

Monday Nitro – October 30, 2000: So That's Why He's There

Monday Nitro #264

Date: October 30, 2000

Location: Bren Events Center, Irvine, California

Commentators: Mark Madden, Scott Hudson, Tony Schiavone

We're past Halloween Havoc and as you might expect, WCW managed to screw up what should have been a pretty easy show. Booker T. is still the World Champion after Scott Steiner got disqualified, meaning tonight it's Booker defending against Mike Awesome in a match I'm sure will happen as advertised. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of last night's results, thankfully omitting the Sting Army.

Someone is here in a white limo.

Opening sequence.

Tag Team Titles: Kidman/Rey Mysterio vs. Mark Jindrak/Sean O'Haire

Jindrak and O'Haire are defending and we hear about a new CEO arriving tonight. So what was the point of having two guys fight over being Commissioner for so long? I'm assuming we can add that to the list of stories that go nowhere and mean nothing. Konnan sits in on commentary, which could be a lot more entertaining than it has any right to be. Rey slaps Jindrak in the face to start as Konnan talks about an article on Jindrak's high school sports career.

Kidman comes in and stomps Jindrak in the corner until it's off to O'Haire for a hard shot to the face. A blind tag brings in Rey with a springboard sunset flip but Sean drops him with a slingshot sitout powerbomb. That great looking springboard clothesline gives Jindrak a near fall as well but Rey comes back with a hurricanrana out of the

corner. The hot tag brings in Kidman to clean house as everything breaks down. The BK Bomb drops Jindrak to set up the Nutcracker Supreme, followed by a botched count as the Boogie Knights are late running in. Disco gets in a Last Dance, giving O'Haire the pin to retain.

Rating: C+. As usual this company does much better when they just let the wrestlers wrestle. There were too many botches in here to really have it work but putting Jindrak and O'Haire out there with guys like Mysterio and Kidman is only going to do good things for them. Hopefully these matches are signs of the future instead of signs that Jindrak and O'Haire are being carried.

Mike Sanders is in the back with Kevin Nash when Scott Steiner comes up and demands a title match tonight. That's fine with Mike so Scott leaves. Kevin tells Sanders to pick his battles.

Hardcore Title: Reno vs. Kwee Wee

Reno is defending after beating Kwee Wee last week but Rolling the Dice on Paisley after the match. Before the match, Kwee Wee talks about beating up Reno in the Power Plant and not wanting to be one of the Natural Born Ratings Killers. I'll never get used to this meta nonsense. Kwee Wee starts in with some trashcan shots and a sunset flip on the floor for two as the announcers talk about Steiner.

The fans want tables as the champ starts swinging a kendo stick to take over. Kwee Wee gets in a few more shots and they head up the ramp, only to have the Thrillers come out and beat him down. The big toss from O'Haire and Jindrak sends Kwee Wee flying back inside, setting up the Roll of the Dice onto a trashcan lid to retain Reno's title.

Rating: D. One guy hit the other one with weapons and then the other guy hit the first one with weapons, followed by the Thrillers coming out to make this nothing. You would think they would be out there at the bell since there were no rules but that might make too much sense. I like the idea that Kwee Wee was in the Power Plant class with these guys but doesn't want to side with them but the gimmick is making this more of a joke than anything else.

Here's General Rection to talk about how proud he is of winning the title but has to call out the Misfits, including Major Gunns back in the camouflage. After a bunch of hugs, Rection rips the Canadian sticker off and makes it the US Title again. He dedicates this to all the C team players like Konnan and Mysterio (Really? They're C team? What's the B team then?) who never get a chance to show what they can do.

Gene starts the slow clap for Rection and the roster comes out to applaud for him. Even Booker and Goldberg, the latter of whom says he appreciates Hugh (yes Hugh) make appearances. You know what might make this better? Renaming the champ Bill DeMott. This was quite a moment but it's really hard to get fired up for someone named General Rection.

We're not done yet as Lance Storm pops up on screen to say Rection never beat him for that title. If Rection is man enough, he'll give Storm another shot at that title. Rection is one step ahead of him as he's already had the rematch made and signed (complete with a contract) for Mayhem. Goldberg tells Hugh to shut Storm up. This was a lot better than I was expecting and felt like a really strong rub, assuming he doesn't drop the title soon.

Here's David Flair with the DNA testing results, which say Buff Bagwell is NOT the father. You know, which you can get in less than 24 hours. Cue MI Smooth (Madden: "You ever notice he looks like an inflated Cuba Gooding Jr.?") to say he has a bone to pick with David. Apparently Smooth never told him that Buff was the dad and David just jumped to that conclusion.

David Flair vs. MI Smooth

Smooth destroys him as you would expect and we get a Flair Flip in the corner. David's sunset flip only gets two and it's a Bubba Bomb to put David away in a hurry.

Jimmy Hart issues an open challenge to wrestle any radio DJ. Oh sweet goodness wasn't Mancow enough?

Here are the Boogie Knights with something to say. Disco: "I'm not entirely sure why we're out here." Apparently Sanders sent them out here,

perhaps to praise their abdominal development. This brings out Goldberg to easily toss the two of them over the top and take their mic. Goldberg didn't know who he was until a few weeks ago but now adversity has introduced him to himself. After last night, Kronik knows who he is to. The record is just a number and now everyone in the back is next. You would think they could have had him beat the Knights to get two more wins here.

The new CEO comes out of his office and we look at his feet. Since this is WCW though, the camera is looking up and has to pan down quickly so we see the new boss' face.

Here's Mike Sanders in a suit with something to say. Sanders brags about his win last night, including bragging about knocking out the Cat for the 1-2-3. Actually it was a 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10 because it was a countout but close enough I guess. That brings him to business though as the World Title match is now going to be Booker defending against Awesome and Steiner. As for the CEO, all he's going to run is around getting Sanders coffee. This new CEO is going to drop out of WCW faster than Shawn Stasiak drops out of a spelling bee.

Cue Ric Flair, who we saw earlier. You would think they would edit these things to make sure they don't give away the big moment of the night but that's too low brow for them I guess. Flair has been watching Sanders lately and he's impressed by what he sees. However, Sanders and the rest of the Thrillers are going to start playing by the rules or they're not going to play at all.

Mike gets sent out but first of all, Flair is going to have him fight the Cat again tonight and it's going to be by the rules. That brings us back to last night and we'll start with Lex Luger. Ric asked Luger to watch out for his boy but Luger went a bit too far. Buff Bagwell is owed an apology but it seems that Luger is back.

This brings out Jeff Jarrett, who has to find a working mic. Jarrett thinks Ric Flair is going to be around until after civilization ends (not that far off actually). Flair: "The only time you're the chosen one is when you're in a room full of girls." They threaten each other a bit and

Flair keeps insisting that he's retired. I'll believe any of this will mean something when I actually see it happen.

Here's Lex Luger with something to say. Last night Ric made him an offer: take care of David and he'll be back full time. Luger brags about all his accomplishments and his bank account before saying last night with Buff was just business. Tonight though he wants to make an announcement: he's next. For Goldberg that is. Buff comes out and fumbles over his challenge to Luger, setting up a match for later. Actually Buff has a referee here with him just in case so let's do it right now.

Lex Luger vs. Buff Bagwell

Buff starts with that double arm DDT but the Blockbuster hits the referee by mistake. Luger uses the distraction to get in some chair shots, setting up the Rack for the quick win. It amazes me how Buff continues to be treated as such a nothing guy. He's kind of the Dolph Ziggler of his day.

Shawn Stasiak promises loyalty to the Thrillers. Nash gives Palumbo and Stasiak a quick spanking and offers to let Pamela give him one.

Kronik vs. Perfect Event

Nash sits in on commentary. Stasiak actually knocks Adams into the corner to start as a loud WE WANT SCOTT HALL chant breaks out. It's off to Clark to stomp Palumbo down in the corner and Stasiak gets knocked out to the floor. Nash: "Walk it off kid." That sends Stasiak off to the back as the full nelson slam plants Palumbo. High Times puts Palumbo away.

Rating: D. Nothing to see here as the dull Shawn Stasiak face turn continues, even though I have little reason to believe that he's actually going to turn as WCW is likely to make it a SWERVE. There wasn't much to the match of course but that's what you have to expect from a Perfect Event match.

Post break Nash leads the Thrillers to find Stasiak.

Booker isn't worried about having two challengers at once. Steiner cheated to get where he is while Awesome won his shot fair and square.

The Cat vs. Mike Sanders

Before the match, Cat says he saw Madden in the shower earlier today. Hudson: "What was he doing watching you in the shower?" Sanders asks for a handshake but it's a chop to the chest instead. Cat starts hammering away in the corner before they head outside, allowing Madden to rant about how much he hates Cat because Madden looks GREAT in said shower. Back in and Mike puts on a chinlock for a bit before Cat fights up with his dancing elbow. A quick Feliner gives Cat the pin in a hurry.

Post match Shane Douglas pops up on screen and says Cat needs to worry about his own house. The camera pans over to Ms. Jones, who gets a backbreaker for slapping Shane in the face.

Cat is livid post break.

Mike Awesome likes the idea of Steiner being in the main event and suggests an alliance to take Steiner out.

WCW World Title: Mike Awesome vs. Booker T. vs. Scott Steiner

Booker is defending. Before the match Steiner rants about how he should have won last week and got ripped off anyway. Booker limps out to the ring and Mike couldn't feel more added on if he was a free toaster for opening a bank account. Steiner and Booker start fighting before Awesome comes out and Booker hits a quick sidekick to take over. Mike finally comes out maybe two minutes in and it's time to clean house. Awesome's flying shoulder gets two on Booker but Steiner comes back in with his belly to belly.

The elbow into the pushups have Booker in trouble but Awesome goes up for a clothesline. The Awesome Splash gets two on Steiner until Booker gets in a side kick to put everyone down. Booker is up first, only to get suplexed by Steiner. Scott beats on the champ outside until Awesome gets in a chair shot. Back in and Scott gets two off the super Angle Slam and there's the Recliner, only to have Booker kick Steiner in the face. The Bookend to Awesome retains the title.

Rating: D+. Ah so Awesome was put in there as a jobber. I have a hard

time believing that WCW planned this all the way back in Australia but it's a better idea than they have most of the time. The problem here continues to be that Steiner is a fairly one note character who is doing what he can but it's now more of a matter of time until he gets the title, which makes a lot of these shows feel unimportant.

Steiner has to be held back by security. Booker issues a challenge for him at some point in the future because the fans want to see it.

Overall Rating: D. It's still a bad show but they got rid of a lot of the stuff that really slowed things down, such as Jeff Jarrett, Shane Douglas wrestling and the Thrillers looking like morons. As we've covered multiple times, a lot of the wrestlers just really aren't that good right now. The stories are trying but there's only so far guys like Lex Luger, David Flair and an old Scott Steiner can take you.

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Halloween Havoc 2000: There It Is

Halloween Havoc 2000

Date: October 29, 2000

Location: MGM Grand Garden Arena, Las Vegas, Nevada

Attendance: 7,582

Commentators: Stevie Ray, Tony Schiavone, Mark Madden

It's at least a double main event tonight and you could argue a triple with Kronik vs. Goldberg, Sting vs. Jeff Jarrett and Booker T. defending the World Title against Scott Steiner. After that though the card falls off a cliff and hits every single rock on the way down. Let's get to it.

We open with the fans being polled about the handicap match. Well to be fair that's cheaper and safer than asking the announcers what they think.

The regular opening video focuses on how everyone needs to overcome their fears.

Tony: "This is sports entertainment!"

Tag Team Titles: Boogie Knights vs. Rey Mysterio/Kidman vs. Sean O'Haire/Mark Jindrak

O'Haire and Jindrak are defending after losing to both teams in recent weeks. The Thrillers come out second for no logical reason but I'm sure it's supposed to draw money or humble them or something. The ring has the Backstage Assault (WCW video game sponsoring the show) logos in each corner. Konnan is on commentary as Alex, Mark and Kidman are in to start. I've always liked that three men in at once rule in WCW.

Kidman headscissors Mark down and hits a nice dropkick before it's off to Rey, whose Bronco Buster hits a raised boot. Disco comes in and dances but Jindrak springboards in so high that Disco has to take a step back before Jindrak hits him. O'Haire throws Rey into the air for a powerslam (cool spot) so Disco helps double team him down, only to start fighting with Rey over the cover. Kidman comes in and elbows Disco instead of O'Haire, only to have Wright dropkick Kidman for two.

The fans stay on Disco as Wright knees Jindrak in the arm for two (well done camera guys). The yet to be named Tower of Doom freaks Stevie out as Wright is planted for a double two count. Konnan is already getting on my nerves with his Natural Born Cranberries line and we get a triple tag to bring in Rey, Disco and O'Haire. Everything breaks down and Kidman takes

the double beal over the top from the floor.

O'Haire throws Rey over the top into a belly to belly from Wright for two. The Animals take over for a bit and Wright takes a Kid Crusher but the champs make a save. Wright runs into Rey and falls over the top anyway, leaving Disco to Last Dance Jindrak. Stevie sounds like he's doing a JR impression for reasons that aren't clear, only to have O'Haire hit the Seanton Bomb for the pin on Disco to retain.

Rating: B-. This was a lot of fun as they just let all six of them go nuts for ten minutes to fire up the crowd. I like the idea of a hot opener and given that they probably don't have much left on the show worth much until the last three matches, this was a good choice to have early on the card.

Post match Wright beats down the Animals with a chair so Konnan comes in, drawing in Sgt. AWOL for the save for absolutely no logical reason. Konnan looks hurt and comes up limping.

Hardcore Title: Reno vs. Sgt. AWOL

AWOL is challenging so he sets up a table in between matches. Reno hits him with a kendo stick but takes a boot to the face (totally missed), only to flapjack AWOL through the table for two. Madden says old school hardcore rules are in effect: pinfalls count anywhere and anything goes. That would be different than the new rules of start in the back and end in the ring. So there are two eras for a title not even a year old?

A trashcan shot to the head gets two on AWOL as I have flashbacks to him being invincible just about a year ago. AWOL comes back by putting a trashcan over Reno's head before kicking the can rather hard. Not the part with Reno inside of course because that might mean something looks good in this match.

AWOL and Stevie Ray do a Too Sweet for some reason before the guys walk up the aisle. A Roll of the Dice on the ramp knocks AWOL silly but let's set up two tables instead of covering. As expected, AWOL gets up and throws Reno through both tables (or at least most of them). That's not enough for a cover either so they head backstage with AWOL throwing a

computer monitor at Reno's head. Ignore the picture on the monitor that isn't plugged in because this is OLD SCHOOL HARDCORE, meaning technology doesn't have to make sense.

The champ blasts him with a fire extinguisher and throws AWOL through another table, only to have AWOL throw him onto another table. Madden makes jokes about the internet ruining wrestling as AWOL hits him with the monitor again. AWOL hits agent Fit Finlay and Madden gets in what sounds like an inside joke that makes no sense unless you were probably in catering that day. Back to ringside and AWOL loads up another table, only to walk into Roll of the Dice to retain Reno's title.

Rating: D-. WAY too long here as I was begging for this to be over nearly halfway through. This gimmick is so beyond dead and now the match is getting nearly eleven minutes (third longest match of the night) on a card with ten other matches. Who is this supposed to appeal to? I hit you with some object, we do a table spot, repeat five times? That's the best they've got?

