

# Monday Nitro – February 26, 2001: Down The Stretch They Come

## Monday Nitro #279

Date: February 26, 2001

Location: Lakefront Arena, New Orleans, Louisiana

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Scott Hudson

We had a pretty good show on Wednesday so maybe we're in for something a bit better than usual this week. The big story is Diamond Dallas Page as the latest great hope against the Magnificent Seven and at least the big match should be better than the mess of Steiner vs. Nash. Let's get to it.

We open with Kronik having been laid out in the back and Doug Dillinger accusing Totally Buff and Team Canada of being behind it. Ric comes in to tell Doug that he's got this. Tony doesn't seem convinced.

Scott Steiner beats up a backstage worker for not knowing where Diamond Dallas Page is. As luck would have it, Page is in the arena and calling Steiner out at the same time. Steiner hits the ring and calls out Page with some insults to the fans. Page is still in the crowd and says he's just playing mind games. One of those guys Steiner beat up and put in the hospital is on his way back here tonight to get a piece of the champ. Page says there's only some Cajun Crazies in between him and Steiner so come get him. Good stuff here from Page as he's easily the best of all the good old boys at this point.

We get the brackets for the Cruiserweight Tag Team Title tournament.

Rey Mysterio Jr./Kidman

Johnny Swinger/Jason Lee

Evan Karagias/Shannon Moore

Jamie Knoble/Scotty O.

Elix Skipper/???

Air Paris/AJ Styles

Jung Dragons

Kwee Wee/Mike Sanders

Cruiserweight Tag Team Title Tournament First Round: Rey Mysterio Jr./Kidman vs. Johnny Swinger/Jason Lee

Lee was a regular in OVW and HWA but never did anything on the national stage. Swinger was in a fairly good tag team with Simon Diamond in ECW. Mysterio and Kidman get jumped as they get in the ring with Lee getting two off a sitout Rock Bottom. Kidman shrugs it off and feeds Lee into Rey but a Lionsault hits raised knees. Swinger poses over Rey and gets two of his own off a swinging neckbreaker.

A collision allows the double tag to bring in Kidman and Lee as everything breaks down. The baseball slide low blow sets up the Bronco Buster for two and Rey clotheslines them both off the apron. Not to be outdone, Kidman hits a shooting star off the top to the floor. Back in and the modified What's Up into the Kid Crusher puts Lee away.

**Rating:** C+. Totally watchable match here, even if the ending was never in doubt. Kidman and Mysterio are the kind of dream team that should win this whole thing or at least make the finals before an upstart heel team cheats to win. Kidman looked like his old self here, which means he was one of the most entertaining things around.

Here's a solemn Cat with something to say. Cat hates Canyon for what he did to Ms. Jones last week and it's going to take everything to get to Canyon with all the people he has to hide behind. It doesn't matter what it takes because Cat will fight through everyone to get his hands on Canyon. Therefore he's stepping down as Commissioner because he can't be accountable for what he does.

This brings out Flair (Which can only refer to Ric again since that whole

“David is kidnapped” thing was dropped without any real resolution.) to say Cat is finally getting it. Cat can’t beat them or join them so all he can do is whatever Flair says. He can have Canyon at Greed so Cat tells him to get away. Flair wants to deal with Cat himself and there goes the jacket. Cat hits some horrible looking shots to an area around the collarbone and knocks Flair to the floor. Ric makes Cat vs. Rick Steiner for tonight.

Konnan, talking to someone off camera, is ready to find some soldiers to fight the Magnificent Seven.

### Sean O’Haire/Chuck Palumbo vs. Mike Awesome/Lance Storm

Non-title. Before the match, Sean accuses the Canadians of attacking Kronik. Storm and Awesome aren’t afraid of the threats of murder so we’re joined in progress after a break. Palumbo jumps over Sean’s shoulders to land on Awesome’s ribs so it’s off to Storm, who is thrown down with a fall away slam.

The Canadians are smart enough to double team Palumbo in the corner to take over but Lex Luger’s entrance music plays to distract them. During the confusion, Canyon sneaks in and hits a Flatliner on O’Haire. Heel miscommunication (with Storm leaving a leg lariat short and landing at Awesome’s feet) doesn’t cause many problems as Storm grabs the Mapleleaf on Palumbo for the win.

**Rating:** D+. Can Lex Luger just go away? He wasn’t even here and he’s still getting annoying. I’m not sure I understand where they were going with this idea but I’m sure it’s going to lead to some faction war because that’s what WCW does these days. At least O’Haire didn’t take the loss here as it seems they have plans for him instead of just treating him like another guy.

O’Haire wants Canyon tonight.

Flair tells Canyon to go get him.

Earlier today, Page said Steiner isn’t taking his legs and talked about breaking Steiner down mentally.

## Rick Steiner vs. The Cat

Non-title again. Steiner clotheslines him down for an early two and they head outside to avoid any more of this wrestling stuff. Back in and Rick kicks him in the face before hitting the chinlock. Rick rips away at the face until Cat hits some kicks and a legsweep for one. The referee goes down so Cat hits an enziguri to send Rick outside. That means it's time for our hero to choke with a cord, drawing out Totally Buff for the save. As they should as that was ridiculous cheating. Hugh Morrus comes out for the save and a Feliner puts Rick away.

**Rating:** D. Of all the people they could have put over Rick, they picked the Cat? I really don't get the love affair with the guy as they seem to think Cat is the greatest thing that has happened to WCW in years. He's good on the mic but at some point you have to have a good match. Not a great one, but you would think he would have at least cracked good in the years he's been around here.

Scott Steiner runs in for the beatdown and Page's save attempt fails. This brings out the returning Booker T. to go after Scott as the good guys clear the ring. After some weak insults from Scott, Booker throws out a challenge for a six man tag.

## Booker T./The Cat/Diamond Dallas Page vs. Scott Steiner/Totally Buff

Did Morrus just dissolve? Flair jumps in on commentary as the good guys control to start. Things settle down with Cat uppercutting Buff in the throat and Page getting two off a Batista Bomb. It's off to Luger and Booker with the latter hitting a hook kick to the air next to Luger's face for two. Cat comes back in (not a good idea) and Luger takes him down with the running forearm.

The bad guys take turns on Cat, including Scott getting in a chair shot to the face. We hit the double arm crank minus any actual cranking which sets up missed tag. Cat finally hits a jumping kick to Luger's jaw and the hot tag brings in Page, who is cut off just as quickly. Luger's powerslam getting two doesn't agree with Flair. A double clothesline allows the real hot tag to Booker as everything breaks down.

Scott and Booker have the big slugout with Booker getting the better of it and scoring with a missile dropkick for two. We get the return of the Spinarooni but Totally Buff beats Booker down. Cat gets caught in the Recliner but there's a Diamond Cutter to Steiner. Buff gets in a Blockbuster on Page but he walks into the Bookend. A quick ax kick puts Steiner away.

**Rating:** B. Cat aside, this was a wrestling match which got time and stayed hot during the entire second half. It's so rare to see the wrestling actually being treated like something serious and setting up a potential challenger to the World Title. I had a good time with this match and Booker looked sharp in his return.

Back from a break and Scott is livid, wrecking everything he can find.

The good guys are proud of their win.

We recap Dustin Rhodes vs. Jeff Jarrett which seems to be more about Dusty Rhodes than anything else. Dustin turned down a spot in the Magnificent Seven so the team started going after him. This included Jarrett imitating Dusty in an unfunny segment last week to further set Dustin off. They fight tonight.

Dustin is ready to get his revenge.

#### Shannon Moore vs. Shane Helms

Evan Karagias is in Shannon's corner. Shane starts very fast with a TKO onto the knee and a neckbreaker for no cover. A running sitout powerbomb out of the corner (dubbed the Sugar Bomb for a stupid name) gets two on Shannon but he kicks Shane to the floor for some cheap shots from Evan. Back in and a Whisper in the Wind gets two for Shannon but the Bottoms Up is countered into the Vertebreaker for the quick pin.

**Rating:** C+. This could have gone longer but the short time forced them to cram in everything they could into just a few minutes. Shane is getting a lot of well earned praise around this time but Shannon has been on a very strong roll of his own. I could have done with more of this and less of Evan but we seem to be stuck with him for some reason.

Chavo Guerrero Jr. comes out for the beatdown and leaves with Evan and Shannon.

Kid Romeo is still coming.

### Kanyon vs. Sean O'Haire

O'Haire sneaks in from behind and crossbodies Kanyon to the floor as this feels more like a fight. Back in and Sean slowly hammers away until Kanyon hits him low in the corner. A middle rope Russian legsweep puts both of them down but O'Haire no sells a middle rope Fameasser. Kanyon misses a top rope splash, only to grab a sitout Alabama Slam for two. O'Haire throws him up in a fireman's carry and something like a reverse AA (O'Haire slammed him back down instead of flipping him over. You might remember it as the Widowmaker in his WWE run.), followed by the Seanton Bomb for the pin.

**Rating:** C+. More good stuff here as this has been one of the best shows they've had in a long time. O'Haire looking good is a very smart idea as WCW desperately needed to set up some guys for the future. Sean is one of the best possible ideas as he has the look, the energy and (most of) the in ring ability. It's not like they have many other options anyway.

The post match replay shows Booker pinning Scott by mistake.

### Dustin Rhodes vs. Jeff Jarrett

Ric is guest referee and we get a quick Dusty impression from Jarrett before Dustin comes out. Dustin is as mad as you would expect him to be and knocks Jarrett to the floor to start. Ric won't allow some right hands in the corner though and Jeff cheap shots Rhodes to take over. They head outside with Dustin hammering away even more, followed by a superplex for the slow two count.

Ric low bridges Dustin to the floor and we get the sleeper reversal sequence to check that box off the list. Dustin's powerslam sets up a piledriver for the next slow motion two. That's finally enough for Dustin who loads up Shattered Dreams to Flair but has to block the guitar shot. Ric hits Dustin low and the Stroke gives Jeff the pin.

**Rating:** D. I wasn't feeling this one with the old crooked referee stuff throughout the match. It also doesn't help that Dustin vs. Jarrett is the least interesting story they have going on the show right now. I don't know why I'm supposed to care about Dustin Rhodes and the family feud with Flair all over again but it's really not working, especially with Dustin not exactly lighting the world on fire.

Page, Cat and Booker chase the villains off to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** B. There's a fresh energy here and while I have zero reason to believe it's going to last, this was a very easy show to watch. The wrestling worked very well throughout with the main event alone holding it back. The cruiserweights were on point all night and the six man was one of the better matches they've done in a long time. Good show here and hopefully they can keep it up over the next month.

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# Thunder – February 21, 2001: It's So Easy

## Thunder

Date: February 21, 2001

Location: Von Braun Civic Center, Huntsville, Alabama

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Tony Schiavone

It's hard to believe we've got less than a month to go. The last pay per view is called Greed because the wrestling universe is funny that was. Earlier this week we found out that Diamond Dallas Page was the next challenger for Scott Steiner, mainly because there's pretty much no one left to do it. Let's get to it.

We open with Kwee Wee issuing an open challenge. Brace yourselves.

### Kwee Wee vs. Kaz Hayashi

Kaz is ready to go here and kicks Kwee Wee to the floor for a big flip dive. Back in and it's Angry Alan time as Kwee Wee punches Kaz down and suplexes him into the corner. The aggression gets toned down a bit with a vertical suplex. Kwee Wee tries a German suplex to complete the trifecta but gets kicked in the chest instead. They head outside with Kwee Wee missing a dive and getting caught in a hurricanrana to send him into the steps. Back in and Kwee Wee gets crotched on the top, setting up a slingshot DDT for the upset (I think?) win.

**Rating:** C+. This was better than I was expecting and a very nice way to open the show. I'm very happy to see one of the cruiserweights finally get a win over anyone other than the same five people and it's not like Kwee Wee has any chance to go anywhere after losing to Mike Sanders.

Post match Kaz gets planted by a piledriver to keep things even.

The Boogie Knights agree to team up one more time to face AJ Styles and Air Paris for an easy win. I think I know where this is going.

Here's Hugh Morrus with something to say. He wants to get his hands on Rick Steiner for what happened to Lash Leroux on Monday (At least that squash wasn't completely pointless) but it's Scott coming out instead. The distraction lets Rick sneak in but a bunch of low level guys run out to chase the Steiners off. You know, like they would ever run away from anyone other than a main eventer.

The Magnificent Seven is here with Flair making some matches for later. Apparently Canyon hangs out with them now but isn't exactly magnificent.

Shawn Stasiak and Mark Jindrak jump Big Vito.

### Air Paris/AJ Styles vs. Boogie Knights

Paris and Wright get things going with Alex knocking him down into the corner. An atomic drop/spinwheel kick combo puts Paris down so it's off to Styles, who is beaten down just as quickly. That means it's time for some Alex dancing and a tag to Disco, whose mere presence sends AJ over for a tag off to Paris. This goes badly too as the Knights are too much for the power of Air.

A missile dropkick Doomsday Device drops Paris again but he's able to punch Disco in the ribs and make the hot tag off to AJ. Styles gets two off a tornado DDT as everything breaks down. AJ takes both of them down with a big flip dive to the floor and Paris does the same to Wright. Back in and AJ hits a high cross body for the pin on Disco and the big upset.

**Rating:** C. You can tell the good guys are still young and in need of ring time but they're also exciting enough to warrant a spot in the upcoming Cruiserweight Tag Team Title tournament. Neither is really setting the world on fire yet but beating a known team, even one as inept as the Knights, will help them a lot.

Kid Romeo is still coming.

### Shawn Stasiak vs. Big Vito

Despite the earlier attack, Stasiak comes out to issue a challenge here. Vito goes right after him to start and easily takes over, likely because he's facing Shawn Stasiak. The suplex and flying elbow get a quick near fall for Big but Shawn pops back up for some lame brawling. Vito kicks him in the head (always works), only to have Shawn grab a neckbreaker for the quick pin.

Crowbar really doesn't like what Jeff Jarrett did to disrespect Dusty Rhodes on Monday. Revenge is promised tonight. After the Terry Funk feud, this really does feel like something Crowbar would do.

Video on Hugh Morrus.

## The Cat/Diamond Dallas Page vs. Canyon/Buf Bagwell

Kanyon brags about Canyon Cutting Page and Miss Jones because he's that awesome of a heel. Cat runs out with a chair to clear the ring before introducing Page like he's a surprise, even though Page was already announced as being in this match. Page and Canyon get things going though Page pauses to hit Bagwell in the face first. Cat comes in to get two off Page's clothesline before Bagwell easily pounds him down in the corner because Cat just isn't that good.

