

ECW on TNN – September 1, 2000: Unfortunately, Tournaments Are A Thing

ECW on TNN

Date: September 1, 2000

Location: Hammerstein Ballroom, New York City, New York

Commentators: Joel Gertner, Joey Styles

After last week, I'm really not sure what to expect from this show. This promotion goes from a fun wrestling show to some insane clip show with a bunch of wrestling that wasn't very good to set up an angle that we've seen before. The next pay per view is in just over a month and I have no idea we're going to see on the way there. Let's get to it.

We see the end of Tajiri/Mikey Whipwreck advancing to the finals of the Tag Team Title tournament.

Opening sequence.

Joey and Joel are in the ring and the big arena does actually look cool. Joel does his rhyme about various escapades in each of the boroughs before Steve Corino comes out, flanked by Billy Corgan playing New York, New York on his guitar. I'm not sure how old school the Smashing Pumpkins were in 2000 but it's better than Limp Bizkit.

Corino is the new #1 contender (What about Jerry?) and refuses to apologize for cheating to pin New Jack, Dusty Rhodes and Tommy Dreamer. He's not going to apologize either when he pins Justin Credible. Cue Lou E. Dangerously and WHEN DID HE BECOME JUSTIN'S MANAGER? He's not Justin's manager? Well he certainly acts like him and that doesn't help because this company makes no sense half the time with all the people running around doing random promos to advance the overall angles.

Lou yells about wanting to beat Corgan up and wants the title shot at Anarchy Rulz. A fight is about to break out when Justin Credible "sneaks" (read as Corino clearly looks over his shoulder to see him coming in) in and canes Corino. Corgan actually chokes Justin with

the cane until Lou hits him in the back of the head with the phone. Lou says that's a message from the Network. Ok so he works for the Network and not Justin? Really I'm not sure at this point and I don't particularly care either.

Tag Team Title Tournament Quarter-Finals: Rhino/Justin Credible vs. Sandman/Chilly Willy

The winners get Jerry Lynn/Tommy Dreamer. A table is brought in less than ten seconds in but Sandman cleans house with the cane. Rhino shrugs them off and Gores Sandman through the table for two, followed by the piledriver to advance Credible and Rhino in less than two minutes. Did Willy stop for a taco?

Tag Team Title Tournament Semi-Finals: Simon and Swinger vs. Roadkill/Danny Doring

Roadkill starts fast with a powerslam on Simon but CW pulls Doring to the floor because almost every heel is part of a stable. A double Downward Spiral gets two on Doring but he grabs a double Bareback (Those names get annoying.) and makes the hot tag. Everything breaks down and Roadkill is thrown through a table, only to have Anderson hit Simon by mistake. Not that it matters as the Problem Solver puts Doring away and send Simon and Swinger to the finals.

Rating: D+. As much of a mess as most of ECW was at the end, they did have a good tag division going. Unfortunately we barely saw most of it as the matches were either clipped or had nothing on the line because of the ridiculous four month waiting period. Four weeks is a long time to not have champions but from April to September is unthinkable.

Tag Team Title Tournament Semi-Finals: Tommy Dreamer/Jerry Lynn vs. Rhino/Justin Credible

Joined in progress with separate brawls in the crowd. They're nice enough to come back to the ring with Jerry dropping Justin but having to spank Francine instead of going for the pin. The Gore takes Dreamer out and there's a piledriver through the table. Little Spike Dudley comes in with an Acid Drop to Rhino and the cradle piledriver puts Justin away to send Dreamer/Lynn to the finals.

Rating: D. As usual, WAY too much going on to keep track of anything here and that gets annoying in a hurry. Why do so many matches have to go into the crowd in a wild brawl or have so many people

interfering? Would a straight match every now and then, especially when we're coming up on a title shot, be too much to ask for?

Tag Team Titles: Tommy Dreamer/Jerry Lynn vs. Simon and Swinger vs. Tajiri/Mikey Whipwreck

The titles are vacant coming in and this is elimination rules. The Sinister Minister is the only manager present and Dreamer is in a neck brace. Tajiri, Lynn and Simon start things off with Simon sitting back while the other two start fast. Everyone tags out and the new three stare at each other for a bit.

