

Monday Nitro – December 12, 2000: Might As Well Ruin Tuesday

Monday Night #270

Date: December 12, 2000

Location: Centurytel Center, Bossier City, Louisiana

Commentators: Stevie Ray, Tony Schiavone, Scott Hudson

It's the go home show for the final Starrcade and the show is airing on a Tuesday, likely due to something else getting the regular timeslot on TNT. These recent shows have ranged from mostly missing to somehow shooting yourself in the foot, dropping the gun and having it shoot you in the other foot but hopefully things pick up a bit before the biggest show of the year. Let's get to it.

This show was taped on Monday so any references to being live are pure falsehoods.

To show you how worthless Thunder is, here's the same recap video that opened last Wednesday's show. In other words: ignore anything on Thunder because the only show that matters is Nitro.

Lex Luger is granted a match by Mike Sanders.

Here's Ric Flair to say we're live (we're not) and that we're in Shreveport (Again not really, though the towns are about five minutes apart. Why not just have everyone say the same town?). Ric says Steiner and Sid aren't going to come into any contact with each other in this arena. They'll be out here talking but they're going to hold the fighting until Starrcade. If they fight, it's going to be a suspension and the title being stripped. As for Steiner, yeah he put Sting, Booker T. and Arn Anderson in the hospital but they could be here tonight to get some payback (I'm sure).

Sgt. AWALL is going to get a World Title match tonight and that's finally

enough to bring Sanders out to interrupt. Mike has a match of his own for tonight as the Perfect Event will face Mark Jindrak/Sean O'Haire and the Insiders in a non-title match. There goes Flair's suit jacket and he makes Sid vs. Sanders. If Mike doesn't wrestle, he loses his power and the Thrillers are barred from ringside.

Earlier today, Scott Steiner beat down Corporal Cajun until AWALL made the save to set up tonight's title match. That's better than I was expecting.

Sid is ready for tonight and for Sunday.

Jindrak and O'Haire have a monitor.

Disco Inferno insults Sarge so he yells a lot. So a guy famous for losing almost all the time is now one of the most intimidating guys in the company? That kind of stuff gets old in a hurry, but I'm not sure how many people remember Sarge in the first place.

Lance Storm/Major Gunns vs. The Cat/Ms. Jones

Before the match, Storm has an idea to make this more interesting: if Cat loses, he has to sing the Canadian national anthem on Thunder. Storm stops for the song and here comes Santa Claus (right down the steps instead of right down his own lane). That goes nowhere so here's Cat to call Storm a Power Ranger. Cat makes the obvious stipulation of Storm having to sing if he loses too.

The women get things going with Gunns actually throwing a decent dropkick to knock her into the corner. Jones gets two off a spinning kick to the face and it's off to the men. Cat dances out of a sunset flip and gets one of the loudest pops WCW has had in months. You could actually see the fans freaking out over the dancing. The Feliner gets two with Gunns (not Jones, Tony), putting the foot on the ropes. We get the catfight on the floor as Elix Skipper's interference fails. Cat catches Duggan's 2x4 and knocks Storm out for the pin.

Rating: D+. Who knew Cat was this over in Louisiana? Jones and Gunns were just there for their looks (not the worst idea in the world) and their

wrestling was of course horrible. The Duggan thing is long overdue and I have no idea why they put him with the Canadians in the first place.

Jimmy Hart is starting a radio network and is ready to wrestle some Memphis DJ's when Nitro hits the Mid-South Coliseum.

Hugh Morrus (yeah we're going with that as the people are calling him Hugh most of the time) catches Lash Leroux (the gimmick names are mostly dead anyway) on the phone with Chavo. That's fine with Hugh as he gives AWALL a pep talk.

Sanders adds Kronik to the three way dance, much to Reno's annoyance.

Crowbar and Daffney are on commentary as Norman Smiley issues an open challenge for a hardcore match in the hopes that he gets a title shot as a result.

Meng vs. Norman Smiley

Meng has Paisley with him because that's still a thing. Norman, complete with shoulder pads, gets stomped down in the corner as Crowbar is doing his Gordon Solie thing again. They head up the aisle with Norman actually getting in a few shots for some effect. Somehow DJ Ran still has a job (Why isn't he fighting Jimmy Hart?) and a booth in the arena so the guys fight around there too. Santa tries to get involved so Meng drops him too, followed by some chops to make Norman scream. Norman steals Santa's bag so here's Santa in the ring to throw powder at both guys for a double DQ in a hardcore match.