It's back to Page who has some better luck due to being Diamond Dallas Page but the double arm DDT gets two for Bagwell. Some simple double teaming gets two more and Canyon's slingshot elbow gets the same. Page gets in a discus lariat to put Canyon down, allowing the hot tag off to Canyon. Everything breaks down with Page sending Canyon outside and into the crowd, leaving Cat to hit the Feliner for the pin on Bagwell.

## Jeff Jarrett vs. Crowbar

Feeling out process to start before a sitout hiptoss of all things gets two on Jeff. A Lionsault (not the Asai Moonsault Tony) gets the same but Jeff does the sleeper reversal sequence to send Crowbar over the top with a belly to back suplex. Crowbar comes up holding his knee because that happens to every opponent of someone who uses a Figure Four. Some shots to the knee don't do much good as Crowbar gets in some right hands in the corner, followed by a northern lights suplex for two. Not that it matters as Jeff kicks him in the knee again and grabs the Stroke for the pin.

**Rating:** C. This would be Crowbar's last match and it was nice to get to see him have a decent one on his way out. It's also kind of a shame that he's stuck in this role while Dustin Rhodes and Jeff Jarrett get a feud and a pay per view payday out of this because they're both veterans who aren't going to draw anything but why let that get in their way?

Jeff loads up Shattered Dreams but Dustin Rhodes comes out for the save.

Ric tells Rick and Animal to take out Hugh Morrus to keep Scott free tonight.

Long Shane Douglas video, basically saying he hates Flair because Flair wouldn't mentor him as a rookie. That's a fine reason for a face turn, especially considering their real life issues, but Shane Douglas, especially this Shane Douglas, is as natural of a heel as you'll find in WCW.

Sean O'Haire is banned from ringside for the next match. To make things worse, Buff Bagwell gives him a cheap shot.

#### Lex Luger vs. Chuck Palumbo

Before the match, Luger goes on a rant about how Palumbo wanted to be him and how rich he is because of his amazing abilities. A GOLDBERG chant cuts him off but Luger gets back to the point: he and Bagwell are winning the titles. Palumbo runs him over with a clothesline to start but Luger takes it to the floor to beat him down. Some forearms to the back set up the powerslam but Palumbo small packages him for the quick pin as Luger goes to pick him up for the Rack.

**Rating:** D-. This was barely long enough to rate and Luger was his usual self. At least Palumbo won but it would have been nice to see him get in more than two or three bits of offense throughout. This is much more acceptable as long as Luger or Buff lay down for the finisher at Greed and it's not some screwy finish where the young guys get a fluke win.

O'Haire can't wait to hurt Luger and Bagwell. As I had to ask about Goldberg: why is he slumming it with those two? Is this really supposed to be a rub? I know Luger has a great resume but can anyone honestly believe a win over him means something at this point?

Morrus locks Animal and Rick Steiner in a locker room before the main event. Smart big man.

#### Hugh Morrus vs. Scott Steiner

Non-title. Steiner beats him into the corner to start and calls fans white trash while firing off chops. A powerbomb out of the corner drops Morrus and the slow beating continues. Steiner is nice enough to send him outside and then right back in, only to stop to tell a fan that their

mother sucks. Those should be fighting words but Steiner is too busy yelling at a referee.

Morrus gets in a whip into the steps for a breather and a powerslam gets two. This is already far more competitive than the previous match. No Laughing Matter is broken up by an electric chair though and Scott gets in the spinning belly to belly for two. Morrus drops him again but we cut to Rick and Animal breaking out of the locker room. Scott doesn't really need the help though as he belly to belly superplexes Hugh into the Recliner (an even worse version than usual) for the knockout.

**Rating:** C-. Morrus is another guy that I feel a bit sorry for. He was clearly working hard and had a strong enough connection with the crowd to possibly be an upper midcard guy but he's pretty much peaked with back to back pun names. Just let him be called Bill Demott and wrestle his fast paced big man style and he would have been fine. But no, instead let's have him laugh a lot, adding a grand total of nothing to his character.

Post match Steiner loads up the pipe but stops to tell Page to come out here. That's exactly what he gets and a brawl wraps up the show with Rick helping his brother out.

**Overall Rating:** C. This was a really easy show to sit through as the angles were advanced and there wasn't a lot of time spent on talking. I think that's been one of the major things holding back Nitro lately: they talk almost as much as a modern WWE show and it gets really tiring sitting there waiting on the rushed matches to start up. This wasn't anything great but WCW being an easy two hours is a nice improvement for them.

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# Monday Nitro – February 19, 2001: One More Funeral

## Monday Nitro #278

Date: February 19, 2001

Location: Von Braun Civic Center, Huntsville, Alabama

Commentators: Scott Hudson, Tony Schiavone

At this point, I can't imagine they'll ever leave the southeast again. We're past SuperBrawl and as is far too often the case with pay per views, not a lot happened. Scott Steiner retired Kevin Nash which I'm sure means he won't be back whatsoever. We've got less than four weeks until Greed so this is the final time we'll start the build to a pay per view. Let's get to it.

We open with the pay per view recap.

There's some exclusive footage of Nash walking out and driving away from the arena last night. This is far too somber for someone who spent years trying to take over the company.

In the arena, there's a Kevin Nash RIP screen up and here are some people carrying a casket. After they get to the ring, the Magnificent Seven come out in suits (with titles of course) as it's time for a funeral. Flair says we're here tonight to bid farewell to a man who walked as a giant amidst titans. Nash was a once in a lifetime athlete and now his career has come to an end because the Magnificent Seven struck last night.

Now there's no one to stand against them at all because no one can handle

Scott Steiner. Scott says they'll do whatever it takes to succeed because he's the man making history. They're heels in case they haven't spelled it out well enough for you. We get the same list of people that Scott has destroyed and sent to the hospital but apparently they're all scared to come back. As Steiner talks about each victim, the RIP graphic changes appropriately. Scott was willing to let Nash live out the rest of his life at a nice retirement home but then Nash put his hands on the freak.

Now there's one man left for Scott to go after and he's going to show us who that is. The casket is opened and it's Canyon dressed as Diamond Dallas Page. Tonight Buff is going to beat up Cat, Jarrett is going to take out Dustin Rhodes and Canyon can hurt Page but make sure to leave Scott a little piece. Cue Page through the crowd to say he'll take care of Canyon tonight and then get his hands on Steiner at Greed.

Miss Jones congratulates Cat for becoming Commissioner again. To celebrate, Cat makes the Cruiserweight Tag Team Titles and the tournament to crown the first champions starts next week. Well they might as well give the three teams something to fight over to make it seem like they're getting somewhere.

#### Jamie Knoble vs. Shannon Moore

Evan Karagias is here with Knoble. They start fast with some quick headscissors until Shannon misses a charge in the corner. Jamie gets two off a northern lights suplex as the announcers actually talk about the match for a change of pace. A running leg lariat in the corner staggers Jamie and knocks him out to the floor for a big flip dive. Shannon dropkicks him into Evan, who is knocked into the steps. Like almost any wrestler would, Evan blames Knoble and decks him from behind, allowing Shannon to hit Bottoms Up for the pin.

**Rating:** C. More of the same here but at least they might be mixing up the teams a little bit. I can go for the idea of some new teams going into the tournament but it would be nice if they had some new talent instead of the same six guys fighting over and over again. Shannon has been growing on me in the last few weeks and his ring work has been making him stand out, which says a lot given who he has around him.

Konnan and Kidman are ready to take out Animal and Chavo tonight. They don't want Road Warrior Animal style though. Instead let's do it Filthy Animals style.

#### Mike Awesome vs. Bryan Clarke

Fallout from Awesome dressing up like Clarke last night, though I thought Clarke was still injured. They slug it out to start with Clarke getting the better of it, though he keeps looking over his shoulder. As you would expect, Elix Skipper runs in but gets slammed down with ease. Lance Storm comes in as well and that's enough for the DQ.

Team Canada beats Bryan down until Brian Adams comes out for the save.

After a break, Team Canada is still in the ring when Cat and Miss Jones (in a completely different outfit than earlier) come out. It's time for Storm to pay for his crimes as Commissioner so Cat is giving him a match. If Storm doesn't fight, he can go make pancakes in Canada because he'll be fired.

Kid Romeo is coming. Or coming back as he was around a little over a year ago.

#### Chavo Guerrero Jr./Animal vs. Konnan/Billy Kidman

Animal and Konnan start fighting in the back after Chavo has come to the ring. Kidman, in a black shirt for a change, runs in from behind to jump Chavo and we take a break with no bell. We come back to see Chavo and Kidman brawling with referees not being able to break it up. Konnan and Animal come down the ramp and the match actually starts with Chavo hitting a tornado DDT on Kidman.

I'm assuming the match started somewhere during the break as Konnan does Chris Jericho's springboard dropkick to knock Chavo off the apron. Things settle down with Kidman elbowing Chavo in the face and handing it off to Konnan for a reverse standing Figure Four with both arms tied up. That's certainly different. Animal makes a save because he's Animal and doesn't do a lot of wrestling, allowing Chavo to take over in the corner.

Konnan gets in his rolling lariat so Kidman can come back in. Everything

breaks down and some double teaming puts Animal on the floor and Konnan completely botches his faceplant on Chavo. You can hear the crowd going awkwardly silent as they seem stunned that Konnan can't sit down properly. The big guys fight on the floor as Rey Mysterio runs in for a What's Up legdrop to Chavo, setting up the Kid Crusher to give Kidman the pin.

**Rating:** C. Chavo continues to look good in the ring and putting him in there with Kidman is only going to produce even more great stuff. I wasn't wild on Rey coming in for the cheating as it takes some of the steam out of Kidman's win, as well as doesn't fit someone like Rey in general. Still though, not a bad match here with Konnan actually working hard to make up for Animal not even trying.

In case you thought something of Kidman there, Animal powerbombs him into oblivion. Animal never was legally in the match which keeps making me wonder why he has this spot. Was Team Canada so important that they couldn't put Mike Awesome in his same spot?

#### Buff Bagwell vs. The Cat

Before the match, Cat offers Bagwell a chance to leave Flair's team and come back to the good side. Bagwell considers it before hitting Cat in the face to take over. Cat comes back with some chops to the throat but gets caught in a swinging neckbreaker for two. It's already off to the chinlock but Buff stops to strut instead. We hit the second chinlock and Cat looks like he's nodded off.

Some clotheslines cut off the comeback and it's BACK TO THE CHINLOCK. We're not even five minutes in and it's already the third chinlock. At what point do you just realize Buff has nothing else to offer? Buff dives into raised feet and it's time for some kicks. Cue Canyon so Miss Jones gets on the apron, only to allow Buff to get in the double arm DDT (with Cat landing on his hands). The Blockbuster puts Cat away for the pin.

**Rating:** D-. Again: five minutes and three chinlocks. Bagwell gets lazier and lazier every single time he's in the ring but at least he's had some good matches before. I don't ever remember Cat doing anything above bad. If that chinlock is the best they can do, cut this off and put on a

Norman the Lunatic match instead as you might get some chuckles as a result.

Jones gets a Canyon Cutter post match. Cat fights them off but I can't imagine we'll be seeing Jones again, which is a shame.

Post break Jones is taken away in an ambulance.

#### US Title: Rick Steiner vs. Lash Leroux

Steiner is defending and quickly takes Lash outside for a whip into the barricade. This looks like one of those matches where Rick seems more ticked off than usual. A Steiner Line almost takes Lash's head off as the fans accurately call this boring. Steiner throws him down with a release German suplex before ripping at his face. Another Steiner Line and three Steiner Drivers complete Lash's destruction.

**Rating:** F. Yes we get it. Rick Steiner is the most amazingly tough wrestler of all time and we're supposed to be interested in seeing him beat people up really hard. For some reason he's the US Champion despite not drawing a dime in years and barely associating with his brother, which would be almost the only possible way for people to be interested in him.

Lash is checked out by medics post break.

Scott Steiner gives Canyon his brass knuckles to use on Page later. Page isn't making it to Thunder.

Hugh Morrus wants to fight Rick Steiner for personal revenge but his match with Storm tonight is about pleasure.

#### Lance Storm vs. Hugh Morrus

Team Canada is barred from ringside. Storm says he doesn't care who he's fighting tonight because he was born to wrestle. Morrus can't get him into a test of strength to start so the referee says they have 6:30. They trade chops until Morrus knocks him outside with a clothesline. Back in and a fall away slam looks to set up No Laughing Matter, only to have Storm take him down and possibly hurt the knees.

Morrus gets back up and catapults Storm into the buckle but can't follow up. A trip to the floor lets Morrus take over again and he splashes Storm in the corner for good measure. Storm superkicks him down and grabs the Mapleleaf, only to get slammed and hit with No Laughing Matter for the pin.

**Rating:** D+. The feud had lost any of its heat at this point but it was nice to see them actually stick with Morrus as a big deal who can win matches on his own for a change. Storm is in a really weird place at the moment as he was Commissioner for six days but is now losing most of his matches without putting up much of a fight. It could have been a worse match but Morrus winning made more sense.

Here's Jeff Jarrett dressed as Dusty Rhodes (including a very stuffed shirt and jeans) for a bad comedy impression. Jeff, in a borderline good Dusty, talks about how he's here to save WCW and says no one can beat Dustin when his daddy is in his corner. Unfortunately there's no way he can beat the Chosen One because Dustin (the fruit of his loins, which Jarrett says about ten times) just isn't good enough.

Jarrett calls in some young wrestlers for an exhibition, which means slow motion elbows. Jeff falls down and can't get up as the announcers treat this as some horrible idea. One of the guys gets Shattered Dreams until Dustin comes out, only to have Rick Steiner follow and beat Dustin down. Jeff guitars him and the villains stand tall. This went on and on and wasn't that funny, mainly because it's about Dusty Rhodes in 2001.

The announcers pay tribute to Dale Earnhardt, who passed away the day before.

#### Kanyon vs. Diamond Dallas Page

Page goes right after him to start and knocks Kanyon outside, meaning it's time for a brawl in the crowd. That only leads to some brawling before they get inside again with Kanyon bailing to the corner to avoid a Diamond Cutter. Kanyon comes back with a middle rope faceplant for two and a Russian legsweep gets the same. Page is sent into the corner for a middle rope Fameasser and it's off to the chinlock. The fans chant for Page in one of the few genuine reactions of the night.

