

# Thunder – January 3, 2001: They Still Suck

## Thunder

Date: January 3, 2001

Location: Mid-South Coliseum, Memphis, Tennessee

Attendance: 2,547

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Tony Schiavone, Stevie Ray

Happy New Year everyone and welcome to some of the final months of WCW. It's been a little while since we've had anything to actually watch as a few shows were preempted by holidays. Even WCW wasn't stupid enough to try and have a show on Christmas night so this is a fresh start for them. Let's get to it.

We open with a rapid fire video of everything that has been happening recently. It would be nice if they had more than five seconds per story but we need to get in and out of this in thirty seconds.

Mike Awesome has a Team Canada bus.

Opening sequence.

Tony calls this 2001: the Wrestling Odyssey. Well it certainly is a difficult journey.

Here's President Ric Flair to get things going. He has a few things to get through before we start the show. First of all, Goldberg's Streak is on the line in his tag match at Sin, as per Goldberg's request. Second, Scott Steiner will be defending his World Title in a three way dance against Jeff Jarrett and a mystery partner (Yes partner. Even Flair said it twice.). For now though, he's under a two week suspension because that's how you build up a World Champion for a pay per view title defense. That suspension ends on Monday, because having a two week suspension WHEN YOU DIDN'T HAVE ANY SHOWS makes perfect sense.

Cue Jeff Jarrett to interrupt because he's tired of hearing about Steiner

and the Mystery Man because he's the other one in the match. Ric really doesn't like being threatened so he gives Jarrett a match with Sid with the three way dance spot on the line. His opponent is Sid, whose music starts playing before Ric can even introduce him. It's a taped show and they still can't pull this off. We see a clip of Sid having Steiner pinned at Starrcade, which is enough to warrant another title shot. Shouldn't that be a guaranteed title shot and not a match with Jarrett? Sid says it bees that way so the beating is on tonight.

Post break, Ric asks Mike Sanders why the Insiders aren't on the show. Sanders says they were given a night off. Ric isn't convinced but Sanders insists he's not up to anything.

The Thrillers are in their office when Sanders comes in to say that yeah, he's the reason the Insiders aren't here tonight. Reno is given a match with Johnny the Bull later tonight.

Crowbar has a chair match with Meng tonight before he gets to face his idol again. Terry Funk was the man Crowbar looked up to before he bound Crowbar's hands together and hit him in the head with a chair over and over. Crowbar swears revenge and to receive the hardcore torch at Sin. This was a really impassioned promo, which is why Crowbar isn't going anywhere.

Buy a Cat T-Shirt!

#### Shane Helms vs. Jamie Noble

This should be good. They run the ropes to start until Shane shoulders him down, followed by Shane pulling on a double underhook and bending Jamie around like an abdominal stretch. A middle rope fist drop (remember that we're in Memphis) gets two on Noble. Shane takes too much time posing though and the Nightmare on Helm Street (that dragon sleeper into a standing elbow drop) is countered into a northern lights suplex for two. The Vertebreaker plants Jamie but again Shane won't cover. Now the Nightmare on Helm Street is enough for the pin in a bit of excess violence.

**Rating:** C+. Nice little match here with Shane looking good before he

heads into his title shot. The Cruiserweights has been one of the few bright spots in these last months as there's a story here and a talented champion defending against a bunch of guys who want the belt and personal revenge at the same time.

Post match Evan Karagias comes out to go after Shane but Shannon Moore runs in for the save. Jamie tombstones Shannon but takes another Nightmare. Now it's Chavo running out to hit Shannon with the belt, making him the last man standing.

We see Konnan beating Elix Skipper for reasons I still don't understand other than stupid politics.

Konnan and Elix get in an argument in the back but it's a Canadian trap with Konnan getting beaten down.

Cat wants to be the Commissioner again and suggests that Gene Okerlund watch Lassie. Gene thinks he could do things to Miss Jones.

The Harris Twins have been laid out.

