

Monday Nitro – May 8, 2000: I Bet They Can't Even Spell DQ

Monday Nitro #239

Date: May 8, 2000

Location: Trans World Dome, St. Louis, Missouri

Attendance: 6,545

Commentators: Scott Hudson, Mark Madden, Tony Schiavone

Sanity. I beg of you, let there be some sanity on this show. We're FINALLY past the David Arquette title scene, meaning it's time to start the build to Ric Flair vs. Jeff Jarrett for the World Title at the Great American Bash. Last night's show was pretty much a disaster, which you could actually argue as a major upgrade. There might even be rules tonight! Let's get to it.

By the way: the Trans World Dome has a capacity of 66,000 people. Whoever decided to book this building needs to be shot.

We open with a recap from last night which doesn't work in a minute long package either.

Page is sitting next to Canyon's hospital bed with Canyon in a halo. The New Blood came in and destroyed Page because, as Punk said on Raw that one time, security around here sucks. Kimberly emptied a bedpan on him because that kind of stuff is funny you see.

The Millionaire's Club's bus arrives. You can hear Flair talking about wrestling history in this city from here.

Here's the New Blood, complete with David Arquette in a yellow suit and matching fur coat, to open things up. Bischoff goes through the entire plan of being in league with Arquette the whole time and how they handed Page and then Arquette the title just because they felt like it. So in other words, they did this whole thing for the sake of having fun and were willing to just drop the title because they were bored one day?

Bischoff says he did it to get under the skin of the internet wrestling fans who all thought it was a disgrace to have Arquette win the title. He wanted to royally screw Page. So....he made him World Champion? Arquette does the big over the top heel speech about how you can't trust anyone from Hollywood and he roped Page in and became World Champion. Jarrett brags a bit and we cut to the back to see Page arriving. Kimberly says it's all about her and rips open her coat to reveal very little clothing aside from a purple sports bra with ME written on it. Bischoff: "It's all about....her!"

Awesome makes fun of Kanyon being crippled and here's Page for the brawl. House is cleaned and Arquette takes a Diamond Cutter, only to have Jarrett, Awesome and Cat come back in for the beatdown. This brings out Sting to clean house, which draws in Bagwell/Douglas (confirmed as the champions. It only took five days to figure that out, but Kronik cancels them out and the Millionaire's Club stands tall.

Post break, Bischoff makes Awesome vs. Page in a stretcher match and Sting vs. Jarrett in a title match.

Hardcore Title: Ralphus/Norman Smiley vs. Terry Funk

Funk is defending and Norman/Ralphus are fired if they lose. Norman sends Ralphus after Funk first and it works even worse than you would expect it to. The champ knocks Norman into the crowd and they quickly fight into the back with Smiley jumping into a golf cart to chase Funk around.

Terry gets on the back of the card and they go crashing into some crates. This is eerily reminiscent of Kane vs. Raven vs. Big Show at Wrestlemania XVII. They wind up in the kitchen and start beating each other over the head with cookie sheets. Ralphus joins them and gets beaten down all over again. Funk pounds them both down with a sheet and gets the pin to retain.

Rating: C. Oh come on how can you not love Ralphus? It's a stupid match and a stupid idea that needs to die already but I had a good time with this due to them cutting it down to about four minutes instead of the ten minutes they went at Slamboree. This was one of the more entertaining hardcore matches with the golf cart as a funny idea. Norman and Ralphus

have potential.

The announcers talk about David Flair turning on his dad.

Ric tells Luger that he has to deal with David on his own.

Here's Ric to talk about how Terry Funk told him if he wanted to be a big star, he had to make it to St. Louis on a Friday night. He holds up the NWA World Heavyweight Title (held by Naoya Ogawa at this point) and talks about first seeing it around the waist of Jack Brisco and they gave every single thing they had to be the biggest stars in the world. Then that title went away and the current World Title (Flair holds up a bad looking copy) took its place. "Jarrett, it was mine before it was yours."

All of this gold means nothing though when you compare it to what happened last night. Ric wants David to come out here right now and apologize for what he did and be his own man instead of trying to be Ric Flair. Cue David and Daffney but Russo quickly joins them. Last night, Russo spat in the face of a long list of people who stand for tradition. Of course he has an actual list and the top name is Ric himself. Now David is standing next to the father that he never had.