Page fights up and gets a belly to back suplex to put both guys down for some of the loudest spot calling I've heard in a long time. The discus lariat drops Canyon but he's still able to get out of the Diamond Cutter. The Canyon Cutter gets two and the Positively Page book (which clearly has a brick inside) gets the same. Canyon loads up the knuckles but walks into the Diamond Cutter for the pin.

**Rating:** C+. I know Page doesn't have the best reputation around this time but he's by far and away the most consistent main event star of this last year. He just has good matches with anyone you put him out there against and that's so valuable to have. Above all else though the fans still care about him and that's more important than almost anything anyone can do in the ring.

Post match Scott Steiner leads the troops out but Page is smart enough to bail into the crowd to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D+. That middle portion is the usual death but there was enough good stuff in here to easily carry things for a week. Greed has some potential but the big story would seem to be who comes after Page to challenge Scott for the title. The announcers were talking about the Cat and Dustin Rhodes, who are somehow two of the top three faces in the company at this point. This place needs star power and it needs it in a hurry. I still think Sean O'Haire could have been something but he's just too young at this point. Maybe in fifteen years or so.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book on NXT: The Full Sail Years Volume II at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01FWZZ2UA>

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

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# SuperBrawl Revenge (SuperBrawl 2001, 2016 Redo): One More Time

## SuperBrawl Revenge

Date: February 18, 2001

Location: Nashville Municipal Auditorium, Nashville, Tennessee

Attendance: 4,395

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Scott Hudson

I'm still not sure what the REVENGE subtitle is referring to but it might be due to the fact that we've seen several of these matches on TV in recent weeks. The main event is Kevin Nash challenging Scott Steiner for the World Title in a match we saw just six days ago on Nitro. Let's get to it.

The opening video looks like something out of a serial killer movie with someone cutting out pictures of Ric Flair and cutting words like PSYCHO and GREED out of magazines and newspapers. No idea what it meant but at least it looked cool.

Jamie Knoble vs. Evan Karagias vs. Kaz Hayashi vs. Yang vs. Shannon Moore vs. Shane Helms

Elimination match for the #1 contendership. Helms is a replacement after Animal attacked Kidman so we can have these six opening ANOTHER pay per view. Thankfully there are tags here so it won't be as insane to keep track of. Well at least to start because there's no way the tags last. Jamie and Shannon start things off but Shane comes in with Shannon tossing Jamie into a powerbomb for two.

Even sends 3 Count to the floor with the Dragons hitting stereo Asai Moonsaults (which the camera mostly misses). Back in and the Dragons

double team Jamie, followed by Kaz headscissoring him into the middle turnbuckle. Jamie fights back and it's off to Evan to beat on Yang. I know it's not exactly a surprise but it would have been nice to not have a three way tag for a change.

Karagias plants Yang with a full nelson slam and then almost completely misses a springboard dive. Shane tags himself in and goes nuts on Evan before getting spun around into a rollup by Yang. Things are starting to speed up a bit with the Samoan Drop/neckbreaker combination getting two on Yang as Kaz makes the save. Tony says anyone could have made a save and Hudson talks about how anyone should have because he doesn't know the rules of this thing.

The tags start getting much faster until Kaz starts cleaning house, only to have Evan drive him into the corner. Shane pops up with a top rope superplex to drop Kaz, followed by FIVE straight missed top rope moves to put all six down. Hudson: "The first man to his feet has to be the legal man." No Scott, that's not how wrestling works.

Kaz springboards into a kick to Evan's head, only to get kicked into an X Plex from Shane. Evan hits a good looking springboard dive to take out Shane and Yang on the floor. We get the parade of dives with Jamie going last and being the only man standing. Back in and Evan gorilla presses Kaz into a spinebuster for two, followed by a powerbomb/missile dropkick combo but Jamie and Evan fight over who gets to cover. Guys don't listen to Scott Hudson. It just destroys your career. In the melee, Yang grabs an over the back piledriver on Evan for the first elimination.

Jamie slips back in and grabs a tombstone to get rid of Yang to get us down to four. 3 Count's double team doesn't work as Jamie dropkicks Shannon into the barricade, only to have Shannon come back in with a super Bottoms Up for the pin on Noble. So we're down to Shannon, Shane and Kaz with the team looking down at Hayashi. Hudson tries to say there are no teams here because he thinks we might believe him. In a fairly scary looking spot, Shannon backslides Kaz and Shane adds a guillotine legdrop at the same time.

Shane calls for the Vertebreaker but Shannon gives him the Bottoms Up in

a quick turn. We get a ref bump on the save (STOP DOING THAT!) so Shane can kick out but Shannon low blows him right back down. Kaz and Shannon double team him for a bit before Kaz throws Moore outside. Shane gets back up and hits the Nightmare on Helm Street to eliminate Shannon and we're down to two. Kaz rolls through a top rope sunset flip and kicks Shane in the face for two, only to get caught in the Vertebreaker to give Shane the title shot.

**Rating:** B. The match was the fun you would expect from these six but it's getting really tiresome to see WCW putting them against each other over and over again. It's cool to see them get some time like this (over seventeen minutes, the longest match on the show) but of course it's the opener and the match is likely to be forgotten in about an hour because that's where these guys belong.

Earlier today Chavo Guerrero was with Animal and Ric Flair but we can't hear what was said. Chavo was upset though.

Hugh Morrus says General Rection did a lot of good things for the Wall in WCW but then Rection (he's speaking like Rection is a different person) felt Wall's betrayal. Tonight it's Hugh Morrus, who has nothing but hatred in his heart.

Ric gives Scott Steiner an envelope that contains Kevin Nash's future. Scott is very pleased by this.

Commissioner Lance Storm tells Kronik (arriving half an hour into the show) that Clark has to be seen by the company doctor before he can wrestle tonight. The Brian/Bryan's don't seem to mind.

### Hugh Morrus vs. The Wall

Grudge match following the split of the Misfits in Action. Wall hammers away to start and gets an impressive looking shoulder to knock Morrus outside. Morrus comes back with a hard shot of his own and sends Wall into the steps, which he uses to crush Wall's head up against the post. They get back in after a few minutes on the floor with Hugh dropping a top rope elbow for no cover.

Wall comes back with some big chops, followed by headbutts in the corner. Morrus avoids a top rope legdrop and both guys are down again. A spinebuster plants Morrus and keeps up the string of hard hitting moves. Back up and Wall gets flajacked so we can have another double breather. They slug it out from their knees, which Hudson describes as not wrestling of any type. Then why exactly am I watching? Morrus gets up first and hits a German suplex to set up No Laughing Matter for the pin.

**Rating:** D. This started off well with them beating on each other with heavy shots that looked like they did a lot of damage but then the ridiculous amount of laying around after big spots got annoying in a hurry. Cut this match down by about two or three minutes and it's actually a fun power brawl but it was clear that they were out there too long. Wall didn't look as horrible here, which is high praise in his case.

Konnan goes after Animal for what he did to Kidman.

We recap the battle of the Thrillers, which is basically about who has the Tag Team Titles, which set up a rivalry over who were the stars of the team.

Tag Team Titles: Sean O'Haire/Chuck Palumbo vs. Mark Jindrak/Shawn Stasiak

O'Haire and Palumbo are defending. Before the match, both teams say they're awesome and promise a win. A quick brawl breaks out at the bell before Stasiak clotheslines O'Haire to start. Sean sends Jindrak throat first into the ropes though, allowing Palumbo to get in a dropkick to the face. The champs take over with Palumbo jumping over his partner to land on Mark's ribs before grabbing a sleeper.

Stasiak actually does something right for a change as he distracts Palumbo so Mark can get in a clothesline to take over. A double clothesline into a double nipup into a double elbow drop let the challengers show off a bit, only to have Palumbo hit that insanely hard right hand on Stasiak's jaw. It's not enough for the tag though as Jindrak takes him back into the corner for more stomping.

Mark grabs the chinlock on Palumbo as they're doing the smart thing here by waiting on the hot tag to O'Haire, who is by far the most interesting of these four. Back to Stasiak for an armbar before Jindrak grabs a tilt-a-whirl slam for two. They're certainly giving Stasiak and Jindrak a bunch of offense.

Shawn misses a top rope splash (which would have overshot Palumbo by three feet anyway) and the hot tag finally brings in O'Haire to a moderate pop. That's not bad considering there's no reason to cheer the champs, who never have done anything to turn face. Everything breaks down and Stasiak has to pull his partner away before the Seanton Bomb can launch. Not that it matters as Palumbo Jungle Kicks Shawn down, setting up the Seanton to retain.

**Rating:** B-. Not bad at all here and the clean finish did a lot of good here. Sometimes you just need one side to come off as the better team and that's what happened in this match. O'Haire looks like a star and I'm really surprised he didn't become a bigger deal in wrestling due to his look and athleticism alone. The other three were average at best (Palumbo) and a warm body at worst (Stasiak) with all four of them really needing personalities and/or characters.

Dustin Rhodes blames Ric Flair for keeping him out of WCW. Tonight he's drawing first blood on his team. After that, you will never forget the name of Dustin Rhodes.

Cruiserweight Title: Rey Mysterio Jr. vs. Chavo Guerrero Jr.

Chavo is defending after Rey won a gauntlet match earlier in the month. Rey starts fast with a running clothesline as you can see far too many empty seats in the upper deck. The champ sends him to the apron for an attempted sunset bomb which is countered into a hurricanrana to send Chavo flying. Back in and Chavo drapes him ribs first across the top rope.

Going after Rey's ribs has worked for years so there's no reason to not go for it again. Rey gets tied up in the Tree of Woe to work on the knee but Chavo stays on the ribs. Now that's just versatility. It's time for the Gory Special for a bit with Chavo teasing the Gory Bomb (not Gory

Buster, no matter how many times the announcers try to refer to it as such). Rey escapes and tries a springboard, only to dive into a dropkick to the ribs. This has been all Chavo as he keeps countering everything Rey throws at him.

There's an STF of all things before Chavo sends him outside. Rey comes up holding his knee which is quickly sent into the steps. Chavo steals a fan's Mysterio mask and puts it on Rey before grabbing a chinlock. Back up and Rey crotches him on the turnbuckle, setting up a hurricanrana as the mask comes off. Chavo takes a breather outside so Rey flip dives over the top to take him out as he FINALLY starts acting like himself. Another springboard goes badly for Rey though as he bangs up his knee, also just like himself.

It's time for a chair because....well I have no idea actually. Rey sends Chavo into the buckle and tries a hurricanrana, which finally sends Chavo outside after two botches. Hudson praises Rey's execution, which Tony says is appropriate since he almost killed Chavo. That was far too close to being amusing. Cut it out Schiavone. Back in and the Bronco Buster hits Guerrero as Rey is way too healthy in a hurry. Rey goes for a chair so Chavo finds another one to crack Rey in the head, setting up the brainbuster to retain the title.

**Rating:** B+. What is with this show tonight? We're almost halfway in and there has been one bad (and not even that bad) match so far. Chavo was basically wrestling himself for most of this match, which you really don't expect out of Rey. To be fair though there's a good chance that Mysterio is injured or at least banged up as he was so often. Chavo on the other hand is looking like the best champion in years and his matches are getting better and better every time.

Commissioner Storm moves up Kronik's match, meaning Clark might not be tested in time.

We recap Dustin Rhodes vs. Rick Steiner, which is basically "Dustin is back and was here ten years ago so therefore he's awesome" and Rick Steiner is here because he has to be.

US Title: Rick Steiner vs. Dustin Rhodes

Steiner is defending after Dustin pinned him on Nitro. Dustin starts fast with a DDT and clothesline as we hear about the Rhodes vs. Flair feud. A missed crossbody sends Dustin outside and it's time for the brawling. Rick slowly pounds away and rakes the eyes, making sure he has as little wrestling involved as possible.

We hit the chinlock for a bit before it's off to a half crab. It's off to another chinlock until Dustin gets a jawbreaker (more like a Diamond Cutter) to escape. A clothesline puts Rick down again but he won't sell a faceplant. Dustin's bulldog sends the champ outside but the referee takes a chair away from Rhodes. During the argument, Rick takes the turnbuckle pad off and a hotshot onto the steel retains the title.

**Rating:** D. Rick Steiner sucks and I'm not sure I need to go much further than that. It doesn't help that Dustin is such an uninteresting character with his clotheslines and bulldogs as we wait on the latest chapter in Dusty vs. Ric. This is probably the best example of WCW's biggest problem: old guys hogging spots with no one else ever getting a chance. I'm no fan of his but Shane Douglas has been tossed aside in this whole thing for the sake of Steiner and that's a downgrade at this point. At least Shane can cut a good heel promo.

Post match Rick beats on him even more but Dustin fights back and hits Shattered Dreams.

Ric tells Storm that everyone not on their team needs to be out of the building after their match. Also, Kronik vs. Totally Buff is now a #1 contenders match. Storm says consider it done. This has been your most recent plot advancement.

Diamond Dallas Page gives Cat a pep talk.

### Totally Buff vs. Kronik

Before the match, Totally Buff has to laugh that Goldberg is gone. After getting through that, Buff says Clark hasn't been medically released so this is a handicap match. Clark comes out but gets blasted in the head by a Buff chair shot to really make this two on one. Bagwell keeps moving to break up a full nelson slam and it's an early double teaming to keep

Adams in trouble. A double back elbow gets two and it's off to Luger to stay on the back.

Adams makes a big comeback with some clotheslines and throws Bagwell at Luger. The super Blockbuster is broken up and here's Clark into the ring as....Bryan Clark comes out to the stage. IT'S A SWERVE as the Clark who was laid out earlier (when Kronik's mood lighting was still on) was actually Mike Awesome in disguise. Mike lays out Adams with a German suplex, setting up the Blockbuster for the pin and the title shot at Greed.

**Rating:** D-. When I have to sit and try to figure out how many parts there were to a swerve, it might be a bit too complicated. It also doesn't help that this is a match we've seen so many times already in recent weeks that all the novelty or interest in it has gone away. Bad on so many levels, not the least of which is Luger getting a title shot at the next pay per view.

The announcers talk about the swerve with Hudson pointing out that Storm must have been in on it, not realizing that Tony JUST SAID THAT. Bobby Heenan used to do that as a gag with Monsoon. Hudson does it because he's not that bright.

Storm ejects Kronik from the building but they beat up security.

### Lance Storm vs. The Cat

Winner is Commissioner, though if Cat wins it doesn't take effect until midnight. Before the match we get a quick fan poll to decide who the people want as commissioner. Storm rides him to the mat to start and slaps him in the back of the head for fun. A spinning kick to the face sends Lance outside but he sends Cat into the barricade. Cat's leg is bent around the ropes to start the build towards the Mapleleaf. Hudson says Cat won't give up that easily because he wants that corner office back.