#### Corporal Cajun/Sgt. AWALL vs. Sean O'Haire/Chuck Palumbo

O'Haire and Palumbo are surprise opponents as this was supposed to be a six man. Sanders publicly says that he's the reason the Insiders aren't here tonight. The rest of the Thrillers lay out the Misfits to give the team an early advantage with Cajun taking the early beating. It's a shame the Thrillers can't beat these stupid names out of them. Stevie makes a Hogan's Heroes reference which actually breaks Tony up a little bit.

AWALL comes in and punches Palumbo a few times, allowing Cajun to powerslam him for two. Cajun gets two more off a back elbow, only to have Chuck do the Chris Jericho springboard dropkick to knock him off the apron. Of course the Thrillers get in some cheap shots on the outside and AWALL is knocked to the floor. The Seanton Bomb puts Cajun away.

**Rating:** D. Quite the messy match here but it establishes O'Haire and Palumbo as a good team for the future. Odds are they'll be the pair that faces the Insiders for the belts at Sin, which is the best possible option due to the level of talent there. The Misfits on the other hand

just need to go away. They're not interesting, the joke is long past over and there's just nothing left for them to do.

The Thrillers lay out the Misfits post match until Chavo tries to make a save. Shane Douglas comes in through the crowd and beats on Rection.

Post break Shane says he's going to keep tormenting Rection until he gets the US Title as revenge for him taking away Torrie Wilson. Sin is going to be a chain on a pole match, which makes me think Russo is back. Rection runs in and beats Shane down.

On the bus, Jim Duggan sneaks up on Skipper and attacks because HE NEVER WALKS AWAY FROM A FIGHT. No, apparently he starts them by sneaking up on someone and telling the camera to stay quiet.

The Filthy Animals need to regroup after Konnan got attacked.

Johnny the Bull and Big Vito are talking about their priest when Cat comes up to say he wants to take out Reno tonight so he can put him in soup.

Buff Bagwell doesn't understand why Sarge has issues with him. Someone who can turn a goof like Goldberg into a wrestler must be talented. Lex Luger has an "autographed copy" of Goldberg's book and apparently Goldberg can't spell.

Video on Sarge running the Power Plant.

Lance Storm gives Mike Awesome a match with Duggan tonight, which apparently he can just do.

Rey Mysterio has a plan.

Flair comes in to see the Thrillers and gives Reno a match with the Cat. So Reno has a night off? Jindrak will have a match too but his opponent isn't named.

Sid, in different clothes than earlier, is ready for Jeff and is very thankful for his spot.

That's about nine straight minutes of backstage segments. Maybe next up

they can have someone hold up a sign that says "YEP! WE'RE STALLING!"

### Crowbar vs. Meng

Chair on a pole match, making me even more convinced that Russo is back. Of note: there isn't an actual pole as the chair is just in the corner. They slug it out to start as Daffney breaks some glass with the screeches. It's already time for the chair with Meng getting his hands on it, only to have Crowbar dive over the top to take him out. Meng is whipped into the barricade but comes right back with his normal Tongan insanity. A drop toehold sends Meng head first into the steps and for some reason it actually works.

Daffney and Paisley get in a fight over the chair (you remember the chair) as Crowbar slows Meng down with a reverse DDT. That's not enough for a cover though as Crowbar charges at Meng, only to be flapjacked into the chair on the top turnbuckle. The Death Grip puts Crowbar out.

**Rating:** D+. For some reason the announcers were stunned by the win, even though this feels like your standard way to build Meng back up before having him get taken down again. I'm assuming we'll be having another three way for the Hardcore Title at Sin, which makes me think this should have been a standard hardcore match but why do that when you can have a (non-existent) pole.

Flair shakes Bagwell and Luger's hands but nothing is heard.

### Mark Jindrak vs. Goldberg

Jindrak actually gets in some offense but gets beaten in just over a minute with the usual.

Goldberg is ready for Luger and Bagwell.

Jeff Jarrett calls out the Mystery Man tonight because the Mystery Man can choose who he's facing at Sin.

Luger and Bagwell talk to Kronik.

### The Cat vs. Reno

Before the match, Cat says he wants Sanders out here because he has no issue with Igor (his name for Reno, which he's used at least five times tonight). Reno jumps him from behind and chokes a lot to start, only to get knocked out to the floor. Miss Jones fires off some kicks, which certainly isn't an excuse to showcase how she looks in chaps. Back in and Reno stomps away but his t-bone suplex is countered into a small package for two. Stevie: "Is that a brainbuster?" Cat pops up, does the crotch chop, and the Feliner ends Reno quick. I have no idea what this is supposed to accomplish but Cat is winning a lot lately.

