

# Monday Nitro – December 28, 1998: Who's The Boss?

## Monday Nitro #169

Date: December 28, 1998

Location: 1st Mariner Center, Baltimore, Maryland

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Larry Zbyszko, Tony Schiavone, Bobby Heenan

Starrcade is gone now and the main story coming out of the show is Nash stopping Goldberg's winning streak last night and winning the World Title. Other than that we saw Bischoff beating Flair in the big match of their feud, because Heaven forbid Bischoff's ego not get stroked at the biggest show of the year. We close out an up and down year tonight so let's get to it.

We open with the announcers talking about the big matches from last night and get to see Eric's Greatest Hits, which is basically Eric kicking Flair in the head.

Nitro Party winner.

Here are Miller and Onoo to talk about how he's going to whip somebody. This brings out Jericho and Ralphus of all people, but they're just here to introduce Cat's real opponent.

## The Cat vs. Shiima Nobunaga

Jericho and Ralphus are in Shiima's corner. Chris: "COME ON DO SOME KARATE!" Tony points out that Nobunaga doesn't speak English which makes this funnier. Miller and Jericho have mics during the match but don't say much of anything. Cat kicks Shiima in the face and catches him in a powerslam. The Feliner is good for the pin in less than 90 seconds. I'm not sure what the point of this was.

Stills of Goldberg vs. Nash last night.

Clip of Flair having a heart attack, even though that wasn't a focal point of the match at all last night.

### Chavo Guerrero Jr. vs. Norman Smiley

They circle each other to start until Chavo goes to talk to Pepe. Norman grabs a wristlock as the announcers talk about Nash not seeing Hall interfere. A clothesline puts Chavo down and it's time to dance. Chavo comes back with a dropkick to put Smiley on the floor and rides the horse around the ring. Back in and Norman takes him down again, setting up the Big Wiggle. There's the swinging slam and Norman fires an arrow into the air. Chavo gets caught in a chinlock before dancing out of a sunset flip.

Larry officially christens the dance the Big Wiggle to make this show historic. Now it's time to dance with Pepe but that's just going too far and sends Chavo into a frenzy. The fans don't mind but it's a nice idea at least. A middle rope bulldog drops Smiley and it's time for Chavo to dance. Norman runs him over and grabs the horse, asking it who's your daddy. Smiley gets crotched on the top rope and slapped in the face, but the horse distraction lets Norman slap on the Conquest for the win.

**Rating:** D. For dancing of course. The match was nothing special with the dancing taking up WAY too much time. It's fun to see it happen once but they hit about seven or eight times. That's just way too much and it stops being funny after about two. At least Norman won though as his moderate push continues.

Clip of Raven leaving last week.

### Booker T. vs. Fit Finlay

Finlay doesn't feel like waiting and blasts Booker during the

posing on the buckles. He hammers away and they head outside where Booker nails a quick kick to the face and whips Finlay into the barricade. Oddly enough there's no talk of Finlay's match last night. It's almost like it meant absolutely nothing at all and even Finlay's mom wouldn't have wanted to watch it. Back in and Finlay grabs a quick slam for two and we hit the chinlock.

Booker fights up with some elbows and a clothesline before nailing the side kick. Some knees to the ribs have almost no effect on Finlay as he comes back with a jawbreaker and European uppercuts. Booker is sent into the corner but comes back with the spinning sunset flip for two. Finlay nails an atomic drop and sends Booker outside, only to have Booker come back with another sidekick and the missile dropkick for the pin.

**Rating:** C-. Not bad here but Finlay has really fallen back to earth after his nearly worthless TV Title reign over the summer. It's the best match of the night so far though, which is likely due to who was in the ring. I still can't get my head around the fact that Booker didn't make Starrcade but Finlay did. Finlay is definitely talented enough but it didn't make any sense.

Here's Flair with some luggage for the first important moment of the show. He says he doesn't deserve this kind of a welcome because Bischoff beat him last night. Last night he went back to the hotel, called Arn, got drunk, then called his wife because it was over. He got on the plane and the flight attendant asked him what he wanted. Well Flair wanted to go to Baltimore so he's right here tonight.

Now Flair wants Bischoff to hear him out for the very last time. Flair rips off his jacket and shirt, takes out another suit from the luggage and throws it down. There's a third suit with ties to match but Flair is ranting about living the life of a king because the people have allowed him to. Now he

unbuckles his belt, saying it cost him \$2,000. There's a \$30,000 Rolex to match and now he's ripping up \$100 bills.

A shoe is launched into the crowd and there go Flair's pants. He struts around in boxers and drops a knee on the mat before screaming that he isn't leaving until he and Bischoff get something straight. Flair offers his house, cars and every dime he has to Bischoff if Eric will fight him one more time tonight. One more condition though: if Flair wins, he's in charge for ninety days. Why wasn't THIS the match for Starrcade?

Flair's first act if he wins: detach Eric's head from Hogan's censored. Ric goes on another rant about WCW vs. the NWO before going to his last piece of luggage. This time it's handcuffs and he attaches himself to the ropes. We go to a break with Flair still yelling for Bischoff. If the camera goes off, he'll be missing his clothes when it comes back.