Storm kicks the leg out to break up a comeback bid but he takes too long going up and gets slammed back down. The leg is wrapped around the post though and Cat is down again. That lasts all of ten seconds before he

comes back with his dancing offense, including the elbow drop. There's a kick to the head but cue Mike Sanders, who is quickly taken down by Miss Jones (who is looking great tonight). The Feliner puts Storm away and makes Cat Commissioner again.

**Rating:** D. Thank goodness our six day international crisis is over. This could have been a lot worse but the key thing here was keeping it short. Cat is only going to be able to do so much in the ring, even with a technician like Storm out there doing most of the work for him. This was more of a spectacle, but Storm really should have been out of power longer.

Quick recap of Jeff Jarrett vs. Diamond Dallas Page, which is mainly over Jarrett having Page arrested (went nowhere) before bringing Page's old enemy Canyon back to feud with Page again.

Cat is the new Commissioner but Ric has thrown him out of the building.

#### Jeff Jarrett vs. Diamond Dallas Page

Not so fast because Jeff brings up Page saying he would fight Canyon anywhere anytime.

#### Diamond Dallas Page vs. Canyon

Canyon sneaks in from behind but Page is ready for him with the discus lariat. They head outside with Canyon going into the barricade a few times. Canyon sends him in as well though, followed by a Fameasser from the apron onto the steps. Page has some blood on his eye as Canyon suplexes him from the bottom rope back in for two. Another Fameasser (which Tony calls innovative) gets two more for Canyon and we hit an innovative chinlock.

Back up and Canyon uses Page's swinging neckbreaker for two as there is a lot more blood in a hurry. Page fights back with a swinging Rock Bottom, only to eat a sitout Alabama Slam for another near fall. Canyon hits the Cutter but the referee goes down, allowing Jarrett to come in with the Stroke. A Flatliner puts Page away.

**Rating:** C+. These are two guys who are going to have a good match with

almost anyone you put out there and that's what we got here. The Canyon Cutter should have finished the match but at least the right person won here. Canyon should have been a big deal but all the heel turns and time off really held him back.

Post match Canyon introduces Jarrett for the original match.

#### Diamond Dallas Page vs. Jeff Jarrett

Tony is saying Page just went "Ten, fifteen, twelve minutes" against Canyon because just over eight minutes is close enough to twelve or fifteen. They fight into the crowd with Jarrett rocking the staggered Page with right hands. Back to ringside with Page sending him into the announcers' table, only to be hit in the ribs with a few chair shots. Jeff drops some slow shots to the head but gets caught by the discus lariat. Sleeper, counter sleeper, jumping DDT from Page for a change of pace instead of the belly to back.

Back up and Page keeps slugging away with Jarrett going face first into the buckle over and over. Cue Canyon, who Tony wants knocked out with a ball bat. Now come on Tony. You know it's the ball bat that sets up the finisher which knocks people out around here. Jeff chairs Page down for two but the guitar hits Canyon by mistake, setting up the Diamond Cutter for the pin. Hudson: "THAT IS A PERFORMANCE FOR THE HISTORY BOOKS!" For having back to back long TV matches?

**Rating:** C+. Despite a lot of the flack Page gets, he's always going to give you a good match if he's allowed the chance. It probably won't be the best thing in the world but at least you're guaranteed something totally watchable at worst, which is something WCW is severely lacking at this point.

We recap Scott Steiner vs. Kevin Nash. Basically Nash is standing up for WCW but Steiner hit him in the knee with a pipe on Nitro.

Ric Flair comes out for commentary on the main event.

#### WCW World Title: Kevin Nash vs. Scott Steiner

Steiner is defending but before we have the match, let's look at the Sid

Vicious injury to show how bad Scott can be to people. Ric has an announcement to make: the loser has to retire, which apparently was the ruling in the envelope. Nash is wheeled out with some good looking nurses and the leg in a cast. It looks like a countout but Nash stands up and we're ready to go. A belt shot to Steiner's head pins him in 12 seconds.

Of course that's not it as Flair says it's 2/3 falls and no DQ. We cut to the back to see Totally Buff lay out Page in the back as Nash beats on Steiner at ringside. Nash slowly hammers away before clotheslining him out to the floor. Midajah offers a distraction so Steiner can hit Nash in the head with a pipe. Flair makes it falls count anywhere so Steiner pins him on the floor for the second fall.

Some brass knuckles shots have Nash in even more trouble as the crowd is groaning as they're far from impressed here. Both guys are bleeding and Steiner keeps hammering away at the cut on Nash's head. The push-ups elbow gets two followed by the t-bone suplex for the same. Another knuckles shot is blocked with Nash hitting a side slam to put both guys down.

Midajah pulls the knuckles away from Nash but Flair sends in a chair so Nash can be knocked out (Tony: "He's dead!"). The Recliner is broken up (with Tony acting like Nash is the new Goldberg as a result) and Nash gets two off a chokeslam with Midajah making the save. The Jackknife connects but Midajah interferes AGAIN, earning herself a side slam. Flair pulls the referee out and punches him in the jaw, allowing Steiner to get in a low blow, knuckles shot, chair shot and the Recliner to retain.

**Rating:** F. Nash isn't exactly the new Goldberg because it didn't take this much to put Goldberg down. You could see what they were going for as soon as Nash pinned him off the belt shot and it was just a bunch of Tony treating Nash like the greatest thing that ever lived for the rest of the match. Nash actually wouldn't wrestle in WCW again so for once they did something right, though I'd be surprised if he wasn't on Nitro tomorrow.

**Overall Rating:** C+. This is a good example of a show where you knew exactly what you were going to get out of each match. Six man cruiserweight elimination? Good stuff. Lance Storm vs. The Cat? Waste of

time. Kevin Nash vs. Scott Steiner? Oh please. The big surprise though was how much good stuff there actually was and the show was very nice as a result. I can't imagine anything else they'll have will top this but at least it was nice to have one more easy show to sit through.

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## Monday Nitro – February 12, 2001: Not This Again

### Monday Nitro #277

Date: February 12, 2001

Location: Mississippi Coast Coliseum, Biloxi, Mississippi

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Scott Hudson

It's the go home show for SuperBrawl and it's probably not a good sign that they're in Mississippi for the second week in a row. We're set for the pay per view and the card isn't exactly thrilling but you can see how we got there for the most part, which is a lot better than some of the shenanigans we've put up with from WCW over the years. Let's get to it.

Rick Steiner vs. Dustin Rhodes

This is joined in progress as the show opens and I'm assuming the title isn't on the line. The Cat has allowed Dustin to wrestle here and it's very strange to see him in a singlet. Flair comes out and says this isn't happening. Ric threatens to have security take him out but it seems to be an excuse to have Steiner jump him from behind. I don't think you can really call this a match and the "action" wasn't even a minute long.

Dustin is told to leave because he'll never work here again. Ric gets in the ring with Rick, Animal and Sanders to brag about how much power he has. Cue the Cat for the same argument these two two have every single week. Apparently Dustin is reinstated (Was he ever instated in the first place?) but Flair makes Cat vs. Lance Storm for the Commissionership right now with Sanders as guest referee. Thank goodness he has a referee shirt under his suit.

Before the match we go to a break and come back with Chavo Guerrero Jr. yelling at Flair about the El Nino stuff last week. Ric promises that he'll get revenge before SuperBrawl.

### The Cat vs. Lance Storm

Cat kicks him down to start and does a little dance before uppercutting Sanders for fun. He loads up the dancing elbow but Sanders decks him instead, only to have Cat DDT them both at the same time. An elbow drop gets two with Cat making Sanders slap the mat but he's not the Rock so an elbow doesn't work. The Feliner drops Storm and Cat tries to steal the referee shirt, allowing Storm to hit the superkick and put on the Mapleleaf for the quick non-submission because that's the only screwy thing in this match.

The Magnificent Seven comes down to celebrate and they all get together to beat on Cat. Before anything can happen though, Nash pops up on screen to say he wouldn't do that. Ric says he has all the bases covered but Nash isn't so sure. The camera pans back to show a beaten up David Flair with tape on his mouth. Wait we're doing the Flair father/son thing again?

Since he's in charge tonight, Nash wants Storm vs. Cat for the commissionership at SuperBrawl. Flair agrees, so Nash wants Dustin Rhodes

vs. Rick Steiner for Dustin's job tonight, and if Dustin wins then Nash gets a World Title shot against Scott Steiner tonight. The threat of a left hand to David forces Ric to make the matches and he promises to smooth this over with Scott.

During the break, Ric sends Sanders to find Dustin.

Totally Buff offer O'Haire and Palumbo spots on the team so the Magnificent Seven (thereby making it nine) so they can have all the gold.

Sanders finds Dustin but he's not interested in saving David's skin.

Dustin: "Now go on, git! GIT!"

### Lash Leroux vs. Yang

The winner is in the #1 contenders match at SuperBrawl. Yang's kicks confuse Lash to start so it's time for the Crane Kick to knock Lash around even more. Lash is sent into the corner for another running kick to send him outside but Yang holds off on the dive. The second attempt takes Lash down though, followed by a moonsault to floor Lash again. Back in and Lash powerslams him for two, only to miss a frog splash.

A quick ankle scissors puts Lash on the floor but he comes right back in with a slingshot clothesline (looked good too) for two. Lash drives in a knee lift and you can see how dark the top of the arena really is. Yang comes back with a tornado DDT but can't cover. Instead it's Lash up first with a pumphandle into a sitout powerbomb for two more. Whiplash gets the same so Yang runs to the top for a moonsault press and a near fall of his own. A Regal Roll sets up Yang Time (which mostly hits Lash's head) to give Yang the pin and the spot on the pay per view.

**Rating:** B-. Lash was in over his head here but he was able to hang in there well enough to make this work. Above all else though, this got an unthinkable nine minutes, giving it a chance to actually go somewhere. Yang winning was the right call though it's getting more and more obvious that we're heading towards the Dragons vs. 3 Count again in that six way on Sunday because that's where they belong, likely opening the show again as well.

Sanders tells Ric that he's negotiating with Dustin but that's not what the boss wants to hear.

Dustin agrees to the match tonight if he gets a title shot against Rick on Sunday if he wins.

Shawn Stasiak says he's going to prove he carried Palumbo to the titles.

Diamond Dallas Page gives Cat a pep talk.

Ric has Animal hold Sanders up by the throat until Sanders says it's taken care of. Dustin's demand isn't mentioned.

Video on the Steiner Brothers reuniting.

### Dustin Rhodes vs. Rick Steiner

Non-title. It's a slugout to start and Tony is SHOCKED that Rick was dropped with a flying clothesline. Like, how could a former US Champion do damage to Rick Steiner? The Steiner Line gets two on Dustin which is a lot more realistic of course. They head outside with Rick being sent into the barricade but he doesn't have time to sell. Back in and Rick slaps on a reverse chinlock before ripping at Dustin's face and ripping open his nose.

We hit a chinlock because Rick is already spent after so much effort. Even that looks lazy but it still manages to get two armdrops, only to have Rick blast him with a Steiner Line for two. Back up and Dustin accidentally headbutts the referee, meaning there's no one to count the cover off Dustin's bulldog. Cue Animal to knock Dustin into a belly to belly but here's Shane Douglas to hit Rick with his cast. Dustin grabs a DDT for the pin and the title shot.

**Rating:** D-. Rick Steiner is just so bad and it's getting harder and harder to watch him every single week. Dustin was Dustin Rhodes instead of the interesting character he was capable of being but that doesn't make for anything interesting. Shane Douglas becoming a face isn't the most interesting idea either, which is likely why we're seeing it happen.

Post match Rick and Animal break Shane's good arm with Dustin's save

attempt failing.

Scott Steiner isn't happy with what Ric has done and says he's doing things his way.

#### Billy Kidman vs. Elix Skipper

This should be good and it's another qualifying match for Sunday's six way. Kidman dropkicks him into the corner as we get a graphic saying SuperBrawl is in six days. I've always liked that as WWE would have you believe that the pay per views are on Monday when Cole says the show is in two or three weeks on Raw.

Skipper takes over to start and stomps a bit as the fans chant USA. Kidman's cross body misses completely as Skipper pulls out the Matrix move for a sweet counter. Skipper heads up top and gets powerbombed back down for two and both guys are a bit gassed. A reverse suplex gets two for Kidman and he reverses the Overdrive (Play of the Day) into the Kid Crusher for the quick pin.

**Rating:** C+. As usual the cruiserweights are putting on the best matches of the night and for a change they're actually getting a bit of time. Unfortunately it doesn't matter if this doesn't lead anywhere because it's the same cruiserweight stuff we've seen for years with no one actually being elevated. That's one of so many of WCW's problems over the years and this is no exception.

Hugh Morrus is told he gets the Wall at SuperBrawl so he issues a challenge for a tag match on Thunder: Morrus/Mysterio vs. Wall/Chavo. I know it's not much but that's a simple, logical story and a match that makes sense.

Scott Steiner beats up a backstage worker for not knowing where Nash is.

Ric is on the phone with his wife and promising to find David.

Video on Kanyon and Diamond Dallas Page.

#### Shawn Stasiak vs. Chuck Palumbo

It's a bad idea to have Palumbo be the one that is going to be carrying the match. Stasiak is knocked to the floor to start and a fall away slam gets two for Chuck back inside. A not great looking gutwrench slam gets two for Stasiak and Palumbo gets the same off a small package. Stasiak bulldogs Palumbo onto his leg (another botch as Stasiak isn't great in the ring) sets up a neckbreaker for two.

We hit the choking for a few seconds as the announcers speculate about where David Flair might be held hostage. Stasiak charges into a boot and gets caught in an Alabama Slam for two more. Chuck tunes up the jungle but gets caught and turned into an awful looking rollup with the referee not being sure if he should count or not. Clearly that was going to be the ending as Stasiak grabs a quick rollup and hooks the trunks for the pin.

**Rating:** D. This right here summed up the issue with the Natural Born Thrillers in a nutshell: they were generic wrestlers and not very good in the ring. Neither guy here did anything special to make them stand out and they were both just guys in trunks. It also doesn't help that neither has anything resembling a character or a personality and it shows more and more every time. Oh and there were several botches here because they weren't much to see in the ring either.

Post match Stasiak says that proves he carried Palumbo.