### Jim Duggan vs. Mike Awesome

There's a big blurred out area behind the Canadians during their pre-match speech due to fans flipping them off. Duggan is back in the blue trunks here. They slug it out to start with Awesome being knocked to the floor for a change. Back in and Awesome slowly beats him down as the match loses the little interest it had coming in. Duggan comes back with a running clothesline as Stevie name drops Bronco Lubich. Skipper does...something from the floor though, allowing Mike to hit a quick Awesome Splash for the pin in a hurry.

Post match the beatdown is on until the Filthy Animals come in for the save. Konnan grabs the mic and tells them to look at the screen, where we see the Team Canada bus covered in graffiti.

After a break, Team Canada says they want to deal with the Animals at Sin instead of calling the cops.

The Mystery Man's gear is shown in the back.

### Buff Bagwell vs. DeWayne Bruce

Buff turns his back to pose to start (and it's hard to blame him), allowing Bruce to get in a shot from behind. They take it to the floor with Bruce in control and walking around the ring with Buff being dragged behind. Back in and Buff gets two off a neckbreaker before we hit the choking. Bruce fights up and makes his comeback so here's Luger with a chair. We cut to Goldberg running out of his locker room but Kronik jumps him, throws him in a box and carries him away on a forklift. Back in the

arena, Luger Pillmanizes Bruce's arm for the DQ.

**Rating:** F. Leave it to two moronic heels to attack a career jobber and injure him instead of going after GOLDBERG. This is such a stupid story as we've already had Goldberg go over Luger twice and now they're going to use Bruce to stretch it out to a third pay per view. Why this is happening while Sid, Jarrett, and whoever is under that mask get a title shot isn't clear, but I'd chalk it up to "WCW is stupid."

### Jeff Jarrett vs. Sid Vicious

The winner is in the three way dance at Sin. Before the match, Jarrett wants to talk (of course) to the Mystery Man. Jeff rambles on for a long time about how he and Sid both want momentum coming towards Sin but the audio keeps cutting out, likely trying to censor some chants. Sid won't let him bail though and the brawl is on in front of a dead crowd with Jeff being dropped throat first across the barricade.

Back in and Jeff stomps away before a dropkick gets two. We hit the sleeper (of course) until Sid fights back and gets in a chokeslam. The powerbomb is loaded up but the Mystery Man comes in and hits Sid in the back, but since this is WCW we'll call that a no contest, meaning neither has advanced to Sin.

**Rating:** D. Naturally two former World Champions can only get four minutes before a run-in finish that didn't even go the way it was supposed to. As usual, Sid didn't quite look great in the ring and Jeff was doing nothing other than his signature stuff. I'm sure you know where this is going for Sin and I really wish they could have just gone with that in the first place.

Sid gets double teamed and of course it's Scott Steiner under the mask to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D-. There's just so much stupid on this show with the main event scene being the biggest issue. I can't get over the fact that it's freaking Buddy Lee Parker getting the spotlight in a story. Yeah he trained Goldberg, but you can't just make up a story to get someone in there with a slightly better win/loss record? As in with any wins on his

record? The rest of the show was the usual mess, not made any better by the fact that Sin is next week. Bad show here and a really horrible way to start the new year.

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

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<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

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# Thunder – December 20, 2000: Ending Like It Began

## Thunder

Date: December 20, 2000

Location: Richmond Coliseum, Richmond, Virginia

Attendance: 2,872

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mike Tenay, Stevie Ray

This is the final show for the year for WCW as the next two Nitros are canceled due to Christmas and New Year's Day while next week's Thunder is a Best Of show. Believe it or not, WCW is actually on a roll at this point, or at least as much of a roll as you can be on with one good show. Let's get to it.

The opening recap focuses on the World Title situation which might be more interesting if Lance Storm was involved but instead we're getting Steiner, Jarrett and another mystery man. Steiner's last surprise



challenger was Sid so this could be anyone from Rollerball Rocco to Flyboy Rocco.