Back with the boxers still on and Flair saying WOO. He goes off on Bischoff again and now Eric is on his way. Eric laughs at the handcuffed Flair who can't reach him at all. Bischoff talks about all the things he's done to Flair recently and takes the money from the mat. He says Flair is going to die of a heart attack. Flair: "When I die of a heart attack, it'll be on your girlfriend pal!" The challenge is accepted for later tonight.

Nitro Girls calendar.

Nitro Girls.

### Barry Windham vs. Prince Iaukea

Windham goes right after him to start but gets caught by a dropkick and some lame right hands. That's fine with Barry as he pops Iaukea in the jaw and suplexes him down for two. Back up and Windham no sells some more right hands and hits his old jumping DDT. Instead of covering though it's a belly to back

suplex on Iaukea before Barry throws him outside to continue the beating. Back in and Iaukea's comeback goes nowhere, setting up Windham's bulldog for the pin.

**Rating:** D. Total squash here with Barry never even breaking a sweat. Iaukea has done almost nothing in a year and is really just filling in a spot on the card. Yeah he's a former TV Champion, but he's still one of the least interesting people I've ever seen on a wrestling show. Barry didn't look great but it could have been worse.

A security guard talks about the stun gun Hall used last night being very powerful.

Souled Out ad.

DDP comes out and brags about beating Giant last night. He talks about the two main matches from Starrcade and that's really about it. He'd love to work for Flair.

Konnan is arguing with Disco Inferno when Nash and Luger come in. After yelling at Disco even more, Nash offers Disco a deal: if he can beat Nash's handpicked opponent tonight, Disco is on the team. Nash says he has to go and make things right.

Eddie Guerrero/Juventud Guerrera vs. Billy Kidman/Rey Mysterio Jr.

This should be good as it's fallout from the two Cruiserweight Title matches last night. Guerrero, Guerrera and Mysterio are in the LWO but Rey doesn't want to be. Mysterio comes out with his LWO shirt folded in his hand. Kidman is Cruiserweight Champion. Eddie throws Juvy into the corner just after the bell but Guerrera backs away without fighting back. Rey and Eddie get things going with Eddie running him over and then suplexing Rey to the mat.

Back up and a Japanese armdrag sends Eddie running into the corner to cower in front of the referee. Guerrero brings

Guerrera into the ring with a slap to the face but Juvy backs away from Kidman. The backing off doesn't seem necessary as he clotheslines Kidman down but Eddie doesn't feel like coming back in. Kidman avoids a charge in the corner though and suplexes Juvy down before tagging Rey back in. There's the Bronco Buster in the corner as Eddie is lounging in his team's corner without looking concerned.

Juvy crawls over and tags Eddie in with Guerrero going nuts to take over. Everything breaks down with Eddie and Juvy taking over, only to have Rey nail a springboard dropkick to knock Juvy into Eddie, sending both of them to the floor. Rey and Kidman hit stereo flip dives to take everyone out. We take a break and come back with Juvy holding Kidman in a chinlock but getting caught in a bulldog out of the corner.

Back to Rey vs. Eddie with the masked man taking over but going after Guerrero instead of the legal man, allowing Eddie to get in a cheap shot to take over. Everything breaks down for a few seconds and Guerrero grabs a powerbomb to put Mysterio down to get control. The match settles down again and it's Eddie chopping away in the corner. Something like the Eye of the Storm into a neckbreaker gets two on Rey with Kidman having to make the save.

In an awesome double team move, Eddie loads up Rey in a powerbomb and Juvy adds a springboard legdrop to drive Rey down even harder. Somehow Rey is right back up though and whips Guerrero into Guerrero's boot, only to have Juvy break up a tag attempt. Eddie is already back up and hammers on Rey, but the LWO heels collide and Kidman comes in off the hot tag.

The champion cleans house and holds up Eddie for a powerbomb as Rey adds a springboard seated senton to drive Eddie down even harder than Mysterio was driven down earlier. Juvy makes another save and everything breaks down. Eddie's powerbomb attempt to Kidman goes badly (of course) but Guerrero is up at two. The BK Bomb puts Guerrero down again and a facebuster

does the same to Juvy. Eddie throws Rey to the floor for a big dive from Juvy, allowing Guerrero to nail the Frog Splash for the pin on Kidman.

**Rating:** B. This is one of those matches that you couldn't screw up. You took four guys and let them fly around the ring for fifteen minutes while having a story involved as well. What else was going to happen but some awesome work? Those double team powerbomb spots were really cool looking with the powerbomb Eddie took being a big highlight.

That would be about it for the LWO though as Eddie Guerrero would be involved in a car wreck on New Year's Day, putting him out of action for several months. There would be some closure to the team and we'll get to that in a few weeks.

Here's the Wolfpack for Nash's victory speech. He doesn't seem too happy though as he's seen the way the match ended. Nash was there last night for money, power and respect, but apparently money is the root of all evil. He suddenly veers off course to say Disco is facing Bam Bam Bigelow tonight and if Disco wins, he's in the Wolfpack. Back to Hall, who Nash thinks was doing him a favor. Nash respects Goldberg so much that he's willing to put the title on the line again next week in Atlanta. The new champion points out that the belt still has Goldberg's name on it, just like it will going into their match next week. There's the setup.