Here's Diamond Dallas Page in a Sopranos shirt with something to say. He's ready for Jeff Jarrett at SuperBrawl but he has to talk about Canyon. Page isn't happy with Canyon stealing all of his stuff so it's time for Canyon to learn that no one steals nothing (his words) from DDP. He's ready for Canyon anywhere, anytime. Instead here's Jeff Jarrett to say he's ready for Sunday. Page wants to fight right now but first he has to fight off a sneaking Canyon. The distraction lets Jeff come in with a guitar shot and the Stroke to leave Page laying.

WCW World Title: Scott Steiner vs. Kevin Nash

In case you just couldn't wait to pay for it on Sunday. Nash is challenging and brings David Flair out with him for a right hand to the face. Ric comes out to get his son but Nash powerbombs David first. They

start fast with Nash sending him into the turnbuckle before the bell rings. A clothesline gets two and unfortunately Scott puts together the fact that Nash is getting a shot in Nashville.

We cut to the back to see Ric sending the troops out despite promising that there would be no interference. Steiner posts Nash to take over and it's time to choke and shout a lot. Cue the two factions to fight on the way to the ring as things stay even. A side slam gets two for Nash and there go the straps but Ric comes in for the DQ.

**Rating:** D-. No surprise here as they kept promising no interference and you always go with what they promise not to happen. I've never gotten the idea of having a match on Monday and then asking people to pay for it on Sunday, especially when it's the same match we're going to be seeing with no changes whatsoever. They could still change something on Thunder, or knowing WCW, they'll change it at the pay per view and blame the fans for being annoyed.

Ric takes the Jackknife but Steiner destroys Nash's knee with a pipe to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D. The cruiserweights tried tonight and almost pulled off the minor miracle of saving this show. However, there's only so much you can do when you're up against this much bad. The David Flair stuff isn't interesting as he and Ric have turned on each other so many times over the years that it's hard to care about. Page vs. Kanyon is good, partially due to Page's natural charisma and ability to make anything seem somewhat interesting. Other than that though, this is another show where you can see a lot of the holes that need filling in a hurry.

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# Monday Nitro – February 5, 2001: After All This Time

## Monday Nitro #276

Date: February 5, 2001

Location: Bankcorpsouth Center, Tupelo, Mississippi

Commentators: Scott Hudson, Tony Schiavone

Things are starting to build up towards SuperBrawl and the unbelievably fresh MEGA SHOWDOWN between Scott Steiner and Kevin Nash because that's what's going to get the young'uns talking about WCW as they walk through the airport. If nothing else maybe we can go a full week without Animal squashing two cruiserweights for the sake of....what was the point of that again? If pushing Animal is their idea of drawing money, close the doors now. Let's get to it.

On a side note: I've been doing this series for about five and a half years, have a month and a half to go and NOW they're being put on the Network? Hopefully they at least get the rest of them up before I wrap this show.

We actually open with Flair and Animal in the ring, yelling at Nash in the aisle. They insult each other and Flair tells Nash to come say that to his face. Animal comes to meet Nash in the aisle and is quickly beaten down, leaving Flair all alone to take a big boot. As luck would have it, the rest of the troops arrive in the back with Mike Sanders telling them what's going on.

Nash keeps beating on Flair and starts ripping his clothes off because that's what you do to a man in his 50s. Flair's pants are ripped off, revealing University of Florida underwear. Nash takes down the straps and

loads up the Jackknife as the troops come out. They back off due to the threat of Nash breaking Ric's neck but Nash says he has a negotiator with....the Cat.

Nash cranks on Ric's neck as Cat says he's running the show tonight. Ric makes some weird noises which translate to Cat being in charge here. First up, Steiner will be fighting four cruiserweights in one match tonight. Once he gets done with that, he can fight Diamond Dallas Page. If THAT'S not enough, Steiner can defend the title against Kevin Nash and a mystery partner. If Nash wins, Flair has to resign at midnight tonight. Got all that?

After a break, Flair is still leaving the ring.

#### Scott Steiner vs. Jung Dragons/Noble and Karagias

The beating is on quickly as Steiner is in street clothes. Yang dares to break up the push-ups with a springboard Fameasser and all four combined finally get in some offense on the champ. Steiner kicks out of a four man cover and it's time for the suplexes. Everyone is out so Steiner puts three of them on top of each other for a triple Recliner for the win.

**Rating:** F. If this is the new direction for the cruiserweights, they might as well bring back Oklahoma and Madusa to fight over the title instead. If nothing else it might be a bit less embarrassing and one sided than going through this kind of a mess again. Steiner just beat up four people, one of them a former Cruiserweight Champion, in three minutes. Those are four of the people who worked hard and put their bodies on the line at Starrcade in a ladder match and this is their reward about six weeks later. Why would those people want to stick around at this point if this is as good as it gets for them?

Flair rants about what happened tonight.

The good guys are ready and Cat gives Brian Adams a match with Buff tonight.

Rick Steiner is ready to win the US Title. Wasn't the rule that Flair couldn't know about it?

Gene asks Adams about Animal hitting Brian Clark in the head with a chair last week on Nitro, which now apparently has blue ring skirts that say Thunder and has replays with a THUNDER graphic in the corner. Anyway the point is Kronik is tough.

Buff is WAY too fine with this match and Flair is all happy. Totally Buff vs. Kronik is made for SuperBrawl because let's have them go four times in about six weeks.

#### US Title: Rick Steiner vs. Shane Douglas

Shane is defending and has a big cast on his hand. A few shots to the head and back have Rick in trouble but the referee takes a chair away from the champ. Rick pops back up and sends Shane outside for a ram into the announcers' table but Douglas gets in a shot on the way back in.

The reverse Hennig necksnap has Rick in trouble for all of five seconds before he starts coming back with the usual. The Steiner Bulldog is knocked out of the air with a cast shot, only to have Rick suplex him a few more times. Shane might as well just quit now as Steiner clearly isn't going to sell a thing for him. The Steiner Driver gives us a new champ in a clean pin.

**Rating:** D-. Sure why not. I mean you're pushing Scott to the moon so why not give his less talented brother the midcard title? This was basically wiping Shane out as Steiner took everything he had and just shrugged it off, as he does to everyone else around here. Bad match of course, but then again when is the last time Rick had a good one?

Steiner does his catchphrases post match.

Flair tells Chavo Guerrero Jr. that he has a special opponent for him from Mexico.

Here's Dustin Rhodes to say Ric Flair will never forget his name. Ric comes up on screen and says Dustin is fired, meaning his mic is cut and we abruptly go to a commercial.

#### Scott Steiner vs. Diamond Dallas Page

Non-title. They start fast with Steiner hammering away but running into a swinging Rock Bottom for two. The fight heads outside as the announcers talk about how Page's mission is to hit a Diamond Cutter. Not beat Steiner or any nonsense like that, but just hit his finisher to soften Steiner up for Nash. You know, our real hero.

Steiner takes over and puts Page in the Tree of Woe for the upside down choke, followed by a suplex. We hit the elbow into the push-ups but Steiner spends too much time posing, allowing Page to come back with right hands. The spinning belly to belly gets two so Steiner shoves the referee. Page gets in a Diamond Cutter out of nowhere as the referee calls for the DQ.

**Rating:** D+. The time really hurt this one but I could picture these two having a strong match if they were allowed to actually go somewhere. Page doing his big comebacks against the monster Steiner has potential though I really can't imagine Page pulling it off. The formula would be similar to the famous Goldberg match though and that works just fine.

Page leaves through the crowd but he gets beaten down by Jeff Jarrett and a returning Kanyon.

Back from a break and Page can barely walk.

Jarrett and Kanyon run off in a limo.

#### Chavo Guerrero Jr. vs. El Nino

Non-title and Nino is a pretty small guy under a mask. Chavo quickly takes him down to start as the announcers point out how few Mexican cruiserweights are left. Chavo runs him over and gets two off a suplex to start. A springboard cross body is countered into a backbreaker for two before Chavo starts firing off chops. Nino sends him to the floor for a nice plancha but stops for a lap around the ring.

The delay lets Chavo suplex him on the floor but Nino snaps off a top rope hurricanrana. Chavo takes him down again and puts on a chinlock as the announcers finally start paying attention again. Nino snaps off a headscissors but takes an ax handle to the back. Back up and Nino does

the 619 around the ropes, followed by a sitout bulldog. The springboard seated senton gives Nino the big upset.

**Rating:** C+. I'm not really sure what the point was in having Mysterio (they weren't exactly hiding it) win here, or why Flair would give him this match in the first place but it's not like Chavo is a champion who shouldn't be losing here or anything. The match was fine and I'm looking forward to seeing what they can do with some more time, though I'm not wild on having them fight this close to the pay per view.

Of course it's Rey Mysterio.

#### Lance Storm/Mike Awesome vs. Chuck Palumbo/Sean O'Haire

Non-title. Before the match, Storm promises to become the first Canadian Commissioner at SuperBrawl. Awesome and O'Haire get things going for a chop off until Awesome throws him down with a German suplex. O'Haire rolls to the floor so Mike takes him down with a plancha over the top. In the meantime, Storm missile dropkicks Palumbo down as I'm not sure who I'm supposed to be cheering for as the Canadians are definitely wrestling like good guys.

Back in and O'Haire blasts Storm with a clothesline before Palumbo gets two off a powerslam. Awesome gets drawn in so the champs can stomp Storm in the corner. Not that it matters as Storm hits a leg lariat and makes the tag, only to have Awesome get caught in a hot shot.

Not that it matters as Awesome comes back with a slam on Sean to set up the Awesome Splash with Palumbo making the save. Everything breaks down and it's time to fire off some big kicks. Storm gets poked in the eye and grabs the Mapleleaf on Awesome by mistake. He eventually realizes what's going on but gets sent outside, setting up the Jungle Kick into the Seanton Bomb for the pin.

**Rating:** B-. If he had even the slightest bit of charisma, Storm could have been money as a face. Awesome on the other hand could have been amazing no matter what role you put him in, save for a fat chick thriller or That 70s Guy. There aren't many names above Awesome on the "What if" list in WCW and it's a shame that he never did anything in WWE either.

Jindrak and Stasiak think that was luck.

### Buff Bagwell vs. Brian Adams

There's no bell as Adams superkicks Buff in a surprising bit of offense. The gorilla press and a clothesline put Bagwell on the floor as the announcers hype up a No Substitution match at SuperBrawl, which is apparently going to lead to a handicap match because Clark is out with an injury. Back in and Buff scores with a dropkick before we hit the chinlock less than three minutes in.

Another chinlock keeps things slow, which is probably best given Buff's questionable motivation from week to week. Back up and a double clothesline lets them lay around even more. You know, in case two chinlocks didn't cover their resting quota. Cue Luger but Clark comes out to intercept him. Buff gets two off a double arm DDT until Animal decks Clark from behind. Adams comes back with a full nelson slam but the bell rings....for a time limit draw....at 5:44.

**Rating:** F. For five minutes and forty four seconds. Fine enough if WCW just has to have TV time limits back (as if any WCW TV match ever comes close to ten minutes at this point) but how in the world do you get it THAT wrong? I can understand even up to like two minutes but this felt more like a five minute time limit where they forgot to cut the time. I know WCW thinks its fans are the stupidest people on the planet but I think they can tell time. The match was what you would expect from Bagwell vs. Adams anyway so the time was hardly the only problem here.

Adams gets racked post match.

Flair tells Scott Steiner that there's no interference in the match tonight. Steiner doesn't care and goes to the ring. I'm glad Flair's neck is fine after nearly having it broken an hour and a half ago.

Adams says these attacks just make Kronik stronger. He wants Luger on Thunder.

### WCW World Title: Scott Steiner vs. Kevin Nash/???

Steiner is defending and the mystery partner is....Rick Steiner because

Kevin Nash is a stupid man. I'm assuming Nash gets the title if Rick pins Scott. Rick suplexes him into a right hand from Nash and it's time to go outside. Scott sends Rick into the crowd but gets pulled back in by Nash. The champ begs away until he can hit Nash low and spit at his brother. A backbreaker gets two on Nash but Rick forearms Scott in the back, knocking him into a side slam. Snake Eyes and a big boot set up the Jackknife but Rick comes in and turns on Nash because of course. Scott pins Nash to retain.

**Rating:** D. You knew it was coming because, again, WCW thinks its fans are going to fall for the same stuff time after time. I know I've said it before but here it is again: no one cares about Rick Steiner, who somehow got to work twice tonight and picked up the US Title in the process. If nothing else though, I'm scared of who will be the next face to help fight Flair and company, though I'm sure it's likely to be Dustin or Dusty because COWBOYS ARE AWESOME.

The Steiners go to celebrate as Nash says he's got some more left. Cue Page with a chair to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D+. There was some good wrestling in the middle but having four Steiner matches in a night is a bit too much for me. They're making Scott look like a monster but can anyone explain to me why the cruiserweights had to get squashed? You can't throw the Mamalukes, as in the designated jobbers of the tag division, out there to get beaten up? It's not like they're doing anything else or putting on awesome matches when they're in the ring like the cruiserweights are doing.

I'll give them this though: there's a goal in mind here with getting Scott over as a monster. While it may not be the best story long term, at least it's something and could build up to a big moment when someone takes the title off of him. That's a lot better than proving Vince Russo's MANLINESS or having Sting turn heel despite not really being a heel or whatever else was going on a year or so ago. Now if they can get rid of Rick Steiner and actually have Scott as the top heel instead of sharing the spot with Flair we might get to a more interesting story, but this is a good enough step.

Unfortunately it's not a great show because as usual WCW has no idea how to cut back on the focusing so much on the same story. The stable war thing is getting annoying as WCW has done it so many times but the bigger problem is how they keep hammering that story home. It's by far the biggest thing going on here and if you don't like that, don't bother watching. That's a WCW/Bischoff trope and it has never worked for me, much like it doesn't here.

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## Thunder – January 24, 2001: The New WCW

### Thunder

Date: January 24, 2001

Location: Lawrence Joel Memorial Coliseum, Winston-Salem, North Carolina

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Tony Schiavone

We're still just living in Ric Flair's WCW as he and the Elite (the unofficial name at the moment) destroy everything in sight, though to be fair it's more interesting than the Sid Rules The World stuff we sat through for so long. It's getting closer to SuperBrawl with Kevin Nash getting the World Title shot against Scott Steiner because we're just

that lucky. Let's get to it.