Ric Flair is in the back of his limo and talks about how great the pay per view is going to be. The Mystery Man is hyped up again and we hear about tonight's tag team battle royal.

Opening sequence.

#### Cruiserweight Title: Chavo Guerrero Jr. vs. Jamie Noble

Noble is challenging. Before the match, Chavo talks about being ready to face Shane Helms at Sin. However, if he somehow loses here, it would be a rematch at Sin and Shane would be left out in the cold. What an odd threat. Noble starts fast with a dropkick and slam before putting on a quickly broken up STF. Chavo is sent out to the floor and grabs his title but goes back inside so Noble can roll him up for two.

What appears to be a low blow puts Jamie down and Chavo's dropkick gets two more. Jamie gets in a quick neckbreaker and fires off some right hands to send Chavo backing into the corner. Noble loads up a superplex but here's Shane to hold Noble's leg, allowing Chavo to send him down. A frog splash and the brainbuster retain Chavo's title.

**Rating:** C. This wasn't the most exciting match in the world but I'm really digging the storytelling here. It's a basic, logical story that makes you wonder how Chavo is going to get out of this at Sin. That's the kind of thing that would have done WCW a world of good in their main events over the last year or so. A lot of the time a basic story will give you more positives than almost any overly complicated story like a big swerve and a heel stable headed by a corrupt boss.

Crowbar is ready for Terry Funk at Sin.

Cat rides up to Flair on an ATV (Which you can WIN!) and asks for a match with Scott Steiner tonight. Flair, realizing that Cat has no chance of actually beating Steiner, is fine with this.

Bam Bam Bigelow is ready for Crowbar tonight.

Here's Jim Duggan in street clothes with something to say. Duggan doesn't want to take up too much of our time so we can get back to the show. He's made a decision and it's caused him some issues. About three months ago, it was decided that he needed to retire because it was past his time.

For twenty years, Duggan has shared his life with us because this is who he is. Then he made the mistake of turned his back on his country and gave up on everything. Now he needs to apologize for everything, including to his father, his wife and his children. Above all else though, he wants to apologize to the fans. After those twenty years, they deserve an apology because he can only hope they understand. I like the idea here and it's another story that is always going to work but couldn't this be used on someone with a bit more upside than Jim Duggan?

After a break, Duggan is leaving but Mike Awesome offers him a ride after the show is over.

The Natural Born Thrillers are ready for the battle royal and Gene Okerlund's insults don't seem to sway them. Stasiak insults Okerlund and that's about it.

Hugh Morrus thanks Duggan and accepts his apology. There will be no taking Hugh's beer though.

### Tag Team Battle Royal

3 Count, Jung Dragons, Meng/Kwee Wee, Filthy Animals, Noble and Karagias, Harris Twins, Sean O'Haire/Mark Jindrak, Perfect Event

The winners get a title shot at the pay per view. The fight starts during the entrances and it only takes one member being eliminated for a team to be out. Yang is eliminated early to get rid of the Dragons and thankfully clear the ring out a bit, which would go much faster if there wasn't a referee included.

Noble and Karagias go out next as those pesky cruiserweights are being cleared out. Everyone slowly beats on everyone until 3 Count is eliminated. This nonsense is getting ridiculous. Cue Vito to beat on Reno (standing at ringside with the Thrillers) and Johnny the Bull of all

people to make a return and blast Sanders with a kendo stick.

We get a Mamalukes reunion as Meng is eliminated by the Twins, only to have them get eliminated as a result. We're back from a break with Kidman/Mysterio, Jindrak/O'Haire and Perfect Event. The Thrillers clean house because it's four against two meager cruiserweights. A dropkick eliminates Kidman so we're down to the Thrillers...who split the win, basically repeating the same idea that 3 Count had in the ladder match at Starrcade.

**Rating:** D-. Make sure to treat those cruiserweights like they're the most worthless things in the world. I mean you have SHAWN STASIAK out there to get a title shot and stand tall. The idea is fine but it's really not going to hurt you to let some of the other teams look like something important on the way to having these two teams stand tall.

