

Daily News Update – December 16, 2016

We Hope This Slammy Awards Rumor Isn't True. December 14, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/we-sure-hope-this-slammy-rumor-isnt-true/>

Which Big Name is in Talks to Return to TNA? December 14, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/big-name-talks-tna/>

Which Former TNA Champion Has Caught WWE's Eye? December 15, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/former-tna-champion-caught-wwes-eye/>

WWE Signs Three New Female Talents. December 15, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/wwe-signs-three-new-female-talents/>

When is Big Show Planning on Retiring? December 15, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/big-show-planning-retiring/>

Randy Orton Talks Eventual Retirement and Winning More World Titles.
December 16, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/randy-orton-talks-eventual-retirement-winning-world-titles/>

Monday Night Raw – May 29, 1995: Get The Flashlight!

Monday Night Raw

Date: May 29, 1995

Location: Broome County Arena, Binghamton, New York

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Jerry Lawler

We're wrap up the month here as the company is just getting worse and worse as the weeks go by. The Undertaker is back tonight though so maybe we can get a little relief. Unfortunately he's facing Jeff Jarrett, who could somehow bring him right back down to reality. This tournament is showing how weak the heel side of this roster really is. Let's get to it.

Jeff Jarrett is in the ring to say he's ready to face Undertaker but he panics when the lights go out. Jeff: "GET THE FLASHLIGHT! GET THE FLASHLIGHT!" Funny line, but what's even funnier is Vince and Jerry making little comments about Jeff's promo but you can see them sitting there in silence.

Opening sequence.

Sid vs. Mike Khoury

Sid has Tatanka and Ted DiBiase in his corner. Isn't that a bit excessive for a squash? Powerbomb ends this in about a minute.

We look at Diesel injuring his elbow at In Your House and having surgery to fix it up. He should be back soon and won't miss any significant time.

Adam Bomb vs. Bob Cook

Vince mentions that there will be a broadcast version of Wrestlemania this weekend and says he's proud as a peacock about it. I'm not sure why he can't say it's on NBC (whose logo is a peacock) as they're willing to air it but won't let him market it? Bomb starts in on the arm and punches away before scoring with the top rope clothesline to end it quick. He never recovered from that Mabel match.

King of the Ring Control Center with Diesel and Bigelow promising to bankrupt and close the Million Dollar Corporation.

Hakushi vs. John Snakowski

Hakushi comes out with a bag containing.....A BRET HART HEAD. You can hear

the crowd freak out over that and I can't blame them. That was actually creepy. Hakushi chops a lot, hits a Vader Bomb and finishes with a running flip splash.

Antonino Rocca, Ernie Ladd and Ivan Putski will be inducted into the Hall of Fame.

Alundra Blayze wants to fight Bertha Faye. For some reason this takes three minutes.

Men on a Mission vs. Aaron Ferguson/Gary Scott

Scott fires off kicks to Mo's fat gut to start but Mabel comes in and destroys him as you would expect. Aaron comes in to start on Mo's arm but gets punched in the face for his efforts. It's back to Scott so Mabel can splash him in the corner, setting up another splash for the pin.

Rating: D-. I'm running out of ways to describe these squashes. Mabel is huge and crushes people and Mo is just there because Mabel needed a partner. For the life of me I don't know what Vince saw in Mabel to push him like he did but maybe he thought it was another Yokozuna. You know, without the talent, intimidation factor or anything else positive.

We look at the incomplete King of the Ring brackets.

King of the Ring Qualifying Match: Jeff Jarrett vs. Undertaker

As you might expect, Jeff is terrified but tries some right hands to start. That earns him the jumping clothesline and Old School. Just like last time, Roadie's interference doesn't work and Jeff has to avoid an elbow drop. Another Roadie distraction actually does work though and Jeff starts stomping away with a dropkick getting two. Jarrett starts in on the leg and we take a break. Back with the Figure Four going on until Jeff gets caught holding the ropes. A swinging neckbreaker keeps Undertaker in trouble but he grabs Jeff out of the air for a chokeslam. The Tombstone sends Undertaker to the tournament.

Rating: C. For once I'm ok with a champion losing clean because despite not being a champion, Undertaker is a much bigger deal than Jarrett could ever hope to be. This was a totally watchable match as Jarrett is more

than capable of wrestling a simple match and making it look fine. The problem is when he's asked to be interesting out of the ring because he's just boring otherwise.

A preview for next week's show and Bob Backlund raging against modern music wrap us up.

Overall Rating: D+. It's really interesting how much one match not being horrible can help a show. Jarrett vs. Undertaker certainly isn't great but it kept the show from leaving a bad taste in my mouth and that's more than you usually get from any given episode. The King of the Ring is starting to take shape and that's probably why I'm desperate to get out of this month.

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In Your House #1: Mother's Day Mayhem (2013 Redo): The Short Form

In Your House #1

Date: May 14, 1995

Location: Onondaga War Memorial, Syracuse, New York

Attendance: 7,000

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Doc Hendrix

Other than the matches mentioned, the main story tonight is the WWF giving away an actual house down in Florida to play up the In Your House name. This was a major idea that was heavily promoted on WWF television leading up to the show. It was a nice marketing idea as it gave some adults a reason to care about the show and possibly buy it for their kids. Let's get to it.

The opening video talks about the clash of the giants as well as several other matches on the card.

It's Mother's Day, meaning the announcers are going to talk about moms a lot tonight.

The set is exactly what you would expect: a big house with the wrestlers walking through the garage to get to the ring.

Bret Hart vs. Hakushi

Hakushi has his manager Shinja with him. Bret is in the back and says he's going to prove how great he is and that he's dedicated this match to his mother. How nice of him. Hakushi is a very unique looking wrestler as he has Japanese characters all over himself, giving him a nickname of the walking Japanese menu. Bret grabs a headlock to start but Hakushi easily escapes to a standoff. Now Bret tries the arm, only to be pulled to the mat by the hair.

The fans chant USA as Hakushi takes Bret down with a flying headbutt for two. Off to an armbar as this is still firmly in first gear. The stupid USA chant begins again, or maybe they're all fans of the referee? Now it's Bret on the arm before easily armdragging Hakushi down again, this time to the floor for a breather. Back in and Bret pounds away as things start to pick up again. Hakushi comes back with a kick to the face and what we would call a Vader Bomb for two.

Jerry Lawler is watching gleefully in the back as he still gets to face

Bret later in the night. Hakushi stomps Bret down in the corner and hits what we would call a Bronco Buster before stopping to pose. Back up and Hakushi blocks an O'Connor Roll, sending Bret to the floor so he can be stomped even more by Shinja. Another Shinja distraction allows Hakushi to choke even more as the crowd is getting into this. Bret's comeback is easily stopped by a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker, setting up a swan dive headbutt from Hakushi for two. Hakushi's springboard splash misses completely and Bret is back on his feet.

Bret comes back with the Five Moves of Doom (Russian legsweep, backbreaker, middle rope elbow, atomic drop, Sharpshooter, pick an order for the first four) but he has to stop and deal with Shinja again. Bret pounds away on Hakushi but gets tripped by Shinja AGAIN, finally causing him to dive through the ropes and pound the man in the white suit.

Back in and Hart reverses a suplex into one of his own, sending both guys out to the floor in a nice crash. Shinja's distraction allows Hakushi to get back up and hit a top rope Asai Moonsault to take both guys down again. Hart's ankle might have been twisted in the process. Bret is pulled back in but has his rollup countered into an attempted German suplex, only to counter that into a victory roll to finally beat Hakushi.

Rating: B. Really solid match here and a great way to open up the show as well as the series. Hakushi wasn't really much of note after this but that's what Bret was best at: getting the most out of anyone he worked with. Really fun match here which had the time to get going and build into what it needed to be.

Bret twists his knee getting to the floor.

A way too excited woman looks at the entries in the sweepstakes for the house. We even get a video of the truck bringing the entries here earlier today. Seriously.

Jeff Jarrett/Roadie vs. Razor Ramon

Handicap match here after Roadie (more famous as the Road Dogg) helped Jarrett take Razor's Intercontinental Title at the Royal Rumble. Razor's normal partner the 1-2-3 Kid is out with an injury and calls in to say

he's watching the match. In the back, Razor also dedicates this match to his mom. Vince yells about Roadie and Jarrett both being in the ring to start, prompting Hayes to say that Vince doesn't make the rules around here in a funny line.

Jarrett starts for the team and is promptly punched down and then slapped in the face. Roadie is lurking around the floor before getting back up on the apron. Back in and Jeff misses a dropkick before being clotheslined hard out to the floor. Roadie gets in a cheap shot to take Razor down from behind, allowing Jarrett to connect with an enziguri to take over. Not that it matters though as Ramon catches Jeff's cross body in the fallaway slam for two.

Roadie comes in for his first match and scores with a quick clothesline and a snapmare to put him down. Back to Jarrett who gets a quick two off a sunset flip before Razor gets the same off a small package. Not exactly thrilling stuff so far but they're not boring the people to death. After more basic stuff from Roadie it's back to Jeff, only to have him jump right into a punch to the ribs. Razor is backdropped out to the floor and there goes his bad knee again. Roadie adds a middle rope clothesline and Ramon is in big trouble.

Back in and Ramon is dazed but still manages to roll through a top rope cross body from Jeff into a two count, only to be taken right back down with a neckbreaker. Jeff's running hip attack only hits ropes but Razor collides with him, putting both guys down again. Ramon has the word Kid written on his boots. Back up again and Razor hits a belly to back suplex, putting both guys down one more time.

Jeff is able to make the tag before Razor can get up and it's Roadie hitting a middle rope knee drop for two. We hit the chinlock for a bit before Razor fights up and jawbreaks his way to freedom, putting both guys down for the third time in five minutes. Razor suplexes both guys down but Jeff goes to the bad knee to slow him up. The Figure Four is kicked away though, sending Jeff into Roadie and a quick Razor's Edge takes Jeff out for the pin.

Rating: C. Not bad here but it could have been the same match in about

half the time. On top of that the knee injury really didn't play much of a role in the match after the announcers talked so much about how bad Razor's knee was. This feud wouldn't last much longer but it worked pretty well for both Jarrett and Ramon.

Post match the heels go after the knee but Portuguese wrestler Aldo Montoya tries to make the save. That goes nowhere so here's yet to be named Savio Vega from the crowd for the real save, only to have him be taken away by police.

Jerry Lawler wants to face Bret right now but president Jack Tunney says no.

Video on Sid dominating his way to the title match tonight.

King of the Ring Qualifying Match: Mabel vs. Adam Bomb

Bomb is about 6'4 and over 300lb but Mabel towers over him at 6'10 and 508lb. Mabel has recently turned heel so he jumps Bomb before the bell rings. A splash in the corner has Bomb in trouble but he comes back with right hands to send Mabel to the floor. Adam dives out onto Mabel and pounds away before sending him back inside for a pair of top rope clotheslines, getting two each. Not that it matters much though as Mabel catches Adam's cross body and falls down on him (think Mark Henry's World's Strongest Slam) for the pin in less than two minutes. Mabel was his usual fat and worthless self here.

Razor introduces the man that saved him as Caribbean wrestling legend Savio Vega.

Tag Titles: Smoking Gunns vs. Yokozuna/Owen Hart

Yokozuna was Owen's mystery partner at Wrestlemania where they took the belts from the Gunns. Lawler is out here again but still can't get his match with Bret at the moment. The champions are managed by Mr. Fuji and Jim Cornette. Billy tries to grab a headlock on the 600lb+ Yokozuna and it works as well as you would expect it to. A pair of dropkicks work a bit better but Yoko headbutts Bart down before bringing in Owen.

The Gunns can handle a guy Owen's size and take him down with a nice

dropkick/suplex combination, only to go after Yoko again for some reason. Hart comes back with an enziguri to take Billy down before it's back to Yoko for a big clothesline. We hit the nerve hold on Billy before it's back to Owen who gets two off a neckbreaker.

A great looking enziguri puts Billy on the outside but he avoids a charge, sending Yoko into the post. Owen misses a charge of his own and there's the somewhat hot tag off to Bart. A suplex puts Hart down and the Gunns hit a belly to back/neckbreaker combo for another two before Bart misses a dive and lands on the floor. Yoko drops a leg to crush him ever further before throwing him back in to Owen for the retaining pin.

Rating: D+. The match wasn't anything great but with less than six minutes there's only so much they could have done. The problem with Yokozuna is there's only so much anyone can do against him and it makes it hard to work around him. Not a horrible match due to Owen but it still wasn't anything of note.

Diesel is sad because his mom died right after Christmas so he wishes all the other Mother's a good day. He's sore from an attack by Henry Godwinn but says he's 100%. Diesel is also glad that Shawn Michaels will be watching at ringside.