### Cruiserweight Contender Countdown

I could go for this no promo to start thing. This is basically a singles version of Tag Team Turmoil with the winner getting the title shot at SuperBrawl. Works for me. Shane Helms and Elix Skipper get things going and it's already time to run the ropes. Elix grabs a quick suplex for two and spins off the middle rope into a legdrop for two more. The Play of the Day is countered into a Vertebreaker for the very fast pin. Oh so it's one of those gauntlet matches.

Evan Karagias is in at #3 (of 10) and misses an early top rope Lionsault, setting up the Vertebreaker for the second pin in less than two minutes. Kidman is in at #4 and quickly knocks Shane outside for a nice plancha. Back in and a TKO into a facebuster onto the knee drops Kidman but there's no selling since this is a cruiserweight match. Instead Kidman grabs the BK Bomb but Shane pops back up for two off the X Plex. Another Vertebreaker is countered into the Kid Crusher to get rid of Shane. They're certainly in the "hurry up and get your stuff in" formula.

Yang is in at #5 (with a much more covered up Leia Meow) as we take a break. Back with Yang grabbing a neckbreaker across the top rope. A headscissors sends Kidman face first into the mat and Yang gets two more off something like an Iconoclasm. For absolutely no logical reason, Yang sits on the second rope to try and suplex Kidman to the floor. Instead Kidman hits a super Kid Crusher for the elimination.

It's Jamie Noble in at #6 and scores with a missile dropkick, only to get caught in a reverse suplex. Kidman throws him down with a belly to belly suplex and takes Jamie to the top for a super Michinoku Driver and another near fall. Noble better win if they let him kick out of that. Jamie gets in a jumping tombstone to put Kidman away and Rey Mysterio is in at #7.

Rey quickly sends him outside and slides under the bottom rope into a tornado DDT on the floor. I don't think I've seen him do that one since, or at least not very often. Back in and Jamie catches a springboard in a sitout powerbomb for two, only to have Rey hit his sitout bulldog. A

springboard diving headbutt gets rid of Jamie and it's Lash Leroux in at #8. Lash grabs a tilt-a-whirl side slam and a seated dropkick gets two. Rey counters what looked like a BK Bomb into a faceplant (he's Kidman's partner after all) before a split legged moonsault eliminates Leroux.

Shannon Moore is in at #9 with something like a springboard Rough Ryder for an early two. A Whisper in the Wind misses but Shannon lands on his feet, only to have Rey trip him down into a bridging pin to get us down to the final two. Kaz Hayashi is in at #10 and kicks the winded Rey, because a gauntlet match causes you to be winded after four minutes in the ring. A helicopter bomb gets two for Kaz but Rey sends him shoulder first into the post. Rey takes it up top for a super sitout bulldog and the pin, giving him the title shot against Chavo.

**Rating:** B-. These matches are hit and miss for me as they're a lot of fun but at the same time I take issue with these clean falls taking place in about a minute each. If you can pin someone that fast here, why can't you do it that quickly in a regular match? That being said, the match was fast paced and entertaining, which is SO much more fun than the main events that I have to watch at double speed to stay awake.

Jeff Jarrett laughs at Hugh Morrus for losing on Monday and gets punched out. Laughing ensues.

Glacier video, followed by Norman Smiley actually meeting his hero. Glacier says he has Norman's back tonight.

Here are the Cat and Miss Jones with something to say. He announces the same three matches we already knew about for the pay per view before making Jarrett vs. Morrus and Scott Steiner/Animal vs. Kronik for tonight. That means it's time to dance.

Ric Flair has a master plan. Can we ever have a villain with just a plan? Why does everything have to be a master plan?

Shane Douglas tells Bam Bam Bigelow that he can be in Flair's group if he beats Rick Steiner tonight.

Norman Smiley vs. Mike Awesome

I could go for more of Major Gunns in black with the red maple leafs. No Glacier in sight and Norman looks a bit nervous. They run the ropes to start but stop. WIGGLE TIME! Awesome slowly pounds him down as the announcers discuss the improvement Awesome has undergone. Norman gets in a clothesline and loads up the Big Wiggle (Tenay: "Is he looking for Glacier?"), only to be run over again. Tony has to cut off Tenay from talking about the main event but a neck crank from Awesome pulls Tony into the 1997 style of commentary all over again.

Cue Glacier, with Tony acting like this is some huge deal. Glacier takes his sweet time (you might say he's moving like a gl....yeah that's bad even for me) and stops to wave at the fans, allowing Awesome to suplex a distracted Norman. A slingshot splash gets two for Awesome, followed by a powerslam for the same. Glacier's music is still playing as he walks around the ring. Tony: "The match is still going on. Of course it is." The Awesome Bomb finally puts Smiley away.

**Rating:** D. I'm amazed but somehow this superhero worship is actually a step up over the hardcore stuff. Glacier is just a comedy guy here and that's all he needed to be, especially given how much of a joke his first run really was. Smiley vs. Glacier could be an amusing angle but somehow Glacier would probably wind up going over.

Post match Glacier gets in the ring and tells Awesome to bring it as Mike leaves. Glacier does the post match karate demonstration and shoves Norman away.

Post match Gene Okerlund rips on Glacier, who is oblivious to everything wrong with what he just did. Norman collapses and Glacier says he's here to clean up the evils of WCW. This was actually kind of funny.

Here are Kwee Wee and Paisley with something to say. Kwee Wee, calm again here, issues another open challenge and we're already on a fan before he can even get the words out of his mouth. Kwee Wee drags him over the barricade and gives the plant a piledriver until security drags Kwee Wee away. If they were actually serious about pushing him, WCW would let him be Alan Funk (or any other name that doesn't bring back Terry) and take away the pink and the glitter, but I'm sure the lack of getting over is

his fault at this point.

Kronik says Animal and Steiner are going to get smoked tonight.

### Jeff Jarrett vs. Hugh Morrus

Before the match, Jarrett goes on about how he's beaten Page before and he can do it again at SuperBrawl. Morrus charges the ring and hammers away with the smile on his face. The announcers ignore the match in the first minute to talk about the main event as Morrus gets two off a powerslam.

They head outside with Jeff already resorting to cheating with a chair to the ribs. Jeff starts in on the knee but does that always stupid looking jump off the top with the sole intention of landing on a raised boot. Morrus gets in a top rope elbow but cue the Wall to try a chokeslam. That's broken up but Jeff goes for the guitar, allowing Wall to get in the chokeslam on the second try. A Stroke gives Jeff the pin.

**Rating:** D+. This was better than it should have been and at least they're going forward towards a logical match like Wall vs. Morrus. I mean, no one is going to want to see it and it won't draw any money but at least it's logical, which is a step up for WCW. It's also good to see Jarrett back in the midcard where he belongs instead of teasing more World Title runs.

### Ron Harris vs. Crowbar

Of course, and to make matters worse, Daffney has a megaphone. Harris starts fast by pounding Crowbar in the corner and planting him with a side slam. A quick cross body gives Crowbar two and I'd assume that's it for his offense. Harris takes him outside for a whip into the barricade, allowing Don to get in some stomping. Back in and Ron grabs a sleeper followed by a clothesline but something like a Death Drop gives Crowbar a breather. He scores with a moonsault and it's time for TWIN MAGIC! The neck brace switches and Don ends Crowbar with something like a Rock Bottom.

**Rating:** F. This is the new WCW: a place where Crowbar and Kwee Wee, who

have worked very hard to get over the genius characters of as close to gay as we can get without saying it and battling car wash guy who thinks it's 1974, are treated like morons and jobbers because RICK STEINER, LEX LUGER AND THE FREAKING HARRIS TWINS need pushes. In other words, take every single problem WCW has had with its booking over the years and do it again because we need to show how it's going to be different this time.

Rick Steiner is willing to beat up Bam Bam Bigelow to prove a message to Shane Douglas.

We go to a long video of Tenay meeting with an orthopedic surgeon to talk about Sid's leg injury. Basically he snapped it like a pencil and will be on crutches for up to three months and then in therapy for up to a year. Like Sid or not, that's one of the worst injuries you'll ever see.

#### Rick Steiner vs. Bam Bam Bigelow

If Bigelow wins, he's on Flair's team. They slug it out to start until Rick grabs a belly to belly, followed by a Steiner Line and another belly to belly. Good to see he's going versatile this week. Bigelow comes back with a quick slam and the flying headbutt hits way too early. Greetings From Asbury Park is countered with a DDT, followed by an elbow drop for two. Another DDT sets up the Steiner Bulldog for the pin, despite Bigelow not really being touched as he went down.

Ric Flair knocks out the Cat with brass knuckles. We also see Nash and Page laid out.

Rick Steiner tells Kronik to go to the ring for the main event while he takes care of these three. So he's a repetitive wrestler and a trained medic? Shane comes in and hits Rick with his chain.

#### Kronik vs. Scott Steiner/Road Warrior Animal

Before the match, Steiner yells at Kronik for making a horrible decision. He's ready for Nash too because Nash is going to get the same treatment that Booker T. and Sting received. Animal and Clark get things going, preventing that LOD vs. Demolition reunion showdown that we were all

looking forward to. Stereo shoulders give us a stalemate so Animal's clothesline and elbow drop get two.

Adams comes in and we get the REAL showdown, only to have Animal bring in Steiner to stomp on Adams in the corner. A quick full nelson slam puts Scott down and the heels bail outside where Clark takes them down with a flip dive off the apron. Back in and Scott plants him with a butterfly powerbomb, meaning it's time for the push-ups.

Steiner charges into a boot though and the hot tag (Tenay's words) brings in Clark to clean house. The Meltdown gets two on Animal but here's Totally Buff to break up High Times. Animal breaks up the full nelson slam as Buff chokes Cat on the floor. Now the High Times is good enough to pin Animal. Tenay pushes this as a major upset, despite Kronik being former multiple time Tag Team Champions and Steiner/Animal never teaming before.

**Rating:** D. I actually didn't hate this as there's a simple idea here and the younger (I think?) guys went over clean. It gets really tiring seeing an established team losing to two guys who happen to be good tag wrestlers with their regular partners but WCW actually went with the logical ending here. I'm as shocked as you are but this could have been a lot worse.

Steiner comes back in with the pipe to beat Kronik down and end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D. I know the running line about WCW is that everything goes down after the cruiserweights but this was one of the worst cases I've seen in a long time. This Elite story isn't even warmed over NWO at its best and the wrestling is getting weaker and weaker every single show. At the end of the day though, it's seeing people like the Harris Twins, Totally Buff and Rick Steiner getting so much TV time. These people just are not interesting and it's showing more and more with each passing show.

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# Monday Nitro – January 23, 2001: Same Old, Same Really Old

## Monday Nitro #274

Date: January 23, 2001

Location: Lawrence Joel Memorial Coliseum, Winston-Salem, North Carolina

Commentators: Scott Hudson, Tony Schiavone

We're on a Tuesday this week as TNT has stopped pretending that Nitro is the ratings juggernaut it was back in the day. It's the new era of WCW (the latest one that is) with Ric Flair in charge and evil for reasons that haven't yet been and won't be explained because WCW. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the pay per view and last week's show, which night as well have Nash going TOO SWEET to make it feel more NWOesque.

Last week, the heel stable was eating chicken wings and breaking the bones in time with Sid breaking his leg. Ok that's kind of awesome.

Tony and Scott say WCW has new owners and it's not clear where things are going.

Here are Flair, Animal, Luger and Bagwell to get things going. Flair gets

right to the point and says that Steiner, who isn't here yet, deserves a top level opponent for SuperBrawl. That makes Flair think of one name and that would be...Alex Wright. Alex actually comes out as the heels can't keep straight faces, only to have Kevin Nash cut him off. Wright yells (and rightfully so) and is promptly powerbombed through the stage.

Nash declares himself #1 contender with Cat coming out to say that's correct. Flair says not so fast because Nash has to beat Bagwell first and Luger will be guest referee. Not so fast either as Luger has to face Diamond Dallas Page for the right to be guest referee in the main event #1 contenders match (my head hurts). Oh and Buff or Nash can't interfere, because other wrestlers not being allowed to interfere is a special rule.

Mike Sanders gives Chavo Guerrero a pep talk and tells him to watch the next match closely. The Wall is here too and promises to end the legend of the Misfits tonight.

Flair tells Jarrett and Steiner what's going on. Was there any reason to not have them be there during the talking segment?

#### Michael Modest vs. Christopher Daniels

Modest had one match on Nitro in March 2000 and hasn't been seen since. Daniels is 29 here (in his mid-20s according to Tony) because he's never been a young wrestler in his life. He does however have hair here which is quite jarring. Daniels punches away to start but gets taken down with some wristlocks that have Modest dropping to the mat as he twists. Daniels botches a springboard and almost lands on his head allowing Modest to crank on the arm a bit more.

Modest takes a kick to the shoulder which puts Daniels on the mat for reasons that aren't clear. They head outside with Modest being sent into the barricade and eating a dropkick through the ropes, followed by a slingshot splash to the floor. Daniels seems to have shaken off whatever was wrong with him at the start. Back in and Daniels hits a slingshot moonsault (called split legged by Hudson despite the fact that Daniels' legs were in fact unsplit) for two before getting caught in a dragon suplex for two of his own.

Daniels pops back up to the top but Modest runs across the ring and does a handstand into a hurricanrana to bring him right back down. Modest gets dropped again though and the BME gets two, only to have Modest get the same off something like White Noise. A second attempt is countered into a modified Angel's Wings (Daniels flipped Modest onto his back instead of his face) for two more. Modest cross bodies him out to the floor and here's Scott Steiner to destroy them both for a no contest.

**Rating:** C+. It was nice while it lasted but why bother letting either guy go anywhere when you can use them as cannon fodder for WCW? This would be the last appearance in WCW for both guys but at least they were able to be in the ring for a bit before Steiner got to treat them like the most worthless goons this side of The Goon. At least let someone win the match before the run-in.

Steiner uses the pipe to break both their legs before saying he broke Sid's leg on purpose. They'll be laying next to Sid and Nash is going to be added to the list soon.

Here are Kwee Wee and Paisley with something to say. He's ticked off about now being part of Flair's team and it's clear that he's tough enough after the beating from Rick Steiner on Monday. Kwee Wee issues a challenge to anyone in this building, including fans. For some reason he goes after a security guard and beats him down until other guards break it up. As usual this would work better minus the overly gelled hair and glitter.

Team Canada comes out with Lance Storm challenging Konnan to a one on one match with the winner being the official winner of the war between the Canadians and the Filthy Animals. Konnan comes out to accept in his own unique way.