Ric tells David that they discussed this when he got in the business a year ago. He told David that people would pull him aside and try to manipulate him. David says he's angry at Ric (he doesn't say dad) and Russo wants to make father vs. son at the Great American Bash. Ric pulls out his phone and says he'll call Vince McMahon right now and have David on Raw next week. David hugs Ric, who goes after Russo, only to have David hit Ric with another Statute of Liberty. The angle is good and interesting, but as usual it's all about making Russo look good.

Post break, Ric says he's had it and leaves.

Here's Chuck Palumbo to Luger's (the announcers are using the name again) entrance to introduce himself. He calls out Luger so here's Lex to clean house. Russo and Bischoff's security comes out to kidnap Liz (again?) but Luger goes after them, allowing Palumbo to hit Lex with the exercise bar. Liz is taken away.

Post break Russo yells at Liz and puts her in her first ever match against Daffney. If Liz wins, she can go with Luger.

Shawn Stasiak vs. Captain Rection

Stasiak runs down Mark McGwire for some easy heat. Rection shrugs off some early offense and pounds down right hands in the corner. Cue Miss Hancock to watch as Hennig comes down to shove Stasiak out of the way of a splash. The PerfectPlex gives Stasiak the pin.

Kevin Nash comes out and destroys Stasiak with a big boot and Jackknife. Nash wants Russo to come out here and face him tonight because he didn't kill Nash last night. Instead he gets the Filthy Animals with Kidman saying that Nash is low on the scrotum pole (censored when Kidman says it, not censored when Madden repeats it).

Last night Kidman got rid of Hogan and tonight he'd be glad to get rid of another giant. Konnan says screw the Wolfpac and Nash's over the top shocked face is rather funny. Rey gets in a bat shot to Nash's knee but Hogan (Madden: "Oh no not again.") makes the save. Nash grabs the mic and issues a challenge for a street fight tonight. Hogan says first they have to take a Russo and wipe their Bischoff. I bet he spent all day coming up with that line.

Mike Awesome vs. Diamond Dallas Page

Stretcher match. Bischoff and Kimberly are here for commentary. Page is on Awesome during the entrance and they're quickly on the floor. He throws Mike onto the announcers' table but Awesome comes back with a right hand to the head as they go inside. They miss a few shots until Page finally nails a big clothesline.

A DDT drops Mike again but Kimberly wants Page to sign the divorce papers RIGHT NOW. Awesome gets in a cheap shot and DDT's Page on a chair twice in a row. Page gets off the stretcher though so Awesome hits him with a chair to bust him open. A powerbomb puts Page through the table and Bischoff has Page sign the papers in his own blood before putting him on the stretcher for the win.

Rating: D+. I wasn't wild on this one as it was much more story than a match but at least they gave it some time (well time by this era's standards) for a change. The stuff with Kimberly is fine but again it comes off like a way to have Bischoff next to a gorgeous woman instead of any valid storyline reason.

Russo asks Steiner for protection tonight but Steiner blows him off. Post break Russo is asking Tank Abbott.

Jarrett says he'll win tonight.

Here are Steiner and the girls with something to say. Steiner talks about beating Rection last night and he found one of his own with the girls at the hotel. After some more sex talk, Steiner calls out that amoeba Booker T. Tank Abbott comes in from behind and knocks Steiner out cold.

Sting says he'll win tonight.

Harlem Heat vs. Kronik vs. Harris Twins vs. Mamalukes

Elimination rules. Adams and Clark have the title belts so Bagwell and Douglas to watch. Kronik fights off all six men until it's one of the Twins in the ring. Clark takes him down with a top rope clothesline but let's cut to Steiner in the back shouting for Tank. Schiavone: "He may be looking for Tank Abbott!" Everyone gets in for another big brawl but Adams hits an F5 for the pin on Vito to even things up a bit more. A big boot takes out Don and it's 2-2 so Bagwell and Douglas try to help. Harlem Heat double teams Clark down but Cash screws up, leaving High Times to knock Big T. silly and give Kronik the win.

Rating: D. This was another big mess that didn't get anywhere because it was too much going on. Kronik is clearly getting the titles soon and it's a good thing to get them off the transitional champions as fast as possible. It also goes to show you how far the division has fallen recently, but at least the Twins are just another team.