Here's Jerry Lawler in the ring with his....mother, who looks to be about 24 years old. She wants to see Lawler, who is in his mid 40s here, beat Bret and then challenge Bret's mom to a fight. We cut to the back to see Bret almost dancing because, in classic Hart fashion, he faked the injury.

Jerry Lawler vs. Bret Hart

Jerry didn't see the interview so Bret limps to the ring again, only to climb in with ease. Lawler tries to run but gets caught in the corner where Bret pounds away. Bret takes him down with a slam and some legdrops followed by a BIG backdrop. All Hart so far but Lawler comes back with a quick piledriver (his finisher) but Bret is up in just a few seconds. He pounds way on Jerry in the corner again before piledriving Lawler down for one.

Jerry comes back with a slam of his own while going up top, only to jump into Bret's fist to the ribs. Bret pounds away but here's Shinja to distract Hart for about the 12th time tonight. The referee is knocked into the ropes and gets his ankle tied up in the ropes as Bret hits the Russian legsweep. Hakushi comes in and takes out Bret with a kick to the head and two top rope headbutts, giving Lawler the easy pin.

Rating: D+. Again this didn't have the time to go anywhere as the last two matches haven't even combined to go 11 minutes. Lawler vs. Hart was a feud that went on for over two years and would culminate soon enough. This wasn't the best entry in the series though but it furthered both itself and Hakushi vs. Bret so no complaints there.

Post match Bret gets up but Lawler escapes with his "mom".

Sid very slowly says he'll win the title and that he rules the world.

We look at the sweepstakes house in Orlando. Interviewer Todd Petingill finds some rakes in the garage so he and the annoying interview can mix up the entries before drawing out the winner whom they call with the results. Thankfully this only takes about five minutes.

The announcers talk about the main event for a bit.

WWF World Title: Sycho Sid vs. Diesel

Diesel is defending of course and Sid has Ted DiBiase as his manager. The idea here is they both use powerbombs as their finishers, which should tell you a lot about this match. Diesel fires off forearms to start and hits some running clotheslines in the corner to stagger Sid. An elbow to the jaw puts Sid on the floor and it's time for a breather. Back in and three straight clotheslines get two on Sid as this is all Diesel so far. Sid pulls Diesel to the outside and knocks him down to take over for the first time.

Diesel is sent into the apron and post as the match slows way down with the challenger in control. A running boot to the side of the head has Diesel in even more trouble before they head back inside for clubbing forearms to Diesel's back. Sid stops to pose, meaning he didn't pay

attention to the opening match. More shots to the back have Diesel in even more trouble and we hit a camel clutch. After about a minute and a half in the hold Diesel fights out, only to have Sid cannonball down onto his back for two.

Back to the camel clutch with Sid leaning forward, as in the exact opposite of what he's supposed to be doing. At least pull your arms back man. Diesel starts breaking it, presumably out of boredom, and avoids a second cannonball attempt. Not that it matters though as Sid chokeslams him down and hits a quick powerbomb but poses instead of covering. DiBiase freaks out until Diesel is up at about two and one tenth. Diesel avoids a charge into the corner and drops Sid face first onto the buckle. There are the big boot and the Jackknife powerbomb but DiBiase's other man Tatanka comes in for the DQ.

Rating: D. There's a reason you rarely see matches with the same style going for a long time: they're not very good. The styles clash is too much to overcome and when it's such a basic style like these two have, it doesn't work well at all. Two similar styles can work, but you better be awesome at that style. Sid isn't particularly good at anything in the ring and this was a prime example.

Sid, Tatanka and DiBiase triple team Diesel until Bam Bam Bigelow, a man DiBiase fired a month earlier, makes the save. Wasn't Shawn supposed to be watching live?

Overall Rating: D+. The opening match was solid stuff but after that everything flew by until the horrible main event. This was a bad time for the company as Diesel wasn't very interesting on top of the card but he could have good matches with the right opponents. Sid was so far from the right opponent that he was left, making for a bad match. Not much to see here but things would get a lot better. Also, the show only ran for 96 minutes, which just isn't enough to go anywhere.

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Monday Night Raw – May 8, 1995: Bart Gunn Saved This Show

Monday Night Raw

Date: May 8, 1995

Location: Civic Auditorium, Omaha, Nebraska

Attendance: 5,800

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Jerry Lawler

This is a bad time as it's the go home show for In Your House but that means we're coming up on King of the Ring 1995, which is one of the worst shows of all time. We have two matches announced for tonight: Bob Holly vs. Doink the Clown and Bart Gunn vs. Owen Hart. I think you can see the problems from here. Let's get to it.

The opening recap looks at Sid and Razor from last week. This takes 45 seconds, not five minutes.

Opening sequence.

Lawler is WAY too happy that Bret Hart is having two matches at Summerslam.

Jeff Jarrett vs. Doink the Clown

Jeff's Intercontinental Title isn't on the line and Dink is in the big clown's corner. Doink starts fast but Roadie grabs his foot, only to have Doink stomp on Roadie's fingers. Roadie reaches for Jeff's hand to break up a wristlock but Doink kicks the hand away. It's not like the referee was going to do anything. Roadie's cheating fails AGAIN as he can't hold Doink up against the ropes, earning himself a Stunner. Just fire this goon already. Jeff finally takes over on his own as the announcers start making book references. Doink comes right back with a sunset flip for two and we take a break.

Back with Doink's leg in trouble and Jeff slowly kicking away as the match slow down (not the worst thing). We hit the half crab but Roadie somehow screws up for a fourth time with the referee catching him holding Jeff's hand. Doink grabs a DDT and a powerslam for two, followed by Dink taking a bite out of Jeff's tights. It's time for the Stump Puller (an odd leg submission) on Jeff but the referee is with Jarrett, allowing Roadie to get in a chop block for the save. Jeff slaps on the Figure Four for the submission.

Rating: C+. Odds are that was Steve Lombardi under the mask and it's very clear that he was a better choice if you need a good match. Jarrett was more than fine in a role like this where you have him in a midcard match instead of having any kind of attention. There's nothing wrong with just having a good wrestling match like this one, especially in the land of squashes that is 1995 Monday Night Raw.

The BodyDonnas are coming. This is Sunny's national TV debut and she's instantly a star with more charisma than any woman has ever had in the company to date and possibly ever.

Bam Bam Bigelow is sorry for all the things he's done over the last few months and wants to get his hands on the Million Dollar Team.

Video on Sid vs. Diesel.

Vince brings out Sid and DiBiase for a chat. DiBiase was the one that told Shawn Michaels to hire Sid as his bodyguard because he knew Sid

would turn his back on Shawn and draw Diesel into a WWF World Title match. There's a great slap in Shawn's face there as Ted is basically saying there was no way Shawn would win the title at Wrestlemania. Ted is ready to send Diesel to a rest home and Sid talks about an African lion. Promises of a powerbomb wrap this up.

Hakushi vs. Gary Scott

Hakushi starts fast with chops and kicks (because of course) followed by a gordbuster, all with Lawler drooling over the thoughts of this happening to Bret on Sunday. An abdominal stretch of all things sets up a springboard splash to put Scott away.

In Your House Control Center doesn't tell us much. As for storyline stuff, Diesel says he's ready for Sid and that's about it. Todd runs down the card and that's that. Other than that, there's no replay. Unless that's a pay per view company decree, I have no idea why the WWF would go with that move. Maybe they can't make enough money due to the lowered price but it sounds like giving away money.

Owen Hart vs. Bart Gunn

A main event anywhere in the country, or maybe just on a Raw in Omaha. Bart quickly knocks him outside to start but Owen forearms him in the back because it's just Bart Gunn. Owen is taken down again and it's time to start in on the arm. Mr. Fuji offers a trip (it's not like he can do anything else) and Owen takes it outside to send Bart into the post.

The enziguri gets two on Bart and we take a break. Back with Bart stopping a charge by raising a boot in the corner. That's it for his offense (Or was it defense?) as Owen gets two off a clothesline. Cornette breaks up a superplex but Billy Gunn crotches Owen on the top, allowing Bart to grab a rollup for the fluke pin.

Rating: C. Bart Gunn of all people pinning Owen Hart aside, this was a fine way to set up the Tag Team Title match on Sunday as it's not like they need much of a story since it's just a rematch. The Gunns aren't the most interesting team in the world but this gave them some momentum, which is really all they need here.

Todd and Stephanie (not that Stephanie) tour the house they're giving away and it's...a house.

Vince and Jerry, in front of a green screen of fans for some reason, wrap us up with Jerry promising that his mom will be at ringside.

Overall Rating: C. Now this was entertaining with two totally watchable matches and a build towards a few of Sunday's matches. Above all else they let us have some wrestling instead of four squashes in forty five minutes. It's certainly nothing great and no one would have thought much of it at the time but this was way better than most of the shows I've been sitting through in recent weeks.

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Monday Night Raw – December 18, 1995: The Tennessee Invasion

Monday Night Raw

Date: December 18, 1995

Location: Bob Carpenter Center, Newark, Delaware

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Jerry Lawler

We're FINALLY past the nightmare that was the December taping cycle and In Your House V. Bret Hart retained the WWF World Title (shocking I know) and Undertaker beat Mabel in the casket match (shocking again) and that's about it for anything of note from that pay per view. Tonight we have Razor Ramon vs. Yokozuna for Razor's Intercontinental Title. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of last night, including Diesel and Undertaker staring each other down to plant seeds for Wrestlemania.

Opening sequence.

Jeff Jarrett vs. Fatu

This is Jarrett's return after a long absence. Fatu dances a lot and makes a difference by atomic dropping Jarrett out to the floor. Back in and a shot to the head has no effect on Fatu but Jeff sends him throat first into the ropes for the running crotch attack to the back of the head. Jarrett rams him into the steps and actually has some success as we go to a break. Jeff slowly beats on Fatu but dives into a punch to the ribs. Fatu hits a powerslam and corner clothesline for two until he crashes down and holds his shoulder. It's time for the Figure Four but Ahmed Johnson comes in to jump Jarrett for the DQ.

Rating: D. It's not a good sign when Jeff Jarrett's big return match is put in the perfect kind of spot for him and the match wound up being this bad. Jarrett just isn't interesting in the ring and he's not interesting on the mic either. Other than that he's just fine though. That ending seemed to be improvised though as Fatu looked hurt off the crash landing.

Ahmed beats Jarrett up and helps Fatu to the back.

Gorilla Monsoon says Diesel can get over Undertaker being named #1 contender. As for the Royal Rumble, Jeff Jarrett won't be in the Rumble itself because he'll be facing Ahmed Johnson.

The graphic for Razor vs. Yokozuna is really weird as Razor is in the middle and Yokozuna is off to the side with most of his left arm cut off.

Goldust wants to sleep with Razor Ramon.

We see a clip from last night with Diesel getting in Undertaker's face about Undertaker being #1 contender.

Buddy Landel vs. Bob Holly

Landel is a Ric Flair knockoff/ripoff/tribute character and even had Flair's 1992 theme music here. Holly armdrags him down to start but Landel takes it back to 1985 with every Flair move you can think of, even down to his mannerisms. Buddy keeps it on the mat and starts working on the leg before getting two off a backdrop. We FINALLY get to the comeback with Holly hitting right hands and a clothesline but he misses a dropkick, allowing Buddy to drop a jumping elbow for the pin.

Rating: F. I sat through almost seven minutes of these two boring the fans to death and the best I can get is an ELBOW DROP? They had no idea what to do to counter Nitro at this point and if the best they can do is back to back old school Tennessee style matches like they've spent the first half of this show airing, they deserve to get squashed.

To make it even better, it's the Brother Love Show with Ted DiBiase. The topic tonight: DiBiase having his answer to Santa Claus with Xanta Klaus, who lives at the South Pole and steals presents from kids. Now he's going to steal victory after victory (oh dear) because 1996 is going to be the year of the Million Dollar Team and the Million Dollar Champion.

Raw Bowl ad. Did they really think this was some brilliant idea?

Intercontinental Title: Razor Ramon vs. Yokozuna

Razor is defending and here's Goldust to watch from ringside. The champ quickly knocks Yokozuna out to the floor to start and we look at Goldust during the lull. Back in and Razor hammers away with everything he's got before having to avoid a sitdown splash. Yokozuna takes him down with ease and grabs the nerve hold because he already needs a break.

Razor gets up because it's just a fat man nerve hold and hits some clotheslines. Back from a break with Razor having to fight out of another nerve hold. Razor fights up, stops a charge in the corner and hits the

middle rope bulldog.....as Undertaker comes out with a casket. Yokozuna panics and runs away because THESE TWO HAVE TO FEUD FOREVER.

Rating: D. Match of the night here until the horrible ending. Was anyone asking for another casket match between Undertaker and Yokozuna? Like, wasn't the Undertaker's spirit rising out of the casket and then Chuck Norris enough for us? Thankfully this didn't go anywhere of note and Undertaker would move on to the main event and then his much better feuds in 1996.

Razor is actually flattered that Goldust likes him but he's just into women.