Rating: F. That's my standard rating for hardcore matches anymore because there's no good reason to have guys like this (meaning Crowbar and Smiley) in this waste of time. I mean, they're better than Brian Knobbs and company but there's so much other stuff these people could be doing.

The blinded Meng puts the Death Grip on Paisley. Santa takes off the beard....and it's Terry Funk. Terry starts throwing chair shots but can't put Meng down. Kwee Wee comes out too as Meng finally drops. Terry says he's the real Santa Claus (Crowbar: "He's my idol.") and wants the Hardcore Title at Starrcade. Crowbar gets in the ring and the match seems

to be on, earning himself a chair shot to the head.

Sarge is given Lex Luger on Thunder and Goldberg tonight.

The Harris Brother eat sandwiches because that's a thing that actually exists in wrestling. We cut to the Filthy Animals, who put laxatives in said sandwiches.

Steiner promises to knock down anyone Flair sets up for him.

AWALL is ready and Morrus is fine with a war against Shane Douglas. Lash is facing Shane tonight but he's using some of Chavo's lines to Hugh's annoyance.

Mike Sanders vs. Sid Vicious

Sanders is in street clothes and says he's not medically cleared to wrestle. Not that it matters as Sid, also in street clothes, chokeslams and powerbombs him for the pin in about a minute.

Sid says the sucka ain't got no class. Tony: "What is he talking about?"

Post break, Sid attacks a parking lot attendant and demands the keys to all the cars.

Kronik beats Reno down until Vito tries to make a save. The rest of the Thrillers come in to beat him down but Kronik isn't cool because they thought Reno was a Thriller. Apparently there's a tag match at Starrcade.

Insiders vs. Perfect Event vs. Mark Jindrak/Sean O'Haire

Non-title and the announcers talk about the Harris Twins' sandwiches during the entrances. Nash, O'Haire and Palumbo and it's Kevin getting superkicked a few seconds in. Stevie: "What does he call that kick?" Tony: "The Jungle Kick." Stevie: ".....ok." Nash clotheslines them down and tags Page in for the house cleaning. Jindrak and Stasiak come in and beat Page down as well but Nash quickly comes back in for the real destruction. Palumbo gets jackknifed but Jindrak takes Nash down to set up a Seanton Bomb. Now it's Page coming in with a Diamond Cutter on Jindrak, only to have Stasiak hit Page with a belt for the pin.

Rating: D. So to recap: Nash and Page were against four young guys, all of whom are either current or former Tag Team Champions and it took a belt shot to finally put them away. As we've firmly established, these stories are designed to make the older generation look good at the expense of the next generation. I don't know how this benefits anyone but Page and Nash but I can't wait for them to get the titles back on Sunday and set things right with the world.

The Thrillers worked over Nash's knee during the break.

Sid is moving cars around in the parking lot.

Sgt. Dewayne Bruce vs. Goldberg

Goldberg doesn't know who he's facing because Jindrak and O'Haire took his monitor earlier in the night. Bruce says they have to do this even though Goldberg doesn't want to do it. Cue Luger to say to say it's Goldberg's career if he doesn't fight here. Goldberg tries to leave anyway but Sarge hits him in the back. Goldberg still won't fight back until it's a spear to put him down. There's no Jackhammer though so Sarge grabs his leg and demands it. Goldberg grants the request and it's 30-0.

Sarge is carried out on Goldberg's shoulder.

Jamie Noble asks Kwee Wee, Paisley and Meng for advice on how to deal with Evan Karagias. Evan runs in to say they all have to come see what Sid is doing in the parking lot.

Shane Douglas vs. Lash Leroux

Before the match, Shane rants about how he's stuck here without Torrie because of what Morrus did. Lash takes him down in a hurry and pounds away at Shane's head before a snap suplex gets two. A suicide dive sends Shane into the barricade and it's time to fight by the table. This has been all Lash so far and the announcers don't sound very surprised. Back in and Shane grabs a powerslam but it's a double clothesline to put them both down. Cue Chavo to offer Lash a chair but the distraction lets Shane load up the chain. Lash hits Shane with the chair though and that's a quick DQ.