Post match the Perfect Event comes out and beats on AWOL, drawing out Lieutenant Loco and Corporal Cajun to give us a very lame reaction.

Shane Douglas talks to the Thrillers and tells them that Nash has put him in charge of the team tonight. Nash can't even show up on pay per views now?

Apparently Goldberg was injured when he hit the post on Thunder. He isn't here yet but that's commonplace in WCW.

Kronik talks to the Nevada State Wrestling Commission and mentions Goldberg having a head/neck injury.

Lieutenant Loco/Corporal Cajun vs. Perfect Event

This is an impromptu match but luckily the Thrillers were already in their gear. Why Loco and Cajun had to go to the back and come back out isn't clear. Stasiak gets beaten down to start and you can see people getting out of their chairs. It's also clear that the cameras aren't panning over to the side because there are A LOT of empty seats that keep

sneaking into view.

Things settle down to Stasiak beating on Loco before it's off to Palumbo. The announcers argue over how together the Perfect Event is, despite the fact that they're not even the best team in their own stable. Palumbo charges into Cajun's raised boot as I have no idea why this match is taking place on pay per view. Was a ten match card really not enough? A double flapjack puts Loco down as Stevie thinks Madden called Loco "Chubby Toes."

Stasiak gets two off a sitout powerbomb (Tony: "Out of the Coach Kevin Nash playbook!") as the announcers talk about how many saves you're allowed to make in tag team wrestling. Apparently there used to be a limit on that. You would think that some company like Ring of Honor might have brought that back over the years. Loco somehow spins out of a press slam and it's off to Cajun with the hot tag.

Palumbo makes the save so Stasiak can get two and the fans are put right back in their seats. Well the fans that are still in the arena at least. A sleeper makes things even worse but Cajun fights out...and is put in another sleeper. Well Palumbo's hand is over Cajun's eyes so it's more like a one man game of Peek-A-Boo. Cajun escapes again and runs him over for the tag to Loco but the fans aren't bothering to get fired up this time. Everything breaks down and Loco gives Stasiak a quick tornado DDT for the pin.

Rating: C-. Well that happened. It was a watchable match that I'm going to forget about inside of the next ten minutes and really only served to further the "Stasiak is a screwup" story, which isn't interesting in the first place because IT'S SHAWN STASIAK. You could have easily cut this from the show and given the time to other matches and given how fast the fans were leaving, there's probably something to that idea.

Konnan is hurt but is willing to go fight anyway.

Torrie Wilson/Shane Douglas vs. Konnan/Tygress

You can see Stasiak and Palumbo leaving the ring as Shane's entrance comes on. Torrie is in a Wonder Woman swimsuit and the announcers trip

over each others tongues to oogle her. Before the match, Shane laughs at Konnan's injuries and offers Tygress a chance to come out here and get beaten up. Or sexually assaulted if you pay attention to what he says.

Tygress fights on her own to start by kicking Shane low, setting up a HORRIBLE sequence between the women. Shane breaks up the Bronco Buster as the announcers talk about Torrie's stockings. A double Franchiser is loaded up but Konnan comes in through the crowd for no apparent reason for the save. His back is fine enough to clothesline both of them down and we get a horrible looking double baseball slide as everything heads outside.

It settles down into a regular match and Tony freaks out when Tygress grabs a wristlock on Shane. Torrie tries to make a save and has no idea what to do (makes sense) so Shane takes over on Tygress to save himself. It's off to Torrie for a really awkward looking run across the ring (with no complaints from the announcers), followed by a camel clutch from Shane.

Off to a crossface chickenwing with Shane putting her hand near his crotch (and shouting something about "make me feel good baby") until Tygress escapes and crawls over for a hot tag to Konnan. Everything breaks down and Torrie pulls the referee into the path of a Bronco Buster for the comedy spot of the match. Torrie gives Konnan a decent Franchiser for two but the good team gives Shane a double facebuster for the pin.

Rating: D-. Other than Torrie in that outfit, this did not need to be on pay per view. This needed to be about five minutes shorter and on Nitro, mainly because I have no idea why this match even took place. Something about who is the best couple, but isn't Tygress with Rey? They made it clear that this was all about looking at Torrie but there are other ways to do that without wasting over ten minutes of pay per view time.

Again the camera immediately cuts away to the next interview. What's up with them wanting to get away from Tygress and Torrie so fast? Anyway David Flair and his doctors (they have stethoscopes and stuff) are ready to prove that Buff is a lying piece of garbage.

Buff Bagwell vs. David Flair

This is a DNA match and we're still waiting on a definition of what that is. Madden: "Tony what are the rules of a DNA match?" Hey thanks Mark. It means First Blood, though I don't think the fans have actually been told that otherwise. Before the match, Buff promises that he'll win. You can add that to the long list of things that could have been cut from this show.

Buff punches David down to start and scores with a swinging neckbreaker. All Buff so far as this is a total squash since David still isn't much of a wrestler. David does the Flair Flip in the corner but gets slammed down just like his daddy. Buff rips the shirt off and makes him do a double bicep pose, allowing David to kick him low for his first advantage. Outside they go but Buff can't get a piledriver on the exposed concrete because that might kill him.

Your comment of the show that sums up how stupid this whole thing is: Tony: "David trying to bust Buff open and get a DNA sample!" Just imagine a non-fan hearing that one line and see how they react. Anyway they get back in and David tries a chair, only to get hit low and hit with the chair instead. David is busted open so the match is over but since the wrestlers don't seem to know how the match works, Buff gives him a Blockbuster anyway.

Rating: D-. This was a squash and another match that didn't need to be on a pay per view. The DNA story is interesting enough but does anyone really care about David Flair? Buff would be a better person in this role, especially since Ric has barely been a factor in it most of the time. At least we got to see David beat up his mailman though. That's something right?

Post match Lex Luger of all people comes out to celebrate with Buff and turn on him a full two seconds later. Luger posts Buff and busts open his lip, allowing David to get a sample. Boy that's convenient.

Goldberg, looking a bit shaky, arrives. Thank goodness they made sure to fix that cliffhanger that started half an hour ago.

Scott Steiner and Midajah aren't worried about Goldberg. Steiner promises to win the title.

The Cat vs. Mike Sanders

This is a kickboxing match for the Commissionership with three rounds lasting two minutes each. Both guys get to run their mouths to start and still nothing of note is said. Palumbo and Stasiak (fine again) are in Sanders' corner as Madden thinks this is a karate match. They feel each other out for a bit until Cat kicks him in the head for an eight count. A legsweep drops Sanders and they lock up with about ten seconds to go to end the round.

Cat beats on him with ease for a knockdown and Sanders barely beats the count. Another punch drops Mike again but the Perfect Event argues over whether or not to throw in the towel. Mike says throw it in but somehow beats the count to end the round. This has been completely one sided so far and Cat has barely broken a sweat.

Stasiak and Palumbo get in a fight during the break but here's Shane Douglas for some reason. The referee is outside yelling at the Thrillers as Cat beats up Sanders even more. Cat gets in a good looking cartwheel kick and Sanders doesn't want to get up. With Mike kind of on his feet, Cat hammers away even more. To his credit though, he's able to shout "GET THE CHAIN MAN!" to Douglas, who knocks Cat out with a chain a few seconds later.

The slowest ten count ever (the referee is at five with twenty seconds left and gets to nine with three seconds left) allows the Cat to get up just in time and the match continues. Cat knocks Sanders out again but goes to the floor to fight Shane, giving Mike a countout win. In overtime. In a kickboxing match. To be a wrestling commissioner. Which he already was.

Rating: F. There's a difference between this kind of stuff and the kind of stuff you would see under full Russo control. While that stuff was really more about shock value and being as stupid as possible, this was a match where you knew everything that was going to happen from the second Shane came out (save for maybe the stupid countout ending). It's still really bad either way but at least this had some great facial expressions from Sanders. Of course this was horrible but it's not like the two of

them could have a much better wrestling match.

Goldberg talks to the wrestling commissioners and says he's fine from Monday. The injury was on Wednesday's show but it was taped on Monday so I'm not sure if I can call that a botch or not.

Kronik gives Goldberg until the end of the night because they get paid either way.

Mike Awesome vs. Vampiro

Add this to the list of things that doesn't really need to be on pay per view. Not the match that is but Mike as That 70s Guy. This is over Awesome beating Vampiro down a few weeks back so Vampiro is here for revenge. Odd heel motivation but whatever. Vampiro wants to put Awesome's title shot on the line as well. Now that's more like a heel. Mike says groovy. Well actually he says that's fine but he should have said groovy.

Vampiro is knocked to the floor to start and a big plancha takes him down again. That never stops looking awesome. The brawl heads into the crowd despite there being regular rules for this one. Vampiro grabs a cane from someone and beats on Awesome, only to have the guy hit Awesome, who beats him down as a result. Well that was a bad moment.

Back in and they duel with chairs like samurai warriors according to Tony. I'd love to meet Tony's history teacher if he thinks samurai's fought with folding metal chairs. Vampiro gets the better of it and takes over with a release belly to belly superplex that almost had a horrible landing. Back in and Vampiro tries a top rope seated senton but Mike seems to counter into a sitout powerbomb. Well I think so at least because it looked kind of like a counter and kind of like Awesome fell backwards. Mike covered for two so we'll go with horribly executed counter.

Instead it's time for a table and even Stevie thinks there's something wrong with this. The Nail in the Coffin gets no cover so let's bring in another table. Madden: "There's always room for jello and there's always room for another table." I saw Ghostbusters II first so I smiled at that line more than I should have. They head outside for an Awesome Bomb on

the floor...for two? Are we having a second match where they don't know the rules? Vampiro is up fast enough to break up the Awesome Splash. Instead it's a Super Awesome Bomb to give Mike the pin and give us that sweet 70s music.

Rating: D. They had something there with the big spots but that doesn't really work if the spots don't actually work. Awesome and Vampiro were trying but there's only so much you can do when the match is barely looking like a match and turns more into a trainwreck. It also didn't help that they beat up a fan in the crowd. You know that whole assault thing.

General Rection gives a fired up promo talking about how he's lost so much over the last few months but he's here for one more fight.

Vampiro is being checked on by the trainers and gets a round of applause when he sits up. Tony shows us a replay and calls it one of the most amazing spots you'll ever see. Who in the world is going to care if you call it a move? As usual it comes off like WCW trying to make themselves look smarter and forgetting that a lot of fans don't care.

US Title: General Rection vs. Lance Storm/Jim Duggan

Storm is defending in a handicap match and goes on a rant about how Rection won't just accept that he's been beaten. Duggan argues with the referee over who gets to keep the board before locking up with Rection and brawling around the ring. Rection clears the ring with clotheslines before no selling Storm's chops in the corner.

There's a backdrop to send Lance outside but Duggan knocks Rection outside as well to take over for the first time. Stevie: "Tony, why do they call her Major Gunns?" The bad guys take over with Duggan elbowing him down to give Storm two. A superkick gets another delayed near fall but Duggan's Three Point Clothesline is turned into a double clothesline to put both guys down.

Storm slaps on a sleeper and Stevie actually compares it to the one from the Perfect Event match. Who would have thought Stevie would be the best analyst between Tony and Mar....this isn't all that surprising actually.

Canadian miscommunication gives Rection an opening and he powerslams Storm for one.

Duggan hits his partner by mistake again before the referee drops down as Lance runs the ropes. He does it a second time and then we get the ref bump because we needed a ref bump. Duggan piledrives Rection for no count so here's Elix Skipper, who is quickly taken down by a flag shot from Gunns. Back in and a Russian legsweep to Duggan with the 2x4 (clearly not making any contact) is enough to set up the No Laughing Matter to give Rection the title.

Rating: D. I appreciate them trying to keep Storm strong but was this really the best idea they could come up with? Rection isn't really the most interesting guy in the world but at least it fits the story they've built up for months. In a good company this would free Storm up for a main event run but you know WCW isn't bright enough to pull that off.

Mayhem ad centered entirely around Scott Steiner.

Jarrett is ready for Sting.

We recap Jarrett vs. Sting which is over Jarrett claiming Sting has no heart. For some reason this resulted in him dressing up as Sting and mimicking him, which only served to tick Sting off and set up a big fight here. On paper, this should be a layup.

Sting vs. Jeff Jarrett

Jeff goes around the ring running his mouth so Sting jumps him from behind to start things fast. They get inside with Sting hitting an atomic drop....and here comes Surfer Sting. The real Sting (Sting Prime?) beats him up as Madden wonders if you can get disqualified for beating yourself up. Fair question....I think? Sting and Jarrett fight by the stage and then into the crowd so here's 1990 Sting to get beaten up as well. The real Sting gives him a Death Drop on the stage as Jarrett stands in the ring.

Back in and here's Wolfpac Sting (possibly played by Chris Harris) as we skip eight years or so. For some reason Sting takes him up to the stage for some bat shots and another Death Drop. Jeff hits him in the

neck/shoulder with the bat as the referee checks on Wolfpac Sting. Back in and Jeff puts on a sleeper, probably giving us the highlight of the match. Sting fights up and makes his comeback as Crow Sting breaks through the mat and pulls Sting under.

That earns Crow another beatdown but the lights go out and Crow Sting II repels from the ceiling. Sting gives him a Death Drop through the table to knock the wig off and reveal a bald spot. Back in and Sting puts on the Scorpion, only to have Crow Sting I hit him with the guitar. That's no sold (why not at this point) and Crow I gets a Death Drop, followed by the guitar shot from Jeff for the pin.

Rating: T. For There it is. I had heard about how horrible this show was going to be. This match started roughly two hours in and while it was bad, there have been worse. Then there it was. There's the big moment that turns this into horrible. WCW spent weeks building up a three match show and one of them involved Sting fighting the demons of his past because Jarrett apparently hired a bunch of guys to dress up like Sting and interfere at timed intervals.

Normally I would go into a big rant about why this is stupid but it's up there with Mae Young giving birth to a hand or David Flair beating up a mailman on the list of things that speak for themselves. With WCW in the position they're in, they have no business screwing over the fans on one of the only matches that was almost guaranteed to be well done. I mean, it wasn't going to be a classic or anything but if you have Sting and Jarrett doing a mostly straight match, it's going to be fine.

Instead of a match though, which is something the fans might be interested in based on how Russo's TV ratings died over the summer, the company did some insane spectacle that might have made sense to three people in the building. The story of Sting needing to show heart is fine and Sting is the kind of guy who can pull that off but instead we get this mess with everyone being confused and annoyed. How this benefits anyone is beyond me but at least I have a reason to hate this show even more now.

Stevie Ray doesn't help things here by talking about how Sting came up

short after fighting off all those odds. As in an army of Sting clones is the same as Jimmy Hart distracting a referee.

Booker T. is ready for Steiner.

We recap Steiner vs. Booker T., which is basically Steiner going insane and attacking Booker.

WCW World Title: Booker T. vs. Scott Steiner

Steiner is challenging after beating Goldberg last month. Booker comes out first and Tony talks about the World Title not being on last tonight. Before he comes out, Steiner chokes an agent for the title match not going on last. I can get behind that. Booker gets the fans clapping to start things off so Steiner backs him into the corner and gets in an elbow to the jaw. Booker's forearm sends Steiner out to the floor, allowing Scott to jump the barricade and yell at a fan.