Scott Steiner comes out and beats up whoever is in his way before calling out Russo and Abbott. A lot of swearing sends us to the back where Tank is telling someone to get this right. Back from a break and Goldberg's

music plays. Steiner looks bored and it's Tank Abbott doing Goldberg's entrance. Tank gets caught in a t-bone suplex followed by a belly to belly before Steiner mounts him with a choke. Rick Steiner returns through the crowd and helps Tank beat him down.

Russo tells someone to be on standby.

Elizabeth vs. Daffney

Liz is in camo pants and a black t-shirt and starts catfighting. Cue Madusa about thirty seconds in to attack Liz, so I guess Liz is free. Granted she'll be kidnapped again next week.

Mona comes in to brawl with Madusa but Madusa slams her down and stands on her hair. The bell rings roughly 200 times as Madusa beats Mona down, only to have Liz blast Madusa with a chair. Russo and Bischoff's security kidnap Liz again as they're in a hurry this week.

Hulk Hogan/Kevin Nash vs Filthy Animals/Mike Awesome

Street fight. Tony says the previous match was thrown out but I'm the kind of wrestling fan who believes that it's a DQ when someone comes out to attack a single wrestler so we'll say it's a bad continuity error. It's 4-2 (Konnan/Mysterio/Kidman/Awesome) to start but Juvy walks out a few seconds in. The old guys take over to start but Hogan gets lured to the back. Horace attacks Awesome but the Animals have attacked Hogan with ball bats (he didn't go off his feet) and thrown him in the trunk of a car. Back in the arena, Nash gives Juvy one heck of a Jackknife as the street fight is thrown out.

The Animals start driving Hogan away but get cut off by Goldberg's monster truck. Goldberg isn't seen and Hogan gets out of the trunk post break.

WCW World Title: Jeff Jarrett vs. Sting

Jarrett is defending of course. Sting starts fast with some Japanese armdrags of all things, followed by a clothesline to put the champ on the floor. A suplex from the floor puts Jeff on the ramp (that's a new one) but Sting misses a top rope splash. Jeff goes after the knee with a chair

as Tony wonders why Jarrett didn't want this to be a title match. Sting gets a big running start down the ramp and dives over the top with a clothesline. So much for the chair shots to the knee.

Jeff didn't get the idea though and puts on the Figure Four until Sting rolls over to break it up. Sting makes his comeback and cleans house. The Scorpion comes on but Vampiro comes up through the ring with smoke coming out of the hole. Vampiro pulls Sting through the hole and the fans are LIVID. Vampiro pulls Sting, now covered with the red liquid, through the hole to give Jeff the pin. So Madusa coming after Liz is enough to throw a match out but someone pulling a wrestler THROUGH THE RING isn't?

Rating: D+. This was as good of a wrestling match as you were going to get before the screwy ending. Jarrett and Sting are a good example of a pair who doesn't need any kind of outside stuff to have a good match and the fans were right to be upset due to that ending. It was straight out of Kane's (as in what Kane did like a week before this was written fifteen years later. That's sad) playbook and that's not going to fly in an old school down like St. Louis.

New Blood comes out and goes after Sting but here are Hogan and Nash. We cut to the back to see the Goldberg truck destroying Tank Abbott and Rick Steiner's car to end the show.

Overall Rating: C-. Of course that's on an extremely sliding scale at this point. This was by far the best Russo and Bischoff show yet as it actually had some structure. It went from story to story and it didn't feel like I needed note cards to keep track of what was going on. Above all else though, Arquette was taking a backseat to the real wrestlers and not doing anything overly stupid. This flowed so much better as a show and you could tell what was going on, which is more than you can say for most of their shows.

Now that doesn't make it a good show of course. As usual, there's still WAY too much Russo and Bischoff, as well as way too much going on in a single show. I still feel like I just watched three weeks of stories in two hours, but the stories made better sense and had some structure instead of all the insanity.

Above all else though, the show isn't one major story. The show is built around the New Blood vs. Millionaire's Club, but it feels like a bunch of parts of that story instead of one big idea that keeps going all night long. Finally, it's also not a good sign that they couldn't make it a week without changing Flair's plan for the pay per view, but Heaven forbid we get a match built up for that long. The idea of Russo having to fill that much time is terrifying. Much better show this week, but I have no faith for them to keep it going.