Shane lays him out with the chain so here's Morrus for the save and some yelling at Chavo.

One of the Harris Twins has a stomach ache.

Sid is still playing with the cars.

Mike Awesome is ready for his ambulance match with Bam Bam Bigelow at Starrcade. Thankfully he says he's ready for the Career Killer to come back so maybe That 70s Guy is dead.

Jarrett and company are ready for Sunday but one of the Twins isn't looking so good. Tony finds this HILARIOUS.

Jeff Jarrett/Harris Twins vs. Filthy Animals

Elimination rules and it's Konnan/Kidman/Mysterio. We're not quite ready to go yet though as both Twins run to the back for some, ahem, relief. Konnan gets in an X Factor on Jarrett to start but the other Animals try to come in, allowing Jeff to get in a Stroke on Konnan for the elimination. Jeff's music is quickly cut off because this match MUST CONTINUE! You know, because those are the rules.

Kidman snaps Jeff's throat across the top rope for two but Jarrett suplexes Rey with one arm. A powerbomb plants Rey again but not before he tags Kidman in for a missile dropkick. The baseball slide low blow and the Bronco Buster have Jeff in trouble but the referee gets bumped. Jeff guitars Kidman but Rey springboards in with a sunset flip for the pin.

Rating: D-. This is a confusing one as it was fun while it lasted but I'd like to repeat the fact that the Harris Twins were out early because of an overdose of laxatives. Also you would think this match would be the big payoff on Sunday but why do that when you can have another hardcore match? The wrestling was actually good here but the story just crippled it, as is so often the case around here.

Video on Starrcade's main events.

Sid almost has the ring of cars ready.

WCW World Title: Scott Steiner vs. Sgt. AWALL

Steiner is defending. Before the match, Steiner says Flair needs to thank Anderson for changing his mind about stripping the title. Steiner, in his deadly purple trunks, pounds AWALL down to start and we're already seeming to be in squash territory. The comeback is quickly cut off with a belly to belly for two before Steiner throws him over the top. AWALL throws him over the barricade to put Steiner in trouble, setting up a powerslam for two back inside. A chokeslam looks to finish but AWALL would rather mess with the stupid table. That earns him a suplex through the table (good riddance) and the Recliner retains the title.

Rating: D. I can't stand it when people do stupid things like AWALL messing with the table. It really does make these people look like the biggest morons in the world while also enforcing that relaxed rules nonsense. Even the WWF at the peak of its madness had some rules but this is basically ECW on a bigger stage which really doesn't work.

Steiner chokes AWALL with the pipe until Sid gets up on screen and says since they can't fight in the arena, come fight him in the parking lot. Scott heads outside to find a ring of cars ready for the fight because Sid may not be able to talk, but he can certainly park cars. After busting out a windshield for fun, Steiner hits Sid in the ribs with the pipe but has to fight out of a powerbomb. Steiner rams Sid's head into the top of a car to end the show.

Overall Rating: F. Bad wrestling, bad storytelling leading into bad matches and bad everything else (save for a decent angle with Goldberg not wanting to fight his mentor). This was a show that didn't make me want to watch Starrcade but made me not want to watch WCW again. I know the running joke is that WCW was an old folks' home but that's exactly what we're getting here. The biggest show of the year has three major matches and the only one with someone young is designed to make Nash and Page look good. It really is all about the old guard as we head into Starrcade near an all time low for the company.

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Thunder – October 4, 2000: The Effects Are Weakening

Thunder

Date: October 4, 2000

Location: Long Beach Arena, Long Beach, California

Attendance: 2,666

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Stevie Ray, Tony Schiavone

It's the last stateside show for two weeks before they're off to Australia to see if Russo's brilliance can alienate another culture. Now that being said, Russo's influence is certainly waning as his injuries are threatening to keep him off television, as well as away from the office to keep his stories going. Granted I'm not sure how strong the creative will be based on whoever WCW gets to run the sinking ship. Let's get to it.

This show is dedicated to Klondike Bill, a longtime production boss for WCW who passed away.

Shane Douglas tried to get on Mike Sanders' good side earlier and since they're both heels (and kind of dumb), it worked.