#### Lance Storm vs. Konnan

They hit the mat to start where Konnan is completely out of his league. Storm grabs the Maple Leaf but gets kicked in the face for a break. Konnan hits the rolling lariat as everyone else brawls on the floor, as they should be. The faceplant is broken up and an Irish whip transitions into the Maple Leaf for the tap out in less than two minutes. Some war,

but midcards never meant anything under Bischoff's watch.

Shane Douglas wants on the team and Luger says he's in if he can beat the Cat.

General Rection looks a little crazy as Gene asks him about everything the former Misfits have been going through lately. Lash says he'll have Rection's back until the end. Rection says it wasn't supposed to be like this and asks for Lash's shirt. He's honorably discharged from the team and it's time to return to their roots. Rection takes off his shirt and says Hugh Morrus is back. Uh, yay.

#### Lex Luger vs. Diamond Dallas Page

Winner gets to referee the #1 contenders main event. Luger stalls to start so Page knocks him out to the floor so he can stall while looking up at the ring. Back in and Luger hits an atomic drop and belly to back, burning up half of his arsenal in a few seconds. A shoulder sends Page into the corner and it's time to stomp a lot. Page crotches him against the post and sends Luger head first into the buckle several times. The referee gets bumped so here's Jarrett with the guitar to set up the Torture Rack for the Luger win.

**Rating:** D. I could go with this a little bit more if they didn't set all this up an hour ago for a payoff half an hour from now. You could pencil Jarrett's interference in here as soon as they said Bagwell and Nash couldn't interfere. Again: we've reached the point where interference being banned is a special stipulation. How did that happen?

#### Mamalukes vs. Shawn Stasiak/Mark Jindrak

The Thrillers jump Johnny at the bell so he has to kick Stasiak's head off for a breather. It's off to Vito who helps with a double belly to back suplex on Shawn. The Mamalukes take over on Jindrak as well, including a double back elbow for two. Stasiak comes in again and misses a charge in the corner as this is completely one sided so far.

Shawn finally gets in a jumping back elbow to the jaw before bringing in Jindrak for one off a moonsault. Vito takes a double elbow of his own,

which is finally enough for Johnny to come in without a tag as everything breaks down. Vito kicks Stasiak and Jindrak clotheslines Johnny for two each, only to have the rest of the Thrillers come in for the weak DQ.

**Rating:** D+. As illogical as it was for the Thrillers to come in there, you kind of had to know that was going to be the ending. That's how most matches end around here these days because so many people are in some kind of a faction. The Mamalukes continue to be perfectly acceptable jobbers to the stars and that's all they need to be.

Stasiak and Jindrak aren't happy that they just lost a match due to interference. My goodness that actually makes sense.

Post break the Thrillers are still arguing with Sanders not being able to calm them down. Flair pulls Sanders off to the side and tells him to outsmart the rest of the team.

#### Shane Douglas vs. The Cat

If Shane wins he's on the team. We get the usual Shane insults to the crowd to start because that's his big thing. That's not to say it doesn't work well enough though. Cat isn't ready to go yet as he has to make Jarrett vs. Page for SuperBrawl. He also wants to make this for the US Title but Flair comes on screen to say it's non-title. Instead, the Commissioner's job is on the line.

Douglas jumps him from behind to start and Flair makes it No DQ to insure a messy ending. Something like a bridging Indian Deathlock has Cat in trouble before a poke to the eye cuts him off again. Shane gets slammed off the top and sent into the buckle ten times as the match warps back to 1987. Cat keeps up the Hogan offense with ten right hands to the head in the corner, only to get poked in the eye again. Cue Mike Sanders followed by the Thrillers to take Cat out but Rick Steiner makes the save, allowing Cat to superkick a chain out of Douglas' hand for the pin to keep his job.

**Rating:** D. Somehow that wasn't as messy as I was expecting it to be, which is saying a lot. Keeping Cat short like this (under five minutes) is the right idea and the match could have been a lot worse. If nothing

else Cat is great proof of how charisma is far more important than in ring abilities and almost always will be.

Post match Cat does his dancing and Rick actually joins him for a bizarrely entertaining visual.

#### Hugh Morrus/Lash Leroux vs. A-Wall/Chavo Guerrero Jr.

It's a brawl to start and no one can stop Wall (or A-Wall as he's still being called here, even though he's out of the team) until Morrus grabs a slam, only to tag off to Leroux by mistake. Morrus says that was just a high five and Wall uses the distraction to make the tag off to Chavo. Wall chokes Lash in the corner a bit as Morrus tries to get in as this breaks down into a more standard tag match.

Lash gets in a quick tilt-a-whirl slam and scores with a clothesline for two, only to get caught in a Gory Special for a few seconds. Back up and Chavo accidentally hits Wall because you have to have heel miscommunication. Chavo doesn't seem to mind and dropkicks Lash for two with Morrus coming in to break it up. Wall goes after Morrus to start a brawl, allowing Chavo to grab a rollup on Lash for the pin.

**Rating:** C-. This worked better than it probably should have but above all else it was a good sign that Chavo wound up getting the pin instead of having another champion get beat. Morrus is still being treated as a big deal and it's nice to be able to go with the stupid name instead of the really stupid name. Lash still isn't all that great in the ring and is really just a guy in wrestling gear but he could be worse.

Morrus beats Chavo up post match. Sore loser.

#### Kevin Nash vs. Buff Bagwell

Lex Luger is guest referee and if Nash wins he gets the title shot at SuperBrawl. Totally Buff wastes some time as Luger promises to call it right down the middle. Nash starts with a knee to the well toned abs and chokes in the corner with the boot, drawing some harsh criticism from Luger. Thankfully the whole fair referee thing doesn't last long as Luger grabs Nash's foot so Buff can crotch him on the way back inside. However,

Lex counts very slowly for Bagwell with Nash kicking out before one, causing Bagwell to yell at Luger.

Bagwell's chinlock keeps things so slow that it's Nash being the one on his feet to speed things up with a side slam. Of course it's another slow cover and Snake Eyes gets the same speed, only to have Luger cut off the count at two instead of screwing around with the pretext. It's time for a chair with Luger holding it up so Bagwell can knock it into Kevin's head.

The Blockbuster doesn't work though as Nash ducks to send them crashing into each other. Of course this is treated as some heroic comeback because WCW announcers are easily entertained. Cue Diamond Dallas Page to hit the Diamond Cutter on Luger. Nash gets up and Jackknifes Bagwell to set up the Austin/McMahon count with Nash grabbing the unconscious Luger's hand to count the pin.

**Rating:** D-. This was every crooked referee match you've ever seen because there isn't much you can do to change this gimmick. Nash was obviously getting the title shot and somehow this was the better choice than Nash vs. Luger with Bagwell as the referee. Unfortunately Luger and Bagwell are still some of the top heels in the company and this is about as high speed as they're going to be able to go.

Post match Scott Steiner, Kronik, Animal and Jarrett come out for the big brawl to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D. So to recap, this whole show took two hours to set up Steiner vs. Nash at SuperBrawl. One of the matches was to set up a guest referee for a match to establish Nash as the #1 contender. Just like back in the NWO days, there's the issue of having so much of the show revolve around that one story, which isn't very good in the first place. There are other stories on the show to help things out a bit but a lot of them are tied into the Flair super stable stuff in some way. It's another show full of bad wrestling and focused around one tired story, which is an idea that has barely ever worked but WCW kept doing it.

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# Thunder – January 17, 2001: I Can Get Through This

## Thunder

Date: January 17, 2001

Location: Allen County Coliseum, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Attendance: 4,836

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mike Tenay

We're coming off an interesting show Monday where things have changed a bit yet still feel very much the same. In this case Ric Flair is now all evil for reasons that aren't clear (and will remain that way because this is WCW) and the remaining faces are fighting against the latest NWO. It's certainly better than what we've been having but I don't see much of a shelf life for this one. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Sunday and Monday. You know, the early part of Monday before they did this show in front of a dead crowd.

There's a new opening.

Here are Cat and Miss Jones to get things going. Cat gets straight to the point: he wants to clean up WCW and Flair isn't going to keep Goldberg gone forever. Well to be fair no one really believed his career was completely over anyway. Cat wants Totally Buff out here right now so here are Luger and Buff with the latter making fun of the shape of Cat's

mouth.

Luger one ups him by botching Ric Flair's job title, referring to him as the President of WCW. I know it's not that complicated but it's three letters long and Luger can't remember? Cat makes fun of Buff's hat so they come to the ring, only to have Kronik come out for the save, prompting Cat to set up a match between them tonight. Dance time!

Here's Kwee Wee, or Angry Alan more than likely, to issue an open challenge to anyone because he's not happy with being left out of Flair's group (which needs a name). Unfortunately it's quickly answered.

#### Kwee Wee vs. Rick Steiner

This would be Kwee Wee's reward for all the effort into making this stupid character work. Steiner takes him down with a suplex right at the bell and it's time to go outside for a whip into the barricade. A wicked Steiner Line is followed by a bunch of right hands to the face as Rick asks if this is what Kwee Wee really wants. Kwee Wee doesn't think too much of Steiner barking at Paisley but his objection is stopped cold with a German suplex, followed by the Steiner Bulldog to complete the destruction in a hurry.

Steiner says that's it for the audition and Flair can come get him (Steiner) if he wants him.

#### Hardcore Title: Bam Bam Bigelow vs. Meng

Meng is defending. Bigelow jumps him to start and makes the mistake of hitting him in the head. That's fine with Meng so Bigelow hits him in the back with a few chair shots for maybe 14% more effect. They stay on the floor with Meng going over the announcers' table and Bigelow going into the steps. In other words, it's the exact same thing that happens in almost every hardcore match.

Back in and Bigelow actually works on the leg because this is the match where you expect psychology. Meng shrugs it off (of course) and no sells a DDT, setting up the Death Grip. For some reason that's not enough for a pin though and Meng goes up for a top rope splash to retain.

**Rating:** D. What were you expecting here? Meng wasn't exactly someone worth seeing on his best days so having him be an even more unstoppable monster wasn't exactly the right way to go. It doesn't help that Bigelow had been wrestling the exact same match for at least a year and it wasn't getting any better.

On top of that, this was it for the Hardcore Title as the WWF would sign Meng away and put him in the Royal Rumble just for the fun of it. Now some people might think WCW would put their champions under contract to make sure no one steals them away like this but they had more important things to worry about, such as finding a justification for Lex Luger being a top heel in 2001.

Glacier video.

Norman Smiley gets a fan letter back from Glacier, who says he'll have Norman's back. Giddiness ensues.

Team Canada arrives.

Lash Leroux and The Wall apologize to Hugh (yes they call him Hugh) about having Chavo's back too often lately.

Don Harris now has a neck brace and will never be able to wrestle again, leaving Ron to wrestle as a singles guy. Norman comes in and challenges him to a match later. I won't even bother making fun of this.

Ric Flair, Scott Steiner, Midajah and some women arrive. WCW does know that they tell people this is being taped on the same night right? As in the fans should know there's no reason for Flair and Steiner to leave and come back for the second show.

### Norman Smiley vs. Ron Harris

The announcers actually treat Don's "injury" as a big serious thing because Bischoff is in charge again and announcers have to be this stupid. We hit a LONG stall session to start before Norman armdrags him down a few times. A dropkick lets Norman start dancing and it's time to stall again.

Tony starts listing off the reasons why the Twins can't switch again as Ron comes back in with a kick to the face. A side slam gets two so Ron throws him outside and into the barricade. That goes nowhere so Norman makes his comeback with clotheslines and a little spanking. The referee yells at Norman for attacking in the ropes and the Twins switch, allowing Don to give Norman a big side slam for the pin.

**Rating:** F. Norman jobs, the Harris Twins win, and it's time for the announcers to start treating us like idiots while acting like idiots themselves. This is indeed life in WCW because Bischoff really does believe he's smarter than everyone else and that they would actually fall for the most obvious trick in the history of wrestling.

#### Totally Buff vs. Kronik

Just like last week. Adams slowly powers Luger around to start but Lex has that veteran smirk on his face. I'd smirk too if I got paid this much money to do so little. A gorilla press drops Luger and a piledriver gets two with Bagwell coming in for the save. We get a double tag so Clark can powerslam Bagwell, followed by a belly to back suplex. Adams DDT's the heels down at the same time but Luger pops up with a clothesline so the old guys (as in the bad ones) can take over. Everything breaks down and it's Jarrett coming in with the guitar to knock Clark out for the pin.

**Rating:** D-. How in the world do you have a new creative team and fresh stories (well as fresh as the NWO can be) and still have the same ending from last week? This was horribly dull stuff as Luger might as well have been holding up a sign saying "I'm not trying and I get paid for it" and Bagwell was Bagwell.

Page comes out for the save but Flair and company come out to beat him down. Flair makes Page vs. Jarrett for the main event and calls the team The Elite. That might be the most overused name I've heard of in wrestling history.

#### Billy Kidman vs. Mike Awesome

Before the match, Lance Storm says the war between the Filthy Animals and Team Canada is far from over but they will have the last laugh. Kidman

has bad ribs coming in but shrugs off an early beating to dropkick Awesome out to the floor. A crossbody off the apron only hurts the ribs even worse but he's still able to hit a slingshot legdrop for two.

Awesome gets smart and throws Kidman in the air for a crash down onto the ribs, followed by a splash for a near fall. A powerslam looks to set up the Awesome Splash but it only hits mat to keep things going. Awesome hits a top rope clothesline for two but the Awesome Bomb is countered with a Bodog for two. For reasons of general stupidity, Kidman goes up for the shooting star, only to get crotched back down. Now the Awesome Bomb connects for the pin.

**Rating:** C+. I liked the idea of this match when it was mentioned on Nitro and it was about what I expected. These two worked a nice power vs. speed match though the ribs didn't really cost Kidman in the end. The latest stable war isn't the most interesting thing in the world but that's what you get in a Bischoff run company.

The Canadians go to cut Kidman's hair but the Animals run in for the save.

Chavo Guerrero says he was auditioning for Flair when he attacked Morrus on Monday.

Video recap of Nitro.

#### Chavo Guerrero Jr. vs. Hugh Morrus

Morrus (PICK A NAME ALREADY) runs him over to start and throws him up for a gorilla press. That means it's time for the choking before Morrus puts him on the top, only to eat a tornado DDT for two. It's time to start in on Hugh's leg because this show hasn't died enough already. After that eats up some time, Morrus (called Rection by the announcers) comes back with chops, only to get taken down into another leg lock. A sitout powerbomb plants Chavo but cue the Wall to chokeslam Morrus off the top to give Chavo the pin. The announcers are shocked and call Morrus the heart and soul of WCW.