Back in and Booker gets beaten down, only to come back with a clothesline for two. They head into the crowd because Steiner and Booker T. won't wrestle for some reason. Steiner throws Booker through the second announcers' table and chokes the referee for only counting to two. There's the top rope Samoan drop to set up some push-ups but Booker leapfrogs over Scott to take it back outside. That goes nowhere so Booker starts with the kicks, including a missile dropkick and ax kick for two each. It's time for the pipe though as Steiner beats down Booker and the referee, drawing the lame DQ.

Rating: D. The match wasn't even that good before the lame ending which made things even worse. We're 0-2 on the three main events and this was the best of them so far. There's an idea here with Steiner being too hot headed to win the title but it would have helped if they had done a good match before getting here. Booker's comeback was nice but they needed something better than this after all the other stuff they've done tonight.

Jeff Jarrett has to come out and help calm Steiner down.

We recap the main event which is basically Goldberg is dominant and

Kronik are big and strong. Go have a four minute match to wrap up this pay per view.

Goldberg vs. Kronik

Before the match (because giving it more time would be stupid), Adams says Goldberg is too hurt to wrestle so the referee needs to count. We cut to the back where the Wrestling Commission guys announce that Goldberg is cleared. Goldberg's music hits with six minutes left in the show and the bell rings with just over four to go. They brawl to the floor because this is nothing resembling a wrestling match. Kronik takes over but loads up a table, only to have Goldberg knock Adams away and spear Clark through the table for a pin. Adams gets two off a full nelson slam and it's the spear and Jackhammer to keep Goldberg around.

Rating: F. That's you main event people: Goldberg doing the same old thing he's done for over three years now over a team who was losing the titles to Vampiro and Great Muta a few months back. There's nothing to talk about here and the fact that this went on last due to some injury angle that started and ended in the same night sums up this horrible show.

Overall Rating: F. Oh yeah this failed and it failed bad. There's a good opening match where they let the wrestlers go out and do something fun but the rest is one failed idea after another. However, the key word there is idea and that's what keeps this show above some of Russo's disasters: you can see the thinking behind a lot of these matches. Notice that I said thinking behind and not that they actually worked.

That's the problem here: they were trying something in most of the matches and then each of those ideas came crashing down, mainly because the wrestlers just aren't all that good these days. I mean, Cat and Sanders are good talkers for WCW but it's really hard to watch them do something goofy when I can flip on Raw and watch Austin, Rock and Jericho talk to people and then tear the house down with almost anyone they get in the ring with.

WCW is in a bad place right now and so much of that is due to all the turmoil from the last few months. They're in a better place with some

storylines starting to make sense and some promising young talent but you can't come off one of the worst stretches in wrestling history and then bounce back to life like nothing ever happened. The fans, at least the ones that are left, aren't buying it and I can't blame them.

Look at the build for this show. WCW made it clear that this was going to be a three match card with everything else filling in the gaps. Goldberg vs. Kronik would have been lame as a Thunder main event and it closed the show. Booker vs. Steiner was the most acceptable of the three despite it being nothing more than sequel bait. The less said about Sting vs. Jarrett the better.

If I'm one of the few fans still watching and paying for WCW, why in the world am I going to keep going after this show, save for pure habit? Three big matches were promised and the best one under delivered. If that's the best they can do at this point then they can't close the doors fast enough. The worst part for me though is that this was somehow still better than a lot of what Russo had done earlier in the year. Those late summer and early fall shows really were that bad, though this was getting close to their level.

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Thunder – October 25, 2000: Goldberg Fell Down

Thunder

Date: October 25, 2000

Location: Alltel Arena, Little Rock, Arkansas

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Stevie Ray, Mike Tenay

It's the final show before Halloween Havoc and hopefully Sting vs. Jeff Jarrett gets a little more time this week. This show is now being taped after Monday Nitro so there's a chance that some of the guys might not be up to their usual speed. On top of that there's the chance that WCW could manage to put on a show full of errors that could defy all logic and intelligence. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

The opening video focuses on the three big matches at Halloween Havoc. They're building those up very well.

Hardcore Title: Reno vs. Kwee Wee

Reno is defending because this title is still a thing for reasons that I don't quite get. Kwee Wee brings out pink garbage cans. Where would you get one of those? They start slugging it out with the trashcan lids with the champ getting the better of it and dropping a knee onto the lid onto Kwee Wee's head. To sum up the value of the title, Stevie points out that Reno wasn't brought to Australia for the two week tour. Yeah a champion wasn't brought in for two weeks and I don't think anyone noticed he was gone.

Kwee Wee tries to load up a table but gets hit in the face with a trashcan for his efforts. Well that's what he deserves. They fight into the crowd but are quickly up to DJ Ran's booth. I feel like I'm back up in 1999's area. That goes nowhere so they come back to the ring where Paisley breaks up a Roll of the Dice. Not that it matters as Kwee Wee misses what looked like an elbow drop, setting up the Roll of the Dice to

retain the title.

Rating: D. What do you want me to say here? One uninteresting guy beat up a slightly interesting guy with a bunch of nothing weapons shots as the announcers talked about how no one missed the Hardcore Champion being gone for over two weeks. This division needs to die in a hurry because it's so uninteresting by now.

Post match Paisley gets a Roll of the Dice until AWOL (challenging for the title at the pay per view) comes out for the save.

Buff Bagwell insists that he and Stacy Keibler are just friends. He's the stuff though.

Here are the Thrillers, minus Stasiak, with something to say. Problem #1 with the Thrillers: they're picking Shawn Stasiak to turn face out of all the options they have. Nash calls the Thrillers the future and wants Stasiak out here right now. Shawn does as he's told and says that Nash is like Bobby Knight, making him at least the second and probably twentieth person to make that comparison. Nash isn't going to tolerate this and says that Shawn needs to assume the position for a cricket bat spanking. For some reason Stasiak does as he's told again but Palumbo blocks the bat from connecting...and that's that. Ok then.

Buff Bagwell vs. MI Smooth

Smooth is still a thing? Buff poses a lot to start so Smooth kicks him in the ribs. Now why has no one else ever thought to do that? Well apparently Buff has because Smooth makes the mistake of posing and gets kicked in the ribs as well. They keep up their slow offense with Buff avoiding a splash in the corner and hitting the double arm DDT. A Blockbuster puts Smooth away in a hurry.

David Flair comes in to go after Buff's blood but eats a DDT.

Here's the Cat with Miss Jones to challenge Mike Sanders to a mixed tag. "You can bring a woman or put one of the Thrillers in drag." Well they've been humiliated enough times otherwise so why not. Sanders brings out Leia Meow and tells her she can either wrestle or lose her job.

The Cat/Ms. Jones vs. Mike Sanders/Leia Meow

The guys get things going and Cat kicks Sanders right in the face to knock him outside, meaning it's already off to the women. To be fair, they're more interesting than anything the men were going to do. Meow is annoyed at Mike though and rides him around while Cat puts a cup over Sanders' face. Mike gets up for a sunset flip, earning him a shot to the face and a double pin from the women. This would be another match where they tried to be funny and failed about as hard as they could have.

Booker T. and Sting are ready for their six man tag tonight.

The big interview this week is with Goldberg, who spends a good deal of time sucking up to the Australian fans before moving on to talk about the Streak and Starrcade 1998. That brings us back to the new Streak and Goldberg knows how he's going to beat Kronik. Of course he won't tell us how he's going to do that because he'd rather tell us how he regrets beating up David Flair, though it had to be done. Praise for everyone who has gotten him here and a plug for his book ends this mostly worthless interview.

Big Vito vs. Vampiro

This could be fun. They actually go to the mat to start with Vampiro getting the better of it (that's not surprising) before just stopping to stare at the crowd. Vito doesn't attack because he's not an MI Smooth fan, meaning it's time for a slugout with Vito getting the better of it (of course).

They head outside with Vito sending him into the barricade before dropping the top rope headbutt for two. It wasn't quite a swan but maybe an ostrich with a bad limp. The top rope elbow gets the same and it's off to a sleeper of all things. You don't often see that on a heel. Vampiro fights out (because it was a sleeper) and gets in a spinwheel kick for two of his own. A legdrop gets the same for Vito but his top rope splash hits knees. The Nail in the Coffin puts Vito away.

Rating: C. Fine enough but Vito has fallen through the floor since Russo left. Vampiro was fine but he better lose to Awesome on Sunday if Awesome

is getting a World Title match the next night on Nitro. Vito is fine in this jobbing role but right now they need new names. To be fair though, was anyone thinking that it was going to be Vito?

Lance Storm/Elix Skipper vs. Corporal Cajun/Lieutenant Loco

Storm is still ticked off about the parody which wasn't very funny in the first place. Cajun starts with Storm and hits a reverse White Noise for no cover as Storm is right back up. Well so much for that. It's off to Skipper who eats a clothesline, only to have Storm enziguri him from the apron.

Tenay's big news of the match: Elix Skipper DID NOT play in the Canadian Football League. Remember when Mike did a five or six part documentary series on lucha libre? Now this is what we're stuck with instead. A quick X Factor gets Cajun out of trouble and it's a double tag to bring in Storm and Loco. Everything breaks down and Duggan has to be taken out by Rection and AWOL. Gunns accidentally hits Loco with the Canadian flag but Loco rolls through for a pin on Storm anyway.

Rating: D+. There were some decent spots in there but I'm so sick of seeing these teams fight. I can't believe that The Gunns thing is even an issue anymore as they stopped trying to make her Canadian (and to make the male fans drool over her) a long time ago. Storm has lost almost all of his momentum, though a lot of that is due to fighting a guy named General Rection.

Jeff Jarrett and Kronik say they'll win tonight.

Halloween Havoc video.

Disco Inferno vs. Rey Mysterio Jr. vs. Sean O'Haire

Same idea as Monday and there's nothing wrong with that. O'Haire takes over with some big right hands before both smaller guys get in shots to the head through the ropes. Disco trips and pulls Sean to the floor for some posting before dropping Rey with a bulldog. Rey's moonsault is caught in midair for a powerslam, only to have Disco get in a shot to take over again.

Disco can't launch Rey high enough for a hurricanrana but it looks enough like a dropkick to work. Rey takes Disco to the floor with a hurricanrana as the partners start fighting outside. Kidman climbs the post to bulldog Disco but Rey dives on Jindrak instead of covering. Back inside and it's Sean with the springboard Seanton Bomb on Disco for the pin.

Rating: C. This wasn't as fun as the match on Monday but that's due to having inferior talent here. I'm liking the idea of splitting up the triple threat tag match into two triple threat singles matches as it gives you something to keep the build going while not having any team actually lose. It's almost like whoever is running this show has a better idea of how wrestling works without needing to use a lead pipe or whatever brilliant idea the writers have thought of this week.

Jeff Jarrett/Kronik vs. Goldberg/Booker T./Sting

Makes as much sense as any other main event they could put on. Jeff talks some basic trash before the match. Booker's comeback is to tell Jeff to shut up because he isn't the best talker in the world. Booker and Jarrett get things going with a couple of kicks putting the champion in early control. Goldberg comes in and gets to face Adams as Mike says the Streak can be broken if Goldberg gets pinned here. I can go with that.

A single right hand puts Adams down so it's off to Sting vs. Clark with the painted one avoiding a knee in the corner. There's a very early Deathlock but Adams makes a save. It's already back to Booker who scores with a spinning forearm, only to eat a DDT. Jarrett comes in but takes a swinging neckbreaker to put both guys on the mat.

Booker is smart enough to tag in Goldberg and Sting at the same time as everything breaks down. Goldberg's spear hits the post but he easily kicks out of Clark's cover. High Times plants Goldberg but Sting comes in with a low blow. Seriously? That's our hero? Scott Steiner comes out to go after Booker, allowing Sting to hit the Death Drop on Jarrett for the pin.

Rating: C-. Not bad here with the pace being kept up throughout and an actually clean(ish) pin. I'm not sure on having Sting pin Jarrett this close to a pay per view but you take what you can get where you can get

it. At least Goldberg didn't get to kick out of High Times just yet, though you know he's going to no sell the thing on Sunday.

Post match Steiner hits Booker with the pipe, allowing the heels to destroy their upcoming opponents to end the show.

Overall Rating: D. This could have been a lot worse but they're doing a miserable job of setting up Halloween Havoc. Even after watching this show, I'm still not sure what the majority of the card is supposed to be or why I'm supposed to care. The three main events are fine enough but there's a firm limit on how far those things can carry a show with a DNA match (whatever that is) on the card as well.

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Monday Nitro – October 23, 2000: Your #1 Contender

Monday Nitro #263

Date: October 23, 2000

Location: Alltel Arena, Little Rock, Arkansas

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Stevie Ray, Mark Madden

We're stateside again and it's the go home show for Halloween Havoc which actually has a pretty solid looking card. Of course I don't expect WCW to actually make that work but at least the build hasn't been the worst. Unfortunately you never can tell what the final push for something like this is going to be. Let's get to it.

We open with a montage of events from Australia.

Opening sequence.

Perfect Event vs. Harris Brothers

Kevin Nash is on commentary. Stasiak slugs away at Don to start and stomps away in the corner. The announcers are stunned that he's doing anything right so Don clotheslines Shawn down to take over. Palumbo comes in and gets beaten down as well, only to run the corners to dropkick Don off the apron. At least that looked good. An ankle scissors out of the corner looks good as well but Palumbo gets in an argument with Stasiak so Shawn drops to the floor. The H Bomb ends Palumbo in a hurry.

Post match Nash gets in the ring so Stasiak gets in his face, only to have Nash drive him into the corner. No punches are thrown but Nash takes his hat off and gives Stasiak a serious look. Stasiak leaves so Nash gets on commentary again to promise tough love.

Mike Sanders is ready for his kickboxing match on Sunday and has a three round exhibition set up for tonight. This could go so many bad ways I don't even know how to laugh at it.

Gene brings out Booker T. for a chat. Booker knows that people think he's crazy but he's out doing this for his fans and his family every single night. When he came down the ramp tonight, it was like a light bulb went off over his head because this is what it's all about. Booker doesn't think much of Scott Steiner and just like everyone else, Scott is going to have to kill him to take this title. Steiner better be ready to take a beating because Booker is going to have all these fans in his corner.

Cue Steiner and Midajah, hopefully to breathe some life into this thing. Steiner talks about Ebonics and welfare before saying Booker is only

holding the title until Scott knocks him out. The brawl is on in the aisle but Jeff Jarrett jumps Booker from behind to put the champ down. There go the lights and it's Sting with the save, probably setting up a main event. The locker room comes out to break it up, which always feels better than referees and goons. Awesome and Steiner point at each other a lot to tease something for later. This started slow but the pull apart brawl helped it a lot.

Post break, Steiner says he wants Awesome tonight and makes sheep noises.

Here's Sanders in head gear for his kickboxing exhibition but first he says that he's from Badstreet USA. The further down you go the worse it gets and he lives in the last house on the left. Thankfully the announcers are all over the Freebirds ripoff as the opponents are revealed as the Jung Dragons.

Before the match, Sanders puts something on his gloves before Jamie-San starts it like a wrestling match. A shot to the eyes blinds Jamie and a right hand is enough for the knockout. The same thing happens to Yang but Kaz gets in a few good shots, including sending Mike into the buckles a few times. That earns Kaz a shot to the eyes as well, setting up a kick for the third knockout. Leia Meow comes in for a low blow but Mike is wearing a cup. Sanders threatens her with the cup but here's Ms. Jones to interrupt, allowing Cat to sneak in to KO Sanders. I'm not calling it a match but total waste of TV time.