### Disco Inferno vs. Bam Bam Bigelow

Bigelow hammers away to start and throws Disco into the corner with ease. Another whip into the corner is followed by a splash and a big slam but Disco avoids the top rope headbutt. The swinging neckbreaker puts Bigelow down and Disco actually nails the Chartbuster for two. Bigelow pops back up and hits Greetings From Asbury Park (over the shoulder reverse piledriver) for the pin in less than three minutes.

Nitro Girls.

Bischoff is warming up with Curt Hennig.

Flair's physician says, in a lot of medical terms, that Ric didn't have a heart attack, but did have toxins in his body, meaning he may have been poisoned. This sounds like backtracking to me, though it does explain a few things. If nothing else it makes WCW look a lot less negligent about the health of its wrestlers.

Bischoff calls the doctor a quack. It sounds like he's nervous that someone would suggest poison.

### TV Title: Konnan vs. Scott Steiner

Konnan is defending. Bagwell runs his mouth before the match but Konnan uses the distraction to lay out the NWO Referee. WCW referee Scott Dickinson comes out to referee instead but Konnan has to save him from a Steiner attack before the bell. A quick clothesline sends Steiner rolling to the floor but Buff gives him a pep talk. Back in and Konnan gets planted with a release tiger bomb before Steiner takes it outside. That goes nowhere so Scott throws him inside again and hammers away. Scott stays on him and spits on the Wolfpack t-shirt for good measure.

Konnan is put in the Tree of Woe so Scott can work on the leg a bit before Buff gets in some choking of his own. A belly to belly suplex sets up the push-ups from Steiner but Konnan counters a powerslam into a reverse DDT. The champion hammers away and hits the X-Factor before putting on the Tequila Sunrise. Bagwell tries to make the save but Luger runs out to stop him. The distraction breaks the hold though and Steiner is back up. Luger knocks Bagwell into the ropes and causes Konnan to fall to the floor, allowing Steiner to put on the Recliner for the title.

**Rating:** D. So why in the world wasn't this match on Starrcade? I'm glad Jericho got on the show, but you would think this would be a better option for the biggest show of the year.



Granted it's not like it matters as it's just more trading wins between the NWO, which really gets annoying after awhile. That awhile was roughly four months ago.

The announcers think Luger is up to something with Steiner.

Nitro Girls.

No Thunder this week due to New Year's Eve.

### Brian Adams vs. Scott Hall

Before the match, Scott agrees with Kevin. There are three things that are important in life: money, money and money. He handed Nash the title and then Nash didn't even invite him to the victory party? Hall isn't the man Nash used to know, but Nash isn't the man Hall used to know. The fans chant for Goldberg before we get going.

Adams decks Hall to start and hits a nice backbreaker for two. Hall comes back with right hands but ducks his head and gets caught in what was supposed to be a piledriver but came out more like a pancake. Instead of covering though, Adams messes with his hair and puts on a bearhug. A belly to belly puts Scott again but there's still no cover. Brian finally hits a big boot for two and we hit the nerve hold. The fans think this is boring so Adams just lets the hold go. Hall makes a comeback but can't get him up for the Edge. Instead Brian press slams him, only to pose on the corner. Scott grabs the Edge for the fast pin.

**Rating:** D-. Nothing here again but at least Hall got a pin instead of being treated like the loser he's been for so long now. He's still stuck in the middle of this never ending story with Nash and the NWO but that's the case for almost every big name in WCW. It's nice to see Adams lose like the jobber to the stars he should be.

### Ric Flair vs. Eric Bischoff

Flair being in power for 90 days vs. all of Flair's possessions. There's no Bischoff though as we see him in the back saying no way. Eric comes into the arena to get to an exit but the Horsemen are waiting in his limo to carry him to the arena. Nice move. The bell rings and Flair hits Bischoff low before chopping away in the corner. There's another low blow and some choking as the referee counts especially slow. Not that it matters as Flair throws Charles Robinson down anyway.

The NWO tries to run in but the Horsemen are waiting for them in the aisle. Flair drops some elbows as the Horsemen cut off another group of NWO guys. The Giant finally comes out as the Horsemen are busy fighting and a big headbutt drops Flair. Anderson, Booker T., Konnan and Page come out as a JACKED Randy Savage and a good looking blonde come out in Black and White gear. It's a swerve of course as Savage hits Giant low and clotheslines him to the floor. Flair suplexes Bischoff down and slaps on the Figure Four to become the boss for three months.

**Rating:** N/A. This wasn't a match but the angle worked very well. This felt like a big moment and a game changer for WCW. That being said, the question should be obvious: why in the world did Bischoff need to get the win at Starrcade? Either have this match last night or have it be a no contest of some sort. This moment taking place is fine, but how many people remember this compared to Bischoff getting the win at Starrcade? This felt like running back to fix an error and it worked to a degree. However, a lot of the damage was already done due to the fans feeling like they had been punched in the stomach the night before.

Tony, Dusty and Larry come to the ring to celebrate as Tenay plays this up as a huge moment. Flair puts on another Figure Four to end the show. Heenan: "I CAN HIT HIM UP FOR A RAISE!"