Swinger stops to pose and gets put down by the physique-phobic Dreamer and Whipwreck. Everyone fights to the floor (of course) and Dreamer actually kicks Tajiri for a change of pace. Lynn takes Simon back inside for a bow and arrow hold. All six get inside again and it's time for double Tarantulas with Lynn and Mikey being stretched.

They're fine enough for stereo tornado DDT's for stereo two's on Simon and Swinger. Cue CW Anderson to hit Dreamer with something made of metal, setting up the Problem Solver for the elimination. The locker room comes out to watch as Tajiri mists Simon, setting up a Whippersnapper for the pin and the titles.

Rating: C-. This is the kind of match that I normally don't care for but at least it gives us something. Tajiri and Whipwreck are still a new team but at least they're a team instead of two people just thrown together for the sake of being thrown together. They're fine as the new champions, especially since they'll defend the titles against a strong tag division.

Everyone celebrates with the new champions.

Overall Rating: D+. It's like they were trying to show a tournament in one night but didn't have enough time. It was kind of confusing when they went from one round to the other and some brackets would have helped a lot. The finals being shown in full was the right move though and while I would have gone with Simon and Swinger, at least the titles aren't vacant like they've been since a few weeks after Wrestlemania.

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ECW on TNN – August 25, 2000: Evil Referees Are Dumb

ECW on TNN

Date: August 18, 2000

Location: ECW Arena, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Attendance: 1,400

Commentators: Joel Gertner, Joey Styles

The big story continues to be the upcoming Tag Team Title tournament which is taking place a week from this show. You would think they could schedule it sooner but the belts have already been vacant for four months so it's not like it really makes much of a difference at this point. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Joel and Joey are doing their thing when we cut to Rhino, who grabs Francine by the hair to show us her broken nose. Justin Credible gets in his face so Rhino says he'd be champion if he had the chance. Injuries are promised and we get no explanation for who hurt Francine, though it's treated like something we're supposed to know.

Jerry Lynn vs. Bilvis Wesley

Lynn is suddenly #1 contender. Actually hang on a second as the referee grabs the mic. Apparently he's not happy with Lynn for running into him every single time he referees Jerry's matches. There's a bounty on Jerry so the referee might want to claim it. The referee gets dropped so here's Rhino to Gore Jerry Lynn through a

table and then leave. Jerry fights off Tom Marquez before the cradle piledriver knocks Bilvis silly. The original referee gets up though and calls a DQ for Jerry hitting him again.

The Prodigette tries to interfere and gets a piledriver of her own. I have no idea what the point of any of this was.

Tajiri vs. Psicosis

This is from Hardcore TV for reasons that aren't entirely clear. They're quickly on the mat with Tajiri putting on a Brock Lock but getting flipped into a cover for two. The match is clipped (Why is this happening?) to a fast sequence and a bunch of one counts. Another clip takes us to a sweet pinfall reversal sequence and a third takes us to Psicosis crashing out to the floor thanks to a missed dive.

Another clip means we see Psicosis diving over the top to take Tajiri out again. Clipped, yet again, to a baseball slide into Psicosis' face as he's caught in the Tree of Woe. Tajiri hits a Stunner for two and...well you know what happens by this point. Clipped again to a Psicosis getting two off a guillotine legdrop, setting up some kicks to give Tajiri the pin. WAY too much clipping here for it to be rated but what we saw was fun.

Tajiri is in Sinister Minister's clothes as Minister talks about crossing a line. Mikey Whipwreck comes in with balloons on his hands and sounding like Chris Farley. This show makes my head hurt very badly. Thankfully Tajiri and the Minister are confused as well.

More Hardcore TV clips of Roadkill/Danny Doring/Tommy Dreamer vs. CW Anderson/Simon and Swinger. There's more clipping here but less action as the match was cut off for a posedown, including Roadkill doing Hogan's poses. A wild brawl broke out and the Buggy Bang puts Swinger away.

Justin Credible/Rhino vs. Kid Kash/Rob Van Dam

Apparently Francine's nose was broken last night at a house show. Well that's more of an explanation than I was expecting. Kash and Credible start things off and a headscissors sends the champ off to a tag to Rhino. That means it's time for Kash's first hurricanrana which staggers Rhino far more than it should. Rob gets the tag and fires off some kicks before Kash has to save him from a gorilla press.