And to wrap it up, Tell Me A Lie, a video tribute to Shawn Michaels who might never return.

Overall Rating: F. That might be the worst episode of Raw that I've ever seen. The first half of the show is spent on Jeff Jarrett and Buddy Landel, neither of whom could keep the fans awake let alone interested. After that we have an Intercontinental Title match with Razor bouncing off Yokozuna before Undertaker comes out for really not much of a reason.

I mean, there was the face crushing last month but Undertaker is getting a title shot at the Royal Rumble and is pretty clearly about to fight Diesel soon after that. Why do I need to see him with Yokozuna?

Absolutely horrible show here with almost no effort, nothing interesting, and now I have Tell Me A Lie stuck in my head. Thanks Raw, for irritating me this badly.

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Thunder – March 21, 2001 (Final Episode): How Many Times???

Thunder

Date: March 21, 2001

Location: O'Connell Center, Gainesville, Florida

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mike Tenay

We've arrived at the final shows. We'll start off the final episode of the corporate mandate that was Thunder, which has somehow gotten even less important over the years. The big story coming out of Monday is Ric Flair's face being pressed onto the back of a donkey and the upcoming Night of Champions on Monday. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Monday and most of the major stories. I'm still curious about who was attacking the Magnificent Seven. For some reason this recap starts with Dusty vs. Flair, goes to Booker vs. Steiner being announced and goes back to Dusty vs. Flair.

Air Raid vs. Jung Dragons

That would be Air Paris/AJ (now Air) Styles, now in matching G-Suits on the way to the ring. Yang and Styles get things going and hit the mat almost immediately with Yang getting two off a rollup. A headscissors gets Styles out of what looked like a Tombstone and it's Paris sneaking in for a superkick. Everything breaks down for a few seconds before Styles hits the yet to be named Styles Clash (very little reaction from the announcers) for two on Kaz.

Yang comes back in and knocks AJ out to the floor but Raid double teams

Yang down to take over for the first time. It's off to Paris for a double faceplant, only to have Yang hit a running Liger Bomb out of the corner for two. The tag brings in Kaz to clean house with some martial arts but he walks into a Burning Hammer of all things from Paris. Styles dives into a dropkick but he gets up to counter Yang Time.

Air Raid loads up what looked like a superbomb/neckbreaker combo. Well for all I know they might have broken down into a Charleston dance off as the camera cut to the crowd so I'm assuming a botch. Something like an H Bomb gets two on Kaz with Yang making the save. Kaz gets back up and loads up something like Sister Abigail but jumps forward for something like a reverse bulldog for the pin on Styles.

Rating: C+. This was fun while it lasted and a good way for these four to go out. The Dragons went from a pretty generic high flying Japanese team to a downright above average high flying Japanese team. Styles is another name on the list of stars that WCW had though a few matches in a low level tag team aren't really enough to blame WCW for screwing up again.

We recap the Rhodes Family beating Jeff Jarrett/Ric Flair on Sunday.

Here's Dustin Rhodes with a bag of goodies and something to say. We see the clip of Flair and the donkey again so Dustin pulls out a game of Pin the Flair on the Jackass. To go with it: mouthwash, chapstick, and a hotel key for Flair and the donkey in case the idea wasn't clear enough yet. Cue Flair to the screen to make Dustin vs. Jarrett/Scott Steiner for later tonight. Flair rants a lot so Dustin holds up the Horsemen sign but says it means to kiss the donkey again (Four words: Kiss My Daddy's...)

Jason Jett vs. Cash

That would be Kid Kash. They trade arm holds to start and then flip each other around a bit with Jett being set out to the floor. A good looking slingshot hurricanrana has Jason in trouble but he dropkicks Cash out of the air to take over. Thankfully the announcers stop previewing Bam Bam Bigelow vs. Shawn Stasiak to talk about this match.

Kash sends him outside for a big flip dive off the top and an ECW chant. Back in and a double clothesline (with Kash coming off the middle rope

and Jeff flipping into his) puts both of them down. Jett grabs a reverse kneeling piledriver but Kash runs the corner for a bad looking hurricanrana. The Crash Landing is broken up and the Moneymaker (double underhook lifting piledriver) gets two. Jett pops right back up and hits the Crash Landing for the pin.

Rating: C-. And so ends the Jason Jett story. There was potential but he was a far cry from what people like Guerrero and Helms were doing at the time. It could have gone somewhere with more time but alas Jett was another victim of the curse that was WCW going out of business for not knowing how to push people like Jason Jett. Among many other reasons of course.

Flair tries to calm Rick Steiner down after the team accused him of being the attacker.

Cat gives M.I. Smooth a pep talk.

The Cat/M.I. Smooth vs. Animal/Kanyon

Cat kicks Kanyon to start and drives some right hands into his head for good measure. It's off to Smooth vs. Animal for the power brawl with Animal no selling a clothesline. Smooth no sells a clothesline though and it's off to Cat, who walks right into a powerslam. A powerbomb out of the corner allows the tag off to Kanyon for some elbows, followed by a swinging neckbreaker.

Animal grabs a neck crank before handing it off to Kanyon for a chinlock. Kanyon's middle rope Fameasser is countered with a powerbomb out of the corner but Animal breaks up the dancing elbow. Smooth comes in and cleans house on Kanyon as Cat kicks Animal on the floor. A trip puts Kanyon down and a splash gives Smooth the pin.

Rating: D+. Well at least Animal didn't get the pin. Of all the things WCW did in its final months, hiring Animal is one of the most annoying. It's such a WCW standard: bring in some name from the past that people don't care about without his partner when you have people on the roster who could fill the role just as well. I'm sure Animal's brother booking the show has nothing to do with it.

Rick Steiner vs. Hugh Morrus

Morrus has Konnan with him. As is so often the case in Rick matches, they're on the floor in about thirty seconds with Steiner no selling Morrus' offense. Hugh clotheslines the post by mistake so Rick throws him inside for an Angle Slam of all things. The cover only gets two as Rick has to yell at some fans. Well at least he's doing something right. Rick's bulldog gets two with Morrus getting his foot on the ropes.

That earns him a Steiner Line but Morrus comes back with a spinwheel kick. Steiner kicks him low (referee is fine with it) and gets in a chair shot (no complaints from the referee). He loads up some Pillmanizing (this referee is incompetent) but calls out Shane Douglas. Shane comes out for the brawl (HOW IS NONE OF THIS A DQ???) and hits Rick in the head with his cast, knocking him into a German suplex to give Morrus the pin.

Rating: D. Even on the final show Rick Steiner can't pick things up a little bit? I'm assuming this was designed to set up Rick vs. Shane on Nitro (How appropriate: a Walking Dead match on the final Nitro.) or at some point in the future so I'll actually give them some credit for trying to have some more angles for beyond Monday in case they were around.

Post match Douglas hands Dave Penzer a video. Shouldn't he hand that to the production truck?

After a break, the tape shows Douglas challenging Steiner to a fight on Nitro. Was there a reason he just didn't do this live on the mic?

Kid Romeo/Elix Skipper/Chavo Guerrero Jr. vs. Rey Mysterio/Kidman/Shane Helms

Kidman and Chavo start things off but Guerrero goes after Shane on the apron, allowing Kidman to grab a neckbreaker. Shane comes in for a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker but a Skipper distraction lets Chavo take over. It's off to Romeo for some dancing until Shane kicks him in the face. A Samoan drop into a springboard legdrop keeps Romeo in trouble until Skipper gets in a cheap shot from the apron and comes in to take over.

Everyone heads outside for the series of dives in a nice sequence. Back in and Skipper plants Rey with a dragon suplex before handing it off to Chavo without bothering to cover. A Gory Bomb gets two for Chavo but Rey gets in a running DDT to drop Romeo. Kidman's top rope elbow gets another two as everything breaks down. Chavo saves Romeo from the Vertebreaker so it's the Kid Crusher to put Romeo away.

Rating: C+. One more good cruiserweight six man to go out on. I'm always a fan of combining two feuds into one match and they did fine here, especially with a challenger pinning a champion (fine as it was a six man and not a regular tag) to wrap it up. There isn't much to say here but it was exactly what you would expect from these six.

Rick still isn't happy. Was he ever?

Chuck Palumbo tells Lance Storm to stay out of this match.

Mike Awesome vs. Chuck Palumbo

They're all alone here as Chuck starts off with that good right hand of his. Mike sends him outside and hits a great looking springboard clothesline, followed by a slingshot splash for two back inside. A camel clutch doesn't go anywhere so Mike sends him outside again with Chuck's knees going into the steps. Chuck takes a chair away and blasts Awesome in the back but can't manage to jump over him in the corner. Not that it matters as Mike drops him anyway, making the whole thing look bad.

With the wrestling not working they head outside for the third time with Mike being whipped into the barricade. Awesome comes back in with a top rope shoulder but takes WAY too long setting up the Awesome Splash, allowing Palumbo to roll away just in time. Cue Storm and O'Haire to fight at ringside, leaving Palumbo to hit the Jungle Kick for the pin.

Rating: C. I like these guys and it's nice to see them getting a push near the end. O'Haire was the star of the team but Palumbo was good enough to keep a job in WWE for years and have a nice little career of his own. It was certainly bigger than any other Thrillers after leaving WCW, which was probably quite the surprise.

Dustin Rhodes vs. Scott Steiner/Jeff Jarrett

Before the match, Jeff says Booker will be dead after this match, just like his daddy's career. We go to a break before Dustin's entrance and come back with Animal finding Flair laid out in the back. Dustin hammers on Jeff in the corner to start but Scott's distraction lets Jeff escape the Dust Buster. So why didn't he just climb out on his own earlier? Scott ties Dustin in the Tree of Woe for a bit before Jeff crotches himself on the ropes. The bulldog gets two on Jeff but a pipe shot to the back sets up the Recliner for the quick submission.

Rating: D. What a perfect way for Thunder to go out: heels winning a fairly short, meaningless handicap match with an old face that doesn't get much of a response from the crowd. Dustin didn't do anything wrong in this run but time has shown that people don't really care about Dustin Rhodes on his own. He's just a guy in trunks who has done an above average job of separating himself from his famous father. That's commendable, but it's not that interesting. Goldust is someone people care about while Rhodes is just there and that's a common problem in wrestling.

Booker comes out for the save and says he's taking the title.

A group shot of the Thunder production crew ends the show.

Overall Rating: C. This felt more like any given episode of Thunder, which really isn't surprising given how little Thunder meant. The cruiserweights were good (shocking) and the main event didn't mean anything so it was all business as usual. Most of this stuff doesn't matter anyway as Monday is a special show but it was nice to see at least some effort as they close it out.

So that's Thunder. It's no secret that the show wasn't WCW's idea and only existed because Turner Sports told them to put on a second show. For once you actually can't pin this one on WCW but it's not like they did much to help themselves. Looking back at Thunder, in all 147 episodes, I didn't rate anything, be it match or show overall, higher than a B. In three years and three months, you would think they would somehow have something that high but nothing ever broke that barrier.

Over 147 episodes, a grand total of five received an overall rating higher than a C+. Five. As in less than twice a year this show delivered what I would consider to be a strong episode. In those same 147 episodes, I rated a total of thirty three matches above a C+. Of those thirty three, nine didn't involve the cruiserweights. Think about that for a minute.

In almost three and a half years, a weekly wrestling show produced nine heavyweight matches that were better than slightly above average. Shockingly enough, every single one of those nine matches involved Chris Benoit, Booker T., Raven or Diamond Dallas Page. So in reality, those four and the cruiserweights were the only people delivering good matches on this show and even they weren't doing it on a regular basis.

If you want to know why Thunder was such a nothing show, that's where you start: on a show that had let's say 900 matches (147 shows at six matches a show would be 882 so we'll round up a bit), about three percent of the matches were even a little bit above average and nothing would be considered great. At some point, you need to offer something that makes people stick around. Wrestling that is just ok with a bunch of older names having horrible matches to close the shows aren't going to do it.

Thunder just wasn't a very good show and much like Smackdown in recent years, you almost never needed to watch it because almost nothing ever happened there. Let's do a quick comparison with Monday Nitro regarding title changes and look at how many times each title changed hands from the time Thunder debuted until the end of the promotion (not counting the title being vacated):

World Title:

Nitro – 15, Thunder – 4 (Two of which were Kevin Nash awarding himself the title and losing it in the same night, a third being David Arquette and the final one being Nash winning the title, only to give it to Flair the following week on Nitro.). Now to be fair, maybe the bigger problem is that there are nineteen World Title changes on TV alone in just over less than three and a half years.