Here's Kronik to say that this thing with Goldberg started as business but now it's personal. Goldberg may want the money but they've got a lot more to prove. If Goldberg wins, he beats two monsters and looks awesome. That's not happening though because that's not how it works in the real world. We're not done yet though as Kronik has some new clients in 3 Count. Apparently they've hired Kronik to make sure no one interrupts their performance tonight. Clark doesn't want to hear the music though so it's time for a match.

Kronik vs. 3 Count

Well by match I mean a squash lasting 56 seconds before High Times puts Evan away.

Nash has a test for Stasiak tonight. In addition to that, Nash isn't in a good mood tonight because Scott Hall received his walking papers last week. This Outsiders gimmick isn't a work though so they'll run again.

Here are the Misfits in Action dressed as Team Canada for the parody promo. Loco is the former 100 Ounces and Under Champion, AWOL, with his ten foot board, is Jigsaw Jim Jughead (Did the Clowns give him nickname lessons?) and Cajun makes a lot of lame Canada jokes, all of them capped off with an "eh?". Loco goes on about being Wine Time and implies he was the water boy in the Canadian Football League. Rection finally ends this and says he's taking the title and they're taking Major Gunns back because that story is STILL going.

That 70s Guy hits on Pamela and would be glad to face Steiner tonight. Just let him be the monster that he's perfect as instead of this goof. Thankfully he gets serious and promises to give Steiner a beating before he wins the title next week.

Here are Nash and the Thrillers with Kevin talking about the Outsiders again. They were a real team but Stasiak needs to learn the concept.

Goldberg vs. Shawn Stasiak

This is the test and it's over in 40 seconds. We're three matches in and have seen less than five minutes of wrestling.

Goldberg says he'll take care of Kronik on Sunday.

Filthy Animals vs. Boogie Knights vs. O'Haire/Jindrak is official for Sunday. That could be good if they don't make the champions look horrible again.

Billy Kidman vs. Alex Wright vs. Mark Jindrak

Before the match, Disco promises that he and Alex are launching an official investigation into finding out who let the dogs out. See, there are a lot of drunk drivers in Little Rock and Disco wants the dogs to be safe. Jindrak gets double teamed to start as Stevie picks Alex to win this. A German suplex gets two on Mark with Kidman making the save. That earns Kidman a torture rack neckbreaker but Alex dropkicks Mark for two

more. Everything breaks down on the floor and Kidman gets launched into the ring and he grabs the Kid Crusher to put Alex away in another way too short match.

It's a big brawl post match with the Animals clearing out the ring.

Crowbar, again in the 70s gear, hits on Pamela until Jimmy Hart comes in to say Crowbar has a match.

The announcers talk about the pay per view.

Video on David Flair going insane trying to find out who fathered Stacy Keibler's baby.

Video on Sunday's three big matches.

Vampiro vs. Crowbar

For some reason Vampiro has nunchucks and takes over very quickly with some hard shots. A hard whip into the barricade cuts off Crowbar's comeback because the shots with a deadly weapon didn't do enough damage. They get inside for the first time and chop it out as Madden calls Vampiro an angry Count Chockula. Crowbar comes back and sends Vampiro to the floor for the apron splash. With nothing else working, Crowbar drives his fingers into Vampiro's eyes. Madden: "He's not a bowling ball!"

Some good looking right hands knock Vampiro into the barricade and Crowbar drives him HARD into the steps. Vampiro actually suckers him in to take over again as the announcers try to figure out why this match is taking place. It's very telling that the idea of "they're fighting because the company put together a show instead of some authority figure" is unthinkable. Back in and Vampiro sends him flying with something like a belly to belly superplex to give the fans a sends of genuine excitement.

Crowbar starts no selling chair shots and pelts the chair at Vampiro to break up something off the ropes. Vampiro kicks the chair into Crowbar's face for two but Crowbar crotches him off the ropes, setting up a slingshot flip legdrop onto the chair. They fight over to the DJ Ran booth (I'll give you a minute to take in the fact that DJ Ran is still a

thing in October 2000) where two druids set up a pair of tables. Crowbar fights off the druids but gets chokeslammed through the tables (Tony: "As only a vampire can!") for the knockout win.

Rating: B+. This was a heck of a fight as these guys just beat the heck out of each other for nearly ten minutes. If there's a better hidden gem in WCW than Crowbar I have no idea who he is because Crowbar continues to be awesome every time he's in the ring. I had a really good time with this as they were giving it everything they had instead of doing anything resembling a match. On a side note, it's really sad to get excited over a match nearly breaking ten minutes but it's so rare for TV these days.

Post match Vampiro says this is all on Mike Awesome, who put him out two months ago. Vampiro wants to fight Mike this Sunday because that's what Vampiro does best. Vampiro: "Be there or be square."

Crowbar gets stretchered out.

Konnan vs. Shane Douglas

Actually hang on because Shane has a bad arm. Torrie has been a nervous, medicated wreck all week because her man can't take care of her. Konnan offers her a facial and I'm going to hope you don't know what that can mean. For some reason Shane keeps calling him Carlos but Konnan says he's heard it's a legitimate injury so they won't fight.

Shane jumps him anyway but gets taken down onto the arm. Konnan slaps on a freaky submission where he wraps his leg around Shane's head and cranks on the arm which is quickly released for no logical reason. The bad arm is sent into the steps, only to have Torrie slip in a chain. A left hand and the Franchiser put Konnan away quick to make sure that he looks even more worthless.

Scott Steiner vs. Mike Awesome

During the entrances, Tony offers his condolences on the passing of Yokozuna. However, Steiner cuts off the feelings by bringing out A TIGER. As in the tiger comes down to ringside and then leaves about five seconds later. I have no idea why that happened but it certainly got my

attention. Booker comes out as a surprise commentator, or as much of a surprise as you can be while your video plays over Awesome's music. Awesome takes over to start and gets two off a slingshot splash.

The Awesome Splash gets the same as Booker talks about wanting to face Mike next week. Midajah, in her five inch heels, comes in and kicks Awesome over the top. Back in and a suplex (not a fall away slam Tony) allows Steiner to do some pushups. Mike breaks up a superplex attempt and gets two off a top rope clothesline. The Awesome Bomb is loaded up but Midajah grabs the boot, allowing Steiner to get in a pipe shot. A top rope Angle Slam sets up the Recliner to put Awesome away. There's your #1 contender people.

Rating: D+. This is a case of the horrible booking overtaking the decent action. Of all the people they have in this company they had to job the guy who is getting a guaranteed World Title match in a week? There was NO ONE else around? Like, Sting for instance? He and Jarrett didn't get any real focus tonight so why not have Jarrett do the distraction so Steiner can beat him and set up two things at once? Too logical I guess but it would have been better than Awesome losing here.

Booker looks a little scared to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. You really can feel the lack of Russo's influence around this time as you can understand the stories throughout the show and even get some decent action in there. Unfortunately you also get five matches that add up to about nine minutes of wrestling. There comes a point where you just need some good wrestling and I really can't imagine that's going to be the case at the pay per view. They're on the right track but they need a lot of effort to make this whole thing work again.

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Thunder – October 18, 2000: The WCW Rumble

Thunder

Date: October 18, 2000

Location: Rod Laver Arena, Melbourne, Australia

Commentators: Stevie Ray, Mike Tenay, Tony Schiavone

We'll wrap up the Australian tour with one of wrestling's best traditions: a battle royal for a future title shot. In this case it's all for the #1 contendership with the title shot coming on the Nitro after Halloween Havoc. These overseas shows have been hit or miss so it should be interesting to see how this one goes. Let's get to it.

We see Sam Greco working out like any martial arts wrestler (in theory) does. He'll be interviewed later.

Rey Mysterio vs. Mike Sanders

Before the match, Sanders praises Nash and the Thrillers but makes sure not to swear in the process. I can get behind that theory. This is going to be a non-title match so here's Cat to make it No DQ as well. You know, because Rey Mysterio can get so violent and this will in no way allow interference by any of Sanders' cronies.

Cat sits in on commentary as Mysterio takes over to start, which is made even better when Sanders lays on the middle rope for a legdrop. As in he walked over there and got into position for the move with no provocation so Rey could drop a leg on him. A top rope splash gives Rey two and now

let's look at the announcers cracking each other up. Rey bulldogs him down as this is pretty much the last thing you want to do to a champion. Then again O'Haire and Jindrak have been treated like goons for weeks and still have the belts so maybe Sanders is on to something here.

The Bronco Buster connects but Rey gets crotched on the top. Shouldn't that have a similar impact? Sanders yells at Cat for some reason, allowing Rey to come back with a guillotine legdrop for two. A victory roll a few seconds later is enough to put Sanders away. No idea why this needed to be No DQ.

Rating: D+. Some of Rey's high spots were good but this did more harm than good. Why WCW feels the need to have their young champions lose over and over is beyond me but that's what we're going to be seeing for the time being because Heaven forbid someone actually get over around here.

Shane Douglas promises to win the battle royal tonight. I wouldn't bet on that one chum.

Video on Kronik vs. Goldberg.

Kronik jumps Goldberg from behind, possibly taking him out of the battle royal later. Smart move if nothing else.

Shane Douglas vs. Big Vito

Vito sucks up to the fans and wants to get his hands on Reno. You might try Nevada instead of Australia then. They circle each other to start until Vito gives him an atomic drop for a comedic sell job. Another atomic drop takes us to the floor and Shane gets backdropped outside for good measure. Vito hits a quick suplex and drops a headbutt for one, followed by his always good looking top rope elbow for double that. That means it's chain time but a shot to Vito's head only sets up the Pittsburgh Plunge for two. Not that it matters as the Franchiser ends Vito a few seconds later.

Rating: D. This was what you would expect: take someone who was hot a few years back and put them over someone you've been pushing lately because of whatever reason they have at the moment. Oh and make sure that the guy

challenging for the Hardcore Title soon after this loses as soon as weapons get involved.

Goldberg beats up Ron Harris for no apparent reason.

Mike Awesome and Crowbar are ready for the battle royal tonight.

Boogie Knights vs. Harris Twins

This could be...well it's going to be something for sure. After the Knights do some catchphrases, only Don comes out for some reason. The actual team takes over with a nice missile dropkick but Wright charges into a Rock Bottom. Cue Ron for a sidewalk slam on Disco...and an elbow to the Duck. Disco gets dropped face first onto the mat to send him outside where he finds ANOTHER Duck. A Duck shot to Ron sets up a high cross body to give Disco the pin.

Rating: D. I'm not sure what the point of this one was but it really didn't work. I get the Goldberg stuff earlier in the night but the Boogie Knights vs. one of the Harris Twins really isn't the way to get the crowd into a show. The Knights are actually a decent team though and that's all they need to be since they aren't likely to get near the titles anytime soon.

Team Canada promises to end General Rection's career at Halloween Havoc. An argument breaks out over who deserves the World Title shot.

Video on Steiner vs. Booker T.

Scott Steiner invites Pamela Paulshock to join him later tonight. At least he has good taste.

Elix Skipper comes out to run his mouth about how awesome he is until someone sneaks up on him.

Goldberg vs. Elix Skipper

A gorilla press into a World's Strongest Slam sets up the two moves and we're done in a little over a minutes.

Post match Goldberg says that's 11-0 and he's coming for Kronik. As usual

I'll remind you: other than YOU'RE NEXT, Goldberg shouldn't be talking.

As he's done for weeks now, Jeff Jarrett says Sting is soft.

Jeff Jarrett/Scott Steiner vs. Kidman/Konnan

Steiner throws Kidman around like the cruiserweight jobber he is now and we're already on the signature stuff. The gorilla press sets up the push-ups, followed by a quick stomping in the corner. Kidman gets in a quick dropkick before Konnan comes in with the rolling clothesline. It's off to Kidman vs. Jarrett with the Sky High planting Jeff for two, only to have Torrie come out and kidnap Tygress. The top rope Angle Slam sets up the Recliner to put Kidman away in a hurry.

Rating: D. So much for Kidman meaning much around here anymore. Why bother keeping him strong when you can have Steiner and Jarrett beat up the Filthy Animals for fun? This was your usual squashing of two midcarders who could go somewhere in WCW but instead they get beaten down for the sake of Jeff Jarrett and Scott Steiner, the latter of whom is already #1 contender.

Goldberg is still here.

Ric Flair arrives.

Booker and Sting want the Tag Team Titles. For reasons that aren't clear, Booker is in the battle royal tonight.

It's time for the interview with Sam Greco who is officially part of WCW. He's ready to be aggressive in the ring and is already friends with Goldberg. Tony asks about being a martial artist like the Cat but Greco would rather focus on wrestling in the ring. Greco talks about being a Rocky movie with a Goldberg intensity. We wrap it up with Greco saying he'll be bringing intensity to the table three or four times. From what I can find, Greco only wrestled three times with all three matches in Japan and the first being in November 2002.

The Thrillers sing a little Backstreet Boys. Sanders is told to make sure the team keeps the titles tonight.

Video on Jarrett vs. Sting.

Tag Team Titles: Booker T./Sting vs. Mark Jindrak/Sean O'Haire

Booker and Sting are challenging. Sting and O'Haire get things going with the champions taking over early on until Jindrak comes in to send Sting outside. In a ridiculous power display, the champs throw Sting over the top and back inside. For some reason Madden asks if the Funk Brothers are up and coming contenders. Sting elbows them both out of the corner and the hot tag brings in Booker to clean house. The ax and side kicks get two on Sean and it's a double finisher, only to have Mike Sanders come in and jump the referee for the DQ. After the champions were knocked out in less than three minutes of course.

Sting and Booker pose as Tony says the fans deserved a better match than that. Well yeah.

This Week in WCW Motorsports was very bad as the car didn't qualify for the race.

Kronik vs. Perfect Event

Clark doesn't waste any time and dives off the apron to take Palumbo out, leaving Stasiak alone for a bit. The power guys beat on him like he's the weak link of the Thrillers, which is the way the announcers are presenting him for whatever reason. I mean, ignore the team that loses all the time when you can make fun of Stasiak right? The full nelson slam causes Stasiak to kick Palumbo in the face, setting up High Times for the pin on Chuck.

Post match here's Goldberg but he gets chaired down, followed by High Times.

Here's Ric Flair to be interviewed by Mark Madden. Ric talks about the fans being amazing in the best country in the world because the women here are amazing. However, he's here to bring his son home. Cue David in a white coat and Ric gets right to the point: they can have all the women they want for the next thirty days if he'll come home. David says no so Ric leaves, causing Madden to yell at David, basically erasing all the

times that he ripped on Ric months ago. With Mark yelling, David tries to give him a blood test.

Halloween Havoc video.

Countdown to Armageddon

This is basically a Royal Rumble allegedly with two minute intervals. Mike Sanders and the Cat start things off and yeah they're not even trying to hide the fake randomness. They slug it out to start with Cat getting in an elbow and a kick because what else was he going to hit? Shawn Stasiak is in at #3 and it's time for the run of the mill team beating on a single guy.