Sanders runs his mouth a lot post match. Apparently any two of these Thrillers will be challenging the Insiders but we won't know until Sin. Riveting indeed.

Scott Steiner shouts that Flair doesn't control him and he wants that Mystery Man tonight.

#### Konnan vs. Elix Skipper

Konnan does his catchphrases, which I really should understand by this point. They start screwing stuff up early as Konnan botches something off the ropes, prompting the camera to cut away to the crowd in a never good sign. Back with Konnan getting stomped down and put in a chinlock for a bit. The rolling clothesline and a reverse DDT put Elix down, only to have him get to the apron for a springboard missile dropkick. We hit the chinlock again because Konnan needs to rest three minutes in. A springboard legdrop gets two for Skipper but Konnan hits another rolling lariat and grabs the Tequila Sunrise for the tap out.

**Rating:** D-. And that's ALL on Konnan, who looked like a disaster out there, barely being able to do anything without being worn out in a short TV match. Skipper was doing his usual stuff but Konnan is a big deal in another country so it's time for Elix to lose cleanly. Thanks for the

cool spots but drawing power from years ago is all that matters.

Jeff Jarrett is ready for Scott Steiner at Sin. I can't believe we have to sit through more Jarrett main events. Was anyone asking for that?

The Misfits yell at Hugh Morrus over him accepting Duggan's apology while turning his back on Chavo. Morrus says the difference is Chavo not realizing what he's doing is wrong. Point to Morrus on that one.

#### Bam Bam Bigelow vs. Crowbar

Bigelow is still limping. Crowbar is quickly thrown into the corner for an Avalanche because what else is someone Bigelow's size going to do at this point in his career. A huge toss sends Crowbar flying but Bigelow makes the mistake of screaming at Daffney who easily destroys him with some more vocal eruptions. Crowbar gets smart and goes after the knee before they take it outside. Bigelow sends him into the barricade but gets his eyes raked by the banshee, allowing Crowbar to chop block him down. Cue Meng to lay out Crowbar, allowing Bigelow to mostly botch Greetings From Asbury Park for the quick pin.

**Rating:** D. I'm not sure what's worse: Bigelow going over Crowbar or the fact that these two just had a better match without weapons than they've had with them in what feels like years. These guys are capable of wrestling a coherent match with a simple story in Bigelow's knee injury but for some reason they're stuck with the weak weapons stuff most of the time.

Norman Smiley is still too excited about Glacier returning but is told he has a match. It's a makeup match from a few weeks ago.

#### Norman Smiley vs. Goldberg

Norman is in street clothes. Goldberg actually gives him a few seconds before the spear and Jackhammer make it 33-0.

Shane Douglas pays Kronik off.

The sitdown interview this week is with Ric Flair, who won't say who the Mystery Man is despite Tenay asking him over and over. Why Ric just

doesn't say "it's a MYSTERY" isn't clear. Flair praises Steiner's abilities but says the title has a big target that comes with it. The title is all that matters though, unlike this interview which was the same stuff that Flair has been saying for weeks now.

Ernest Miller is ready for his title shot.

### Shane Douglas/Kronik vs. Filthy Animals

Shane does the same promo he always does before the match, which to be fair still works well enough. Douglas is about to start with Morrus but brings in Adams before there's any contact. I'm not a Shane fan but he knows how to use the most basic heel stuff to good results. Morrus clotheslines Adams and brings in Lash for an ax handle.

The dancing punches don't seem to work so Lash settles for kicking Adams low. It's not exactly a crushing blow however as Adams takes over with an easy slam and brings in Clark for the first time. Lash's offense has about as much effect as you would expect so it's off to Wall for a showdown that could set wrestling back a hundred years.

Clark uses a drop toehold of all things so he can tag in Shane for the reverse Hennig necksnap. Raise your hand if that's the sequence you were expecting. Wall gets in a spinebuster on Shane as everything breaks down. Clark gives Lash a Meltdown for no cover, followed by Morrus slamming Shane and hitting the moonsault for two. Adams cleans house with a chair though and the Franchiser puts Morrus away to give us a reason for a rematch at Sin.