TV Title:

Nitro – 5, Thunder – 1

United States Title:

Nitro – 15, Thunder – 1

Tag Team Titles:

Nitro – 14, Thunder – 5 (Two of which were on a single show)

Cruiserweight Title:

Nitro – 11, Thunder – 5

Hardcore Title:

Nitro – 9, Thunder – 4

In total, that's 69 for Nitro and 21 for Thunder. (Again, part of the problem is having ninety title changes on TV in twenty one months. By comparison, in the history of Monday Night Raw, there have been 259 title changes in the history of Monday Night Raw. WCW had more than one third the number of title changes on two TV shows in less than three and a half years than the biggest wrestling show of all time has had in over twenty three years spread over thirteen championships).

That's the grand summary of why Thunder didn't work: average at best wrestling most of the time, few major events and a bunch of horrible main events featuring either old wrestlers far past their primes or low level stars in matches people didn't want to see. Thunder was a horrible idea from the beginning and never got any better. Monday Nitro going away was a major story. Thunder going away was a reminder that Thunder was a show that existed.

Oh and there's this still active website:

<http://cgi.superstation.com/sports/thunder/index.htm>

I know TBS saw WCW as a long term investment but this is a bit much.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new

book, KB's WWE Grab Bag at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01IH70904>

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

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

Monday Nitro – March 19, 2001: The Series Finale (Pretty Much)

Monday Nitro #282

Date: March 19, 2001

Location: O'Connell Center, Gainesville, Florida

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Scott Hudson

Greed has come and gone and it should be interesting to see where things go with this final real show before next week's grand (work with me here) finale. Scott Steiner is still World Champion after demolishing Diamond Dallas Page because that's what Scott Steiner does, though it does raise the question of who is left for him to beat. In theory that would be Booker T., who became US Champion for the first time last night. Let's get to it.

We open with an In Memoriam tribute to Diamond Dallas Page, complete with Taps and a shot of a flag at half mast over video of a trailer park.

Quick look at last night's main event.

Here's the Magnificent Seven (well four, counting Midajah) to open things up. As they're on the way to the ring, we're told that Eric Bischoff will be calling in later. That should be interesting for a change. Scott says Page is now on the same list as Sting, Kevin Nash, Sid Vicious and Goldberg and demands that the fans pay homage to him.

Ric brags about beating Dusty and Dustin around Jacksonville last night and says Dusty isn't here tonight. Dusty and Dustin pop up on screen to say Flair is going to kiss something tonight. After a challenge from Steiner, Dusty says someone is here to fight Steiner instead. Cue Booker T., who Scott says he beat so bad that Booker forgot where the barbershop is. Booker promises to get his hands on Steiner tonight.

Buff Bagwell and Animal are in the back with Buff accusing Lex Luger of being the attacker. The cameraman is told to follow Luger around all night.

Jason Jett vs. Disco Inferno

Hudson talks about Jason Jett's win last night as we see his win on Thunder. Of course they can't get it right with three shows left. Disco has Mike Sanders with him. Jason spins him down with a headlock and a sitout powerbomb for two. Sanders offers a distraction though and it's time for dancing.

A facebuster sets up more dancing and a delayed near fall before Disco starts in on the knee. Yet another distraction allows Sanders to come in and be quickly dispatched so Jett can slam Disco down, setting up a standing moonsault for two. Sanders tries to come in but hits Disco by mistake, allowing Jett to hit the Crash Landing for the pin.

Rating: D+. Jett continues to be interesting but this is pretty much it for him unless he's got a final match on Thunder. Disco losing because of a stupid blunder is the perfect way for him to go out, but he deserves some credit for being around as long as he was. He debuted on one of the very first shows and made it all the way to the end on a glorified comedy character. There wasn't any real future for him in the WWF or anything but Disco is someone who deserves more credit than he gets.

Ric Flair and Jeff Jarrett are having a chat as the documentary cameraman (whose identity isn't entirely clear actually) sneaks in a shot through the crack of a door.

Here's Shane Helms to challenge Kidman to a rubber match for the Cruiserweight Title.

Cruiserweight Title: Shane Helms vs. Kidman

Kidman is challenging. They run the ropes to start with Helms sending him outside and following with a big flip dive. A good looking high cross body gets two for the champ but Kidman gets the same off a belly to back. They're moving out there so far. A BK Bomb plants Helms for two as we're told that next week is the season finale. Helms stops a charge by raising a boot and ducks a clothesline to grab the Vertebreaker and retain the title.

Rating: C+. This was too short to be really good but they were flying around at high speed for the few minutes they had. Kidman looked good as always but it was clear that Helms was just flat out better than anyone else in the division at this point. He's a great option for the final champion and I'm glad he had a long career after WCW went under.

Post match Chavo Guerrero Jr. comes out for the brawl until Kid Romeo and Elix Skipper run down to help Guerrero. Rey Mysterio makes the save and the good guys (including Helms) clear the ring.

Lex Luger has been laid out so the cameraman goes to find Buff or Animal to help.

Bam Bam Bigelow has been granted a rematch with Shawn Stasiak. For the love of all things good and made of pickle flavored ice cream, WHY?

Buff and Animal ask if Luger saw anything. Animal freaks out because this needs to stop and Rick Steiner is the next suspect.

Shawn Stasiak vs. Bam Bam Bigelow

Stacy is now just Stacy instead of Stacy Keibler and despite the Miss Hancock outfit. Before the match we get a quick Shawn and Stacy Show with

Shawn saying he's ready to beat Bigelow up again so he and Stacy can get down to the real business. Bigelow throws him around to start but gets pounded in the corner. Who knew Shawn had that in him? A clothesline actually drops Bigelow but he intercepts Stacy's hairspray. Ever the nice guy though, Bigelow doesn't use it and opts for the Greetings From Asbury Park for the pin.

The replays shows a virtually empty upper deck, which is only the fourth section away from the ring.

Post match Stasiak says he wants one more match but Bigelow wants the pot sweetened a bit: if he wins, Stasiak has to get a tattoo. Shawn agrees, despite thinking it was going to be Stacy at the time. Wouldn't Stacy getting one be a bigger draw? Well to be fair they're going out of business so that's hardly their biggest problem.

Here are Scott Steiner, Flair and Midajah to the ring where a table has been set. Terry Taylor is there also but Scott throws the chairs out and grabs him by the shirt. Cue Booker T. to the stage so he's clearly not a Red Rooster fan. Booker introduces the phone call from Eric Bischoff, which can be heard in the arena.

Bischoff has been trying to acquire WCW but they've hit some roadblocks that may be brick walls. Next week might be the last night of wrestling on the Turner networks so next week will be a Night of Champions, meaning every title will be on the line. That includes Booker T. vs. Scott Steiner in a title vs. title match. Also, any former World Heavyweight Champions are invited to the show next week and please bring your boots with them. As for Ric Flair, he will be giving Dusty that kiss tonight no matter what. Bischoff will be there next week and hangs up.

Steiner signs the contract for next week as Booker has made it to the ring. Scott jumps him before Booker can sign and beats him down with the pipe. Security comes in and gets laid out as well but Booker pops up and hits the ax kick on Scott. Booker gets the pipe but Steiner bails with Flair and Midajah, leaving Booker to say his catchphrase, which is then played again at the start of his theme song.

Buff, Animal and Luger go to see Ric (who obviously hasn't been out to

the ring yet when this was filmed) and Jeff. Ric says they're going to regroup but there will be no kissing.

M.I. Smooth vs. Kanyon

Kanyon jumps Smooth (in wrestling gear here) during his entrance but gets powerslammed down. Smooth has to keep pulling his straps up as they head outside with Kanyon getting chopped around the ring. Back in and Smooth splashes him in the corner but Kanyon gets a Russian legsweep for two.

Kanyon goes Flair by asking for the time and dropping a low blow behind the referee's back. A slingshot elbow gets two on Smooth as Kanyon looks bored. Maybe it's the whole psycho character but he needs to find a better way to show emotion. Smooth powerbombs him but misses a charge into the post, allowing Kanyon to go grab a chair. Animal runs in and DDT's Smooth with the Cat coming in for a save after the pin.

Rating: D-. What the heck was that? Kanyon looked bored out of his mind and after Smooth no sold all those chair shots last week but now he loses in five minutes to a DDT from Animal? I always liked Ice Train back in the day so it was cool to see him get a mild push over the last few weeks but that's not quite how I was hoping he would wrap up his career.

Cat makes a tag match for Thunder.

Dusty Rhodes eats more burritos.

Rick Steiner vs. Konnan

Steiner really doesn't seem to mind that he lost the US Title. They're on the floor in less than ten seconds and for some reason Rick is in bright blue. They trade whips into the barricade before Rick runs him over back inside. We're firmly in the Rick Steiner formula now with Steiner slowly walking around and occasionally hitting Konnan before staring out at the crowd.

Konnan comes back with a faceplant but Rick completely misses a clothesline. It's sold anyway and Konnan looks like a moron as a result, despite the clothesline being about a foot above his head. Rick stands over him again before putting Konnan's arm between Rick's legs and laying

down, which apparently is an armbar. As the fans try to get their head around how Rick can actually be that lazy, Shane Douglas comes in for the DQ with a cast shot to Steiner's head.

Rating: F. For that armbar alone. Of all the people who wouldn't be seen again for years anywhere outside of a reunion show or some bad TNA pay per view, I think I'll miss Rick Steiner the least. The guy was part of a great team at one point but ever since he's become a singles wrestler, he's turned into one of the biggest embarrassments I've ever seen in a wrestling ring.

Rick is back up ten seconds later to be knocked outside by Hugh Morrus.

Bagwell, Luger and Animal accuse Rick of being the attacker and are thrown out after an argument.

Team Canada is ready to win a non-title match and earn a Tag Team Title shot.

Ric assures Jarrett that he'll make the right decision.

Sean O'Haire/Chuck Palumbo vs. Team Canada

Non-title. Storm and Palumbo start to some USA chants. Chuck fires off some great right hands and dropkicks Storm out to the floor. Back in and it's off to Sean vs. Mike with O'Haire ducking a clothesline and hitting a perfect spinning kick to the face for two. Lance comes in for some right hands and a suplex to set up Awesome's slingshot splash for two more.

Awesome clotheslines Storm by mistake but Storm comes off the top to stop a tag attempt. Back up and Sean hits a fireman's carry throw on Storm, allowing the hot tag off to Chuck to clean house. It's a shame that the crowd isn't reacting to most of this as they're having a good match.

Everything breaks down and Awesome eats the Jungle Kick but Storm breaks up the Seanton Bomb. Storm gets a chair kicked into his face but Awesome cracks Palumbo in the head with another chair. The shot was so close to Nick Patrick's head that even Tony has to ask how Patrick didn't hear it. The Awesome Bomb gives Mike the pin on Palumbo. That's your Tag Team

Title match next week.

Rating: B. I liked this a lot better than I was expecting to as O'Haire and Palumbo have turned into a good team here in the final few weeks. Team Canada isn't bad either as Storm and Awesome have good chemistry together and the rematch should be fun next week, even if it barely means anything. You need a good wrestling match like this to boost a show and this one did just that.

Here are Jarrett and Flair for the big closing segment. Flair tells Dusty to come out here right now but it's Dustin instead. Ric wants the old version so Dustin introduces his dad who comes out with a donkey and I think you get the joke. In case it's not clear, the back of the donkey says "Dusty's A**". Apparently the donkey, named Old Silver Dollar, has had about 300 burritos today, which I can't imagine is healthy for him.

Flair sends Jeff to do it instead but Jarrett says no way. Dustin gets beaten down but here's daddy for the save. The villains send Dusty into the barricade and go over towards the donkey. Dustin makes another save and Flair does indeed kiss Silver Dollar to end the show. I get the idea here but wouldn't Flair being made to do what was implied all night be more embarrassing? This was funny enough but it was a downgrade in a way.

Overall Rating: C+. You have to keep in mind that this show is basically part one of a series finale. On that front, it wrapped up several stories though I'm still curious to see if they tell us who the attacker was. The wrestling here was up and down as has become the standard in WCW with a lot of the problem still being Rick Steiner putting on another horrible match and dragging the show down with him. Overall though, this was an easy night to sit through as they're just flat out saying they're done after next week.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book, KB's WWE Grab Bag at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01IH70904>

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

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

Greed (2016 Redo): From A Flair For The Gold To Burritos

Greed

Date: March 18, 2001

Location: Jacksonville Municipal Coliseum, Jacksonville, Florida

Attendance: 5,030

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Scott Hudson

After all that, we've come down to this. Seventeen years ago, the first WCW (NWA at the time) super show aired and it was called Starrcade. The main event of that show saw Ric Flair win the NWA World Title from Harley Race in a changing of the guard, only to be challenged by Dusty Rhodes before the show ended as part of a legendary feud that would headline the next two Starrcades. Now it's a show called Greed and Ric Flair and Dusty Rhodes will be facing off in a featured match with stipulations involving the loser kissing a certain part of the winner. Sometimes wrestling is funny but this is sad. Let's get to it.

The opening video focuses on Diamond Dallas Page, who is still standing after everything Scott Steiner has thrown at him.