Here's Jeff Jarrett to open things up. He immediately gets to the point

by insulting Sting, who apparently has lost his heart for the business and is a ghost of his former self. Sting may have been the man in WCW for the last 40 years but now it's Jeff's world. They'll be fighting at Halloween Havoc....and here's Beetlejuice. Yeah Beetlejuice, the small guy from the Howard Stern Show who has now been part of the swimsuit contest and changing the WCW World Title. That's the logical progression you see.

Beetlejuice threatens to smoke Jarrett, who throws some mock punches. We cut to the back to see Booker getting knocked out by Steiner, followed by Sting running out for a fight with Jarrett. As they're fighting, a fake Sting comes out of the crowd to lay out Sting with a pipe. That would be....Shane Douglas, who is taken away as Jarrett beats up Beetlejuice.

Booker is being taken away in an ambulance. No wonder WCW went out of business. Those ambulance bills probably cost more than Hogan.

Steiner keeps breaking stuff with the pipe.

Halloween Havoc video.

Sgt. AWOL vs. Jim Duggan

If this is the point you've reached in your feud, it might be time to pull the plug. Before the match, Duggan complains about the American flag having too many stars because there's no unity. You can tell Duggan doesn't want to be cutting this promo so AWOL (who sounds A LOT like Shane Douglas) interrupts him to get things going. It's a brawl on the floor to start (dang I'm getting tired of having to write that on these shows) with Duggan getting the better of it and sending AWOL face first into the post.

They get back inside to keep slugging it out with AWOL taking over this time as the announcers talk about hockey. It's time for the table but AWOL slams him into the announcers' table instead. Back in and Duggan fights out of a chokeslam through the table, allowing Reno to sneak in with a kendo stick shot to give Duggan two. Back up and AWOL punches a chair into Reno's face, allowing Duggan to slam AWOL through the table for the pin.

Rating: D-. This is where the relaxed rules get on my nerves. You can almost guarantee that whatever the main event tonight is going to be will have the same thing but I just watched it earlier in the show with two big lumbering power guys in a nothing match. Given where ECW was at this point, do you really want to be copying their business model?

Midajah is talking to Mike Sanders.

Sting is dedicated to WCW. That's an understatement.

Here's Mike Sanders for a chat. The Thrillers had a great night on Monday and won a bunch of titles with Sanders himself winning the Cruiserweight Titles on his own. It was all due to Russo of course, who is a complete genius. We see Luger sitting in the crowd again, which makes me wonder what the point was in having him do a match last week if he was just going to do the same thing he started the angle doing with no real explanation.

Sanders talks about Goldberg's match at Halloween Havoc but doesn't actually say who he's fighting. Kronik comes out and teases High Times on Mike but lets him down gently. Sanders says these are two monsters to Goldberg's one, which the announcers think means Goldberg vs. Kronik at the pay per view. Oh man you mean no Goldberg vs. Hard Work Bobby Walker? No buys.

Elix Skipper thinks he should get a rematch for the Cruiserweight Title.

Jung Dragons vs. Scott Steiner

Gah don't they have some local jobbers to bring in instead? Like a young Samoa Joe or something? Stevie wants to kill Steiner for what he did to Booker. Yang's martial arts and rapid fire punches have no effect to start as Scott clotheslines him down. A gorilla press sends Yang outside and a double team goes just as badly. All three get suplexed and something like a super Angle Slam makes things even worse. Leia Meow chokes Midajah as Scott Recliners Jamie and Kaz for the submission to complete the total squash.

Konnan is brought into Sanders' office because he has immigration issues,

meaning he's not allowed to work tonight. Actually he isn't allowed to leave this office because he's a flight risk. Konnan says he's an American citizen and can produce the paperwork he needs. That's not good enough because he needs to have them on him at all times. Well that would be a very different story today.

Juvy and Rey love this best of five series and send Tygress off to get Konnan's papers. Well at least he does carry them. She goes off right before Shane Douglas comes in to lay them out with a pipe and rant about Sting. That's almost guaranteed to be the main event tonight.

After a break, Konnan checks on his downed buddies.

Mike Awesome talks to Crowbar about being a chick magnet. Crowbar is of course dressed like a pimp.

Video on Goldberg.

Stevie Ray is tired of all this Lex Luger stuff so he goes up to him for a little Suckas Gots To Know. Luger talks about watching all these no-names wrestle in his company, which brings him to General Rection. Last week Rection was just a prop and he'll never be able to touch Luger. Cue Rection for a brawl which goes nowhere.