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Thunder – May 3, 2000: Rules? Where We're Going We Don't Need Rules

Thunder

Date: May 3, 2000

Location: Mid-South Coliseum, Memphis, Tennessee

Attendance: 3,979

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mike Tenay, Bobby Heenan

It's the go home show for Slamboree and David Arquette is still World

Champion. They've done a horrible job of setting up the triple cage match as the gimmick has barely been mentioned outside of a video on it early in the buildup. Instead it's all about David Arquette, who wouldn't prove to be the strongest draw. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

The Millionaire's Club and others (including Hugh Morrus) are outside waiting on the New Blood. Another car comes up and the low level New Blood members get jumped.

After a Slamboree ad, Russo and Bischoff yell at the rest of the team for not protecting them. So....this is going to be one of those shows about the two of them.

Here's the New Blood for a chat. Oh yeah it's a one note show. Russo immediately calls out the Millionaire's Club and gets his wish, plus pretty much every other face on the roster. Tonight he wants the Club destroyed so he's going to throw their names in a hat and let each member of the New Blood pull one out. Well it's official: the booking is now pulling names out of a hat.

As for tonight, it's New York Rules: no referees or referees whatsoever. It's Russo's dream show: no wrestling and just all out carnage. It's like he doesn't have to do anything at all! Flair loves the idea and promises to take it to Russo tonight. A brawl ensues with Russo and Bischoff running off with Liz. Wait wasn't she freed on Monday?

Jeff Jarrett vs. Chris Kanyon

Before the match, Kimberly grabs a mic and says that Bischoff has shown her the light: Page is a bar bouncing bum from nowheresville and he's just a wrestling mark. Cue Kanyon to start the brawl in the aisle as the announcers explain that you count your own pins here. Jeff takes over by dropping Kanyon across the barricade and kneeling him in the face. Back in and Jarrett walks into a Russian legsweep, followed by a top rope Fameasser.

They head back outside with Jarrett sending him into the steps and over

the barricade. A chair shot to the back staggers Canyon but he grabs a neckbreaker back inside. Cue DDP's music and what felt like some clipping. Like, his music hit and then he was just in the ring almost instantly. A Diamond Cutter to Jarrett lets Canyon count his pin.

Rating: D. From what I can find online, the reason for the clipping was due to Page hitting Kimberly with a guitar when she tried to interfere, which also explains why he came out when Canyon was in control. As for the match, it was pretty much the same thing WCW has been doing for weeks now because referees haven't meant a thing for a long time. They just brawled for a little while and then had interference as always. It's pretty telling that it doesn't seem any different when the rules are thrown out. How screwy has this place been if chaos feels like the norm?

Wall picks out his name.

The Wall vs. Total Package

Tables match because of course it is. Russo comes out with Liz because this show is all about him. It also allows Wall to get in some cheap shots but that's just a nice effect. Cue Ric Flair to sit in on commentary and promise to keep Russo out of things. Luger gets kneed in the ribs and stopped with a backbreaker. That's about it for Wall on offense though as Luger comes back with every single standard Luger move that you've ever seen.

They fight outside with Luger yelling at Russo, allowing Wall to get in a shot from behind. Wall and Luger head back inside as Russo hits Flair with the bat. Now how did he not see that coming? Luger Racks Wall but Russo hits Luger with the back as well, making Luger drop Wall through the table for the win. In the match with no rules but a tables stipulation which I guess you call yourself.

Rating: D. It's a Russo night for sure. Here we have another tables match for Wall and he loses again because that's all he does after weeks of being built up as an unstoppable monster. That's the logical progression right? Unstoppable to loser in the span of a month? In Russo's booking, that's slow motion.

Russo asks Flair if he wants a match now. Flair gets inside and Russo hides behind Liz, only to get kicked low. Flair puts on the Figure Four but Douglas and Bagwell make the save, only to be beaten down by Kronik. This brings out Kidman, who drew Flair's name.