**Overall Rating:** C+. This was a hard one to grade because of

the first hour. It took me out of the show after wanting to see where things were going after Starrcade last night. The show wasn't terrible and the ending was especially good, but opening with Ernest Miller followed by Norman Smiley and then Fit Finlay just wasn't the right way to go here and it really hurt the opening part of the show.

On the other hand there's a lot of good stuff here too. Savage coming back was a great surprise and Flair winning control of the company was a change they needed to make. Bischoff being in charge just wasn't going to work and it's nice to see WCW FINALLY getting something to work right. The cruiserweight tag match was good too. This would have been an awesome two hour show if they had switched the order of some stuff, but as a three hour show it's just slightly better than ok.

That's the end of Nitro in 1998 and overall it was more bad than good. The show started off well enough but at the end of the day three hours a week is just too much. There are too many matches on these shows that don't need to be seen and it keeps the good stuff from shining. There are some solid moments in there though with Flair returning and Goldberg winning the title being high points of the year. Nitro would start going downhill in the future, but there were enough good moments in 1998 to give it a shot.

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# Monday Nitro – May 4, 1998: One Of The Fatal Bullets To WCW

## Monday Nitro #135

Date: May 4, 1998

Location: Market Square Arena, Indianapolis, Indiana

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Larry Zbyszko, Bobby Heenan, Mike Tenay

It's another two hour show this week instead of the usual three hours due to the NBA Playoffs. My response: God bless the NBA. We're closing in on Slamboree and the main story is the NWO civil war. Nash, Savage and Konnan have officially formed the Wolfpack who will have their own everything very soon. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Konnan joining Nash and Savage.

Opening sequence.

Nitro Girls.

The announcers talk about the NWO's troubles. Brian Adams has officially sided with Hogan.

Now for a change of pace, we get a recap of the Wolfpack forming and Nash wanting a piece of Hart. We also see Konnan joining the team for the second time in less than six minutes.

Here are Eddie and Chavo for a match. Before the match, Eddie says he's going to be a good example for Chavo. The announcers go nuts on Eddie as he calls out Scott Norton.

## Eddie Guerrero vs. Scott Norton

Surprisingly enough, Eddie doesn't send Chavo in instead immediately. He actually waits about thirty seconds before "hurting his knee" and sending Chavo in to face Norton. Norton slugs away on Chavo in the corner and press slams him down before going after Eddie. Chavo uses the opening to dropkick Scott's knee a few times. Norton comes right back with a powerslam and the shoulder breaker for the pin. Squash.

Ultimo Dragon comes in to check on Chavo but Eddie tells him to get away.

## Scott Putski vs. Kidman

Tenay talks about how Putski's dad, Ivan, was more of a power guy. Larry: "Let me put it another way. Ivan was stupid." Putski slams Kidman down and drops an elbow for two but Kidman hits a running bulldog out of the corner to take over. Scott comes back with a sitout spinebuster as the Wolfpack comes through the crowd, complete with the red and black NWO logo shirts. They storm the ring to take out Putski for the fast DQ.

Nash says this is how things are going to be from now on. The Wolfpack is very hungry, so they're going to pick Sting and Giant's bones at Slamboree. Nash refers to the team as the red and black attack and says it's about to be a war between them and Hogan's crew. Savage says that Hogan's new friend Bret Hart won't get screwed unless that's something he wants.

Nash brings out the newest member of the Wolfpack: Curt Hennig. Bryan Adams comes out to ask Hennig what he's doing but Curt blows him off. Hennig takes off the black and white to reveal the Wolfpack colors. Konnan challenges Adams for later and Nash wants a piece of Sting, so why not have Nash vs. Luger to show Sting what he's in for.

Video on Raven, talking about being alone. He wasn't allowed to play ball

with the other kids but they wouldn't have let him play anyway.

Here's Jericho with the picture of Malenko again. We also get a video featuring Malenko talking about his dad passing away. Jericho says Dean's dad Boris must be rolling in his grave over how much of a failure Dean is. Jericho dedicates his career to someone who is much better than Dean and knows far more holds: Bore-Us Malenko.

### Chris Jericho vs. Bore-Us Malenko

Malenko is a tiny guy in Dean's gear and this is about what you would expect. Jericho pulls Bore-Us on top of him for two before making a comeback and taming the Bore-Us lion for the win.

More Nitro Girls with Alex Wright interrupting them again.

We get Hogan's comments from last week which didn't really say anything.

### Hugh Morrus/Barbarian vs. Public Enemy

This is a street fight which is probably the best idea all around. Grunge whips Morrus with a big rope as Rocco blasts Barbarian in the head with a trashcan. Morrus comes back with a trashcan lid to Johnny's head as Barbarian crotches Rocco on the top rope. It's amazing how often one guy on a team making a comeback triggers the same comeback from his partner. Everyone gets inside for the first time, including Jimmy Hart to get in some stomps of his own. Barbarian misses a dive through a table but Morrus slams Rocco through one to make up for it. Hart hits Morrus by mistake and gets splashed by Grunge for the pin. Ok then.

Bryan Adams suggests that everyone here have a glass of shut up. Are you telling me that Rock was ripping off BRYAN FREAKING ADAMS??? After my mind is blown by that line, Adams tells us all that Hulk Hogan made wrestling and is the reason we're here tonight. He'll fight Konnan

tonight too.