Back to back dives to the floor take the villains out again and everyone is down. Justin gets in his one non-finishing move, the superkick, to take over on Kash before handing it off to Rhino to do the work. Kash finally moonsaults onto Justin to put them both down and slides over for the tag to Van Dam. That means it's time for a chair as everything breaks down, only to have Rhino clean house again.

Van Dam kicks Rhino in the face and drops Kash into a legdrop for two. A low blow breaks up Justin's superplex on Kash and sets up a HORRIBLY botched super hurricanrana as Justin is dropped onto his head. The Five Star gets no cover as Rob goes up again, only to get caned by Justin. The Moneymaker plants Justin and there goes the referee. Rhino piledrives Kash through a table and of course here's Sandman because this feud just won't end. Sandman canes Rhino a few times until Justin canes Sandman from behind. Now it's Steve Corino coming in to superkick Rhino, setting up the Van Terminator for the pin.

Rating: D. So the big deal is that Van Dam finally pinned Rhino and it only took four people to do it. If this is the best thing ECW can come up with, then they're in more trouble than I was thinking coming in. It's also going to be even harder to care about Van Dam vs. Rhino on pay per view as we've seen it twice on free TV already but that doesn't seem to matter to the company.

Overall Rating: D-. I'm really not sure what this show was supposed to be. We had a weird angle at the beginning, two clipped matches from another TV show and a long main event with an angle that doesn't really mean much. We've got about six weeks before Anarchy Rulz and I'm really not sure what I'm supposed to be excited about. Jerry Lynn getting a World Title shot in his home state? That's the best they've got? Is there any reason we're not getting Rob Van Dam as World Champion already? Bad show this week as they're getting more bizarre than better.

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ECW on TNN – July 14, 2000: Another Bad Ep... .That's Bobby Eaton!

ECW on TNN

Date: July 14, 2000

Location: ECW Arena, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Joey Styles, Joel Gertner

It's the go home show for Heat Wave and it can't get here soon enough. I'm not sure what to expect when ECW wants to put on a go home show but they're on a bit of a roll with advancing stories. Unfortunately there's only so much advancement you can have here, though a few matches to Sunday's card might help as I can only think of three matches at the moment. Let's get to it.

Joey and Joel do their thing and Joel actually gets through his very dirty tennis rhyme. Instead of Cyrus for a change, here's Raven to interrupt. So the rumors are that Raven is leaving so we hit the PLEASE DON'T GO chants. He thanks the fans and hugs the announcers, only to have Cyrus and Scotty Anton (of course) cut him off.

It's a full THANK YOU RAVEN chant now but Cyrus says none of that matters to the network. He doesn't care about Raven's revolutionary gimmick either because Raven stole it from the Jackyl. Raven asks if this is going anywhere because he wanted to say goodbye and leave. Cyrus says Raven is going to have to bend over for the network, just like Paul Heyman. And now a match!

Raven vs. Scotty Anton

Anton takes a quick Even Flow but Rhino saves Cyrus from the same

treatment. Raven gets driven through a table but Sandman (with one heck of a tan) comes in with the cane. Lori Fullington (Sandman's wife) comes in and jumps on Cyrus' back until security breaks it up. During the melee, Anton has Raven in the Clapper on the floor.

Rob Van Dam promises to debut the Van Terminator.

We go to the bathroom (of course) where Gary Wolfe says he's back. Blue Meanie, now skinny and with adult star Jasmine St. Clair, comes out of a stall. Apparently his name is now the Blue Boy and he makes a bunch of fat jokes about Wolfe. Gary doesn't take kindly to this but gets beaten down anyway. By the former Blue Meanie.

Tajiri vs. Mikey Whipwreck

Circling to start until Tajiri just blasts him with a superkick. Another kick sends Mikey off the apron for a crash into the barricade but Tajiri doesn't know how to use a ring wrench. Instead Mikey takes over with a slingshot legdrop, only to get kicked in the face again. An inverted tornado DDT sets up an Octopus to make Mikey tap.

Rating: C. They kept this moving but I'm not sure what the point is in squashing Mike, who is doing stuff backstage to set up his new character. Tajiri can beat up anyone else to set up this big heel push but at least it was a good match with Mikey being able to work well with anyone. Tajiri wasn't really a heel here though and that makes the turn a bit questionable so far.