Kronik says they're up for sale to the highest bidder. Ah yes the APA ripoff era.

Cruiserweight Title: Mike Sanders vs. Lance Storm

Storm is challenging. We get the full on Canadian national anthem, complete with the flag superimposed over Storm's face, as this show continues to drag. Sanders charges to the ring and it's on in a hurry. A dropkick puts Mike down early on but he comes back with a nice pumphandle suplex. Some suplexes get two for Storm but Reno pulls Sanders out to the floor for a save.

They fight to the apron with Storm DDTing Sanders as the Canadians and Thrillers fight on the floor. Storm takes Sanders back inside and puts on the Maple Leaf but Gunns rings the bell early for a distraction. Thankfully the camera was already on her and waiting for the plot device,

making sure that nothing seemed realistic whatsoever. Storm yells at her but Rection comes out to throw Storm back inside for a rollup to retain Sanders' title.

Rating: D+. So the Canadians are faces now? They're certainly acting like faces who have been screwed out of titles and wrestle like good guys, but at the same time they're holding Major Gunns, a face in theory, hostage. I know the theory is that everyone has shades of gray and not everyone is a clear face or heel but it's really not making me interested. Instead it's making me wonder what their motivation is because it doesn't make sense from week to week.

It's time for the sitdown interview with MIA. Rection gets annoyed at Tenay for not getting their names right before going on a rant about how there's nothing good in sports entertainment. They're only here because they love wrestling and do everything together, including sleep together. They all agree that they do everything together, which includes fighting Team Canada.

Apparently the Duggans and the Rections are friends and the General's kids are asking why Uncle Jim did these things. There's a lame comedy sketch to be made of Jim Duggan and General Rection having a barbecue together. They'll be ready for Halloween Havoc. Tenay wasn't a jerk here which is a very nice change of pace and hopefully a sign of things to come.

Tag Team Titles: Sean O'Haire/Mark Jindrak vs. Mike Awesome/Crowbar

Awesome and Crowbar are challenging with Crowbar declaring themselves two wild and crazy guys ala the Saturday Night Live sketch. Mike has to show him how to say it properly and they're getting worse and worse with these ripoffs every week. Jindrak side slams Crowbar to start and brings in O'Haire who eats a nice dropkick. Awesome comes in to slap the champ in the face. So he's a fat chick loving 70s guy who slaps people. This would be roughly six months after he debuted as a killer. The powers of Vince Russo everyone.

Mike remembers that he's Mike Awesome and kicks O'Haire in the face before throwing him down with a German Suplex. Crowbar comes back in with

a springboard splash before it's back to Mark off a blind tag. The champs take over with some clotheslines and a double shoulderblock. They may not have the most in depth offenses but at least they look good doing the basics. Crowbar grabs a quick suplex but goes up top instead of tagging, allowing Jindrak to hit a hurricanrana, followed by a Seanton Bomb.

Everything breaks down and Awesome actually gets a tag (nice rules following for a change, though I guess the tagging isn't included on the list of relaxed rules) and hits the Awesome Bomb and Awesome Splash for two on Mark. That's enough wrestling though so here's a table but Crowbar breaks up the double powerbomb with a double low blow to save his partner. Crowbar grabs a reverse DDT, only to get thrown through the table to retain the titles.

Rating: C+. There's your match of the night as they made the thing work by just working hard out there. It's always annoying to see someone like Russo come in and ruin everything by putting in so many stupid ideas that the wrestlers get bogged down. This however was more about four guys working to make the match work and it was entertaining stuff. Oh and a table just because.

Buff Bagwell arrives.

Clip of David Flair tormenting Buff on Monday before taking a Blockbuster.

Halloween Havoc video.

Here's Buff to address the Stacy issues. Apparently Stacy, with her high Midi-chlorian count, got herself pregnant, because Buff always wears his stuff when he goes "there". This brings out David Flair and a "doctor" (read as he's wearing a white coat and has a stethoscope) to do a DNA test on Buff. Apparently the guy wants to give Buff a little prick, as in a blood sample, but the audio is censored anyway. Buff says he's afraid of needles and then punches both guys out before leaving, telling David to figure this out. I think he just tried to Buff and you punched him in the face. That's quite the mixed message.