**Rating:** D+. This actually didn't suck as they went with a simple formula until right up to the ending. Kronik as partners for hire isn't the worst idea in the world and it's a lot better than having them be paid off for half of a fifteen minute match and not being able to read a stopwatch. Douglas isn't great either but he's as good as any other midcard heel so him getting Morrus again worse as well as anything else would.

Post break, Morrus yells at the Misfits.

Here's Team Canada with something to say. After the now traditional

complaining about the Presidential elections, Storm rips on Duggan for turning his back on Canada. Of course cue Duggan again and amazingly the fans go INSANE with patriotism. By that I mean they do nothing and WCW pipes in USA chants. Duggan goes in for the fight and hangs on, only to have Mike Awesome come in and take him out to become the newest member of the team.

Post break, Awesome declares himself the Canadian Career Killer. I would have gone with the guy fighting to become World Champion because he's the kind of guy that might get some attention because he's an athletic freak but this is a major step up from That 70s Guy.

#### WCW World Title: Scott Steiner vs. The Cat

Cat is challenging of course. Steiner pounds him in the back and stomps Cat in the corner because this is Scott Steiner vs. the Cat. The Push-Up elbow gets two and a backbreaker allows Scott to yell at Ms. Jones. Cat comes back with a few kicks, including one to put Steiner on the floor. We get the catfight as Cat stays on Steiner, including a shot to the throat back inside. Never mind though as we get the spinning belly to belly, only to have the Mystery Man come out and distract Steiner, setting up the Feliner for two. A t-bone suplex sets up the Recliner and we're done.

**Rating:** D. Yeah this was exactly what you would expect with the Cat basically getting destroyed and only a few kicks keeping this from being a squash. At the very least, and I do mean VERY least, Cat is able to work a match without looking like he's about to have a mild heart attack during the match. That's something isn't it?

Steiner chases after the Mystery Man to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D-. They've had worse shows but it's definitely a big letdown after Monday. This was all about the questionable decisions like having Konnan go over Skipper clean and WCW thinking Bam Bam Bigelow is anything but nostalgia in the year 2000. It's a pretty standard WCW show for the time: a decent opener and then a bunch of uninspiring stories centered around people who aren't all that interesting in the first place.

That's it for WCW 2000 as the only thing left is a Best of Thunder show and I don't think anyone is going to be wanting to read that. This year is definitely divided into different sections. The earliest part of the year, as in from the start up through Russo/Bischoff resetting things, is flat out boring. The stories weren't any good and the shows were just big wastes of time as Sid held the title for months at a time.

Then it was the New Blood Era where we were supposed to buy that the younger guys were important, even though it was Jeff Jarrett and his thirteen year career running things for the new generation. The rest of the main event was all the old guys being treated as the heroes while the actual new blood was lucky to get a midcard title shot here and there. On top of that you had Russo and Bischoff turning the show into a circus as the fans turned away in droves.

Oh and always remember: Vince Russo is MANLY and can hold on in the Figure Four for over a minute because even though there was a problem in there, they couldn't possibly change the story to protect the move and make Russo look like any normal person in one of the most famous finishing holds of all time.

Then Russo left and Booker T. won the World Title a few times and things got a little bit better, only to have him drop it to Scott Steiner (which was fine) to make sure the most technically sound main eventer they had went away. Booker winning was a genuinely cool moment as he remains one of the only people in WCW to have a traditional rise up the card before winning the title. After that, the show fell back into the same problems it had earlier in the year: boring stories, lame wrestling, the entertaining people being shoved to the side so the "draws" could get all the glory.

WCW was almost entirely dead coming into 2000 and their Hail Mary of Russo and Bischoff working together failed more spectacularly than anyone could have ever imagined. The company was more than living on borrowed time and they didn't do themselves any favors by going with the things people didn't want to see while getting rid of the stuff that wasn't like the WWF. Yeah Raw was on fire at this point, but WCW was standing in the way of the flames to burn themselves alive. This year was nothing short

of a disaster all around and a fitting way to set up the final months of the company.

