buff chinlock slows things down even further and here's Lex Luger for some nefarious reason. Konnan makes his comeback with his usual stuff but Luger sneaks in with the forearm to break up the Tequila Sunrise. Buff grabs a Blockbuster for the pin.

Rating: D+. Actually not horrible here with Buff working on the neck to set up the neckbreaker but you can only go so far when Buff's offense is almost the same as it was when he debuted ten years ago. There's something to be said for getting on the crowd's nerves with posing etc. but that's more than half of what Buff does in a match. It's ok to actually wrestle every now and then.

Brian Adams was trying to limp out for the save but couldn't get there in time.

Scott Steiner destroys catering because he wants Nash. Like he'd ever work back to back Thunders.

Diamond Dallas Page/Dustin Rhodes vs. Rick Steiner/Jeff Jarrett

So just last week's match with Rhodes swapped in for Nash. That might actually be a downgrade for once. Jarrett says this is the world's largest inbred family reunion and tonight is Page's last stop. It's a brawl to start (of course) with all four heading out to the floor. We settle down to Dustin missing a charge at Jarrett and getting beaten down by Steiner.

Page gets the tag and comes in with a top rope clothesline and neckbreaker for two. It's back to Dustin but Jeff knees him in the back so Steiner can get in a belly to belly suplex. The double teaming continues until we get the sleeper/belly to back sequence with Jarrett. Page comes in and cleans house with the clotheslines until Steiner decks him from behind, setting up the Steiner Bulldog. A bonus Stroke is enough to put Page away.

Rating: D+. They were smart to keep this one short but the match worked well enough with three good workers and Rick Steiner there to fill in a fourth spot. It's also a good idea to combine two feuds into one match as if nothing else you don't have to hear Mike and Tony talk about these feuds twice. I still don't know what WCW saw in this version of Dustin but I'm sure it's something about being a cowboy.

Post match Scott Steiner comes in with a pipe to go after Page's knee but everyone else comes out for a brawl with security breaking it up until Scott breaks a guard's leg to end the show.

Overall Rating: C-. This show was actually one of their stronger entries with a really strong first half hour and bad matches going short enough that they didn't drag the whole thing down. I'm sure the fact that Nash and Flair weren't on the show had nothing to do with it of course. It's not that they're playing their roles well (especially Nash actually) but the story isn't interesting when it leads to Nash getting ANOTHER title shot on Sunday. Anyway better show than usual this week though that's not exactly saying much.

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book on NXT: The Full Sail Years Volume II at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

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