Tony: "If it's professional wrestling, it must be greed!"

Jason Jett vs. Kwee Wee

Bonus match. Kwee Wee jumps him during his entrance though to be fair Jason was taking his sweet time going around the ring high fiving fans. Jett comes right back and goes to the top to dive onto Kwee Wee and take over. They head inside with Jason grabbing a reverse Boston crab but also pulling Kwee Wee up by the arm. Tony says he's never seen anything like it but it's been seen in WCW before, from Konnan I believe.

Kwee Wee gets out and throws Jason to the floor by the hair. That's a new one, or at least a painful one. Jett charges at him and gets backdropped onto the apron for something like a Tajiri handspring into a DDT onto the floor. Cool spot. Totally contrived looking, but cool. Back in and Jett is backdropped out to the floor for a big crash and it's time to choke with a cord. As is always the case, Kwee Wee continues to be so far beyond this gimmick that it's kind of sad.

Kwee Wee covers on the floor, prompting Hudson to mention that the main event is falls count anywhere. I don't remember that being mentioned anywhere leading up to this show and unfortunately that's probably the first time it was announced. We hit the chinlock to slow things down a bit (well earned at this point) and we're told that the falls count anywhere stipulation was indeed added to the main event on the pre-show. Actually make that the END of the pre-show.

I'd be more mad about that if the company had ten days left, or if Jett wasn't on top for a superbomb that was countered into a super hurricanrana for two. Kwee Wee calls for the piledriver but Jett reverses and hits the Tajiri elbow. The Crash Landing is escaped (I wonder if Kwee Wee's hair can be used as a flotation device) and Kwee Wee gets two off a northern lights suplex. Jett sends him outside and lays down to play possum, causing Kwee Wee to miss a top rope legdrop. Serves him right to get hurt after not actually doing anything to put Jason down. The Crash Landing gives Jason the pin.

Rating: B+. I don't know if it's the low expectations or just being happy that I don't have another WCW pay per view after this but I dug the heck out of this match. These two were all over the place with big spot after big spot and I wanted to see what they were going to do next. It's a shame that both guys were basically done after this (save for Kwee Wee

wrestling women in TNA) due to not arriving soon enough and having a horrible gimmick.

We recap the Cruiserweight Tag Team Title tournament.

Cruiserweight Tag Team Titles: Elix Skipper/Kid Romeo vs. Kidman/Rey Mysterio

The titles are vacant coming in and Kidman throws a curveball by wearing a gray shirt for a change. That's WCW's version of mind games I suppose. Kidman and Romeo start things off with Romeo hitting an Alley Oop of all things to take over. Skipper comes in and slams his partner onto Kidman for two but it's quickly off to Rey for a springboard legdrop to take over.

They fight up the ramp with Mysterio and Kidman hitting stereo dives off the stage for a good looking spot. Back in and Skipper knees Kidman out to the floor in a crash. Romeo spends too much time chopping though and gets beaten up in the corner, only to have Romeo back with Mysterio's sitout bulldog. We hit the chinlock for a bit before it's back to Skipper to choke on the ropes.

Elix takes him to the top until Kidman takes him down with a sitout powerbomb and a round of applause. The hot tag brings in Rey to clean house and send Elix shoulder first into the post. Kidman hits a top rope shooting star to the floor to take out both Romeo and Skipper. Back in and a reverse suplex gets two on Romeo with Skipper making the save. Skipper dragon suplexes Rey into a guillotine legdrop from Romeo with Kidman diving in for a save.

The good guys one up them with a powerbomb into a top rope splash for two on Skipper, followed by the Bronco Buster. It's nonstop action at this point. Kidman and Skipper head to the floor, leaving Rey to moonsault into the Last Kiss to give Romeo and Skipper the inaugural titles.

Rating: A-. Sweet goodness this show is on fire to start. This was the kind of match you would expect from the previous generation of cruiserweights which didn't seem to be possible until a few months ago. Outstanding stuff here with four guys flying all over the place to show

off for the crowd and make the titles look like something special.

More documentary stuff Buff saying he's doing this so he can get his face on TV. Basically Flair says they'll all win tonight. Animal actually talks a bit here, only showing how worthless of a signing he was. Can anyone explain to me why Mike Awesome couldn't have played the exact same role? Other than giving Animal a payday of course.

We recap Shawn Stasiak vs. Bam Bam Bigelow which has had all of six days' build. Basically Shawn doesn't like bald tattooed people and you can figure out the rest for yourself.

Shawn Stasiak vs. Bam Bam Bigelow

Stacy is back in the Miss Hancock gear and I forgot how well that look worked. She introduces the Shawn and Stacy Show with Shawn doing the same horrible insults that didn't get him over in the first place. Bigelow drives him into the corner to start but Shawn nips up. That is the extent of the comparisons that will be made between Shawn Stasiak and Shawn Michaels.

A shove sends Stasiak outside and that means we need a timeout. Bigelow knocks him to the floor again as this is already horrible. Shawn comes back in with a high cross body and some posing, only to have Bigelow destroy him again for the top rope headbutt. This brings Stacy to the apron for the hair down distraction, allowing Shawn to spray Bigelow in the eyes with some perfume. The neckbreaker puts Bigelow away.

Rating: F. We get two great matches to open the show and then have to sit through the latest attempt to make Shawn Stasiak mean something. It doesn't help that Stasiak's offense is move, pose, move, pose, cheat to win with a neckbreaker. We would have been much better off with just having Stacy stand in the ring reciting the alphabet for six minutes instead but that might be too complicated for WCW.

Shawn and Stacy kiss post match.

Cat tells Miss Jones to stay in the back but she won't stand for it.

Romeo and Skipper put the belts on each other.

We recap Hugh Morrus/Konnan vs. Team Canada which is basically I hit you, you hit me.

Team Canada vs. Hugh Morrus/Konnan

There's no Canadian national anthem for Storm so we get the dramatic head turn as Hugh Morrus' music plays instead. It's a brawl to start (duh) with Awesome and Morrus but it's quickly off to Storm. Hudson brings up the fact that Storm and Morrus were supposed to have their final battle but "the heat was too great." The double teaming continues on Morrus with Konnan punching Storm from the apron, only to knock him right into Hugh to prevent the hot tag.

The locker room leaders ladies and gentlemen. Konnan gets the tag a few seconds later but Awesome runs him over a few seconds in to keep the Canadians in control. Morrus gets to play cheerleader as Storm gets beaten down in the wrong corner. Awesome's clothesline gets two and Konnan's small package gets the same. A top rope shoulder knocks Konnan into his own corner but thankfully Awesome is smart enough to pull him right back. Storm's dropkick hits Konnan in the hands so clearly that even the announcers have to acknowledge it.

We hit the chinlock for a bit, followed by the referee missing the hot tag. A piledriver from Awesome sends Konnan back first onto Awesome's legs but Storm's awkward looking top rope...something lands on Konnan's raised boot. That was really weird looking as Storm seemed to be going for a swan dive (not exactly a standard move for him but had to move forward to hit Konnan's foot. Either way it's enough for the hot tag to Morrus, only to have Storm superkick him down. Konnan and Storm fight to the floor but Lance is able to break up No Laughing Matter, setting up the Awesome Bomb for the pin.

Rating: D+. The match was longer than it needed to be but this could have been a lot worse. That being said it's also not any interesting match and I'm also not sure why these teams were fighting in the first place. It also doesn't help that they weren't exactly putting in the strongest effort, though it's kind of hard to blame them at this point.

Dusty Rhodes orders 240 burritos to get ready for his match later. See,

if Flair loses he has to kiss Dusty's....yeah you get the idea.

Buff interviews Rick Steiner, who isn't sure why Scott is so freaked out. It's probably Midajah though.

Chuck Palumbo and Sean O'Haire look at something several feet away from the camera as they talk about how they'll die to keep the Tag Team Titles.

Cruiserweight Tag Team Titles: Chavo Guerrero Jr. vs. Shane Helms

Chavo is def....what's that? Oh WCW put up the wrong graphic because they can't go five minutes without screwing something up? Let's try this again.

Cruiserweight Title: Chavo Guerrero Jr. vs. Shane Helms

Chavo is defending for reasons that the announcers can't cover because they're too busy talking about Dusty and his burritos. Ignore them saying the wrong number of burritos because they can't remember something Dusty said five minutes ago. Chavo beat Shane back in January but Shane has gotten much better (and put on trunks instead of pants) since then and earned another title shot last month.

A headlock gives Chavo early control and a clothesline cuts off Shane's attempt to increase the pace. Shane gets in a middle rope fist drop for two as the fans aren't exactly thrilled by this. It's almost like those two really boring matches killed the crowd's enthusiasm or something. A high angle t-bone suplex gets two for the champ and it's off to an STF. The idea they're going for is Chavo taking away Shane's rhythm and not letting him get anything going so at least there's an idea here.

We hit a Muta Lock for a bit before they can't bridge into a backslide. Shane comes back and sends Chavo outside, only to have the champ slide back in and hit a dive off the top. You don't see Chavo fly often but he looks good when he does it. Back in and Shane grabs a swinging neckbreaker to put both guys down.

The Sugar Smack knocks Chavo off the apron but he comes right back with a sitout reverse inverted DDT. Helms grabs the Nightmare on Helms Street

for two but Chavo crotches him on top, only to pick Shane up instead of cover. Ever the overconfident one, Chavo tries his own Vertebreaker and is promptly reversed into the real thing to give Shane the title.

Rating: B-. This was much more entertaining than good but the important part was the story they told to get here. Shane started off as the unpolished talent and then moved on to become the champion after honing his skills. Chavo was a great champion and more than made the title feel important again but his reign was over and it was Shane's time. Not a great match but a really good story.

Flair and Jarrett say they'll win.

Booker T. says he's coming for the only title he's never won.

We recap Sean O'Haire/Chuck Palumbo vs. Totally Buff which is your standard new school vs. old school feud. The champs have beaten Luger and Bagwell for weeks now so the signs point to new champions here.

Tag Team Title: Totally Buff vs. Sean O'Haire/Chuck Palumbo

Totally Buff, challenging here, have individual entrances. Before the match we need to hear about Luger and Bagwell getting rid of Goldberg all over again because that hasn't been touched on enough. The champs come to the ring and it's a superkick into the Seanton Bomb for the pin to retain in less than a minute. Hudson: "That was a Georgia Championship Wrestling squash!" I guess it takes the company dying to have Luger put someone over this strongly like he should have done two years ago. As glad as I'll be to see WCW finally finish, I'd still really like to see what they did with O'Haire. That guy had it.

Scott Steiner yells about beating Page tonight.

We recap The Cat vs. Kanyon which started when over Kanyon laying out Miss Jones, attacking her in a hospital and then not being able to stop the angry limo driver, who came off as looking like the big star out of all this thing.

Buff is still down in the ring but gets up pointing at his neck.

The Cat vs. Kanyon

Kanyon goes after Jones again and is sent into the barricade a few times. Apparently Kanyon broke his hand on Monday night (not Tuesday Tony). They head inside for the first time with Cat electric chair dropping Kanyon off the ropes but Kanyon starts hitting him with the cast.

That just earns him a powerbomb because a cast shot to the head merely annoys Cat. Kanyon gets two off a top rope clothesline, which Hudson says wasn't worthy of a cover. The middle rope Fameasser gets the same and we hit the chinlock, followed by a swinging neckbreaker for two. Cat's superplex gets two and it's time for the dancing martial arts.

Kanyon can't do his snap sitout Alabama Slam for some reason so he settles for a Boston crab instead. A Feliner out of nowhere gets two as Kanyon puts his foot on the rope because this match needs to keep going. Kanyon's cast shot gets two more (that's a horrible cast) and the referee goes down. Jones comes in and kicks Cat by mistake, only to kick Kanyon away, setting up the Feliner for the pin.

Rating: D. The ending was the only possible choice but that doesn't mean it was the right way to get there. Kanyon clearly wasn't trying and you don't want to have the Cat be the one responsible for carrying a match. Boring match here but at least we got one more appearance from Miss Jones for the road.

Post match Kanyon gives Cat the Flatliner but Smooth comes out to save Jones.

Totally Buff argues over the loss.

Dusty has eaten a lot of burritos and promises it's going to smell bad. This isn't funny.

We recap Booker T. vs. Rick Steiner which is really just to give Booker something to do before he can fight Scott for the World Title.

US Title: Rick Steiner vs. Booker T.

Booker is challenging. Rick punches him to the floor to start and sends

Booker into the crowd because this is about making Rick look strong. Back in and a Pearl River Plunge gets a delayed two for the champion but Booker grabs an Angle Slam of all things. That's it for his offense at the moment though as Rick gets in a belly to belly for two. We hit the chinlock because Booker can't be on offense for more than ten seconds in a row.