Video on Chris Benoit vs. Booker T, making it look like a big time rivalry. Benoit swears he made Booker tap out but Booker says he was reaching for the rope. The video isn't conclusive enough to tell either way. Another match is set for Slamboree.

Heenan joins commentary.

We look at the end of last Tuesday's show with Hart not explaining his actions.

Hour #2 begins.

### Saturn vs. Hammer

Kidman says this is a loser leaves the Flock match. Hammer sends Saturn into the steps to take over and gets two off something like an airplane spin. Saturn comes back with a superkick and some chops in the corner followed by a Cactus Clothesline to take both guys to the outside. We look at Raven's dressing room to see the Flock watching the match. Saturn dives into a powerslam for no cover and a delayed superplex gets the same lack of cover.

Hammer goes for the legs but gets kicked into the ropes, setting up a top rope legdrop from Saturn. Saturn brings in a chair which is legal here it seems. A springboard dropkick using the chair knocks Hammer into the corner but a second attempt hits the referee. Saturn hits something like a Van Daminator and loads up the Death Valley Driver, only to have Kanyon come in dressed as a beer vendor. One beer case to the head is enough to knock Saturn out of the Flock.

**Rating:** D+. This was better than I expected and it's nice to see the Flock have a story outside of whatever Raven is doing at the moment.

Saturn leaving the Flock is interesting, but he's always been the rebel of the group. Nice match here though and it should set the stage for more interesting stuff in the future.

Raven is mad and comes to the ring, only to have Page storm into the locker room with a stop sign and a bullrope around his neck for no apparent reason. Page drags Raven around the back and into the ring. Pyro goes off as Page comes down the ramp and scares everyone to death. The guys are tied by the neck but Raven comes back with a low blow to drop Page. DDP counters the Even Flow and hangs Raven over the ropes, drawing in security as we take a break.

More Nitro Girls as Tony tells us there's no Thunder again this week. Well if he insists.

#### Sick Boy vs. Juventud Guerrera

Is this Flock Night or something? Sick Boy jumps Juv in the corner to start and stomps him down in the corner. An elevated Pedigree gets two for Boy but Juvy comes back with a spinwheel kick for two. The ring is soaked from Canyon's drinks so they keep slipping out there. Juvy is sent to the apron for a springboard missile dropkick and there's the Juvy Driver. Horace breaks up the 450 and that's a quick DQ.

Juvy gets out of the double team but the seven foot Reese is too much for him. He isn't however too much for Goldberg who makes the save and Jackhammers Reese.

Here's Rick Steiner for a chat with Gene. Rick wants his brother to come out here right now and tell him whether the Steiner Brothers are getting back together or if one of them will be left laying. If Scott has any guts, he'll be out here right now. Scott does come out, but on crutches.

Scott says he's lost friends and their parents aren't talking to him the



same. Sometimes bad things happen like what happened to Bagwell, but Scott doesn't want something like that to get between the Steiners. Rick says they either fight it out right now or walk to the back together. Scott denounces Hogan and the NWO, saying he wants to reform the tag team.

Rick, somehow the smartest guy in the room, says he can't trust Scott, even as he appears to be on the verge of tears. The intelligence is short lived though as Rick says he'll give Scotty another chance, but if Scott stabs him in the back, Rick will hunt him until he dies. They hug and here's Adams with a ball bat. Scott is of course fine and cheers Adams on, confirming his loyalty to Hogan's camp.

#### Bryan Adams vs. Konnan

Konnan goes right at Adams to start and clotheslines him down. Can we please get Konnan some fitted pants? All that tugging must get annoying. Adams comes back with a bad looking piledriver (Tony says it was the jumping variety despite the complete lack of jumping) and sends Konnan to the outside. Cue Bret Hart to get a cheap shot on Konnan and send him back inside. Adams gorilla presses Konnan down but Nash comes in for the DQ.

Adams gets jackknifed.

Nitro Girls again, this time in silver.

We look at the Nitro Party winner of the week.

#### TV Title: Fit Finlay vs. Booker T

Fit takes him into the corner to start and hits a hard kick to the champion's back. Finlay cranks on the leg as Tony is thrilled to have Nitro back to three hours next week. Booker fights up with a good looking

spin kick to the face before backdropping Finlay to the floor. Back in and Finlay hits a hard clothesline, only to be taken down by a running forearm. The ax kick puts Finlay down and the whip spinebuster does the same. There's a flapjack from the champion as Benoit saunters down to the ring. The distraction lets Finlay tombstone Booker down for the pin and the title.

**Rating:** D+. Nothing special here but it furthers the Booker vs. Benoit feud, which has already had developments since the last time we saw them. Over the last week, Booker and Benoit traded the TV Title at some house shows, but neither of Benoit's two wins were acknowledged tonight. Instead we need Finlay to get the title. That's not a knock on Finlay, but he hasn't done anything of note in months and he gets a title?

#### Kevin Nash vs. Lex Luger

We have less than five minutes of air time left during Luger's entrance. Luger pounds away in the corner to start but a Konnan distraction allows Nash to kick him in the face. Nash fires off elbows in the corner and does the foot choke to really expand the offense. A running clothesline hits Luger in the corner but a second one runs into Luger's boot. Savage and Konnan get taken down but Nash gets in a cheap shot to take over again as the Wolfpack comes in for the fast DQ.