Ric Flair vs. Kidman

This is joined in progress with Flair punching away in the corner. Tony: "If you're keeping score at home and I know that you are." You have to be at this point. Kidman gets in a few shots of his own and superplexes Flair. They fight near a table at ringside but save it for later. A slingshot legdrop keeps Flair in trouble but Kidman's top rope splash completely misses.

Cue Konnan and Mysterio to beat down Flair but here's Nash to probably beat them down and shave their heads with one arm tied behind his back and two broken legs. Kidman runs as Konnan gets Jackknifed, only to have Hogan knock Kidman off the stage. I'm assuming the match is thrown out.

Mike Awesome runs to the ring but gets double teamed by Nash and Hogan. That really shouldn't surprise you as he might make them break a sweat and must be destroyed immediately. Nash Jackknifes Awesome and declares Awesome the winner due to outside interference.

Diamond Dallas Page vs. Vampiro

Sting jumps Vampiro from behind, beats him up, covers him in blood and throws him in for the Diamond Cutter in less than a minute.

The New Blood is all shook up.

The Millionaire's Club on the other hand is rather pleased.

Mike Awesome vs. Sting

Now normally this would be an interesting match. Here I'll be shocked if it goes three minutes before someone interferes. Awesome sells the Jackknife on the way to the ring. Mike is right on Sting when he gets to the ring and slams him down, followed by a splash for two. Sting fights back and knocks Awesome to the floor, where the Misfits In Action jump

the barricade and beat him up. Back in and the Stinger Splash and Scorpion make Awesome tap. What a way for a face to get a win.

Scott Steiner is the last New Blood guy to go tonight so Russo tells him to make it work. Steiner says he's doing this for himself.

Scott Steiner vs. Hulk Hogan

Non-title. This should have headlined a pay per view. The announcers are shocked that Steiner is calling Hogan out, even though Hogan is the only Millionaire left. Steiner promises to go see Hogan's wife after the show. Not even Steiner is that crazy. Steiner is on Hogan as he gets in the ring but Hulk comes back with right hands and a clothesline. They fight into the crowd where Hugh Morrus shows up to help Hogan. Back in the ring and Steiner calls in the troops but no one comes to help him and Scott walks for the countout.

Steiner swears a lot in the back and chokes Russo and Bischoff.

A new limo pulls up with FUNB on the license plate.

Kronik vs. Shane Douglas/Buff Bagwell

Wait is this a title match? Also there better not be a single tag in this whole thing. It's a brawl to start with Douglas doing a reverse Hennig neck snap on Adams. Douglas gets caught in something like an F5 but Adams puts him down in more like a DDT instead of a full body plant. Clark side slams Bagwell in the ring but Buff comes back with the Blockbuster (Tony: "Whatever it is."). Adams makes the save and it's High Times for the pin. Tony: "Are they the champions? We might have to wait until Slamboree to find out!"

Rating: D. I'm going to assume Kronik didn't win the titles here because that would be one of the more logical things WCW could do and logic has no place in WCW these days. Bagwell and Douglas are such lame champions that I often forget they even have the titles. This was one of the more coherent matches of the night so far and it really wasn't very good.

Bischoff says he has an idea.

Here's the New Blood in the ring, all armed with weapons. Bischoff gets right to the point and asks if the fans want guerrilla warfare. Cue Flair and the Millionaire's Club so Bischoff asks if they want an 11 on 11 man war. Flair says the Club has nothing left to prove tonight but if Bischoff wants to make it a battle royal for the World Title shot at the Great American Bash, so be it.

Battle Royal

Ric Flair, Sting, Brian Adams, Bryan Clark, Horace Hogan, Diamond Dallas Page, Hugh Morrus, Canyon, Total Package, Curt Hennig, Hulk Hogan, Shawn Stasiak, Jeff Jarrett, Vampiro, Mike Awesome, Scott Steiner, Buff Bagwell, Shane Douglas, Chris Candido, Kidman, The Wall, The Cat

It's a huge brawl to start of course and there are no referees so I guess we're going on the honor system. We're nearly three minutes in now and here come Konnan, Bam Bam Bigelow, Disco Inferno, Johnny the Bull, Big Vito, the Harris Twins, Norman Smiley and all three members of Harlem Heat to get us up to thirty two people in the ring at once.