It's also too much to ask for Rick to actually crank on the hold. Booker comes back again and hits the ax kick (now the Ghetto Blaster) but the referee gets kicked by mistake so Rick can take over AGAIN. Cue Shane Douglas to hit Rick with the cast but Rick is fine enough to miss a swing, setting up the Bookend to give Booker the title.

Rating: F. That's entirely on Rick as Booker wasn't even on offense for a minute in this whole thing. I don't know what happened to Rick in the last few years but he has turned into the most selfish worker I've ever seen. Booker is one of the best of all time but you have to give him SOMETHING to work with other than a bunch of chinlocks and a beating.

Buff has been laid out and Lex accuses Animal.

We recap the Rhodes Family vs. Ric Flair/Jeff Jarrett. Dustin wouldn't join the Magnificent Seven so Ric has gone after him. The only option was to bring in Dusty Rhodes because it's not like there was anyone else they could have gone with here. It's not like they could have gone with O'Haire, Palumbo, or any of the other young guys. No, they had to have a long feud with Lex Luger and Buff Bagwell remember. I mean, you get a nice nostalgia moment with Dusty and Ric but WCW needs to have people like Flair and Dustin giving what rubs they can to someone at this point, not being the focal points.

Jeff Jarrett/Ric Flair vs. Dustin Rhodes/Dusty Rhodes

Losers have to, shall we say, kiss up to the winners. Flair is wrestling in a Hawaiian shirt for reasons that aren't quite clear. Actually Ric says he won't wrestle, which results in Animal being ejected. Jeff jumps Dustin to start but gets punched in the corner several times. Dustin crotches him against the post with Tony saying "the Yellow Rose of Texas." No real context to that one unless he's changed Dustin into David

Von Erich.

Flair comes in for some chops and it's off to Dusty for some strutting. Dustin is back in but the Dust Buster is broken up to give the heels control again. Jeff does the sleeper and they go through the standard counter package. It's time to work on Dustin's knee but Flair get small packaged for two.

Jeff comes right back in and puts on the Figure Four. That goes nowhere as Dustin escapes and hits a belly to back for the tag to Dusty, who apparently is full of burritos and ready to go. Dusty drops the big elbow for two on Flair and it's back to Dustin as everything breaks down. Double Figure Fours are broken up and Dustin rolls Flair up for the pin.

Rating: D. I'm not wild on Dustin and Jarrett as the young pups for this match but it was a one off match and fun enough match for what it was. The fans reacted to it and while they would have been better off giving someone young a rub here, it could have been much worse. Also the show needed something much more lighthearted after the string of lame matches that people didn't want to see.

Ric bails so Jeff has to take a very weak Stinkface from Dusty.

We recap Scott Steiner vs. Diamond Dallas Page with the idea of Page being the last hero standing. Well save for Booker who came back after this match was made.

WCW World Title: Scott Steiner vs. Diamond Dallas Page

Page is challenging, anything goes, and this is falls count anywhere, which was announced less than three hours ago. Midajah is here with Steiner, making her attack on Monday seem a bit pointless. Steiner knocks him outside to start but Page comes back in with a top rope clothesline for two. The champ takes over on the floor and gets in some yelling at fans.

They fight over the Spanish announcers' table (oh it's so funny) with Scott breaking a kid's crutch over Page's back. The same kid throws Page his other crutch for a shot to Steiner's back so Page can drive an elbow

through a table for two. Back to ringside with Page hitting him in the head with a breakaway plate of some sort for another near fall. A t-bone suplex drops Page and it's off to the bearhug.

Steiner puts his boot between Page's shoulders and pulls back on the arms until a DDT plants the champ. Back up and Page gets the Diamond Cutter, only to have Rick Steiner pull out the referee. The bloody Page is put in the Recliner but makes sure to do the Austin in the Sharpshooter pose before reaching the ropes. Some shots to the ribs with a pipe set up another Recliner to knock Page out and retain the title.

Rating: C+. This was a match where they put too much stuff in at the end and it bogged the rest down. Page was as good as you would expect him to be as he's one of two stable main eventers (the other being Booker T.) for months if not years now. The falls count anywhere stipulation didn't need to happen but the bloody collapse near the end suited Page well. Shame they can't follow up on it though.

A recap of the night's events wrap up the show.

Overall Rating: C. I know the line is that the cruiserweights often carry a WCW show but I never remember it happening to this kind of an extreme. Main event aside, the cruiserweights were the only good things (save for a 54 second squash) on this entire show. The middle portion of this show was an absolute disaster and the best proof you'll find of how understaffed WCW was around their final few shows. The Cat is treated as a big star, Booker T. gets squashed until he wins off a fluke, Ice Train is a conquering hero, and something about Dusty Rhodes eating burritos.

Now let's talk about the good for a bit. That opening half hour with the two cruiserweight matches is as good a stretch as WCW has put on in a very, very long time. It's fast paced, it's high quality and it's half of exactly what the show should have opened with. This is a standard problem with WCW: they load most of the exciting matches on the top of the show and then let things die throughout the middle. Swap Cat vs. Canyon with the Cruiserweight Tag Team Title match and see how much better it feels, if nothing else due to having the titles seem more important.

No matter how you look at it though, that's the final WCW pay per view

and it's still the same batch of problems that their shows had for a long time, mainly stemming from the talent near the top not being great. I know Dustin is still around today but that doesn't mean he should be in the second biggest match on a pay per view. This show worked due to how hard the young guys worked but it was just far too little too late.

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Thunder – March 14, 2001: That's So Thunder

Thunder

Date: March 14, 2001

Location: Knoxville Civic Coliseum, Knoxville, Tennessee

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mike Tenay

The long nightmare is almost over as we only have two shows left, including this one. This is the final show before Greed and things aren't exactly looking up. Monday's show was full of old guys having bad matches and not enough build to anything other than Sunday's main event. Let's get to it.

Nitro montage.

Cruiserweight Tag Team Title Tournament Semifinals: 3 Count vs. Rey Mysterio/Billy Kidman

The winners get Elix Skipper and Kid Romeo at Greed. Kidman and Moore start things off with a headscissors putting Kidman down. Moore misses a slingshot hilo though and it's Rey getting two off a moonsault. Evan comes in and gets taken down with a springboard ankle scissors (or an ankle lock according to Tenay) but he plants Rey with a spinebuster for two.

The double teaming slows things down for a bit until Rey 619s around the ropes and tags in Kidman to speed things right back up. The villains get Kidman to the floor for a whip into the barricade followed by a suplex/high crossbody combo. It's impressive when a team can do the high flying stuff and still be heels. Evan springboards into a dropkick to the ribs and the hot tag brings in Rey to clean house.

Karagias puts him down and a 450 gets two on Rey. Bottoms Up plants Kidman (illegal) for two with Mysterio making the save, followed by a Bronco Buster to Shannon. A middle rope seated senton (not Thesz Press Mike) drops Evan and Kidman dives onto everyone. Back in and Kidman holds Moore up in a wheelbarrow suplex for a springboard missile dropkick to give Rey the pin and the spot in the finals.

Rating: C+. Standard high flying tag match here but at least the ending was a unique move. They flew around for about ten minutes and popped the crowd to open the show and that's really all you can ask for from the cruiserweights at this point. The downside to all this though: the tournament final won't have any of the six cruiserweights who have broken their backs for months to get the cruiserweight tag matches over. Those matches were almost all for nothing, as is the case way too often in WCW.

Skipper and Romeo come out but are quickly dispatched.

Disco Inferno and Alex Wright are eating lunch with Disco stealing food off Alex's plate. That's enough for Wright and the team seems to be done.

Here's Diamond Dallas Page to say he's still standing and ready to take the title from Scott on Sunday. This brings out Dustin Rhodes, who says

he's here on Ric Flair's orders. Cue Ric, Jeff Jarrett and Rick Steiner to the video screen to say Scott is off tonight (because who needs him to sell a pay per view on the go home show) and Cat/Booker T. are both gone. Therefore, the main event will be Paige/Dustin vs. Jeff/Rick, which we saw just a month ago. With the three of them on the screen, here are Rick and Jeff to attack Page and Dustin from behind. The heels are quickly cleared out.

Jason Jett vs. Alex Wright

Wright is ticked off and hammers away before getting two off a powerslam. Jett sends him into the corner and gets two of his own with an enziguri. A standing moonsault lets Jett show off even more but he misses a charge in the corner. Wright gets two of his own off a good looking spinwheel kick and a top rope superplex for the same.

Alex stays aggressive by knocking Jason outside with a forearm, only to have his suplex countered into a small package. Off to a modified abdominal stretch on the mat to keep Jason in trouble. Back up and Jason crotches him on the top before hitting a Tajiri handspring elbow. Jett's release suplex slam (the Crash Landing) is enough for the upset pin.

Rating: C+. Jett had some potential and looked like a new star in the making but unfortunately time caught up with him. You would think he would have gotten some time in the WWF but for some reason it never went anywhere. At least someone like Wright is putting him over here so they were kind of trying.

We get some more from Buff's "documentary" with Flair and Lex Luger wondering who attacked Midajah. Ric changes gears in a hurry and puts Buff, Luger, Palumbo and O'Haire in a four way elimination.

Video on Booker T. vs. Rick Steiner.

Here's Shawn Stasiak for a match and he has Stacy with him. Before we get to his opponents, Stacy has to talk about how awesome Shawn is. Shawn on the other hand insults the fans for being fat and tattooed because he didn't learn a thing on Monday. Cue Reno to say he's bald and tattooed so let's have a match.

Shawn Stasiak vs. Reno

Stasiak takes over to start which goes against the rules of a wrestler answering a challenge. A side slam and gutwrench suplex get two each for Shawn as we hear about Reno's pit fighting career. Reno stops a charge in the corner and grabs a suplex for two of his own. They head outside with Stasiak taking over. I guess a pit isn't as deadly as a padded section of floor next to the ring. A top rope clothesline gets two for Shawn and he quickly escapes a Roll of the Dice into a neckbreaker to put Reno away.

Rating: D-. So is there a reason why Stasiak got this push instead of Reno? Stacy couldn't be into the bad guy with the ponytail and tattoos instead of the muscle guy? I'd love to hear that production meeting where this was the answer they decided on. Bad, bad match here as Stasiak continues to be horrible in the ring. He's terrible on the mic too but one problem at a time.

Stacy dances to brighten things up a bit as Stasiak autographs a picture for Reno. Bam Bam Bigelow comes out to chase Stasiak off.

Chuck Palumbo vs. Sean O'Haire vs. Lex Luger vs. Buff Bagwell

Because we've seen these teams in singles matches so many times that this is the best we can get. Bagwell and Palumbo get things going which is arguably one of the best two combinations. Whatever keeps Luger out of the ring at this point. Just to show you how bad of an idea this is, we almost immediately cut to a shot of the crowd and come back to Buff on the mat, meaning someone botched the heck out of something.

Sean comes in and eats a jawbreaker so it's off to Luger for an atomic drop, giving us another crowd shot. I know the match isn't very good but they botched that badly twice in a row? Sean gets in a suplex on Luger and tags Buff in, which lasts all of no time as Luger hits Palumbo on the apron so Buff can tag out. A quick chop block brings Palumbo down and Buff grabs a rollup to get us down to a handicap match. Sean slams Luger for two with Lex's foot on the rope but Palumbo shoves it off to make it a pin. So it's one on one now and a quick clothesline into the Seanton Bomb puts Buff away in a hurry.

Rating: F. It's never a good sign when you completely run out of ideas for a feud. It's also not a good sign when you don't have anyone else on the roster to feed into this match so the champs could have a quick squash etc. At least O'Haire got to look like the conquering hero as his push continues to seem like it could have gone somewhere if the company had stuck around.

Totally Buff gets chased to the back.

Disco tries to get Mike Sanders to team with him tonight. Sanders so no, until Flair comes up and asks Mike to go fix a toilet, because in WCW's world the company fixes building issues. Mike decides to team with Disco instead, albeit after taking his time thinking about it.

Video on the Rhodes Family vs. Jarrett/Flair.

Flair tells Animal to go interrogate Page about Midajah's attack. After Animal leaves, Flair accuses Animal of doing it.

Kwee Wee vs. Shane Helms

So Kwee Wee has gone from "I should be in the heel stable" to Sanders' wacky partner to jobbing to the #1 contender to the Cruiserweight Title. Dang he's on a roll. I mean it's a roll down a hill but a roll is a roll. If nothing else there's Shane's really cool entrance. Unfortunately there's also a shot that shows WAY too many empty seats.

They start slowly as the announcers keep referring to Kwee Wee as Kiwi. To be fair that would probably have extended his career. Kwee Wee slams him for two as you can tell they're not exactly interested in trying tonight. Helms gets in an armdrag to send Kwee Wee to the floor for a baseball slide followed by a high crossbody.

Back in and another crossbody puts Kwee Wee down, followed by a northern lights suplex for two. The Vertebreaker is countered into a rollup for two and Kwee Wee goes back to the slam. He tries to go a bit too high though and a top rope legdrop only hits the mat, setting up the Vertebreaker to give Shane the pin.