Sting and Giant come out to break up the Jackknife and start a fight. Adams comes out but Bret stops him from hitting the ring, wisely saying let them fight to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C-. This is an interesting case for Nitro. On one hand, this was a story driven show which did the last thing WCW needed: put even more focus on the NWO. The silver lining for this show though was the length. It's amazing how much easier it is to sit through Nitro when it loses that third hour. There's a lot of good stuff in WCW, but the extra time is always given to pad out the bad stuff, dragging the show down in the process. Not a bad show here, but the bad is going to take

over in a hurry.

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# **AAA When Worlds Collide – Rey, Eddie, Konnan in 1994**

## **When Worlds Collide**

Date: November 6, 1994

Location: Los Angeles Memorial Sports Arena, Los Angeles, California

Attendance: 13,500

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Chris Cruise

This is another one of those shows that is the holy grail of stuff I've wanted to see for years. This was a co-promoted show by WCW and AAA (Mexican company) when the company first started. It has five matches on the card and based on Meltzer's ratings, the worst is three and a half stars. There are a lot of names you'll recognize and a few you won't. This is something I've wanted to review for a long time so let's get to it.

This is Tenay's commentary debut.

Mascarita Sagrada/Octagancito vs. Jerrito Estrada/Espectrito

This is a minis match. Sagrada was Max Mini in WWF around 1997. These guys are all mini versions of full sized guys. This isn't a comedy act in Mexico and is really a big deal so this will be treated seriously. Espectrito is the Minis Champion. There are two referees here and even they have backstories. Octagancito and Espectrito start us off. Off to Estrada who is a giant mini at 5 feet tall.

Sagrada comes in and flies all over the place. Sagrada is a very tiny man so the heels who are much bigger toss him around with ease. You can come in if your partner is thrown to the floor here. It's kind of hard to keep track of who is legal here. The heels go after Octagancito's mask which is an automatic DQ if it comes off. This is IWC (another Mexican company) combining with AAA so it's technically a tri-branded show.

Espectrito hits a superkick to put Octagancito to the floor, which allows Sagrada to come in. This tagging style is taking some getting used to but it's customary there so it's fine. Estrada misses a corner dropkick and then a second one to Octagancito. You have a 20 count on the floor also. The heels double team Sagrada until he fights off with a bunch of flips that Sin Cara would be jealous of. Everything breaks down and here come the dives. Estrada slams Sagrada on the floor but Octagancito takes over on Estrada. A moonsault press from Sagrada ends him back in the ring.

**Rating:** C+. It was entertaining, but I think the minis thing is something that doesn't translate well from one culture to another. It wasn't bad but the ton of arm drags got pretty old quickly. This is fun in moderation but a full match like this gets a little dull. Still though, fun match and a nice cultural thing which fits into the worlds colliding theme.

Madonna's Boyfriend/Fuerza Guerrera/Psicosis vs. Rey Mysterio Jr./Heavy Metal/Latin Lover

Madonna's Boyfriend is Louis Spicolli. You know Psicosis and Rey. Latin Lover is a guy that was in WWF for like one match and was a big deal in AAA for awhile. You have to pin either the captain (Guerrera and Metal respectively) or both of their partners. So it's kind of like an elimination match, but if you pin the right guy you win automatically. It's kind of weird but again it's a cultural thing.

Big brawl to start and now it's time for the explanation of technicos and rudos. HUGE pop for the 19 year old Rey. Fuerza vs. Metal to start us off in a captains match. Off to Psicosis and Rey who are called potential superstars by Cruise. Well he's half right. Rey sends Psicosis to the floor via a slick rana but Psicosis shows some common sense and RUNS from the ring as Rey sets for a dive.

Off to Spicolli who is way bigger than almost anyone else in this. Louis puts him on the top and pats the head. Then he does it again so Rey snaps off a missile dropkick which is no sold. Off to Latin Lover who used to be a male stripper according to Tenay. Cruise: "How did you find that out?" Spicolli likes to dance a lot.

Heavy Metal clears the ring and we're told he's the son of the referee. Things speed way up and Metal puts on a nice acrobatics display with Psicosis. Off to Guerrerra vs. Rey. The fans are into this a lot more when Rey is there. There's another rana, this time off the apron to the floor. Psicosis tries to ram into Latin Lover and it fails a lot. Off to Metal vs. Guerrera and we get a low blow by Guerrera I think.

Off to Spicolli and the tagging thing is still hard to get used to. Rey gets tossed into the crowd as the heels take over. The most famous guys are in again and they hit the air quickly. Back to Lover vs. Spicolli and make that vs. Guerrera instead. Lover is very popular here and his superkicks get good reactions. Love misses a top rope splash and Guerrera hooks a very modified Sharpshooter.

That lasts all of five seconds and they slug it out a bit. Metal does a sweet backflip off the top and things break down again. This match needs to end now. Rey speeds things way up and hits a SCARY swanton headbutt (only way to describe it) to the floor onto Spicolli. Guerrero hooks a neck hold on Metal after he missed a swanton for the tap out. And yes he actually tapped.