Chuck Palumbo is in at #4 and the intervals are more like thirty to forty seconds. The three on one beatdown continues until it's Disco Inferno in at #5. Disco is smart enough to hang back while everyone beats on Cat until Alex Wright comes in at #6 because RANDOM. It's rather amusing to hear Tony try to push this as a random draw which WWE was nice enough to drop years ago. Crowbar, minus the 70s stuff, is in at #7. Naturally this turns into a debate about whether or not it's bad to work at a service station.

Ron Harris is in at #8 as these intervals are getting shorter and shorter. Don Harris is in at #9 as the ring is way too full. Jim Duggan is in at #10 as there's barely time to write out who is entering before Penzer starts the next countdown. Duggan slugs away for a bit and it's Lieutenant Loco in at #11. Kevin Nash is in at #12 and we take a break to come back with Nash just getting in the ring to get rid of Duggan, Loco, Sanders and Cat in just a few seconds. The Boogie Knights get rid of Crowbar but get dumped by Nash as David Flair is in at #13.

Perfect Event gets rid of the Harris Twins but get in a fight, allowing Stasiak to hit a horrible right hand to get rid of Palumbo. Stasiak jumps out to avoid facing Nash, who dumps David a few seconds later. Corporal Cajun is in at #14 and eliminated fifteen seconds later, leaving Nash alone. Kwee Wee is in at #15 and is eliminated even faster than Cajun. At least we don't have to sit around in the meantime.

Rey Mysterio is in at #16 and actually puts Nash down with a springboard missile dropkick. Mysterio escapes a Jackknife and here's Booker T., as in the World Champion in a match for the #1 contendership, in at #17. That goes nowhere so here's Mike Awesome at #18. Sting is in at #19 as we're getting some interesting names in there but the short intervals are making it really hard to care. Everyone goes after Nash, which Madden says is like an old kung fu movie. Nash gets dumped as Jeff Jarrett comes in at #20, though Scott Steiner comes in as well. We'll call that #21.

Sting Cactus Clotheslines Jeff out for the double elimination (with Steiner leaving as well) and it's Kidman in at #22. Awesome dumps Booker off camera (oh come on), leaving us with Awesome, Kidman and Mysterio. Lance Storm is in at #23 and nothing happens until Big Vito is in at #24. Sean O'Haire is in at #25 as the announcers can't remember what number we're on.

Mark Jindrak is in at #26 as they aren't even hiding the random stuff here. Konnan is in at #27 as the mindless brawling continues. Kronik, as in both members, come in at #28 and Adams gets rid of Kidman in a hurry. Rey and Konnan go out as well, followed by Storm and Vito. The intervals have stopped and Adams hits the ugliest piledriver I've ever seen to thankfully not cripple Awesome.

That's not enough to get rid of him though so here's Goldberg, apparently not an entrant because he can't get a title shot (but the WORLD CHAMPION can). Jindrak and O'Haire are put out and Clark quickly follows. Adams tries to bring in a chair but gets speared, setting up a double clothesline from Awesome and Goldberg to give Mike the win, thereby confusing the fans since Goldberg is still in the ring as Awesome is announced as the winner.

Rating: C. Some really questionable moments aside, this was actually pretty enjoyable. I kind of liked the hyper intervals as it kept the match from dragging because people like Jindrak, Loco and Kwee Wee certainly aren't getting a title shot so why pretend they will? Awesome winning is a nice surprise, even though the 70s music playing to end the show really made it feel silly. It's good to see someone fresh in the main event instead of having the same five or six guys get title shot

after title shot. This was as good as it was going to be and they managed to avoid most of the stupid battle royal tropes so call it a nice surprise.

Overall Rating: D+. The big main event helped but the rest of the show still had so many of the same problems that regularly plague WCW. As is so often the case, the World Title is the only thing that matters, assuming you have any reason to care about it after all the damage it's taken over the last year. Not a terrible show but still bad enough to fit the WCW mold to a tee.

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Thunder – October 11, 2000: I Don't Want To Jump Off A Cliff

Thunder

Date: October 11, 2000

Location: Entertainment Centre, Brisbane, Australia

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Tony Schiavone, Stevie Ray

We're still down in Australia for a show that was taped right after Nitro. Monday's show was an improvement but it's hard to say how well that's going to carry over because this company has the consistency of a broken roller coaster. Halloween Havoc is in a few weeks and most of the card is already set though so let's get to it.

Scott Steiner and Jeff Jarrett yell at Shawn Stasiak, telling him to tell Sanders that Steiner wants Booker tonight. Of all the people you could tell this to, you pick Shawn Stasiak?

Shane Douglas/Lance Storm vs. Konnan/General Rection

Fallout from the Down Underwear match on Monday. Before the match, Douglas and Torrie rip on the Australians for being wannabe Americans. O Canada is interrupted by the Misfits theme, which is quite the downgrade. The good guys rush the ring and clean house before we get going. Douglas and Konnan slug it out in the corner to start but Storm sneaks in with a blind tag, setting up a springboard cross body to drop Konnan in a nice move.

The heels take turns on Konnan with Shane nailing a nice basement dropkick. You would have thought Storm would use that spot. Gunns offers a quick trip though and a double clothesline puts Storm and Konnan down. We get a good looking catfight as Rection comes in off the hot tag. Rection's top rope elbow gets two on Storm with Shane using a reverse Hennig necksnap for the save. Cue Kidman for a Kid Crusher to Shane, setting up No Laughing Matter for the pin.

Rating: C. Storyline advancement, Kidman, a three way catfight and some good looking stuff from Storm and Douglas. What more can you ask for from a short tag match between two midcard storylines? If I didn't know any better, I'd think WCW was actually being booked somewhat well.

Mike Sanders is singing Tie Me Kangaroo Down Sport (obviously an Outback Jack fan) when Stasiak comes in to explain Steiner's demands. Booker gets a non-title match tonight (not necessarily against Steiner) and a quick argument breaks out over a stuffed kangaroo.

Here's the Cat to talk to Australian martial arts champion Sam Greco. Sam

admits that most people don't know who he is but he'll fight anyone that WCW puts in front of him. Cue the Thrillers, with Sanders saying Cat can't hire anyone. Cat: "I hired your mom last night." Sanders is annoyed so Cat gives him Stevie Ray tonight, which forces him to make Cat vs. Kevin Nash. We're still not done yet though as Cat changes the match to Sanders vs. Sting. Greco kicks Sanders down and that's supposed to be his big introduction. Tank Abbott he is not.

Jindrak and O'Haire don't have much to say to Sanders.

Tag Team Titles: Sean O'Haire/Mark Jindrak vs. Lieutenant Loco/Corporal Cajun

Jindrak and O'Haire are defending and start beating up the much smaller guys in a hurry. Loco is thrown across the ring and clotheslined down. The Misfits come right back with DDT's, only to have Sean plant Loco with a tilt-a-whirl slam. The hurricanrana into the Seanton gets two with Chavo making the save, setting up a Frog splash for two on Sean. Leroux grabs a hurricanrana of his own for the very quick pin on Jindrak for the titles in a big surprise.

Rating: C. They kept this one moving fast in the smartest move of the night as Chavo and Leroux are only so interesting even when they're at their highest speed. O'Haire and Jindrak are a good, young team and it's really no surprise that they lose in a nothing match like this to a low level team.

Not so fast though as Sanders comes out and says the rematch is RIGHT NOW.

Tag Team Titles: Lieutenant Loco/Corporal Cajun vs. Sean O'Haire/Mark Jindrak

A quick double rollup gets two on the new champs and Sean superkicks Chavo. Lash dives back in with a high cross body for two, followed by a botched sunset flip for the same. All four stay in the ring and we get an awkward sequence where Sean brings in a belt but watches Jindrak get sunset flipped again for two more before hitting Lash in the head to turn a hurricanrana into a powerbomb. That's still not it though as Chavo

makes the save but gets knocked out, setting up the Seanton for the pin to give the Thrillers the titles back. Too short to rate but as usual the title change doesn't mean much.

AWOL comes out to fight the champs.

Elix Skipper brags about being an Olympian and wants Kidman later tonight.

Kronik vs. Booker T.

Non-title. Before the match Booker doe some good sucking up to the fans. Well what else is a face champion supposed to do? The beatdown is on in a hurry with Kronik beating Booker down like he's any given jobber. It's not like titles mean anything anyway right? The full nelson slam looks to set up High Times but here's Goldberg through the crowd to spear Clark. Adams almost gets a full nelson slam on Goldberg but eats a superkick from Booker as the match is thrown out. Well that was pointless.

Chuck Palumbo is on the phone with someone who might be his mom and asks for advice against Goldberg.

Johnny the Bull tells an arriving Nash that Sanders is having problems but Nash doesn't seem worried.

Kidman vs. Elix Skipper

This could be fun and Duggan is with Skipper. Kidman pounds away to start and dives onto Duggan with a nice plancha. Back in and Kidman misses a quick splash, allowing Skipper to stomp away. We get some CANADA SUCKS chants as Skipper misses a top rope elbow (drawing a Macho Man reference from Madden).

The Bodog gets two for Kidman and a quick BK Bomb gets the same. Kidman gets crotched and Skipper rope walks into a hurricanrana for a cool looking yet mostly screwed up spot. Not that it matters as Duggan gets in a board shot, setting up the Play of the Week (Wasn't it Play of the Day last time?) for the pin.

Rating: C-. I was expecting more here but they're doing a good job of building Skipper up as a player in the division. This makes him 1-1 against Mysterio and Kidman which is a lot better than a lot of people do. Just like so many cares before him though, it's likely that he winds up doing nothing because the Cruiserweight Title is stuck in an angle instead of a feud but at least he isn't being wasted.

Palumbo confirms that he was indeed talking to his mom but lets it slip that she told him to run. WHY ARE YOU TREATING THE THRILLERS LIKE WORTHLESS COWARDS??? WCW spent all this time and effort to bring these guys up (years after they should have) and it's another excuse to waste them while making the old guys look strong. Yeah they've gotten the midcard titles that almost everyone has won over the years and haven't done anything for anyone but since it's WCW they do the same things over and over and over again and then wonder why it doesn't go anywhere.

It's time for an Australian Lava Lamp Lounge because this gimmick WILL get over no matter how dead it is. At least the set is a bit more festive this week with the Australian décor. Tonight's guests are Kwee Wee (not Kiwi Mike, though it would be easier to type) and Paisley and Mike gets right to hitting on her. Kwee Wee talks about training with the Thrillers and yells at Mike for the Paisley stuff, only to have the Thrillers and Harris Brothers come out for the weekly attack. Another week with the same stuff because WCW wants to make Mike Awesome look as stupid and worthless as possible.

Sanders tells Nash about his match with Sting tonight. So Nash wasn't watching the show either?

Goldberg vs. Chuck Palumbo

After the long entrance, Palumbo (looking very serious in yellow) tries a cheap shot with as much success as you would expect. Stasiak gets in a shot from the apron but Goldberg no sells a top rope shoulder. A spear drops both guys and Goldberg Jackhammers both of them for back to back pins, making the new streak 7-0. To be fair they had to do something to make this new one get higher in a hurry and this is as good as they can get.

Halloween Havoc video.

Sting vs. Mike Sanders

Non-title of course. Jarrett comes out dressed as Surfer Sting (again to Metallica) and points the bat at Sanders. Jeff talks about having no heart anymore and lays down, drawing out the real Sting to clean house. A Stinger Splash misses though and Sanders gets in a few bat shots followed by a dancing DiBiase falling punch. We hit a cobra clutch of all things until Sting makes the obvious comeback with three Stinger Splashes and a Death Drop for the easy pin. Good thing those baseball bat shots didn't have too much effect.

Post break Sanders yells at the Thrillers, even though he should be yelling at Jarrett for bailing so early. Then again, heels aren't supposed to make sense.

Harris Twins vs. Mike Awesome/Crowbar

Awesome gets beaten down by the Twins to start as the referee continues to not care about doing his job. Crowbar dropkicks both Twins out to the floor and the thrown together 70s team (the fact that Crowbar was one of the roster's hidden gems for so long and gets this as a reward sums up a lot of WCW's problems) getting the better of it early on.

Crowbar tries to speed things up a bit too much though until he charges into a Rock Bottom as everything breaks down. A nice wheelbarrow suplex (always liked that move) drops Ron but it's already table time. I'm not sure if I'd rather have a table involved or watch the Harris Brothers try to have a regular match. The table is set in the corner but Awesome counters a powerbomb with a backdrop to drive Ron through for the pin.

Rating: C-. The action was faster paced here but the important thing is the Twins losing. I know it isn't going to mean anything long term but at least a team of two talented guys who work hard got a win over one of the least interesting acts in the company. Maybe that's just dumb luck or maybe it's Russo being gone. Either way, at least it was the right call.

Rey Mysterio vs. Scott Steiner

We get a few rhymes from Steiner about how awesome he is with the ladies. For some reason Stevie says that watching BET at night doesn't mean you're going to win. Tony: "Tygress, you got it girl." Steiner knees Rey in the ribs to start and we're already in squash mode. If it's good enough for the Jung Dragons, squashing Rey isn't much of a stretch of course. I mean, all cruiserweights are the same right?

Rey tries to speed things up but gets his head taken off by a clothesline. Steiner throws him over the top but Rey hangs on, allowing him to drop a springboard legdrop to break up the pushups. A hurricanrana staggers Steiner again...and he throws Rey down with a suplex to take over again. Something like an Angle Slam from the middle rope sets up the Recliner to end this squash.

Rating: D. I get the idea here but there has to be someone besides Mysterio that you could put into this spot. Normally this should have been Lash Leroux but for some reason we already saw him twice tonight. You can't find anyone else other than the most successful cruiserweight the company has ever had to take this beating? No one at all? With the roster WCW had they didn't have three schnooks to put out there and get squashed in a handicap match?

Kevin Nash vs. The Cat

Oh wait as here's Mike Sanders because we haven't seen him enough. Stevie: "When is he going to defend that belt?" Tony announcers Nitro and Thunder in England next month but Stevie doesn't want to go. Did he turn heel and I missed it? Sanders sits in on commentary in a holdover Russo trope but pops up to the apron for an early distraction. You know, because Kevin Nash needs help against The Cat.

Nash does his usual slow offense in the corner while throwing in some trash talk. Now it's Nash offering a test of strength but getting kicked in the ribs for a surprise knockdown. I'm stunned Nash actually bumped for that. Another karate shot stuns Nash but he kicks Cat in the face. There go the straps but Sanders comes in with a chair to knock Cat out for absolutely no apparent reason.

Booker comes out to save Cat from a powerbomb through the chair. This

brings out Steiner which brings out Sting which brings out Jarrett. The heels dominate until Goldberg comes out, only to have Kronik run in and give Goldberg High Times to end the show. One note here: for the last few weeks they've had a Halloween Havoc countdown come on screen a few times a show. It's a good idea to keep fans thinking about this but also letting them know that they're running out of time to order the show. I wish more companies would do this today as it can't take more than a few buttons to get it on screen.

Overall Rating: D+. Again, better show here as the problems that have been plaguing the shows are still there but they're toned way down. They need to cut out the dueling authority figures nonsense and stop with the quick title changes but the show doesn't feel as chaotic. It doesn't make me want to throw the remote at the screen anymore and is now just more of a show with a lot of problems instead of a show flying off a cliff. That's something, right?