Rating: C-. Shane is on a roll at this point and there's no reason for

him to not win the title on Sunday. Chavo has been great with the belt but Shane is clearly the top guy in the division at the moment. It's a rare instance of a story being well put together to set up a big title change, which you almost never see around here.

We look back at the post match shenanigans from the four way.

Hugh Morrus/Konnan vs. Mike Sanders/Disco Inferno

I guess this is a warmup for Morrus/Konnan, who are described as locker room leaders. No wonder the company went under. The bad guys jump them from behind to take over but Disco stops to dance. Disco and Konnan fight on the floor (aftermath of that music video feud), leaving Morrus to clothesline Mike over the top. We settle back into a regular tag match with Sanders elbowing Morrus off the apron to keep Konnan in trouble.

Tenay actually brings up the Dungeon of Doom and Tony sounds stunned. A chinlock doesn't get Sanders anywhere as Tony is still on the Dungeon reference. The hot tag brings in Morrus for running splashes in the corner and a Hart Attack with Konnan playing Bret (payback for teaching him the Sharpshooter perhaps). Konnan grabs a Last Dance (Stunner) on Disco to set up the No Laughing Matter and the Tequila Sunrise.

Rating: D. For Dungeon of Doom, the highlight of the match. I got a good chuckle out of hearing Konnan and Morrus as the locker room leaders but there's nothing wrong with throwing them together for the sake of having another midcard team. It's not like either of them had anything to do in the first place.

Team Canada attacks post match.

Buff Bagwell finds Animal laid out with the words IT WASN'T HIM and an arrow over his unconscious body.

Video on Scott Steiner vs. Diamond Dallas Page.

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

All four get their own entrances to further illustrate how this is just two singles matches at the same time. The bad guys are cleared out in an

opening brawl until it's Page and Steiner to start. Rick has already sold enough before the match so he blasts Page with a Steinerline to take over and already hands it off to Jeff. That goes nowhere so it's time for more Steiner because he's the veteran here and therefore needs to get the ring time.

Rick and Jeff take turns beating on Page until a jawbreaker staggers Rick enough for the hot tag to Dustin....which the referee doesn't see. The hot tag works a few seconds later and Rick accidentally Steinerlines the referee. Steiner powerslams Dustin and here's Ric Flair to count the cover with Page making the save. In the melee, Jeff guitars Dustin for the pin.

Rating: D. This was your run of the mill filler match to close out a taping with the audience completely not interested. To be fair though, how interested can you be in something like this? It's a boring match with the #1 contender having no reason to be in the match other than "Booker isn't here". It's fitting that the final Thunders end with main events like this one: the big stars are in the building but they don't feel like working this show.

A bunch of people come out for the NWO style brawl. Page escapes to say he's still standing to end the show.

Overall Rating: D. If you couldn't tell before, this show has turned over and died. It's very clear that they don't care anymore and nothing is going to change that in the last few weeks. The big stars not being here (Save for Booker who had a storyline excuse. I mean, it was a completely unnecessary storyline excuse but it's better than nothing.) is ridiculous, but then you realize that aside from Booker and Scott Steiner, the biggest names probably are the Cat, Page and Rick Steiner. I don't think I need to offer much more of an explanation as to why WCW wasn't around much longer after that.

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Summerslam Count-Up – 1999: Start The Game

Summerslam 1999

Date: August 22, 1999

Location: Target Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Attendance: 17,130

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

This is the end of the summer for an interesting year in the WWF. The main event is the now mega heel HHH and the returning Mankind challenging Austin for the world title, but there's another main attraction: Minnesota Governor and former wrestler Jesse Ventura is the guest referee for the second time in the history of this event. 1999 is a year remembered for a lot of flash and little substance but hopefully that doesn't hold true here. Let's get to it.

The opening video talks about various guest referees over the years, including Mike Tyson and both McMahons. Jesse Ventura talks about how he'll be the law in the ring and doesn't care what happens.

Jesse lectures Chyna and HHH about not cheating. Chyna is allowed to be out there but the pinfall has to be in the ring and it has to be legal.

The recently debuted Chris Jericho yells at Jericholic Howard Finkel for being late.

Intercontinental Title/European Title: Jeff Jarrett vs. D'Lo Brown

Brown holds both titles coming in and Jarrett's manager Debra is in a bikini with a coat over it. Jeff sends her to the back to make sure the fans completely hate him. In the back, Debra offers to escort Brown to the ring to get back at Jarrett. Jeff jumps D'Lo to start but the champion comes back with a powerslam for one. Another powerslam gets two and Jeff can't bail to the floor for a breather. A leapfrog is countered into a short powerbomb for two but Jeff comes back with a sleeper.

Brown is sent to the floor and a baseball slide sends him into the barricade. Ross gets in one of his eye roll worthy lines by saying Brown wasn't safe on that one. I love JR but when he gets bad it's hard not to cringe. A clothesline puts Jarrett over the barricade and Brown pounds away. This is basic stuff so far but not bad at all. Back in and Jarrett gets in some shots to take over as the fans are behind the champion.

Jarrett hits a tornado DDT on the arm and wraps it around the post. The fans are more interested in the recently named Puppies. Jarrett misses a running crotch attack and gets caught in a running Liger Bomb for no cover. A tilt-a-whirl powerslam gets two and a quick legdrop gets two. Brown misses a modified Swanton but here's Debra on the apron. Jeff gets the guitar but here's Brown's training partner Mark Henry to destroy the guitar over D'Lo's head to give Jarrett the titles. Debra of course rejoins Jeff eight minutes after leaving him.

Rating: C+. Nice opener here but the scent of Russo is strong in this one. Debra turned twice within a span of ten minutes in addition to interference and a run-in during a match for two titles at once. These two could clearly have a good match on their own but we had to bog it down with extra stuff anyway. That's Russo 101: yeah it can make things interesting, but at other times it gets in the way of good wrestling.

Edge and Christian are ready for Tag Team Turmoil (a tag team gauntlet match) tonight. They outgrew Gangrel and are ready for his new team: the Hardys.

Tag Team Turmoil

As mentioned, Edge and Christian start against the Hardys which is a layup for a good start. The Canadians are good guys here and we have six

teams involved with the winners getting a tag title shot tomorrow on Raw. Naturally it's a brawl to start until we get down to Edge vs. Matt. A DDT puts the Hardy down and it's off to Christian for a double hiptoss for two. Christian BADLY misses a spinwheel kick but it's Gangrel interfering to give the Hardys control.

The Hardys take their shirts off to almost no reaction so you know they're evil here. Jeff hits a slingshot springboard moonsault for two followed by Poetry in Motion to crush Christian in the corner. Matt takes forever to cover and brings in Jeff for a senton (not yet the Swanton) Bomb for two.

Edge makes the save and allows Christian to hit a double reverse DDT to set up the hot tag. Everything breaks down and it's Edge and Jeff running the barricades to set up a spear in midair. Christian dives onto them both followed by Matt mostly missing a moonsault to take everyone else out. Back in and Edge pulls Matt off the top, setting up a top rope elbow to give Christian the pin.

The third team in is Mideon/Viscera and the big man is starting with Christian. Viscera hits a quick Samoan drop for no cover and it's off to Mideon for a double elbow drop. A knee drop gets two but Christian avoids a middle rope elbow. Off to Edge who speeds things up but gets drilled by a spinwheel kick (again it barely connected but it's more excusable with Viscera). Edge avoids a charging big man and a double shoulder puts Viscera outside. Mideon is speared down for the pin.

Droz/Prince Albert (Tensai) are the fourth team and it's Albert quickly throwing Edge into the corner. JR gets on Jerry for not knowing anything about Albert but Lawler makes a great point: "Look at him and you know everything you need to know." Albert gets two off a neckbreaker as the announcers argue whether football careers matter in wrestling (Hint: most of the time they don't). Christian chop blocks Albert and the Downward Spiral sends Edge and Christian to the next match.

The Acolytes are here before the three count and it's Bradshaw working over Edge to start. Edge comes back with a swinging neckbreaker and a missile dropkick as JR is whiny because Lawler pointed out how stupid the

football stats were. Bradshaw powerbombs Edge out of the corner for two and it's off to Faarooq. ANOTHER spinwheel kick barely connects (the production staff isn't on their game tonight) but Bradshaw gets a tag before Christian does.

A belly to back suplex gets two for Bradshaw and it's back to Faarooq for more basic power offense. We hit the chinlock for a bit before the Faarooq spinebuster sets up an arrogant cover for two. Edge gets up for a DDT and it's a double tag to Christian and Bradshaw. Everything breaks down and Christian gets two off a tornado DDT. Edge drops Christian onto Bradshaw as the Hollys come out before the pin. The distraction lets Bradshaw kill Christian with the Clothesline to get us down to the final two teams.

Faarooq hits a quick Dominator on Crash but Hardcore makes the save. The cousins get in an argument over who gets to fight Faarooq but it's the Acolytes getting to beat up Hardcore. It's back to Crash who has no effect on Faarooq so the announcers bicker some more to entertain us. Hardcore finally gets the tag and dropkicks Faarooq, triggering a brawl between the cousins. Faarooq hits a quick spinebuster on Hardcore for the pin and the title shot.

Rating: C-. This match had the same issues that almost all gauntlet matches have: if these teams can get wins this fast, why don't they do it all the time? The matches are just quick segments instead of actual matches with the longest being a slightly longer version of a TV match. However there was hope on the horizon as Edge and Christian and the Hardys would have a rematch with ladders in two months. Also, a team is coming from Dudleyville in about two weeks. The magic approaches.

The Hollys fight again.

Big Show and Undertaker arrive.

Al Snow grooms his dog Pepper and warns him of Boss Man singing Ethel Merman songs. Good advice actually.

Road Dogg comes out to watch the next match. He wants a shot at the Hardcore Title tomorrow night but here's the brand new Chris Jericho to

interrupt him. He's on a raised platform in front of the crowd and this is his PPV debut. Jericho is disappointed in this whole show. He can't believe it but Raw is Snore has been topped by Summersham. The people here have been conned into paying for it and now they look like fools.

Jericho rips on the roster and says the worst is standing in the ring right now. No one cares about Roadie and his spelling. If Dogg wants to be impressive, spell lugubrious. He makes fun of Dogg's clothes and haircut and says DX sure sucks. Road Dogg tells him to shut up and Jericho is SHOCKED. Dogg's mama cares about him but he's not sure if he should do the catchphrase because Jericho might take him up on it.

Hardcore Title: Al Snow vs. Big Boss Man

Boss Man is defending and Dogg is doing commentary. Before the match Snow leaves Pepper in a small kennel in the back. Snow: "You know Head came to the ring with me." Snow is waiting on Boss Man on the set and hits a high cross body to get us going. Dogg gets up and is going to be a roving reporter. Snow hits Man with a chair and they go to the back almost immediately.

Boss Man comes back with right hands and breaks a chalkboard over Snow's head. Pepper's case goes upside Snow's head but Snow hits him with the board. Boss Man steals a crutch to blast Snow in the back before sending him into the Pepsi machine. Snow avoids the falling machine and throws Boss Man into the side of an SUV. They open a garage door and head outside before going across the street to a bar.

They're fighting in front of the door and a superkick gets two for Snow. Snow is thrown through the patio furniture for two and we head inside. A shot with the Yellow Pages puts Snow down but he gets up to hit on some chick. Snow hits him with a magazine rack and they slug it out with broomsticks.

We hit the restroom for the required "comedy" spot with Boss Man taking soap in the eye. A beer to Boss Man's face slows him down and Snow chokes him with a chain. Snow moonsaults him through a table but Boss Man is up first. They head into the pool hall and Boss Man hits Dogg with a drink. Roadie comes back with a nightstick shot to give Snow the title in an

abrupt ending.

Rating: C. This is one of the more famous hardcore matches and it's pretty harmless goofy fun. The division was at its peak here but the 24/7 Rule was coming to make it a total parody. It was less than eight minutes so it's hard to really complain about this one. Yeah it's bad but it's completely harmless for the most part.

Snow runs back across the street to check on Pepper but has to beat up Stevie Richards and Blue Meanie for some reason.

Jesse warns Mankind about using chairs and how it won't be allowed, but Mankind would rather talk about Geraldine Ferraro's electability.

Women's Title: Ivory vs. Tori

Ivory is defending and Tori is just horrible for the most part. Ivory painted the word sl** on Tori a few weeks ago to set this up. Tori charges in and hits a powerslam for two and it's time for a breather. The crowd is already dead for this and a back elbow gets two for the champion. Tori hits a pair of suplexes and some lame kicks for two. Ivory is loudly calling spots to keep Tori from screwing everything up. The fans chant TAKE IT OFF as Ivory hooks a big swing. Tori comes back with a horrible spear and a middle rope cross body for two. They horribly botch a sunset flip so they do it again with Ivory sitting on Tori for the pin.