**Rating:** C. Meltzer overrating stuff that isn't American? Say it isn't so! Yeah this got four stars from him and it's just not that good. It's too long and while it was cool to see Rey with intact knees, there wasn't much here for the most part. It was sloppy at times and the constant brawls were a bit much to take.

### Tito Santana/Pegasus Kid/2 Cold Scorpio vs. La Parka/Blue Panther/Jerry Estrada

This is IWC vs. AAA. Pegasus Kid you know as Chris Benoit and yes that's the same Tito Santana you're familiar with. Estrada is a brawler, Panther is a masked guy and captain and La Parka is La Parka. Scorpio is starting us off but Estrada and Parka fight over who starts. Instead it's Panther who takes Scorpio to the mat to a HUGE pop. I'm a big Scorpio and Santana fan so I think you know which team I like here.

Off to Benoit vs. Parka. The Parka team is WAY more popular as they're technically the hometown team. Santana comes in but Estrada and Parka fight over who gets to face Santana. Tito in black trunks is an odd sight to see. Also this is just Tito, not El Matador. Mike says Tito is clearly the weak link on his team. That's not exactly what I'd say but he's the Professor.

Parka won't tag in, ticking Estrada off even more. Benoit and Panther come in to speed things way up and Benoit hits a huge suicide dive to the floor. Benoit is the captain of his team so if he loses it's over. Scorpio and Parka come in and try to out overdo it. They slug it out but neither guy can take over.

Parka fakes taking a low blow and both guys hit the floor. That allows Estrada vs. Santana to come in. Remember that's legal here.

Estrada is sent to the floor and it's off to Benoit vs. Panther again. They're both in blue so that works out well. Benoit hooks the snap suplex but an elbow misses. Parka is tagged in and he walks along the apron for a bit first. The Canadian hits a German on the Mexican and it's back to Panther again, this time against 2 Cold. They look like their chemistry is way off at times in this.

A powerbomb puts Parka down but Estrada comes in, breaks it up, kicks Parka a bit for good measure and now the heels can't figure out who to get in. Ok so now it's Tito vs. Panther. Benoit comes in but misses the swan dive. Scorpio misses his huge moonsault as well. I get why Panther is a champion. La Parka and Estrada fight over who gets to cover Scorpio so it's back to Panther again.

Parka sends Santana to the floor and sets to dive but hits Estrada of course. Scorpio hits a big dive to take everyone out. Panther misses a moonsault so Benoit hits a Matt Hardy legdrop for two. Panther tries a powerbomb on Chris but Benoit rolls through into a rana for the pin and ZERO reaction, which also might be a cultural thing.

**Rating:** C. I liked it a little better than the previous one but it's no classic or anything. The idea here was two different styles and in that theory it worked. At the same time though, the tagging thing isn't something I can get used to inside of an hour, which is how long this has been going on. It was fine but it's something I think I'd like a lot more if I watched lucha libre more often.

Estrada and Parka almost get into a fight post match but Panther tries to break it up. Finally he's like screw it and they fight for like a second before Estrada leaves.

## Los Gringos Locos vs. Octagon/El Hijo Del Santo

Oh here it is. THIS is the reason this show is famous and it's one of the best matches of the 90s according to almost every reviewer. There is all kinds of backstory here. First of all: Los Gringos Locos are Eddie Guerrero and Love Machine Art Barr (just called Love Machine) and they are HATED. Barr makes swimming motions at the crowd as they come in, which is about as racist as you can get.

Both of them (plus their lackey Louis Spicolli) are in clothes so American flagged themed that Jack Swagger and Kurt Angle and the Patriot would tell them to tone it down. There are others in the stable with them including non-Americans like Konnan but you get the idea. The story here is that Eddie was in a team with El Hijo Del Santo but turned on him. This was due to their fathers being a big team (Gory Guerrero and El Santo, El Santo being the undisputed biggest name ever in Mexican wrestling) and Gory being overshadowed. The idea was Eddie wouldn't let it happen so he beat up El Hijo to take fame for himself.

On top of that, Los Gringos beat Octagon/El Hijo Del Santo for the AAA tag titles in Chicago a few months before this with the help of a fast count from a paid off referee. This is a mask vs. hair match though, which is the mother of all gimmick matches in Mexico and it's also 2/3 falls. However since this is Mexico, for a fall to count, both members of a team have to be defeated. I'll try to keep track of that as we go.

Got all that? Good.

Eddie vs. Santo (his name is El Hijo Del Santo and Santo is a different wrestler, but for the sake of not having to type that every time I'll be calling him Santo. I'm aware of the difference) starts us off and the fans couldn't be more behind the masked team. There's only one referee in here and if you go to the floor it doesn't mean the other guy can come in so



it's a more traditional tag match.

Off to Barr and Octagon but Eddie cheats like only he can. They set for a Doomsday Rana but Eddie botches slightly, basically dropping Santo on his head. Since he's practically dead, that's good for the first pin. Remember that doesn't count as a fall though, but rather just half a fall. A superplex by Eddie and a frog splash by Barr (he invented it, Eddie copied it) ends Octagon so we're at 1-0 Gringos very early.