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Thunder – September 27, 2000:

He's Getting Away With It

Thunder

Date: September 27, 2000

Location: First Union Arena, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Stevie Ray, Tony Schiavone, Mike Tenay

I know we've been living in a Vince Russo world but now we're living in a world with Vince Russo as the WCW World Champion. Hopefully he isn't on the show as much this week but you can feel the recaps coming from here. It's probably too early to start setting up Halloween Havoc so tonight might be a stand alone show. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Monday's mess of a show.

Apparently it's not clear who the champion is. Of course it's not.

Disqo vs. Konnan

Before the match, Disqo fires the Filthy Animals and brags about having a new partner. They start very slowly and it's pretty clear we're waiting on the partner to come in. Konnan takes over but gets sent outside, allowing a bald Alex Wright to beat on him for a bit. Back in and the Chartbuster gives Disqo the easy pin.

Rey and Juvy run in for the save.

Mike Sanders takes over Cat's office and has a note saying it's ok. No word on who signed it but Sanders having a note to permit it is funny for some reason.

After a break, the Thrillers are all in Cat's office as Sanders seems to be in charge tonight. His first decision: the Hardcore Title is vacated and WE'RE HAVING A TOURNAMENT!

Scott Steiner beats up security and the Disqo Duck. Of course you know this means war.

Here's Jeff Jarrett for a chat. He gets right to the point: Monday proved

that Sting just doesn't have it anymore and is WAY past his prime. That brings him to Lex Luger (yes Luger, not the Total Package) who just happens to be in the crowd tonight. Luger is sorry for what he did on Monday because he shouldn't have helped Russo. No word yet on why he helped Russo in the first place or why he regrets it but I guess that's subtext. This brings out General Rection, who says he forgives Luger. Cue Lance Storm to go after Rection and it's a brawl to set up a tag match (likely with a side of swerve) for later.

The announcers talk for a bit.

Post break, Luger says he doesn't work here but he'll be in a match tonight. That's some fast clearance from the legal department.

The Thrillers are celebrating winning the Tag Team Titles. Leia Meow comes in and is basically ignored.

Juventud Guerrera wants a best of five series against Rey Mysterio for the #1 contendership. Didn't he win that clean last week?

Hardcore Title Tournament Semi-Finals: Sgt. AWOL vs. Johnny the Bull

If we're doing a four man tournament, couldn't we just have a fourway and get it over with instead? It's a stick battle to start because we didn't get enough of it with Johnny vs. Vito on Monday. Johnny gets put in a garbage can and beaten on even more, which means it's already table time. AWOL shrugs off a shot from Johnny and chokeslams him through the table for the fast win.

Post match Scott Steiner comes out to beat up AWOL (your potential future champion) before yelling about Goldberg. Stevie doesn't like Booker being brought up so he shoves Steiner, earning himself a pipe shot to the back.

Stevie is being checked on by a trainer but wants Steiner tonight.

It's time for the Lava Lamp Lounge with special guest Midajah. I'm sure there's some kind of Russo issue as he books a talk show with only women where a man loses everything he has every single week. Awesome starts hitting on Midajah until he finds out that Steiner is still here (so even he doesn't watch the show). There's no monitor in the back though,

meaning Steiner can't watch.

That brings Awesome closer but also brings out Leia Meow for some reason, triggering a catfight. Awesome gets hit low and the set is destroyed again. Security breaks it up and Awesome is relieved that he still has his crystal ball....which he immediately drops. It doesn't break or anything but he does drop it.

Crowbar asks Jimmy Hart where Daffney is (when you need information, you go to Jimmy Hart). Apparently she and Ozzie are going to Australia before the rest of the company shows up there in a few weeks.

Steiner will fight Stevie later.

If you go to WCW.com, you can get an exclusive interview with Jim Duggan. It sounds better than This Week in WCW Motorsports.

Konnor has taken over for Stevie on commentary.

Tag Team Titles: Jim Duggan/Elix Skipper vs. Mark Jindrak/Sean O'Haire

Jindrak and O'Haire are defending of course. Before the match, Duggan yells at the fans (and Gunns, who he tells to "shut up woman") for having no honor. It's a brawl to start as the fans chant for the champs by default. Skipper and Jindrak officially get things going with Mark ducking an early clothesline and bringing in O'Haire for a double throw. Back up and Elix tries a Matrix move but gets his head taken off by a clothesline.

Jindrak misses his no hands Lionsault and it's off to Duggan for some big right hands. We hit the chinlock on Mark before Skipper comes in again for a chinlock of his own. Elix's missile dropkick puts Mark down and Skipper lands on his feet. It's really impressive until you remember that Koko B. Ware could do the same thing. Duggan chokes away and we're in the third chinlock. Gunns breaks up a 2x4 shot though and crotches Elix on top, which draws out Sgt. AWOL to chokeslam Skipper down. Duggan goes after him in the aisle and a torture rack neckbreaker into the Seanton Bomb retains the title.

Rating: D. Those chinlocks in the middle took everything out of this

match and made it dull stuff for the most part. Team Canada vs. the Thrillers gets to keep going as Russo continues his love of stable wars and likely tries to keep recreating DX vs. the Nation. I mean, the Canadians vs. the military guys is exactly the same as Rock vs. HHH right?

During the break, Sanders got annoyed at Elix Skipper for some reason. Here's his reward.

Kronik vs. Elix Skipper

Skipper is smart enough to lay on the mat so Kronik walks away, only to try a dive onto Adams. So much for the Canadian educational system. A brief pummeling leads to the Meltdown, the full nelson slam and High Times to complete the squash. I have no idea what the point of this was but it ate up a few minutes.

Storm is annoyed that he wasn't allowed to help Skipper. I really hope they're not teasing a face turn for the Canadians.

Rey Mysterio vs. Juventud Guerrera

This is the second match in the best of five series with Guerrera up 1-0. Tygress is on commentary as the guys shake hands to start. Feeling out process to start as neither of them are sure of where to go. Rey takes over with an armdrag and a drop toehold into something like an STF. You don't often see him do something like that, especially since I didn't think he was tall enough to pull it off. La Majistral gets two for Rey and he monkey flips Juvy into the ropes, which sends Guerrera out to the floor. The referee drops out to check on him and the match is stopped due to an injury.

The worst part: the fans boo the match being stopped. This could be due to one of two things. First off could be that they're annoyed that a match was stopped and have no sympathy for what seems like a legitimate injury. If so, screw them. On the other hand though, could it be that they're so used to something screwy going on that they were annoyed at a swerve and just wanted to see what they thought was likely going to be the only good match of the show? If that's the case, I can more than

sympathize.

This Week in WCW Motorsports. Maybe I was wrong about that Duggan interview.

We look at Juvy hitting the ropes again and it really was a hard landing. A knee injury of some sort wouldn't surprise me.

Hardcore Title Tournament Semi-Finals: Crowbar vs. Reno

Crowbar has taped up ribs so Reno goes right after them as he likely should. A trashcan lid to the ribs has Crowbar in trouble but he grabs a northern lights suplex for a quick two. Reno goes right back to the ribs so Crowbar pelts a trashcan at him. The ribs are good enough for Crowbar to score with the slingshot legdrop before hitting Reno with a baseball bat. I'm not sure what it says when the spot that made Sting the biggest star in the promotion is now just a transitional move.

They head over to the announcers' table but Crowbar takes WAY too much time setting it up. Since Reno is kind of a goon though, Crowbar still puts him on top and hits a nice dive over the top to crush both Reno and the table again. The referee is counting both guys for whatever reason. If you're counting, shouldn't you be disqualifying them for all of the weapons? Even when they stop following the rules they don't make sense. Reno throws him back in and grabs a t-bone suplex. Cue Johnny the Bull to trip Crowbar and set up the Roll of the Dice for the pin.

Rating: D+. This got some more time to make up for the previous match going short and there's nothing wrong with that. I'm still not wild on the Hardcore Title existing in the first place, but at the same time at least Crowbar is getting some TV time. He's been one of the highlights of this year and it's a shame that the Daffney storyline keeps getting put on hold.

Mike Awesome runs out for the save post match.

Mike Awesome says he can help Crowbar with his "chick problems". Is that still a thing?

This week's sitdown interview is with Vince Russo, complete with title

belt and a neck brace. Apparently there's some question as to who is champion but Russo says he's the one here with the belt because he left the cage first. Russo isn't an athlete or a sports entertainer but on Monday, he showed that at any given time, he can walk into a ring with anyone and walk out champion. However, he's done competing and he'll make his decision with the title on Monday.

Russo certainly isn't afraid of Goldberg and he'll deal with him on Monday too. As for Monday, Ric Flair better stay away or Russo will drop a bombshell on the entire Flair family. Ric knows what it is and he knows what's best for him. Tenay asks about Luger but Russo had no idea about what happened. Russo doesn't like these questions so Monday, Tenay is going to fight.

So yeah Russo is a top heel, the World Champion and getting to laugh at everyone. Now in a normal wrestling company, this would lead to people beating him up and humiliating him to get their revenge and send the fans home happy. However, we're not in a normal wrestling company because we're in Vince Russo's WCW, where Russo gets to be champion, smirk, and probably sleep with Stacy Keibler. Now why would I want to watch something like that? I'm not sure of course, but I'm not as smart as Vince Russo.

Reno and the Thrillers celebrate.

Luger and Rection say they'll win.

Scott Steiner vs. Stevie Ray

Stevie is in jeans. Steiner throws him to the floor to start and whips Stevie into the barricade before taking him back inside for the bicep elbow. A t-bone suplex and a backbreaker allow Steiner to do some push-ups as this is a squash so far. Stevie pops back up with a bicycle kick but has to catch Midajah's cross body. Scott's low blow and a pipe shot set up the Recliner for the submission to end this in a hurry.

General Rection/Lex Luger vs. Lance Storm/Jeff Jarrett

Non-sanctioned while still being on a WCW show and in a WCW ring. The

Canadian national anthem goes on for a good while tonight, likely due to filling in more time. It's a brawl to start and all four head outside until Luger brings Jarrett back inside for a gorilla press and some clotheslines.

We settle down to an actual match with Jarrett putting Luger in a sleeper until a quick suplex breaks it up. Off to Storm for some stomping before Jeff comes back in and promptly runs into a double clothesline. It's off to Rection vs. Storm with the General taking over. Luger holds Lance down for the moonsault....and turns on Rection because of course. A torture rack from Luger sets up the Maple Leaf from Storm for the submission.

Rating: D. Nothing main event here but at least we all get to fill in the SWERVE box on our WCW Bingo card. It really is kind of amazing that Luger is still the exact same boring guy that he was when we last saw him several months ago. You would think he would have some fire in there somewhere but he really is just a guy with muscles doing a move here and there.

Overall Rating: D. Another not great show here and unfortunately it's turning into a modern day Smackdown where you get a token title match every now and then but the general message is "tune in Monday if you want to see anything happen." The Russo stuff was nowhere near as bad this time but putting Tenay in the ring on Monday made my eyes roll. As I've mentioned a time or two: not everything has to be an angle and not everyone has to be a character. This wasn't the worst show by any stretch but just nothing to see here.

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Thunder – September 20, 2000: What A World

Thunder

Date: September 20, 2000

Location: Civic Center, Erie, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Jeremy Borash, Tony Schiavone, Mike Tenay

We're in a world where Vince Russo is the #1 contender to the WCW World Title because that's how things are supposed to go around here. Odds are tonight is going to be about setting up that huge showdown on Monday with Russo getting some MANLY promos or maybe even a quick MANLY match. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Nitro highlights.

Here's Russo, flanked by security, to get things going, complete with the black paint under his eyes that football players wear. Stevie is groaning louder than usual over this and thinks he's going to be sick. Russo talks about being ready to be champion in five days and knowing that Booker needs tonight off because he's a street thug and the visiting team on Monday.

As for tonight though, Vince wants to have a warmup match so he calls out Stevie Ray. This brings Stevie up from commentary but Russo doesn't want to see him. That's quite the quick plot change. As part of his new character, Tenay says that if Stevie leaves, it means more time for Tony and himself to talk. Stevie walks around the side of the ramp as per Russo's orders, leaving Russo to rant about Booker as Jarrett and Steiner

arrive.

Steiner beats up the security and maces Russo before yelling about how he wants his title shot. Russo says they can have a triple threat against Sting later and then have all the title shots they want. Apparently Russo made Steiner (no) and Jarrett (ok yeah he kind of did), which is enough to make Russo run off, only to have Sting and Booker come in for the brawl.

Jeremy Borash takes Stevie's place and is now shilling for Russo.

Jung Dragons vs. Natural Born Thrillers

Sanders/Jindrak/O'Haire. It's Hayashi vs. Sanders to get things going for some armdrags and right hands before it's off to Yang and O'Haire. Sean blocks a sunset flip because he's a big guy and Yang is a rather small man by comparison. It's off to Jindrak to throw Yang down with a Samoan Drop before Sean drops the Seanton. Jamie comes in off the top with a guillotine legdrop for the save at two though, meaning they're actually not squashing the Dragons just yet. That doesn't mean they're being treated all that well though as Sanders has jumped in on commentary because the Dragons just aren't a big threat.

Jamie tries to DDT the two guys actually in the ring but Jindrak plants him with a powerbomb. Everything breaks down and Jamie is thrown hard into the barricade as Sanders powerslams Kaz. The Dragons' manager Leia Meow is whipping Jamie for taking his beating, followed by hitting a top rope seated senton for the pin on Sanders. The referee is just fine with this of course.

Rating: D+. What did the Thrillers do to tick this company off? In a few days now they've gotten beaten up by a retired Orndorff, Tygress and now the Jung Dragons. I mean, I know they were actually getting somewhere so in WCW that's probably the right time to knock them back down the ladder and use them as a way to give Nash an angle.

Disco is in the back with the Cat and Ms. Jones, the latter of whom throws his duck on the ground.

Russo tells a masked guy to sell for him later.

Disco suggests Rey vs. Juvy in a #1 contenders match for the Cruiserweight Title later tonight. Again, how does he have this kind of authority?

It's time for the Lava Lamp Lounge with the contestants in the Miss Nitro competition on Monday. Torrie is going first but Major Gunns cuts her off to talk about how large her chest is. Paisley and Tygress talk a bit and the fact that Awesome might be a judge makes thing even worse. It turns into a catfight with two Nitro Girls coming out to argue as well. The set is trashed again and Awesome is ticked off. So we've seen the Thrillers lose and Mike Awesome used to put over a swimsuit contest while Vince Russo is #1 contender.

Scott Steiner promises to win tonight.

There's going to be a battle royal for the vacant Tag Team Titles on Monday. So far we have Kronik and Mysterio/Guerrera confirmed.

Vince Russo vs. Masked Heel

Russo has his helmet on, which is pretty low level protection after having brain surgery like two weeks ago. The Heel is introduced as an international shoot champion and a 28 time Olympian. His shirt says THE MASKED HEEL and he comes out to the Leave it to Beaver theme that Booker had to use earlier in the year or whenever that was. Russo chops him in the corner a few times and we get the Hogan hand to the ear. Borash is going on like Cole went on about Miz in a kind of funny bit.

A big boot mostly misses Heel's fast and there goes the MANLY shirt for some posing. Russo tries a legdrop but looked like he was missing a dropkick instead. The Heel pops to his feet and starts no selling, including a spear bouncing off of him. The mask comes off and of course it's Stevie Ray with a slap jack to Russo's ribs. He'll leave now though so Booker can have a piece on Monday. Therefore, Russo wins via DQ/countout or it's a no contest, meaning he is STILL undefeated! My but that's MANLY!

