

Monday Nitro – March 8, 1999 (2014 Redo): When Is A Wrestling Show Not A Wrestling Show?

Monday Nitro #179

Date: March 8, 1999

Location: Centrum, Worcester, Massachusetts

Attendance: 10,856

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

We had to get to this one eventually. I've heard warnings about this show for a long time now and even though I've seen it more than once before, the idea that this was allowed to make air still baffles me. It's the go home Nitro before Uncensored, meaning this is the big show to get people to buy the pay per view. Let's get to it.

Video on the cage being built for Uncensored.

Here's the whole Flair and Anderson talk from Thunder. It runs over six minutes and is summed up as Anderson saying Flair should think about his family more than himself.

The Nitro Girls are at Brown University for the Nitro Party.

Profile on AC Jazz and how she does the choreography for the team. She's the clown of the bunch.

Here's the Hogan interview from Thunder about how much he hates Flair and wants him out of wrestling. Again, it eats up about six minutes.

More from Brown University. Konnan is there.

Here's Konnan's music video.

Here's a video of Hogan and Nash watching Flair's promo last week. The only good part comes when Flair talks about a blonde waiting for him in Charlotte. Nash: "Buddy Landel?" Hogan: "Buddy Rose." Hogan and Nash need to regroup on David and switch gears to Plan B.

Video on Lex Luger.

Konnan t-shirt ad. This is the second time we've seen it so far.

Scott Steiner and Buff Bagwell, still on the way to Spring Break, have their bus pulled over. They're allowed to get out of their ticket if they do police work. They agree, but can't decide who is Starsky and who is Hutch. Instead they harass people for minor offenses. The cops let them go free.

Back to the Nitro Party where Kidman is holding the belt and eating Domino's pizza. Kidman thinks Mysterio can beat Nash again.

Video on Mysterio vs. Nash.

The Blonde is at a shooting range when Hogan and Nash show up. Naturally there's a camera facing her when she's shooting. They call her Sam and suggest she use some of her other talents to take care of Flair. Nash hits on her and dinner plans are made. Why Torrie is in a sports bra isn't clear.

Now we go to the dinner where Hogan wants to take Ric out for good. Torrie says she has a friend hotter than she is and will try to get her to take care of David. Nash: "How much for the women?" All this makes me want to do is watch Blues Brothers. The girl shows up and is named Denise Robinson. After some Graduate jokes, she's promised \$20,000 for taking care of David. Denise isn't bad looking but I don't think anyone is looking at her with the Blonde across the table.

Opening sequence, fifty five minutes into the show.

We go to the arena for the first time and Gene asks Goldberg to come out for a chat. Instead, here's the Wolfpack because we haven't heard that music enough tonight. David Flair and Sam come out to confuse Tenay and Zbyszko (Tony's voice hasn't been heard yet). They want Ric Flair out here to settle this man to man. Instead Goldberg's music hits....and we go to a commercial.

Back with Goldberg coming out as I guess the music played for four minutes. Goldberg says he respects the Flair name so he won't deal with David like he usually would. However, David needs to learn some respect. David is disrespecting him by being out here so David pokes Goldberg in the chest. Goldberg grabs him by the throat and we go split screen to see Ric arriving and seeing this on a monitor, sending him sprinting to the ring.

Ric saves his son and chops Goldberg to no effect. Instead Goldberg press slams him but Ric gets right in his face and rants about being the best ever. Goldberg says Flair has lost his mind and stepped over the line. Flair rants about being the line and a match is made for tonight. This REALLY sounds like they're about to turn Flair heel, which might actually be the dumbest thing I could think of this side of a Jerry Flynn push.

Raven vs. Hak

Falls count anywhere. They hug before the match and then the brawling begins. Raven blasts him in the head with a Singapore cane a few times before they head outside for left hands from Hak. The fight heads up the ramp with Raven suplexing Hak on the ramp. Raven puts Hak on a table and dives off the set to drive him through it. Bam Bam Bigelow walks out and adds himself to the match, even though the referee throws it out a few seconds later.

Rating: D. I can't stand this stuff, especially when Raven is capable of having good matches without this nonsense. Hak is Sandman minus the beer and that's not something I have any interest in watching. At least in the WWF they made it funny instead of just ripping off ECW this badly.