Barr does the swimming thing again during the break between falls. Eddie starts with Santo again and Santo is in trouble. Off to Octagon and he's an idiot apparently as Eddie begs off and Octagon lets him have a break. Off to Barr who likes to do jumping jacks. Eddie comes back in via a slingshot hilo and Santo is like screw this and pounds on Eddie a bit. Barr takes a senton backplash and everything breaks down.

Out to the floor and the Mexicans dive onto Los Gringos in a huge crash. Back to Eddie vs. Santo in the ring which is what the original match was going to be. Eddie snaps off a rana off the top and gets a quick pin on Santo but we're not done yet. Santo can't interfere here either. The Gringos double team Octagon but he escapes, hooking a rana on Eddie for a quick pin and then a freaky looking neck lock on Barr for the tap and a POP.

Now we get down to the real stuff as those first ten minutes were just a warmup. Back to Eddie vs. Santo to get us started as Barr chants for Proposition 187, which would be a very tough anti-immigration law up for a vote in California. See why he's so hated? Santo hooks a camel clutch but Barr superkicks him in the head to take over. Octagon comes in to break up a submission hold but stops to kick Barr a little while he's in there.

Octagon kicks away even more but Eddie saves and tries the

Gory Stretch. Eddie goes up but gets caught in an electric chair drop for two. Now Los Gringos try the double suicide dives but Eddie's foot gets caught on the middle rope so he lands on his head. They head back to the ring where Eddie gets powerbombed to the floor. Barr tombstones Octagon (HUGE thing as that move paralyzed a guy shortly before this) and gets the pin to put them a fall away from winning. The crowd is reaching ONS 06 levels of hate now.

Eddie grabs a German on Santo for two and there's the PowerPlex again but it only gets two here, drawing an ERUPTION from the crowd. Octagon is being stretchered out and it's heel miscommunication time. Santo dives onto Eddie and Blue Panther (Santo/Octagon's second) piledrives Barr to make it 1-1. So in essence it's Guerrero vs. Santo now and Eddie hits a Batista Bomb for two. A belly to belly superplex gets two for Eddie as does a rana off the top. Dragon suplex gets two as Barr is waking up again. Santo grabs a rollup out of nowhere and keeps the masks as he gets the pin.

**Rating:** A-. I don't know if it's the lack of context but I didn't see this as being the perfect match that it's built up as. Then again I almost always rate tag matches lower than most people do so that probably has something to do with it. That being said though the crowd was electric for this and the whole thing worked very well. Great match and worth seeing for history if nothing else.

Octagon is taken into an ambulance. Barr cuts Eddie's hair and cries over having to do it. Barr gets his cut now and looks like he's about to cry.

Barr would be dead in 17 days. He had a ton of potential too.

We recap the card while the cage is lowered.

### Perro Aguayo vs. Konnan

Aguayo is an old guy (49) who was betrayed by the young guy.

Aguayo took Konnan's mask while Konnan took Aguayo's hair. This is the rubber match and it's inside a cage, escape only to win. Konnan was the most popular guy in Mexico but turned heel in a huge deal and drew huge money. The previous two matches were three years ago it seems and then they were a tag team. Konnan turned heel and here we are.

Konnan, a pure power guy, throws Aguayo around to start. Perro fires off some kicks to get going and pounds away in the corner. He goes up but comes crashing back down via an electric chair drop. Konnan takes over with a pair of hot shots into the cage. The fans are totally behind Aguayo who is busted. Perro takes over again and keeps going for covers for no apparent reason.

They fight up to the corner and slug it out with Aguayo sending him down. We hear about the three way feud with Perro, Konnan and Cien Caras which kickstarted the AAA promotion. Aguayo takes over but is pouring blood. He really likes that double stomp move. Konnan fires off a low blow and takes over. We get an inset shot of Eddie (mostly bald) and Spicolli watching this on a monitor. Perro is in control so here they come.

Aguayo hits about the third double stomp of the match so far. Now he's climbing but Konnan makes a stop. Here are Eddie and Louis with a cup of something that they throw in the face of Aguayo. They throw Konnan some brass knuckles and Konnan hits the PowerDrop (Razor's Edge into a sitout powerbomb) to kill Perro dead. The knuckles are thrown out but it's not like keeping them secret means anything.

Konnan kicks him down again but Perro fires off some right hands to take over for about 3 seconds. Here are the knuckles again and Guerrero is trying to get in. Konnan hits a low blow and throws the knuckles out again. Konnan goes up and here are Los Dynamite Brothers (Cien Caras and his brothers) for the save. They chase off Eddie and Spicolli and Caras knock Konnan

down off the top of the cage. The 5th double stomp is enough for Perro to escape and win the match.

**Rating:** B-. Fun enough cage match here to close things out. The run-ins at the end make sense and Perro winning when we got things down to one on one was a nice touch. You can't really fault the ending for being Aguayo standing up to win everything and stop the young guy, especially since he's the big legend face. This was fine.

There's a LONG celebration (as in like 7 minutes) to end the show. Konnan goes after an overzealous fan post match as well.

**Overall Rating:** B+. It's not a classic show or anything but it's a fun show to watch. It's a little over two hours and it works rather well. Seeing the legends before they were legends is a cool idea and I can see why this show is so revered. It's good stuff and if you can find it (good luck) it's worth checking out. Almost all of the good guys won which is the idea of a big show. This worked and I liked it. Good stuff.

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