Francine teases flashing us but it turns into Justin Credible talking about Sunday's match against Tommy Dreamer.

Here are Simon and Swinger and their wacky band of misfits (great examples of people who could be let go to cut some costs) with something to say. They're sick and tired of being a comedy act but here's CW Anderson to get in Simon's face. Anderson cleans house and even punches the Prodigette in the face. The Problem Solver lays out the Prodigy as the misfits seem to be gone as Anderson has joined Simon and Swinger.

CW issues an open challenge for a tag match, quick is quickly answered by Danny Doring and Roadkill. The numbers game gets the better of them but....my goodness Bobby Eaton of all people comes out for the real save. Eaton is eventually superkicked down and the new alliance stands tall.

We run down the top of Sunday's card.

Anderson, Swinger and Simon make jokes about Doring and Roadkill. A six man is announced with Doring and Roadkill plus Kid Kash fighting the trio.

Steve Corino/??? vs. Jerry Lynn/???

Another dream partner tag match with Corino picking Rhino and Lynn picking....well we'll get to that in a second as Lynn gets Gored before anyone can come out. Jerry reaches over to the towel he brought in and pulls out a beer. Well that's good for Jerry as he just happened to pick the guy Corino's mystery partner was feuding with.

Sandman hits the ring and immediately eats a superkick from Corino. Well so much for that one. Everything heads outside with Lynn diving onto Corino despite there being almost no space between the ring and the barricade. Rhino and Sandman fight in the ring as Jerry blasts Corino in the head with a chair. All four get back inside for more brawling as they might as well have just had this be a brawl. I don't know why they refer to this as a tag match as I don't remember the last time there were actual tags in an ECW match.

Rhino piledrives Lynn for two, followed by a White Russian legsweep to give Sandman the same. Cyrus comes in to break up the cradle piledriver and Corino elbows Lynn through a table at ringside. This brings in Little Spike Dudley to play Bubba in a 3D to give Sandman the pin on Rhino.

Rating: D. Yeah whatever. I know this is the ECW standard but that doesn't mean it holds up or is anything that I'd want to see again. The ending does help set up Sunday's title match and I guess helps with Lynn vs. Corino but there was no better way than having this mess? I'm just not a fan of these things and they really show how horrible Sandman is at "wrestling".

A long pay per view ad takes us out.

Overall Rating: D+. This was another example of ECW being all over the place with a few matches being added to Sunday's show. That helps a few things but doesn't make this the best use of less than forty one minutes I've ever seen. Heat Wave really needs to change some things up for the sake of keeping the show fresh, but I have a feeling we won't exactly be seeing that on Sunday.

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ECW on TNN – July 7, 2000: It You Build It...Well It Really Doesn't Matter

ECW on TNN

Date: July 7, 2000

Location: The Odeum, Chicago, Illinois

Attendance: 3,500

Commentators: Joel Gertner, Joey Styles

For once ECW actually has built up a big match for this show as Sandman is challenging Justin Credible for the ECW World Title. We're also nine days away from Heat Wave, meaning it's almost time to start something fresh, assuming that's actually done in this promotion anymore. Let's get to it.

We open with a look at the matches taped for Hardcore TV before this show went on the air.

Gorgeous George (just George here in ECW) is in the ring to start but Francine runs out and blasts her with a cane. See, it's her house and she's the Queen of Extreme and all that jazz. Not Jazz but jazz.

Opening sequence.

Joel and Joey are in the ring and IT'S CYRUS COMING OUT TO YELL AT

JOEL AGAIN! Cyrus does his thing so Joel brings out Spike Dudley (remember he used to manage the Dudleys) despite Spike's knee being horrible at the moment. Spike blames Cyrus for deporting Super Crazy, stripping Rob Van Dam of the TV Title (I'm sure Van Dam could have fought on a destroyed leg/ankle) and having Rhino break Spike's leg. Cue Rhino to prevent Cyrus' death and here's Pitbull Gary Wolfe to fight for Spike.

TV Title: Gary Wolfe vs. Rhino

I'm assuming this is a title match but Wolfe spends too much time setting up a table in the corner, allowing Rhino to hit the Gore. A piledriver through the table retains Rhino's title. I actually like them making this a match instead of just a quick beatdown. It's not like it hurts anything.