Bigelow and Raven keep fighting into the back with everyone being thrown into various metal objects. Hak punches Bigelow up against an ambulance but Bigelow rams Raven head first into it as well. Raven puts Hak in a wheelbarrow and throws him into the ambulance. Now they fight over to a limo with Bigelow throwing them both onto the hood. Raven Even Flows Hak onto the hood and everyone gets tired and lays around for a bit. Raven tells Bigelow to bring it on the so the big man dives at the others. Eventually everyone just walks away to end this. The post match stuff was three times as long as the match.

Now we look at these three brawling from last week.

Chris Jericho vs. Lizmark Jr.

Jericho comes out with a dog collar around his neck and a long chain attached. Before the match, Jericho talks about training for the collar match with monks in Nepal and wants to make this a collar match. Tony: "There's been too much talk and not enough wrestling here." Lizmark puts the collar on as you can see a bunch of empty seats opppsite the camera. That's a really bad sign but shouldn't be surprising at all given how the show has gone so far.

Tony explains some new stipulations to Hogan vs. Flair: if Flair wins he's President for life but if he loses, his career ends. Jericho chokes with a chain to start before wrapping it around his knee and driving it into Lizmark's head. Lizmark gets tied up with the chain for two and an ax handle with the chain around Jericho's hands knocks him to the floor. The masked man goes up top but dives into a chain shot to the face, setting up the Lioneater for the submission.

Rating: D. This was just a preview for Sunday so the idea was there but this is what we're seeing halfway through the show. The entire show is a waste at this point and there's almost nothing that is going to save this mess. I'm not usually a fan of gimmick matches being used to preview another gimmick match and this was no exception.

Here's a look at Goldberg and Flair from earlier.

TV Title: Booker T. vs. Scott Steiner

Before the match, Steiner says no one here in Worcester or anywhere else in the world could ever duplicate his physique. Tony downgrades Booker's status from #1 contender to the US Title to #1 contender to the TV Title. Steiner hammers him down but gets caught by a forearm to the head. A spinning kick to the face puts Steiner down and another sends him out to the floor.

Back in after a meeting with Buff and Steiner easily takes Booker down with a nice amateur move. A low blow stops Booker's comeback and the referee shouts to watch the low blows. I'd still like to know when those stopped being a disqualification. They head outside with Booker getting whipped into the barricade as the fans chant STER0IDS at Scott. Tony says the referee is staying inside because he's intimidated by Steiner. That actually makes sense as we've established that countouts and DQ's don't really count in WCW anymore, so why wouldn't he go out there for a better view?

We take a break and come back with Steiner still in control and driving knees in the corner. He choies Booker with his knee while covering but gets small packaged for two. A butterfly suplex gets two for Scott but Booker nails him with a clothesline. There's the ax kick followed by the side kick, but Steiner distracts the referee so Bagwell can crotch Booker on the top rope. The Recliner retains Scott's title as Booker passes out.

Rating: C. The match was ok but WCW continues their start and go pushes. Booker beats Bret in a great match then loses to Bagwell and Steiner on consecutive shows. There's been no mention made of Booker getting his US Title shot on Sunday so odds are that's been either forgotten or canceled. Granted it's not like they're doing anything else right at the moment.

Steiner blasts Booker with a chair after the match.

Nitro Girls as Tony reads the house show (his words) ads.

Now, just to really hammer in the suck, it's a Jerry Flynn interview but Sonny Onoo interrupts. Sonny offers to buy him off to avoid the match on Sunday but Ernest Miller jumps him. They cut off Jerry's ponytail.

Scott Norton vs. Rey Mysterio Jr.

There are now more empty seats visible than there were before. Norton runs Rey over to start and hits a short arm clothesline. After being sent to the floor, Rey comes back in and gets caught in a release suplex. Norton launches him out to the floor again as the beating continues. Rey fights out of a powerbomb but gets dropped face first onto the turnbuckle. Much like Bigelow last week, Norton pulls him up at two before hitting a one handed gorilla press. I don't mean he lifts him up with two hands then drops one. I mean he lifted Mysterio over his head with one hand. Then Rey kicks him low and gets a pin. It was that fast.

Rating: D+. That one handed press slam was awesome but that's about it. The rest of the match was a squash as I don't think Rey had any other offense besides the low blow and a few punches to escape the powerbomb. The giant killer angle may not produce good matches but the endings are entertaining.

More Nitro Girls.