**Rating:** D+. Somehow that's one of the better matches of the night so far

despite Chavo laying on the mat for a long stretch and working on the leg, which of course went nowhere. Now we get the implosion of the Misfits, which I'm sure you were all looking forward to. It's another bad match on a LONG show full of them.

Post break, Chavo says he tried to preach to the other Misfits but couldn't get through to them.

### Jeff Jarrett vs. Diamond Dallas Page

Before the match, Jarrett addresses the Hoosiernuts. Tenay: "Hoosiernuts? Oh we're in Indiana." Basically he's smart and Page is dumb so come get yours you string bean slapnut. Page starts fast with a clothesline out to the floor but they head back inside before the announcers have to run away. Jeff gets in a few stomps but Page slugs away and gets two off a Batista Bomb. That earns Page a low blow and things slow right back down. Page blocks a kick to the ribs but eats an enziguri which puts Jarrett down as well for absolutely no reason.

Jeff breaks up a sunset flip with a right hand but kneels down so Page can pull him down for two. It's time for the required Jarrett sleeper hold which has never won a match. Two arm drops bring Page back to life and a sleeper drop (which Tony calls a version of a Diamond Cutter because Tony isn't that bright) puts both guys down again. A spinning Rock Bottom gets two for Page but the Diamond Cutter is countered, only to have the heels come in for the DQ.

**Rating:** C. Typical fine match between these two with nothing all that interesting but nothing too bad. You knew the ending was coming as we've flashed back to 1998 when a few basic moves were enough to bring out the troops for the DQ because things might get too interesting otherwise.

The good guys come out for the brawl with Tony saying they won't stop until someone dies to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D-. Oh yeah this show has died again. This was another episode with zero effort and almost no storyline development. We have another big storyline with the heel group vs. the face group and they brawled a lot to end the show. It's pretty clear that they're not trying

at this point, but the question is (assuming you don't know they have two months left) what are they waiting for? A pay per view just ended and now they're just waiting around again? For what? Another horrible show here as Thunder gets more and more worthless every week.

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## Monday Nitro – January 15, 2001: Welcome Back Uncle Eric

### Monday Nitro #273

Date: January 15, 2001

Location: Allen County Coliseum, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Attendance: 4,836

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Scott Hudson

We're past Sin and heading towards SuperBrawl with the big story being Scott Steiner retaining the World Title after Sid Vicious broke his leg. However the interesting thing (work with me here) was the Mystery Man being revealed as Animal, who sided with Steiner and Jeff Jarrett. Oh and Goldberg is retired. Forever. Let's get to it.

Of note: this is the first TV show under the new Eric Bischoff regime. He

had some influence on last night's pay per view but I'm not sure if it was full control or not.

Quick recap of the World Title match and Goldberg's loss.

We see some exclusive footage from after the show with Ric Flair hugging Steiner as Buff Bagwell and Lex Luger watch on. So yeah, Flair is the big villain again.

The announcers recap the big stories of last night and show us the HORRIBLY graphic footage of Sid's leg being snapped like a twig. That still makes me cringe.

Here are Luger and Bagwell in suits to what sounds like a funeral march. A group of jobbers follow them out with a coffin and we get an In Memory Of graphic for Goldberg. The announcers continue to act all shocked that Flair was behind it. HE'S RIC FLAIR. HE'S EVIL. Why does this continue to surprise you? Bagwell cries as the casket is opened to reveal....a copy of Goldberg's book, a spear and a jackhammer. The fans are absolutely livid over this stuff so points for getting the fans to boo.

Luger thinks Goldberg would have wanted this outpouring of emotion because they were great friends. The music is still playing as Bagwell tries to get the fans to keep chanting GOLDBERG. Luger asks if anyone has a special Goldberg story and would like to let us hear it so here's a crying Jarrett to put a guitar on top of the casket. Jarrett has one memory above all others and eventually gets around to talking about how Goldberg never beat him. Goldberg is a long list of adjectives slap nuts and Tony freaks out that no one can stop this from continuing.

Now it's time for Scott Steiner to come out with Midajah, who is wearing a veil for a bizarrely creepy look. Steiner takes credit for getting rid of Sid before switching over to Goldberg. Scott didn't hurt him but at Fall Brawl, he gave Goldberg the worst defeat of his career. Goldberg just wasn't man enough to stay on top so there's no rematch. For a genuinely awesome evil moment, Steiner spits in the coffin....and there's Goldberg's music.

We cut to his locker room door and it's Ric Flair and Animal coming out.

After a break (oh yeah this is going on for a LONG time) Flair is in the ring to say this is the NEW WCW. Flair goes on about how awesome a collection of talent we have here and how he was behind the Tag Team Title change, the demise of Goldberg and Sid's injury. The announcers are still shocked that Flair did this.

Flair talks about all the great wrestlers they have and how any of them could destroy anyone at any given time. Tony brings up an important question: WHY DID FLAIR DO THIS??? He's been talking for a good while now and there hasn't been an actual explanation for why he did all of this. It doesn't get any better as Flair says he'll be interviewing everyone all night long and gets to find out their stance: they can either become one of the group or be handed over to them.

Cue Kevin Nash to say he left Big Sexy back in Indianapolis and brought the killer here instead. Nash is sounding far more intense than usual here. Tonight he wants to face Steiner before he comes to kill Flair. Nash isn't alone either as here are Diamond Dallas Page and Rick Steiner (great) to help even things up a bit. Kevin says he wants a title shot against Scott tonight but Flair says he makes the matches.

Cue Commissioner Cat to say not so fast because the title match is on, FINALLY ending this segment at nearly half an hour. Good grief people. I know it's a new regime but we shouldn't be a fourth of the way into the show after one segment, especially when we didn't even get a reason for why Flair did all this. Nash and Page as the top faces make sense as there's the simple problem of there being no one else around to fill the spots. I'm fine with the latest NWO story but this could have been cut WAY down.

After a break, Flair asks Crowbar if he's going to be a team player. Crowbar says he's always been a loner so he's going to keep doing that way. Apparently Flair is going to give him a chance to prove his skills right now.

Cruiserweight Title: Chavo Guerrero Jr. vs. Crowbar

Chavo is defending and I'm oddly intrigued by this. Feeling out process to start before the champ getting in a kick to the face, followed by a

top rope hurricanrana. The announcers keep wondering how Crowbar is going to be able to fight without trashcans. So are chairs just not good enough for them anymore? Chavo dives off the apron to take Crowbar down again but that means the fight heads outside where Crowbar is in better shape.

Back in and a slingshot legdrop gets two on the champ, only to have Chavo come back with chops and uppercuts. A Death Valley Driver plants Chavo for a delayed two but he blocks a top rope hurricanrana to get a breather. The tornado DDT is broken up as well and Crowbar gets a near fall off a northern lights suplex. Chavo is sent out to the floor again and Crowbar scores with his apron splash. Instead of going for the pin though, it's time for a chair but Chavo slingshots out to drive Crowbar face first into the chair. Somehow that's not a DQ so Chavo takes him back inside for the tornado DDT to retain.

**Rating:** C+. Stupid ending aside, this was still entertaining enough and that's all it needed to be for the story. I'm assuming Crowbar isn't going to get the invite to the new stable, which thankfully means he isn't the nothing wrestler that WCW has presented him as for months. Good little match here as Chavo continues to get better and better every week.

Bam Bam Bigelow (He still works here?) accepts Totally Buff's offer to be on the team.

#### Rey Mysterio Jr./Billy Kidman vs. 3 Count

Again, this should be good. They start fast with some 3 Count miscommunication to give the Animals some early control. Shane hurricanranas Kidman out to the floor, leaving Rey to take a sitout powerbomb/neckbreaker combo for two. Kidman is right back in for the save and it's a Bronco Buster for Helms.

There are no tags anywhere in sight so far. Shannon takes Kidman out with a flip dive and lands on his feet just to show off. Rey dives on both of them before Shane dives on all three of them. Back in and Kidman snaps off a top rope hurricanrana for two but eats a superkick from Shane. The Vertebreaker is broken up to prevent broken vertebrates and Kidman adds the Kid Crusher for the pin.

**Rating:** B. There were no tags in the entire match but sweet goodness this felt like an old cruiserweight match for the first time in far too long. It's really cool to see Mysterio and Kidman show off how awesome they can still be in the ring while 3 Count can more than go with anyone. Really fun stuff here, even though it barely broke three minutes.

Post match Team Canada runs in to go after the Animals because this feud is still going. Storm grabs the mic and asks Kidman if he wants a hair vs. hair match against Mike Awesome. Kidman accepts, giving us what could be one heck of a match.

Cat thanks Kronik for their help last night and gives them a Tag Team Title match as a reward. No charge for this one.

Team Canada beats Kidman down.

Flair offers Chavo a spot on the team, which still seems to be called The New WCW. Chavo doesn't seem interested but Ric tells him to go chase the Nitro Girls and have some tequila before they talk about it tomorrow. Chavo leaves and Mike Sanders comes in to suck up but Ric thinks he was just trying to make a spot. Flair makes him his new pet project to make him the new Dirtiest Player in the Game. Oh and don't worry about Kronik getting the Tag Team Titles back.

Totally Buff goes up to General Rection because we haven't flown through enough stuff tonight. Rection doesn't say anything and looks a bit stunned.

#### Tag Team Titles; Kronik vs. Sean O'Haire/Chuck Palumbo

Kronik is challenging. Palumbo punches Adams around to start but gets thrown to the floor, allowing Clark to hit his flip dive off the apron. Tony: "HAS HE EVER DONE THAT???" Scott: "Of course he has." It's off to O'Haire vs. Adams with the full nelson slam planting the champ for two. Clark comes in for some chops as the announcers say any move could be your last as Sid proved last night. Palumbo gets the tag and is promptly suplexed, only to have O'Haire break up the Meltdown.

Adams tries to come in but the distraction just lets Sean nail Clark in

the back of the head. A DDT plants O'Haire though and the hot tag brings in Adams as everything breaks down. High Time gets two on Sean with Chuck making the last second save. Cue Jindrak and Stasiak for a distraction though, allowing Palumbo to score with the Jungle Kick on Adams. Clark gets beaten down on the floor (Hudson: "WHERE IS THE REFEREE?") as Adams is superplexed to set up the Seanton Bomb for the pin to retain the titles.

**Rating:** D+. They kept this moving to make sure people didn't realize how weak Kronik becomes in an actual match but you knew the screwy finish was coming. Thankfully they have the titles on the best pairing as Jindrak and Stasiak are some of the least interesting guys I've seen in a good while.

Kidman can't wrestle so Konnan is taking his place.

O'Haire and Palumbo yell at Jindrak and Stasiak because they didn't need the help. Sanders and Reno come in to make peace.

#### Konnan vs. Mike Awesome

Hair vs. hair....so I guess Kidman's hair is on the line since Konnan is bald. Indeed that's the case with Flair popping up on screen to make that clear. Konnan gets beaten down in the corner to start until he snaps off a headscissors to take over. Awesome stops a charge in the corner with a raised boot and a belly to back suplex gets two. Back up and Konnan wristdrags him out of the corner and it's time to fight on the floor.

Awesome chairs him in the ribs but dives off the steps right into a chair shot to the head. Back in and Mike raises a boot to stop Konnan (looked horrible as Konnan had already landed when he hit the boot), only to have the Awesome Bomb countered into a faceplant (nice nod to Kidman, who can't be powerbombed you see). A spinebuster sets up the Awesome Splash for two so Awesome goes back up, only to get caught in a super DDT for the pin and Mike's hair.

**Rating:** C-. Dang it I really wanted to see Kidman vs. Awesome but instead we got Konnan's slow offense to mess things up. Kicking out of the Awesome Splash was a big stretch, especially when you could probably have

done the same thing with the splash missing but why do that when you can push Konnan harder?

Post match Konnan snips off the back of Awesome's hair until Team Canada makes the save.

Chavo tries to talk to Rection but the General really doesn't want to hear it.

Storm tells Awesome that they'll get the last laugh.

Tickets go on sale for SuperBrawl: Revenge (great title) on Saturday, or less than a month before the show.

Here's Cat to say send someone out here for him to fight.

#### The Cat vs. Bam Bam Bigelow

Bigelow runs him over and stomps away with a belly to back getting two. The announcers talk about how important this match is as Bigelow chokes away, only to miss a charge in the corner. A chop and the dancing elbow get two on the big man, followed by the Feliner for the very quick pin.

Post match it's dance time.

#### US Title: Shane Douglas vs. General Rection

Shane is defending after winning the title last night. Before the match, Shane asks how the fans like him now. Apparently the title weighs 16lbs. Good piece of trivia. Rection starts with right hands and clotheslines for two but Shane comes back with right hands of his own. That's fine with Rection who wins a slugout and kicks Shane in the ribs. The top rope elbow misses though as Rection takes too much time getting to the top. It's already chain time but Rection gets to his feet and press slams Shane before throwing the chain out. Cue Chavo to sneak in a chain shot so Shane can get the cheap pin to retain the title.

Post break Rection holds his head and almost cries about how much he wants to fight Chavo. He's tired of being General Rection or Hugh Morrus but he's going to finish Chavo's career. Hopefully that means it's time

for a better name. Like one that's not a pun.

### WCW World Title: Kevin Nash vs. Scott Steiner

Steiner is defending and I think you know what's coming here. Scott easily takes him into the corner and hammers away to start before Nash spins him around and does the same. A clothesline puts Scott outside and an angry Nash stays on him with the right hands. I'd be mad too if I was asked to wrestle twice in one night.

Scott gets in a shot to the ribs and a spinning belly to belly gets two back inside. The Push-Up Elbow lets the champ show off a bit and a delayed backbreaker sets up a bow and arrow hold. Nash starts fighting up and scores with the side slam but can't cover because he's gassed after three and a half minutes. Snake Eyes and the big boot set up the Jackknife and here come the troops for the DQ.

**Rating:** C. Shockingly watchable match here with both guys working hard and faster than I've seen in a long time. Of course the lack of any drama about the ending didn't help things but that's par for the WCW course. Still though, for who was in there and how the ending was going to go, this was a glorified miracle.

The remaining good guys come in for the brawl to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C+. Yeah it was actually good and it's a strong sign for the start of the Bischoff regime. Unfortunately it's nothing we haven't seen before and I have no reason to believe that WCW won't screw this up by the time Thunder airs in two days. The new NWO isn't going to last long with Lex Luger and Jeff Jarrett as the second and third in command but at least it's something coherent and focused for a change, which is a far cry from the disasters that WCW tends to put on.

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