Raven is upset and Styles is shocked that he's here. He works here Joey.

Recap of Tajiri vs. Jerry Lynn, the latter of whom may or may not be part of the Network.

Tajiri vs. Jerry Lynn

Lynn baseball slides him into the barricade and they're brawling in a hurry. Back in and a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker puts Tajiri down and sends us to a break. We come back with Tajiri grabbing a hammerlock with his leg wrapped around Lynn's neck. Cue Cyrus dressed as Jerry's trainer (because reasons) as Lynn comes back with a great looking German suplex.

A tornado DDT gets two on Tajiri and a superplex makes things even worse. As you might expect, Tajiri comes back with a kick (a missile dropkick in this case) but Jerry sends him outside. Jerry claims an elbow injury so Tajiri puts him in an octopus hold. A little mist gets rid of Cyrus but Tajiri puts him in the Tarantula just in case. Cue Steve Corino to kick Lynn in the face, allowing Tajiri to kick him in the face for the pin.

Rating: C+. The ending was pretty badly telegraphed as everyone was so sure that it was going to be Lynn and then DUN DUN DUN, it's actually Tajiri. I've heard worse ideas but they didn't do the best job of hiding this. At least the match was hard hitting and entertaining though and that's an improvement.

Justin and Francine are in the back and Credible is drooling over

his belt. Sandman won't take it from him tonight.

We see a clip of Simon and Swinger beating down the new Dangerous Alliance last week on Hardcore TV.

Simon and Swinger vs. Chris Chetti/Nova vs. Roadkill/Danny Doring

It's a brawl to start (duh) with Doring and Roadkill taking over on both teams. Nova and Chetti start firing off the kicks to the much bigger Roadkill, only to have to deal with Simon and Swinger. Roadkill hits the always cool double clothesline off the top but here's CW Anderson (of the Dangerous Alliance) to clean house. A quick Simonizer (reverse DDT) eliminates Nova and we're down to two teams. Doring and Roadkill clean house until Doring takes WAY too long on the top, allowing Chetti to shove him down. Swinger adds an implant DDT for the pin.

Rating: D+. I like all three of these teams but sweet goodness they were flying through this so fast that nothing had the chance to sink in. All three teams have a lot of potential and it would be nice if they had something to fight over, but for reasons that I'll never comprehend, Heyman decided that the titles could be vacated on April 22 and new champions wouldn't be crowned for four months. But at least the matches are good, when they have time that is.

ECW World Title: Justin Credible vs. Sandman

Justin is defending and Dawn Marie is referee for reasons of "well, we advertised her so she has to do something." Oh and she hates Justin to make it even screwier. Dawn and Francine start the catfight but Justin canes Dawn in the head to get rid of her. Sandman starts on the floor and sends Justin into the barricade to avoid the whole wrestling thing.

That's the perfect time to bring in a wooden pallet for an actually successful whip across the ring. Justin whips him into it for a change and the referee (not Dawn) is bumped. Sandman hits a hurricanrana (not without some pelvic thrusts into Justin's face of course) and here's Dusty Rhodes to count the two. Dusty fights off Corino and Victory and leaves, allowing Francine to just unload on Sandman with a cane.

That brings out Gorgeous George for the catfight, followed by Scotty Anton to beat on Sandman. Raven makes the save but gets a cane to the head. Those two fight to the back, leaving Sandman to toss

Justin through a table in the corner. Now it's Rhino coming in to blast Sandman, setting up That's Incredible to retain Justin's title.

Rating: C. Oh why not? There's no indication that Sandman can actually wrestle and I haven't seen any proof that Credible can do much besides swing a cane and Tombstone people so this is about as much as you can expect. It's also ECW to a nutshell: violence, chaos and absolutely no wrestling in sight.

We're still not done as Tommy Dreamer comes out with Jazz for a piledriver on some barbed wire to really bust Credible open to finally end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. Some stupid stuff aside, it was so nice to actually get somewhere with any of the big stories, even if it was something that wasn't much of a surprise. Heat Wave can't get here soon enough though and the shows are getting just slightly better, though to be fair it wasn't hard to improve over what they were doing just a few weeks ago.

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