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# Monday Nitro – December 18, 2000: They've Still Got It

## Monday Nitro #271

Date: December 18, 2000

Location: Richmond Coliseum, Richmond, Virginia

Attendance: 2,872

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Scott Hudson, Mark Madden

Since even WCW isn't stupid enough to hold a TV show on Christmas night or New Year's Day, this is the last Monday Nitro of 2000. It's also the night after Starrcade and a grand total of nothing happened. Steiner is still World Champion, Goldberg is still undefeated (and still feuding with Lex Luger for whatever reason) and the Insiders are still a thing because of reasons. Let's get to it.

Ric Flair welcomes us to the show and talks about how awesome tonight is going to be. We'll be seeing Buff Bagwell vs. Goldberg but more importantly we're going to find out who is going to challenge Steiner for



the World Title at Sin. Flair implies that it might be multiple opponents, which would at least be a bit more interesting.

Quick recap of last night's show with a traditional highlight package.

Opening sequence.

### Shannon Moore vs. Shane Helms

Winner gets the title shot and for some reason Helms doesn't get an introduction. They shake hands and start with a fast paced pinfall reversal sequence before Shane turns things up by throwing him over the top by the hair. Shannon pulls him to the floor for a hurricanrana, only to get powerslammed off the top for two. The X Plex (arm trap German suplex) gets two on Shannon before he misses a hurricanrana, allowing Shane to get in a great looking top rope sunset flip for two. Instead the Vertebreaker puts Shannon away with ease.

**Rating:** B-. This was the old school cruiserweight formula with both guys just doing high spots to wake the crowd up. It's sad that the company had to go out so soon after this as the division was definitely undergoing a renaissance around this time and it could have been interesting to see where things were going.

Chavo runs in to go after Shane but gets laid out as well.

Hugh Morrus yells at Lash for saving Chavo last night.

Here's Scott Steiner with something to say. Scott thinks Flair is taking his job as CEO way too seriously because he can't handle being an average champion by comparison. Steiner dominates while Flair had to squeak by and being CEO is a tough job because Flair can't find any wrestlers to fight him. Maybe Flair can convince Diamond Dallas Page to get a sex change so he has the balls to face him. That line was allegedly a shoot and led to a fight in the back where Steiner went after Page's eyes and caused Page and Nash to walk out.

This brings out Ric to say he's going to make Sin's main event a three way match with a mini tournament tonight to decide on one opponent. Ric isn't going to announce who the four participants are so Steiner doesn't

lay them all out. On top of that, there's going to be a mystery opponent who will be here tonight.

Jimmy Hart does his DJ challenge.

Buff Bagwell laughs at Goldberg spelling "stuff" wrong when he signed a copy of his book. Now Bagwell is here to save the company and has formed a new tag team called Totally Buff. Before Luger can say anything, Scott Steiner comes in and almost begs Luger to help him find out who is in the mini tournament.

#### Hardcore Title: Terry Funk vs. Meng

Meng is challenging and has Paisley/Kwee Wee with him. Funk pops up on screen to call Meng out to the back for a fight in a cage. Meng heads back to fight him and it's just in the regular places instead of a cage. I guess old people who are here for no apparent reason are false advertisers as well. They hit each other with some weapons and Funk gets handcuffed. Funk actually begs off, only to say Meng has a big nose.

We get the hit/walk sequence with Meng beating him back into the arena and then the ring. Funk gets in a trashcan shot of his own but Meng shrugs it off and sets up a table. Meng's splash goes through the table instead of Funk but that's not sold either. The Death Grip goes on, only to have Crowbar come out and hit Meng with the monkey wrench to give Funk the pin.

**Rating:** D-. How much good can come from a man in his mid 50s being hit with a trashcan? Apparently quite a bit in WCW's eyes as they seem perfectly happy to let it happen here and then again in his next title defense. It's almost like they're turning this into a joke, like almost everything else around here.

Crowbar, again with the crazy man look, wants Funk and the title at Sin.

Now Steiner wants Jarrett's help as well.

Vito wants to know where Reno's family values are. He's coming for Reno and the Thrillers.

Crowbar tells Mike Awesome to drop the 70s stuff. Didn't he already drop that nonsense?