Post break, Russo sends Kronik after Stevie Ray. Do they follow his orders now?

Konnan approves of Disco's idea.

Paisley vs. Torrie Wilson

Kwee Wee and Shane are in on commentary for what could be rather entertaining if Kwee Wee is allowed to be himself. The match is of course a disaster of a catfight with Torrie shoving Paisley's leg away, which draws Shane away from the five man booth for some reason. The guys brawl and Paisley rolls Torrie up for the pin.

Shane gives Paisley the Franchiser so here's Tygress to jump on his back. Konnan has to come out for the save with his rolling clothesline, which Tenay calls a DDT because his spirit has been broken.

Russo and Sanders are talking in the back.

Here's Team Canada with something to say. After a quick speech from Storm on how we should all join Canada, Duggan blames the American fans for his recent change of heart. With that, it's time to burn the American flag. Cue the Misfits who are beaten down because Storm has a flag and Duggan has a big board, but the powers of a sex pun turn the tide. Rection tries to save the flag but Duggan beats him down instead, leaving the General to cover the flag with his body as he takes a beating.

Sanders puts a forklift in front of Booker's door. Clearly he was the only man in the building capable of doing this and not like, a forklift driver or something.

Jarrett guarantees a win tonight.

Kronik vs. Stevie Ray

Stevie is still in the Masked Heel shirt. Borash: "Suckas are kinda curious about how this match is going to go." Tags are required so Stevie pounds on Clark to no avail as we get things going. A good looking bicycle kick puts Clark down for two but Adams comes in to help out on a double elbow to take over.

Kronik shoulders him down as the announcers try to figure out if Adams and Clark are working for Russo or not. Stevie hits the slap jack but can't hit the Slap Jack. Adams picks Stevie off with the full nelson slam and they load up High Time onto the chair, only to kick the chair away in a show of mercy. The regular High Time is enough for the pin.

Rating: D-. This was exactly what you would have been expecting, which is to say a match longer than it should have been (just over three minutes) and nothing interesting. Kronik having shades of gray isn't a good idea either, especially if it leads to a double turn with the Harris Twins because one set of heel monsters is enough.

Remember that forklift in front of Booker's door? It's still there.

This Week In WCW Motorsports.

Russo yells at Kronik for not using the chair. The pair of giants' response? Nothing of course.

Rey Mysterio vs. Juventud Guerrera

Remember when this was one of the best matches in WCW? Why did they stop with that? The winner gets a title shot at some point in the future. Konnan and Tygress sit in on commentary (of course) with Konnan going into an actually interesting history about how Mexico has a lot of different weight classes and how successful these two have been. They go to a knuckle lock to start and do the now standard series of flips into a double cover with both guys bridging up for the save.

Juvy scores with a DDT for the first real advantage and the guys are suddenly mad at each other. A double clothesline puts both of them down but it's Juvy up first with a springboard spinning dropkick to send Rey outside. Juvy follows with a slingshot dive (Konnan: "Also called a pescado." When did Konnan turn into the best commentator in WCW?) but gets powerbombed back inside. The Bronco Buster crushes Juvy as Konnan says Disco has officially been thrown off the team. A nice spinning ankle scissors sends Juvy to the floor and Rey hits a dive of his own.

Back in and Rey springboards into a HARD sitout powerbomb for two. Rey

landed on the back of his head there and it looked bad. Juvy's springboard splash gets two and Rey grabs a bridging rollup for the same. Back up and Rey tries a standing Lionsault which is caught in the Juvy Driver for another near fall. Rey gets in a powerbomb of his own but Juvy flips him into a sunset flip for the pin and the title shot.

Rating: B. You can't go back to what you had with these two that easily but it was nice to see a flashback for a single night. I'm not sure what's going on lately with Thunder but they're actually letting us have the occasional good, clean match which shows how good the roster still can be. Unfortunately that makes it even harder to sit through how bad things really are as you know they can do better.

Disco comes in post match and gets beaten down by the team.

Sting is ready for the triple threat.

3 Count vs. Harris Brothers

The beating is quickly on because the Harris Brothers are the real stars here and 3 Count can do whatever they want and actually have characters but it doesn't mean anything because there's nothing for them to do in WCW. On a side note: Ron is growing his hair out. That makes him so much more interesting by default. The H Bomb takes Shannon out but here are Kronik and the Thrillers to turn this into a preview of the battle royal and throw the match out.

This week's interview is with Stacy Keibler and this week's creepy Tenay line is when he asks if she needs a second hand to count all the people that she cheated with. Of course it was only one but Stacy won't say who it is. Tenay actually thinks he could have gotten Stacy, "if it weren't for the fact that I'm a married man with morals." Stacy insists it wasn't Ric Flair and leaves. Tenay: "Boy, she's gonna make a great mother."

The forklift is moved.

Scott Steiner vs. Sting vs. Jeff Jarrett

Russo is out for commentary. Before the match, Steiner insults Goldberg, Booker, and Booker's mama. If there is one thing you don't do, it's

insult Mr. T.'s mother. It's a brawl to start of course with Sting getting the better of it early on. Steiner comes back with a belly to belly though as Russo hijacks commentary to talk about his title match being inside Caged Heat. Oh yeah they're building up on those swerves.

The heels double team Sting and here's Booker T. in Sting gear. By gear I mean a singlet and a Sting mask with nothing else hiding his identity. Booker starts cleaning house with signature Sting stuff (and the referee is too stupid to notice the difference you see) until we get a Spinarooni. Sting comes back in and puts Russo in the Deathlock, only to have Jarrett hit Sting with the guitar....AND THAT'S A DQ???

Rating: D. Nothing match but they've actually made WCW referees look even dumber than they already were. This company continues to make my head hurt as they do one stupid thing after another, such as Booker wearing a Sting mask being enough to fool the referee. Of course it doesn't really matter as the announcers were focusing on Caged Heat being announced for Monday because it's all about Russo.

Jarrett and Steiner put on their submissions to end the show.

Overall Rating: D. Mysterio vs. Guerrera aside, this was the latest mess that focused WAY too much on Russo and had too many plot holes going on that stopped making sense. Booker being trapped was fine, but why in the world did Booker dress up like Sting? What did that change or enhance whatsoever, aside from making WCW look stupid? Bad show for the most part, but the worst is of course still yet to come.

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Monday Nitro – September 18, 2000: They Wouldn't

Monday Nitro #258

Date: September 18, 2000

Location: Dom Cardillo Arena, Kitchner, Ontario, Canada

Commentators: Scott Hudson, Mark Madden, Tony Schiavone

We're past Fall Brawl and the big story is Booker getting the World Title back. It's pretty clear that Scott Steiner is the next big challenger after his big win over Goldberg in one of WCW's better matches of the year. The sad part is the match wasn't even that great but WCW has gone so far down hill in match quality that it's the best they can do. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Rey Mysterio/Tygress vs. Natural Born Thrillers

That would be Jindrak/O'Haire/Palumbo/Stasiak (on commentary)/Sanders and this is still under elimination rules as we're continuing last night's match where it left off. Mysterio kicks Jindrak down to start but Mark grabs a fireman's carry neckbreaker before bringing in O'Haire for a sitout powerbomb. For some reason Mark feels the need to hold Rey down for the Seanton Bomb, which hits Jindrak by mistake. That sets up a double pin with Tygress pinning Jindrak and Rey pinning O'Haire at the same time.

Stasiak pops up off commentary and crotches Rey so Palumbo can jump on his back. Palumbo plants Rey with a lifting sitout Pedigree (nice move actually) as Kwee Wee comes out and hits Stasiak with a chair, allowing Tygress to pin Stasiak at the same time Palumbo pins Rey. Geez people stop with the double pins. Why would the referee even count those things? So it's Palumbo/Sanders vs. Tygress so it should be interesting to see

how lame they can make the Thrillers look here.

The referee shoves Palumbo into a rollup for the pin so it's one on one. Sanders slowly takes his shirt off so Tygress grabs a sleeper, only to get snapmared down. Rey springboards back in with a dropkick to set up a Stuff Buster (X-Factor with a lot of gyrations) for the final pin (with more gyrations).

Rating: F. What the heck was that? You just had Tygress and Rey Mysterio pin the Natural Born Thrillers in five minutes for the sake of what? A storyline that involves Paul Orndorff who wasn't actually in the arena that night? That's their best idea? Tygress gets some pins, Rey gets some pins, and the Thrillers look like bigger goofs than usual? So much for whatever momentum this company had from last night.

Kevin Nash is sitting in the back and says the Thrillers need a coach. Of course he has nothing to say about losing the title last night because, as we've established over the years, the World Title means nothing to Kevin Nash.

Post break, Nash has apparently been accepted as the Thrillers' coach. His game plan for the night winds up spelling out YOU SUCK.

Stills of Booker winning the title and Steiner vs. Goldberg from last night.

We go to the back for Goldberg's entrance but it's Vince Russo instead because of course it is. Yeah it's not Steiner getting this entrance but Russo, because he's the real winner you see. Russo gets lost in the back because his sense of direction is overshadowed by his MANLINESS. We get a MANLY walk down the aisle as Russo does Goldberg's poses before pulling out a registered letter. The letter, addressed to Mr. Russo your honor SIR, is from Goldberg which says he's unworthy of working for someone like Vince Russo.

Goldberg has failed the fans over and over and is clearly a total disgrace and loser, so therefore he resigns from WCW. On top of that, all the children should be looking up to Russo, just like Goldberg is now. Russo finally calls out Steiner and praises him for getting rid of

Goldberg once and for all.

Steiner rants about how awesome he is and how he won the battle of the monsters last night. All he wanted to do was beat Goldberg up so he owes the fans an apology for ruining his career. This draws a GOLDBERG SUCKS chant but Steiner cuts it off by saying he wants the World Title. Therefore, next week, he's guaranteeing that he's the next World Champion. It doesn't matter who wins tonight because he'll beat Sting or Booker for the title. Russo doesn't think so but here's Jeff Jarrett before he can elaborate.

Sting didn't beat him on Thunder so Jarrett deserves the title shot. Before that goes anywhere, Russo cuts them off because HE is the boss with all the power around here. Now it's Nash coming out to say that he should have the first title shot and the fans seem pleased. For some reason this means a tag match with the winner getting a title shot next week. It's going to be Steiner/Jarrett vs. Nash/....Russo, who has wanted to be WCW World Champion his whole life, because he deserves to be champion. The shocked look on Nash's face makes me want a Super Shredder spinoff movie.

Post break Steiner and Jarrett say this can't happen. Wouldn't they want this to happen?

Torrie Wilson/Shane Douglas vs. Kwee Wee/Paisley

This is the result of an open challenge from Shane. Allegedly this is a mixed tag but for some reason only Paisley is on the apron. Kwee Wee gets two off an early clothesline as Torrie (in a racecar themed outfit for some reason) jumps up to the apron, only to get kissed by her non-partner. Shane grabs the Franchiser for two because Paisley wants to fight Torrie. Instead Shane fakes a tag to Torrie and Franchises Paisley for the pin with a five count for no logical reason.

Post break, Russo is telling Nash his plan (it involves getting heat and a hot tag) but Nash gets the chalk and writes BITE ME.

Booker and Sting get in a fight in the back before their match tonight.

Disqo is in Cat's office....and he has a duck. Apparently Disqo thinks Cat sucks as Commissioner and wants his job. Cat: "YOU'RE RUNNING AROUND WITH A BLOW UP GOOSE!" A match is made for Disqo getting to be Commissioner for a day, but if he loses then Rey and Juvy are stripped of the Tag Team Titles.

Disqo vs. The Cat

Before I can retype the stipulations, Cat kicks him in the face for the pin, meaning Rey and Juvy lose the titles.

The Animals run Disqo off.

Nash says he's out of the tag match so Steiner and Jarrett can work it out themselves.

Disqo bails.

We see Mike Tenay's interview with David Flair where Flair beats up the mailman.

MI Smooth is in the ring and calls out David for a chat. Apparently Smooth knows something about the father of the baby if the price is right. This brings out David with a crowbar but Smooth calms him down. Smooth has a video tape that shows who the father is. David pays but beats Smooth down with the crowbar instead.

Russo suggests Kronik for the tag match but gets yelled at for his efforts.

David makes a guy play the tape because he can't go buy a VCR.

Terry Taylor sends Mike Sanders to see Russo, who sends Sanders to take a tape to Kronik.

WCW World Title: Booker T. vs. Sting

Booker is defending but Sting drives him into the corner to start. A clothesline puts the champ down, only to have him pop up with a side kick. The Death Drop is countered into a Bookend attempt but Sting reverses into a Fujiwara Armbar of all things. The Deathlock is loaded up

but here's Jarrett for the DQ because of course it's Jarrett.

Steiner comes in to help with the beatdown, including a guitar shot to Sting. The heels put on matching submission holds.

Sanders gives Kronik the tape. That would be the audio tape because there are two tapes running around at the moment.

Jimmy Hart tells David that there's a VCR in Smooth's limo. That earns him another beating.

Kronik has heard the tape and freaks out because it was Jarrett and Steiner insulting them earlier. Russo makes a match for later.

Here's Team Canada with Storm bragging about last night's success before introducing Jim Duggan as the newest member. Duggan has cut his hair and shaved his face, making him look almost unrecognizable. He's tired of fighting for a country that takes him for granted and treats him like garbage. When he fought Goldberg and was taken away in an ambulance, all he heard was a GOLDBERG chant. Now it's all about Jim Duggan (or Dude Love, as this is the same promo that he used to turn heel after Wrestlemania XVI). Cue the Misfits and it's time for a six man.

Misfits in Action vs. Team Canada

The Misfits, heels here, clear the ring to start as the fans tell them that they suck. Loco sends Rection into the corner for a splash to Skipper, followed by a running clothesline from Cajun. Storm comes in for some misdirection, allowing the tag off to Duggan. The retired guy that is. A-Wall chokeslams Skipper through the table as Rection comes in to clean house. Everything breaks down and Duggan hits Rection with the board (fine with the referee) for the pin.

Rating: D+. The wrestling wasn't bad actually and the story is there, but the problem lies in the main character. Who in the world wants to see Jim Duggan as anything more than a comedy goof, let alone as one of the more important heels in the midcard? It's a decent enough story, but not with Duggan involved.

Post match Duggan hits Rection in the knee with the board.

Steiner and Jarrett yell at Russo.

Mike Awesome and Gary Coleman arrive with Gary freaking out over getting beaten down last night. Why did he ride with Awesome then? Vampiro and the Clowns approach the empty bus.

Kronik vs. Jeff Jarrett/Scott Steiner

Never mind of course as Nash and the Thrillers come out first with the former insulting Kronik. Sanders and Johnny are chosen to go out and beat up Kronik with predictable results. More Thrillers come out until it's just O'Haire and Jindrak remaining for what could be an interesting match. Naturally that doesn't happen as Steiner and Jarrett come in with a pipe, followed by the Stroke for the pin.

Russo goes to someone's dressing room.

Vampiro and the Clowns have spray painted the bus.

Russo comes in to see Sting (thank goodness there was a camera in there already) and asks him to be the partner tonight. Apparently people have been saying Sting doesn't have it anymore so it's SHOWTIME FOLKS.