Shane Douglas vs. Sting

You know, this actually sounds intriguing. I mean, not exactly in 2000 but a few years back this could have been something. Before the match, Shane talks about having a date with greatness and a job to do. Also, Torrie isn't sure why this place smells so bad but thinks that everyone hates her because they'll never be her. After a promise of something special for Shane back at the hotel, we're ready to go. During Sting's entrance, Tony starts hyping up the double Nitro/Thunder tapings, which should be some glorious disasters.

Sting sends Shane into the barricade to start as the announcers break the news of Booker vs. Steiner for the title at Halloween Havoc. The fight heads into the crowd to make sure we don't need to see any real wrestling early on. They head back to ringside with Sting hitting Douglas in the back with a chair but Torrie offers a distraction to change things around.

We hit an abdominal stretch as the announcers talk about Torrie turning into a much more dangerous person on the outside. So she's gone from a hot blonde there as eye candy to a hot blonde there as eye candy who trips people. That's not quite a HHH and company level of Evolution. It's more like that David Duchovny movie from 2001. Remember that? That's how much Torrie has evolved.

Shane crotches Sting against the post and loads up a table in the corner as the announcers actually cover the relaxed rules over the last six months. My goodness this has been a long six months. Sting sends him through the table for a counter but Shane pulls out a chain to block the Stinger Splash. Konnan comes out to kidnap the highly evolved Torrie as Sting shrugs off FOUR CHAIN SHOTS TO THE HEAD. Instead it's Jeff Jarrett coming in to knock Sting out with the guitar, setting up the Franchiser for the pin.

Rating: D. To recap: a breakaway guitar and a really bad looking jawbreaker knocked Sting cold but four punches to the head with a chain wrapped around the fist of a professional athlete who wanted to hurt Sting as badly as he could didn't even knock him off his feet. I kind of liked Tony talking about the relaxed rules to make sure people knew what was going on. You know, the four new viewers WCW might have drawn that

night in case they were too drunk to change the channel.

Overall Rating: D. You can kind of feel Russo's influence waning a bit here. First and foremost, there were five matches on this show. Not eight, not ten, but five. Of those five, only one wasn't long enough to rate and that was a squash. On top of that, a lot of the stories felt less complicated. Case in point: the stories were about the wrestlers, not the writer who is injecting himself into things because he feels like it. The show is still bad, but if you take away a lot of the insanity and the really stupid stuff, the wrestling will seem a lot better and can start to carry the show for a change.

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Thunder – September 27, 2000: He's Getting Away With It

Thunder

Date: September 27, 2000

Location: First Union Arena, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Stevie Ray, Tony Schiavone, Mike Tenay

I know we've been living in a Vince Russo world but now we're living in a

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

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

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

Disqo vs. Konnan

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

Rey and Juvy run in for the save.

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

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

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

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

The announcers talk for a bit.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Crowbar asks Jimmy Hart where Daffney is (when you need information, you

go to Jimmy Hart). Apparently she and Ozzie are going to Australia before the rest of the company shows up there in a few weeks.

Steiner will fight Stevie later.

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

Konnar has taken over for Stevie on commentary.

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

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

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

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

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

Kronik vs. Elix Skipper

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

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

Rey Mysterio vs. Juventud Guerrera

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

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

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

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

Hardcore Title Tournament Semi-Finals: Crowbar vs. Reno

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

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

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

Mike Awesome runs out for the save post match.

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

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

Russo certainly isn't afraid of Goldberg and he'll deal with him on Monday too. As for Monday, Ric Flair better stay away or Russo will drop

a bombshell on the entire Flair family. Ric knows what it is and he knows what's best for him. Tenay asks about Luger but Russo had no idea about what happened. Russo doesn't like these questions so Monday, Tenay is going to fight.

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

Reno and the Thrillers celebrate.

Luger and Rection say they'll win.

Scott Steiner vs. Stevie Ray

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

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

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

We settle down to an actual match with Jarrett putting Luger in a sleeper until a quick suplex breaks it up. Off to Storm for some stomping before Jeff comes back in and promptly runs into a double clothesline. It's off to Rection vs. Storm with the General taking over. Luger holds Lance down

for the moonsault....and turns on Rection because of course. A torture rack from Luger sets up the Maple Leaf from Storm for the submission.

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

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

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