Horace is the first man eliminated and there are now referees on the floor because WCW can't keep its rules straight for a whole night. Tank Abbott slowly comes to the ring as Flair is on the floor hitting Shane with a pipe. You would think they would eliminate a few people here but that's too complicated around here. Canyon gets backdropped out and there's still no way to do any play by play with thirty people in the ring. Stasiak dumps Hennig and the ring is still so full that almost no one can move.

Kronik is eliminated at the same time off camera and we take a break. Back with the ring still crowded but a little bit better. I'm not even going to try to figure out who was eliminated during the break as most of these guys have no chance anyway. Some of the bigger names have weapons to make it even more complicated. Luger, Bagwell, Sting and Vampiro go out but keep brawling on the floor.

Chavo Guerrero Jr. and Lash Leroux came in at some point and eliminate Vito. Big T. and Van Hammer go out but Asya and Madusa come out to take their places. Mona comes in to join them as the people are starting to

get tired. Cue Jim Duggan of all people as the women and a man we couldn't see are put out. Duggan eliminates Bigelow and the Cat with the 2x4. Smiley and Tank are knocked out as well but Duggan eliminates himself due to high levels of stupid.

So we have Flair, Awesome, Stasiak, Candido, Kidman, Hogan, Jarrett, Douglas, Wall and Page in the ring. That's not enough though as we cut to the FUNB limo and see a pair of boots get out. Naturally the camera just shows boots and we go to a wide shot to show the boots walking on the video screen. The boots make it to the entrance and it's....RANDY SAVAGE. He fires ax handles to the New Blood and puts out Stasiak, Wall and Awesome in about ten seconds.

Candido is tossed a few seconds later but Savage drops to the floor to go after him. I guess that's an elimination. Page Cactus Clotheslines Jarrett to the floor to leave us with Hogan, Flair, Douglas and Kidman. They pair off and here's Bret Hart with a chair to blast Hogan, knocking him through the ropes to the floor. So through the ropes counts? Then why are Flair and Douglas still in? Could it be because the script didn't call for them to be eliminated earlier and rules can be twisted to suit Russo's grand vision?

Bret walks out so it's Flair and Douglas as Kidman is backdropped out. Flair puts Shane in the Figure Four but here's Russo with the ball bat....and he accidentally hits Douglas. I guess being the manliest man that ever lived doesn't include hand eye coordination. Flair uses the bat to knock Shane out for the win and the title shot.

Rating: D. You know what this had me thinking of? The South Park episode where it wound up in a massive lawsuit with everyone vs. everyone. It's total anarchy and you lose track of what's going on. The match started with 22 people and that had nearly doubled with all the people coming in. How am I supposed to care about any of this or let it have any kind of an impact, especially with most of the match consisting of people not being able to move due to the ring being crowded? This is Russo's deal: take away any form of storytelling and just throw them all out there. Such great writing. The big surprises helped but it was too late.

Post match Hogan gets on the steps to suplex Kidman through the announcers' table but Bischoff hits the knee with a ball bat to knock Hogan through it instead. Bischoff counts a three and raises Kidman's hand because that's supposed to mean something. Yeah it's symbolism or something but it's still stupid.

We're STILL not done though as Jarrett and Page climb up the scaffold. The camera cuts to Savage helping Hogan up and they do the handshake. We cut back to Page, who apparently was knocked off the scaffold and through a table. Tony, in a totally calm and rational voice: "Page has been knocked off the scaffolding. We'll see what this means at Slamboree." Just like that. No emotion, no worry, nothing.

The worst part is that wasn't even the original planned ending. From what I've found, Arquette was supposed to hit Jarrett with the guitar and knock him through the stage. However, Asya accidentally stepped through the gimmicked part of the stage and Arquette fell in later, leaving Page to take an unscripted bump through a table. Only in WCW. I mean ONLY in WCW. Who else could screw up something that badly?

Overall Rating: F+. It's another night of non-wrestling with a bunch of short matches that they drew out of a hat. If that's not enough, the last half hour of the show was just taking almost the entire roster and throwing them into one match with no build. As I've said, Russo is the laziest writer I've ever seen as his stories revolve around the idea that everything is all over the place with no structure or build to anything. This didn't make me want to see Sunday's show and felt like something you put on when you forgot you had a show to put on. Bad wrestling, bad writing, bad execution, bad everything this week.

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