There's going to be a swimsuit contest next week to crown Miss WCW. Howard Stern's Wack Pack will be the judges. You can see it coming from here.

Mike Awesome comes out to rant about Vampiro and the Clowns making it very hard for him to be happy. Therefore, he wants a hardcore match with Vampiro RIGHT NOW.

Vampiro vs. Mike Awesome

Vampiro pounds away with the kendo stick to start but Awesome sends him to the floor for the big dive. They head into the crowd with Vampiro diving off a wall, drawing a badly censored chant. Back to ringside for some cookie sheets, which Tony thinks is worse because it's industrial size. Vampiro's superplex is broken up and Awesome scores with a top rope clothesline, only to get hit in the head with a trashcan. An Awesome Bomb through at able at ringside puts Vampiro away.

Rating: D+. Decent hardcore brawl here but it's more sad than anything else. Awesome is far better than this due to athleticism alone but he's stuck in some humorous gimmick, which likely exists for the sake of giving the writers something to laugh at. Oh and why is there a Hardcore Champion if we're having hardcore matches like this with the title never being mentioned?

Booker goes in to see Russo, which freaks the boss out.

David has seen the tape and storms off to find Stacy.

Sting/Vince Russo vs. Jeff Jarrett/Scott Steiner

Booker comes out instead of Russo, giving us something like the fourth different combination for this match. Whoever gets the fall gets the title shot next week, so I'm assuming Booker is off next week if he gets the pin. It's a brawl to start with Sting getting two off a top rope splash.

There's the Deathlock on Jarrett but Midajah hits Booker with the pipe. Cue Miss Jones to pull Midajah out and slam her as a tag match breaks out. It's Booker playing Ricky Morton for a bit and it's Jeff slapping on a sleeper. Booker finally fights up with a suplex to break things up, allowing the hot tag to Sting. Normally that wouldn't make sense but Booker really doesn't have anything to lose here.

Everything breaks down again and cue Kronik to go after Jarrett. Steiner kicks Booker low and puts on the Recliner but here comes Russo, looking like he's been destroyed. Scott goes after Russo, allowing Booker to hit Steiner in the face with the bat. Booker puts Russo on top of Steiner for the pin and the title shot as the rules of this match are thrown out even further.

Rating: D. As usual, this could have been a nice tag match had they actually let us see a tag match but instead it was a big mess with so many storylines going on at once that it was hard to keep track of. The problem boils down to the fact that you could have the same match without Kronik but they're thrown in there just because. When something can be taken away with no changes to the story, it's unnecessary.

Overall Rating: F+. This was one of your run of the mill Russo shows with a lack of character motivation (Nash not seeming interested in wanting the title back), WAY too much Russo and a main event that kept changing over and over. It's really not much of a draw to tell me to keep watching so I can find out who is teaming with Vince Russo in a match where he might become #1 contender for a match next week. There wasn't a lot of wrestling here either, which would have cut down on the need for all the backstage stuff, though again that's standard Russo. Not a good show here but it's only going to get worse.

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Thunder – September 13, 2000: They're Doing What Now?

Thunder

Date: September 13, 2000

Location: Civic Center, Roanoke, Virginia

Commentators: Stevie Ray, Tony Schiavone, Mike Tenay

It's the final show before Fall Brawl and as usual they're having issues setting up the pay per view because the bigger priority is building up the TV shows. Monday saw Scott Steiner attach Goldberg to a bus which

didn't work because that's the kind of thing you set up and blow off in all of a minute. Let's get to it.

We open with Miss Jones on the phone with Cat, who is assured that everything is fine. Cue Jarrett to take the phone and say not quite before kidnapping Jones. As usual, women are objects and plot devices on these shows.

David Flair is freaking out about the idea that various men might be the father of the baby. Does David actually wrestle anymore? I can't remember the last match he actually had.

Here are Nash, Jarrett and Steiner to open things up. Nash brags about making the fans buy into the swerve on Monday and I have issues remembering which one it was. They tend to run together when you have one every single week. He's also ready for the cage match on Sunday, which they haven't exactly given a ton of focus. Steiner brags about having sex with a lot of women and talks about how big his arms are. Jeff makes Jones lay down (shocking) for a five count and threatens a guitar shot.

This brings out the recently arrived Cat along with Booker, the latter of whom gives out his lame catchphrases. Cat makes a tag match for later with Nash/Steiner vs. Cat/Booker where whoever gets the fall gets the title. Jarrett only gets Sting, which prompts Jeff to guitar Dave Penzer for whatever reason.

Disco has booked the Filthy Animals in a non-title match against Kronik and the Harris Brothers. Why he would do that isn't exactly clear, but he thinks it could get them the #1 ranking in WOW Magazine.

Thunder Tailgate Party video.

An angry Mike Awesome arrives. I'd be mad too. He's in a leisure suit and Justin Credible is the top heel in ECW.

Disco has also booked himself and Konnan against Jindrak/O'Haire, but Konnan isn't clear to wrestle. Therefore, Tygress is getting the spot. Well of course she is.

Mark Jindrak/Sean O'Haire vs. Disco Inferno/Tygress

Before the match, Sanders introduces Johnny the Bull as the newest Thriller. Johnny really enjoyed beating Vito down and is horrible at this whole talking thing. Disqo starts with Sean and thankfully the rookie cleans his clock, which unfortunately means it's off to Tygress, drawing a big rant from Tenay about how women don't belong here. That's just so against anything he's said for years and really comes off as the writers not knowing how character development works. You don't just slap characteristics on people and assume they work.

The Thrillers literally throw Tygress back and forth in the air as Disqo runs off to get help. You know, instead of helping himself. Jindrak tries to give Tygress a Bronco Buster but that's a bit too much even for WCW, so she hits a Bronco Buster of her own. That earns her a sitout powerbomb, followed by the Seanton Bomb for the pin. Total squash of course.

The Animals finally come back out (why they weren't there in the first place isn't clear) but get beaten down by the Thrillers.

David beats up a referee for suggesting that he'd brag about sleeping with Ms. Hancock.

Team Canada teaches Major Gunns to speak Canadian. I think you can write the jokes yourselves, even though Storm really wouldn't seem likely to do something like that.

Sting is annoyed at not being in the main event recently as even he's forgotten WarGames. Therefore, he'd like a title shot against Booker on Nitro if Booker gets the title back. That's rather forward of him.

Disqo has to defend himself from the Animals blaming him for the loss.

It's time for the Lava Lamp Lounge with special guest Major Gunns. So if Storm didn't let her out there, would he really just have screwed up the entire segment? That's not the nicest way to help international relations. Awesome gets straight to hitting on her as Gunns goes on a rant about how much she hates being around Lance Storm. Mike suggests a massage so here's Team Canada for the brawl with Awesome throwing Skipper around with ease.

Cue the MIA to say Gunns needs to come back home. Storm agrees and offers a tag match with Duggan/Rection vs. Team Canada with Gunns on the line. What's in it for the Canadians isn't clear but they're kind of odd at times. That's it for the show but a janitor lays out Awesome and of course it's Jarrett. Much like the other major matches, I'm not entirely sure why they're fighting at this point or why we're going to see them in a hardcore match but I'm sure a guy dressing up as a janitor and breaking a guitar over a 70s enthusiast in a leisure suit who hits on every woman he can find will sell itself.

More Tailgate Party stuff.

Rection asks Duggan to be his partner in the tag match later. Dang it's lucky that Duggan was just sitting there in case someone needed a tag match for AMERICA.

Steiner and Nash charge a kid \$60 for a picture with Steiner covering the kid's face. Simple idea but kind of a needless segment.

Here are Shane and Torrie (good night) to talk about how awesome the mixed tag scaffold match is going to be. Unfortunately he spoils it by promising everyone a full refund if his team loses. This brings out Madusa and Billy Kidman because we're getting a preview right now.

Shane Douglas/Torrie Wilson vs. Madusa/Billy Kidman

Shane takes Madusa to the mat with a lot less difficulty than he should have but Kidman is chasing Torrie around, drawing Shane to the floor for a save. That's already enough as the match is thrown out in a hurry, so at least they didn't waste much of Sunday's THRILLING scaffold match.

Kidman goes after Torrie again and knocks her over a balcony, giving us the most obvious action movie shot I've ever seen in wrestling with Torrie hanging off a balcony to save herself. Just go make B movies already as it's clear what they want to do.

Post break, Kidman and Madusa rant about the scaffold match.

Your weekly sitdown interview is with Ric Flair and it's fully storyline stuff here with the first questions being about the wedding and Hancock's

announcement. Ric talks about how screwy things have been lately due to the efforts of Vince Russo but then they were in an arena for a wedding to a great woman. He and David bonded again and Ric had everything he wanted again. Tenay doesn't seem to buy this but Ric isn't going to be intimidated. "You're not talking to Midajah here."

Ric lists off some of the people he's wrestled and doesn't like the idea that Tenay stopped after the 1980s. That brings Tenay back to Ric vs. Russo, who got the better of Ric. For some reason Tenay doesn't buy that but Ric says he's out of the business because he lost a match where his career was on the line. It was Ric's fault that he brought his family on TV and let Russo get under his skin but Russo is a snake. Tenay flat out asks if Ric is the father of Hancock's baby and that's the end of the interview with Ric walking off after saying Tenay is just like Russo. Well that's quite the insult.

I really do not want to know where this story was going to go, but the more I think about it, the more I think it was likely to be Russo. Why not? He's gotten the better of the Flair's every single time so why not let him do that too? I mean, he can destroy Ric's career and take over his family so why not have him impregnate one of the most beautiful women in the world too?

Fit Finlay tells David to calm down with all of the questions about who is the father. Why in the world is Finlay not in the ring either?

Jeff Jarrett vs. Sting

This is now 2/3 falls, which could make for a good match if they don't screw the whole thing up. While Sting is on the way to the ring, Tony brags about Nitro's ratings from the previous night. As in the 3.2 they got, down from the 3.6 the previous week. Before the match, Jeff tells Sting to forget about the title match because Nash is keeping the title. Instead Sting offers to make this a #1 contenders match, again because they just can. Sting takes him down to start as Stevie talks about Wahoo McDaniel.

The announcers actually bring up Sting vs. Vampiro vs. Muta on Sunday, which is indeed a match despite the lack of discussion over the last few

months. A running clothesline puts Jarrett on the floor and it's time to go to the announcers' table. Stevie: "THIS IS THE ONLY TABLE WE GOT! WHY ARE YOU ALWAYS COMING OVER HERE???" Sting suplexes him up by the stage but Jeff stomps away back inside.

Some clotheslines set up a top rope splash for two on Jeff but the referee gets bumped, setting up a low blow and the Stroke to give Jarrett the first fall. Jeff throws him to the floor but gets caught in a quick sunset flip for the pin to tie it up. The third fall starts with an awkward grappling exchange, followed by the traditional trading of the sleepers. Jeff suplexes out of Sting's version but gets knocked down, setting up Sting's falling headbutt.

Back up and Jeff pulls the referee in the way of the Stinger Splash. This brings out a second and Jeff pulls him in the way as well but Sting doesn't jump. Instead David Flair comes out to hit the referee with a broom stick for his earlier comments, meaning there's no one to see Jarrett tap to the Deathlock. Not that it matters as Sting tells the timekeeper to ring the bell to end the match.

Rating: C+. This was working until the goofy ending but at least they didn't screw it up too badly. As usual, Jarrett is at his best when he has someone to carry him to a good match and Sting, despite not being anywhere near his peak anymore, was still one of the better workers on the roster. If nothing else it was nice to see a match get some time for a change and it helped a lot.

The Misfits don't have much to say.

Kronik vs. Filthy Animals vs. Harris Brothers

Non-title with Disco on commentary. It's a brawl between the big guys to start as the Animals just kind of stand back and watch. To be fair they're above this kind of a match anyway. We settle down to Don hitting Clark low to take over inside but Adams makes the save when the Twins try to use a chain. The Animals get bored of waiting and dropkick Don right into High Times for the quick pin.

Rating: D. As usual, there really wasn't much of a point to this and the

champions, who are fighting the Thrillers on Sunday in a match that is barely getting any mention, were just there. However you can't do the Twins vs. Kronik here because they're doing it on Sunday. Why not do something like a singles ma.....egads the thought of either Twin vs. Adams or Clark gave me a chill.

Post match the Twins beat Kronik down with a ball bat wrapped in a chain.

Here's David Flair with something to say. He's proud that his dad called him a man but at the same time he needs to find out what happened with Stacy and the father of the baby. This brings out Miss Hancock but before anything can be said, it's Arn Anderson out to interrupt. David needs to chill because women are like buses: they come around every twenty minutes. That's quite the public transportation system. Right now, all that matters is Stacy knowing who the father is, and Anderson hopes she does.

Jim Duggan is out cold underneath the American flag. I smell collusion.

Team Canada vs. General Rection

No Duggan so only Rection comes out to interrupt the Canadian national anthem. Rection goes after both of them to start before the bell and runs them over just like every hero does in the early stages of a handicap match. Skipper finally takes over with a springboard spinwheel kick though and the heels start in on the ribs to take over.

It's off to Storm for some elbows to the ribs and that awesome dropkick of his for two. A kick to the face staggers Storm but Skipper gets in a knee to the back, setting up the Maple Leaf. Cue Duggan on a crutch (but no bandage on the head) but he can't get out in time, meaning Rection taps out.

Rating: D+. Storm's dropkick was great as always but it's just not enough to make up for the fact that we're supposed to get behind a guy named General Rection. Also make sure to ignore the fact that Duggan retired on Monday and is supposed to be back in action with no real explanation two days later. As usual, the wrestlers' statements mean nothing and we're supposed to ignore the continuity issues.

Post break, Rection wants a match on Sunday for Gunns and the title. I have no idea why the Canadians would agree with that but as usual, they never actually seem to make sense.

WCW World Title: Kevin Nash/Scott Steiner vs. Booker T./The Cat

Nash is defending but anyone can win the title by getting the fall. It's a brawl to start until Booker and Steiner officially get things going. Nash has to break up an early ax kick attempt so Steiner hits Cat with the title. In theory that should be a DQ but that's not how WCW works at this point.

Cat pops up way too fast so Nash belts him down again, allowing the villains to take turns on Booker. I really have no idea why you would tag out here but logic isn't the strongest point in this company. A double clothesline and big boot drop Booker twice in a row before a belly to belly gets two. There's the Recliner to Booker with Nash making the save, only to have Goldberg come out on a motorcycle for a spear on Steiner, drawing the dreaded no contest to end the show.

Rating: D. Yeah as usual there's only so much you can do here with a gimmick where it's pretty clear they're not switching the title and we're just waiting on the screwy finish. Goldberg coming in was fine and actually shows a little focus on their match instead of having Steiner chain him to a bus for all of ten seconds or whatever that mess was on Monday.

Overall Rating: D. Nitro and Thunder are in an interesting place right now. The Monday show is a complete train wreck with the focus being on Russo despite him not being there and so many ideas floating around that I forget where the show even started. On the other hand, Thunder is a more coherent show but almost none of it feels like it's tying in to the main storylines.

That being said, Thunder is the easier show to sit through as it's not quite as insane, but much like a modern day Smackdown, you lose nothing if you don't watch it. Fall Brawl is going to be interesting, as if nothing else I can watch the show and find out all the matches on the show because the TV leading up to it has been such a wild mess that I've

kind of forgotten.

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