Another video on building the cage with some narration by

Flair.

Van Hammer vs. Bret Hart

Hammer takes him down to the mat with a headlock before we hit a test of strength. Bret grabs a wristlock but Hammer comes back with some very uninspired brawling. Hart of course comes back with a low blow because that's as common as a headlock in this company anymore.

We hit the Figure Four on Van before Bret wraps the leg around the ropes. A backslide gets two for Hammer but Bret goes right back to the leg. He bends the leg around the post but Hammer counters the Figure Four around the steel. Back in and Bret gets suplexed followed by a cobra clutch slam for two. Hammer misses an enziguri and the Sharpshooter ends it.

Rating: D. WAY too long here for a Bret squash. Hammer was just a guy for him to beat up and the leg work got a bit boring after awhile. By the way, this match is pretty much meaningless at the moment as Bret isn't even on the card Sunday. Why we're spending ten minutes on a match that doesn't build up Sunday is an interesting question, but it's really low on the totem of things this show has done wrong.

Tony says this has been a hard hitting three hours. Not only has it been two and a half hours, but this has hit about as hard as a baby rabbit's left hook.

Hogan and Nash come to the broadcast booth, sending Heenan and Tenay running off. They don't have much to say but they'll be doing commentary on the main event.

Ric Flair vs. Goldberg

Goldberg easily shoves him down a few times to start and there's a gorilla press to boot. Flair starts to walk out but Goldberg carries him back to the ring. Tony: "How many men have accomplished so much in less than two years?" Nash:

"There was some cat from the Emerald City that did a lot but I don't remember what happened to him." Back in and Flair hits him low a few times before hammering away in the corner. A third low blow stops Goldberg's comeback and it's time to go for the leg.

The Figure Four goes on quickly and Flair grabs the ropes. Oh yeah he's turning soon. Goldberg turns it over to escape and starts no selling the chops. He drops Flair with a clothesline and a Flair Flip puts Ric on the floor. Back in and the spear hits the buckle, allowing Flair to nail a suplex. Goldberg pops right back up and hits the spear, drawing in the NWO for the DQ.

Rating: C-. The match was decent enough but you knew the run-in was coming as soon as Hogan and Nash sat in on commentary. There was no way either guy was jobbing here as Goldberg is Goldberg and Flair is in the main event in six days. It didn't help that the match was exactly what you would expect from these two.

Hogan and Nash come in as well to help beat down Goldberg and Flair to end the show.

Overall Rating: F. Here's the thing: I had it easier than most with this because I could fast forward the two opening interviews with Anderson/Flair and Hogan, plus a lot of the music videos and t-shirt ads. That made the first hour last about fifteen minutes, a lot of which included the Blonde in various revealing outfits. It wasn't very hard, though only because I suffered through Thunder and could fast forward.

Now that being said, if I watched the first hour live, I'd have been looking into the quickest and most painless form of suicide. The first hour was one of the worst ideas I've ever seen and accomplished absolutely nothing. It was a bunch of recaps and some angle that we didn't hear referenced for the rest of the night that revolved around David Flair.

That brings us to the rest of the show, which was somehow even worse. Let's start with the matches. I'm tempted to write off Raven vs. Hak as not being a match as it was barely given any time and was just there for a table spot. Other than that we had a squash gimmick match, a long TV Title match (good for match of the night), another squash with a fluke ending, a ten minute Bret squash, and eight minutes of waiting for the NWO to run in. That's not really a night worth watching.

Even if you wrote the first hour completely off, the last two hours made for a horrible show. It's a bunch of bad wrestling, annoying segments, uninteresting build for matches and almost nothing I'd be interested in seeing. The best part about it is Raw wasn't even very good this week. It was mainly spent building up Wrestlemania but did feature Mankind/Austin vs. Rock/Big Show. Goldberg vs. Flair is big, but it's not worth sitting through two hours and forty five minutes of drek.

This is pretty high up on the list of worst wrestling shows of all time but it's a rare case where watching online is FAR better than watching live. This would have driven me crazy watching it on TV as it doesn't add anything to Uncensored and doesn't have anything on its own. Uncensored is basically WCW saying "Remember that horrible show from three weeks ago with bad wrestling and annoying booking? Now you get to pay the same price for bad wrestling and maybe some better booking!" WWF was starting to pull away, but a lot of it had nothing to do with what they were doing.

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