Rating: F+. Tori looked good in a bra and tight pants and that's about it. Seriously, she was TERRIBLE and makes the modern Divas look like ring generals. Ivory was trying out there but she was hardly a miracle worker. Trish would debut soon but wouldn't get good for about four more years.

Post match Ivory tries to take Tori's top off but Luna Vachon makes the save, becoming the heel of the segment.

Rock verbally massacres Michael Cole by insulting his tie and implying Cole is a bit coome ci coom ca. Not that it matters as Rock is going to destroy Billy Gunn tonight. This was a bad time for Rock as he had a bunch of nothing feuds until he got back into the title hunt to close out the year.

Billy Gunn has a surprise under a tarp.

We recap Steve Blackman vs. Ken Shamrock. Blackman is recently back from an injury and they've been beating each other up for weeks. The result is another Lion's Den match with weapons hanging from the cage. JR and King do the narration here for some reason.

Ken Shamrock vs. Steve Blackman

This is in the Lion's Den which is that small cage which is NOT ripping off UFC. Not at all. You win by escape only. Blackman starts with the nunchucks but Shamrock comes back with profanity. Blackman chokes him down but gets caught in an armbar. Ken throws the nunchucks away and rams Blackman into the cage. Shamrock pounds Blackman down and whips him into the cage for a high kick to the head.

Blackman blocks a kendo stick shot and fires off kicks of his own before sending Ken into the cage. An atomic drop puts Shamrock down again and Blackman pounds him in the back with his martial arts sticks. Shamrock gets up and runs the cage wall to ram into Blackman with a kind of elbow to the face. A belly to back suplex puts Blackman down but Ken can't quite follow up.

Back up and Blackman hits a quick DDT but Shamrock snaps off a powerslam. An enziguri puts Ken down and Steve pounds away with a kendo stick. A big shot to the head puts Ken down but he comes back with a wicked belly to belly to take over. Ken hits Blackman in the head (shoulder) with the stick...and that's it. No reason is given but I'd assume a knockout, even though the announcers said you had to leave to win.

Rating: D+. This didn't do anything for me. It was basically a hardcore match in a confined area which isn't the most interesting thing in the world. It's a far cry from last year's version with Owen keeping up with Shamrock every step of the way. Granted this is Steve Blackman, a black hole of charisma instead of one of the best of all time. Nothing to see here but it wasn't horrible.

We see Shane attacking Test earlier today.

Test says this is serious tonight.

Test vs. Shane McMahon

This is a Greenwich street fight with love her or leave her rules. Test is dating Stephanie but Shane doesn't approve. If Test wins, Shane stays out of their lives but if Shane wins then the relationship ends. Test has bad ribs but Shane has no backup due to Test injuring every member of the Mean Street Posse. Scratch that theory actually as they come walking out before the match. Thanks for wasting my time on the video of Test destroying all of them. The Posse has a couch set for them in the front row.

Test takes Shane down to start but Shane hits a quick spear back inside, only to be pounded in the corner. A backdrop puts Shane down as the Posse drinks champagne. Shane is sent HARD into the steps and then into the crowd for a drink to the head. Test catches Shane diving off the barricade and powerslams him down onto the floor. Shane staggers around ringside so Test launches him at the Posse to tip the couch over.

The injured Posse goes after Test and give Shane a mailbox of all things to crack over Test's head. A street sign stuns Test again and there's a framed portrait of the Posse shattered over Test's head. That's only good for two and the fans are getting into this. Shane does a great looking leapfrog and this a jumping back elbow to the face to put Test down. A corkscrew senton (Spiral Tap) of all things misses and Test comes back with right hands.

Another leapfrog is countered into a sweet powerbomb but Rodney of the Posse distracts the referee. Test's big boot hits the referee but he clotheslines Shane to the floor. The street sign puts Shane down again but here's the Posse again to take Test down. They load him onto the announce table so Shane can hit the top rope elbow through Test. For a non-wrestler, Shane can drop a gorgeous elbow.

The referee is back up (why did he need to be bumped? It's a street fight) but Test kicks out at two. The fans are really getting into this. Pete accidentally hits Shane with a sign but Rodney hits Test with his cast. That's only good for two and now the fans are fired up. Patterson

and Brisco run out to take care of the Posse and make it one on one. Shane charges into the post and it's a pumphandle slam followed by the flying elbow to get Shane out of Test and Stephanie's lives.

Rating: B. This took a little bit to get going but the fans got into it at the end. It's a great example of a story carrying a match rather than the wild brawling. This was full of weapon shots and interference, but the story behind the match made people care about it. The people were invested in Test and wanted to see him fight for the woman he loved. That's a classic story and it's going to work every time. Good stuff here.

Stephanie comes out to celebrate post match.

We recap the tag title match. With Vince having been revealed as the Higher Power, Undertaker has been dropped down to an evil tag team with Big Show. They're challenging X-Pac and Kane, who are in the beginning of a nearly year long story. Pac is Kane's first real friend and the other monsters hurt him, so Kane wants revenge.

Tag Titles: Kane/X-Pac vs. Big Show/Undertaker

Kane is in the always awesome inverted attire, meaning it's more black than red. The mash-up of Big Show and Undertaker's themes really doesn't work at all. It's a big brawl to start with Undertaker easily knocking X-Pac to the floor. Kane gets double teamed in the corner but he clotheslines Big Show out to the floor and Pac gets two off a high cross body to Taker. We start with X-Pac against Taker with the big man cranking on the arm. Pac escapes and wisely tags out to give us brother vs. brother.

Taker is knocked to the floor and Pac dives off the apron to take him down. The crotch chop earned X-Pac an elbow to the face and a smile from me. Kane saves his little buddy and takes Undertaker down with the top rope clothesline. Taker comes right back with his running DDT but Kane is up almost immediately. Big Show comes in to throw Kane around and drops him with a superkick.

Since this is a battle of the giants it's time for some choking but we're

not to the bearhug yet. A powerslam gets two on Kane and it's back to Undertaker to pound away in the corner. They slug it out and both guys go down with a double clothesline. The hot tag brings in X-Pac who catches Undertaker with a spinwheel kick (actually connects) but Big Show pulls the small man down. Everything breaks down and Pac is crotched against the post. Show slams Pac down and drops a knee to his chest. The size difference is remarkable when you see them next to each other.

There's the bearhug but X-Pac bites his way out of it. A cross between a chokeslam and the Boss Man Slam gets two for Show but Kane breaks up the chokeslam. X-Pac hits Show low and it's off to Kane to clean house. Everything breaks down again and X-Pac sends Taker into the post. There's a Bronco Buster to Big Show but he pops up and chokeslams X-Pac down....for two? Taker is MAD and goes after X-Pac in the corner before ending him with a tombstone for the titles.

Rating: D. This didn't do it for me at all. I couldn't stand X-Pac around this time and this is a great example of why. The whole idea of his character at this point was he wouldn't give up, which led to him beating a lot of guys FAR bigger than him. I don't have much of a problem with X-Pac against smaller guys, but when he's beating people Taker's size it was very annoying. The match was an extended squash.

Jesse gives Austin the same speech.

Billy Gunn vs. The Rock

The loser has to, shall we say, kiss up to the winner. Billy brings a fat chick with him for Rock to kiss if Rock loses. Gunn jumps him to start but Rock comes back with right hands of his own to send Gunn to the floor. They head up the aisle with Billy being sent into a metal barricade. Rock is sent into it as well and clotheslined down as Billy takes over. Rock comes back with a clothesline of his own as they fight by the Lion's Den. This is really dull stuff so far.

They head back to ringside with Gunn sending him into the steps but being rammed face first into the announce table. Rock puts the King's crown on Billy's head for a right hand. Back in and Billy chokes away before getting two off a neckbreaker. Gunn drops an elbow to the chest and gets

two off a bulldog.

A Stinger Splash crushes Rock but he explodes out of the corner with a running clothesline. The floatover DDT takes Gunn down but Rock can't follow up. Rock gets two off a swinging neckbreaker and a Samoan Drop but the Rock Bottom is countered into a Fameasser. The fat woman comes into the ring but Billy goes face first into her. Rock Bottom and People's Elbow ends this a second later.

Rating: D+. What were you expecting here? Like I said, Rock was in a funk at this point and going from lame feud to lame feud with nothing for him to work with. I mean, BILLY GUNN is the best they can do for him at Summerslam? The match wasn't terrible but it was just killing time until the very obvious ending.

We recap the main event. Chyna actually won a #1 contenders triple threat over Undertaker and HHH but HHH went on a power trip, saying it was his shot. Mankind cost HHH a one on one match against Chyna for the shot and then beat Chyna for the title shot himself. HHH attacked Mankind's leg, leading to a fourth #1 contenders match, resulting in a double pin and a threeway tonight.

Jesse comes out first and says he's proud to be a wrestler. Here here!

WWF World Title: Steve Austin vs. Mankind vs. Triple H

Triple H and Austin start fast in the ring but Mankind pulls HHH to the floor and sends him onto the announce table. All three head into the ring with HHH being ping ponged back and forth by right hands from both guys. Mankind offers Austin a handshake but gets punched in the face instead. HHH is knocked to the floor and Mankind misses a charge at Austin to send him to the outside as well.

All three are on the floor now with no one having a clear advantage. Austin clotheslines Mankind down before slugging it out with HHH, allowing Chyna (HHH's manager) to send Mankind into the post. Jesse tries to separate Chyna and Mankind as HHH hits Austin's bad knee with a chair. Ventura asks the crowd if HHH hit Steve with a chair but doesn't do anything about it once they say yes. Mankind is back in now but gets

pounded down in the corner by HHH.

A quick Mandible Claw slows HHH down but Chyna breaks it up by crotching Mankind on the post. That earns her an ejection and a lecture from Ventura. Austin is back up now and pounding away on HHH in the aisle. They fight back to ringside where Austin's bad knee is wrapped around the post. A chop block puts Austin down but Mankind is getting back up again. He breaks up a stomping from HHH to Austin, only so he can stomp Austin instead. Now they stomp Austin together to a loud chorus of boos.

HHH puts on a spinning toe hold but breaks up a cover attempt by Mankind, starting a fight between the two of them. HHH is knocked to the floor but Mankind misses a dive off the apron. Austin's knee is almost wrapped around the post again but Mankind intercept it and brawls with HHH into the crowd. A piledriver on the concrete is broken up and Austin fights HHH again. Everyone heads back inside and there's a low blow from Austin to HHH.

The Stunner takes down Mankind but HHH breaks it up with a chair shot. Ventura yells at HHH about it before HHH knocks Mankind out with the chair as well. HHH covers Mankind but Jesse isn't counting a cover off an illegal move like that. Shane runs in to plead HHH's case but gets Stunned for his efforts. Ventura throws Shane out but HHH and Steve clothesline each other down. Mankind loads up Socko and both guys get a mouthful of it but Austin kicks Mankind low to break it up.

HHH loads up the Pedigree on Mankind but Austin clotheslines HHH down to break it up. Austin punches both of his challengers and hits a Stunner on HHH but Mankind breaks up the count at two. Austin sends Mankind into the post but walks into the Pedigree. Mankind pops back up though and knocks HHH down before hitting the double arm DDT on Austin for the pin and the title in a surprise.

Rating: D+. This wasn't all that great of a match. At the end of the day it was a pretty slow paced brawl and HHH wasn't on this level yet. Still though, it wasn't terrible and Jesse added some good moments to the match. This wouldn't wind up meaning much for reasons I'll get into in a bit. It's a nice moment though.

Post match HHH destroys Austin and his knee with a chair, putting him on the shelf for a month.

Overall Rating: D+. This show is a product of the times and political issues kept it from having the big moment it was looking for. HHH was scheduled to win the title to end the show but Jesse didn't want to raise a heel's hand to end the show. The title change would take place the next night on Raw and HHH would have his first title defense on a new show called Smackdown later this week. The show is totally forgettable though with only the street fight and the main event being notable at all. Not worth seeing but there are worse shows.

Ratings Comparison

Jeff Jarrett vs. D'Lo Brown

Original: B-

Redo: C+

Tag Team Turmoil

Original: B-

Redo: C-

Big Boss Man vs. Al Snow

Original: B

Redo: C

Ivory vs. Tori

Original: F

Redo: F+

Ken Shamrock vs. Steve Blackman

Original: B-

Redo: D+

Shane McMahon vs. Test

Original: B

Redo: B

Unholy Alliance vs. X-Pac/Kane

Original: D+

Redo: D

Billy Gunn vs. The Rock

Original: B-

Redo: D+

HHH vs. Steve Austin vs. Mankind

Original: B+

Redo: D+

Overall Rating

Original: B-

Redo: D+

WOW and I thought 1990 was screwed up.

Here's the original review if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/08/03/history-of-summerslam-count-up-1999-the-body/>

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