### Lance Storm vs. Rey Mysterio

This is the first qualifying match for the #1 contenders match. Before the match, Storm says it's time for him to win the one title he's never won. Rey has taped ribs coming in but still headscissors Storm down and grabs a rollup for two. Storm gets knocked into the corner and the referee takes a shot to the leg in what seemed like a real injury. A Lionsault hits Storm's raised knees and Storm gets two of his own off a backbreaker.

They head outside with Rey being sent hard into the barricade as they're going with a very simple and logical formula here. Back in and Rey scores with a clothesline (not a move I remember him ever using), only to get caught in an abdominal stretch. Rey gets out again but misses a springboard splash to hurt the ribs even further. A headscissors puts Storm on the floor and Rey hits a running flip dive into a seated senton because Rey Mysterio is Spanish for what bad ribs. Now the springboard splash connects for two but a quick Mapleleaf makes Rey tap.

**Rating:** B. Take two talented wrestlers and let them have a good wrestling match with a simple story. What else were you really expecting out of something like this? It's also cool to see Storm get a chance at a slightly higher spot up on the card. I was really liking this and again I got WAY more out of a basic wrestling match like this over one of the multiple wild brawls last night at Starrcade.

### Mike Awesome vs. Jeff Jarrett

This is the other qualifying match, but first of all let's have Awesome call himself a love doctor crossed with a career killer. I'm not sure how to take that one but it sounds like an upgrade. Awesome throws him up into the air for a big crash and a near fall, followed by a release German suplex. A Stunner across the top rope sends Awesome to the floor and Jeff puts him face first into a chair. Mike drive him back first into the apron a few times before going over to the announcers' table to complete a requirement.

A powerbomb is broken up with a low blow however and Jeff gets in that dropkick of his for two. Awesome shrugs it off (well it was just a dropkick) and gets two off a Batista Bomb. Mike uses a lifting Pedigree of all things (Stevie Ray's Slapjack, which I guess is fair game now) for two but the referee gets bumped a few seconds later. Jeff gets the guitar but it's quickly taken away, only to have Jarrett pull out another one to knock Awesome silly for the pin.

**Rating:** C-. Nowhere near as entertaining as the previous match as Awesome really isn't someone who does well outside of the high impact style, which isn't exactly Jarrett's forte. It wasn't terrible or anything but that guitar shot is turning into one of the most overused finishes I've ever seen.

Steiner goes after Jarrett in the back but Jeff says he wants in the title match to watch Steiner's back.

Glacier is still returning and Norman Smiley dances in happiness.

Shane Douglas wants to fight Hugh Morrus again on Thunder and wants the Misfits involved. He's hired Kronik to make sure everything is all nice and fair.

Clip of Goldberg on the Man Show.

Awesome freaks out in the back.

No Nitro for the next two weeks.

### The Cat vs. Alex Wright

For some reason Cat asks Wright to dance some more. Alex does so but Cat says he'd rather see Madden get in the ring and dance. Thankfully that goes nowhere (the last thing we need is Madden thinking more people care about him) and it's Cat missing his kicks to start. Alex throws him out to the floor as Madden gets up and runs away, likely due to the announcers talking about the Insiders for reasons that aren't exactly clear. They trade drink shots as Madden is now back on commentary and a big Wright fan.

Back in and a Saito suplex gets two for Alex and it's right back to the floor. They go inside again as it's clear that Wright doesn't have much of an idea of what to do with this much time. An armbar goes nowhere so Alex cranks on the other arm. Cat gets up for a quick Feliner and the pin.

**Rating:** D-. You know, you can come up with a lot of reasons why WCW wasn't anything worth watching around this time and this is another added to the pile: a lot of the wrestling was absolutely horrible. It's never a good sign when the only good thing about a match is the fact that Ms. Jones looked great. Horribly uninteresting stuff here as people shouldn't be repeating spots in a six minute match.

The Thrillers arrive in a limo.

Scott Steiner beats up some cruiserweights because they're around and not doing anything else.

Here are the Thrillers for a chat. Sanders makes trailer park jokes and then stands around wasting time. Eventually he says they give the children something to look up to and men a reason to get in the gym. Mike rips on the Insiders for not being here tonight and says they'll be defending the titles at Sin.

Their opponents will be...announced later as here's Ric Flair to brag about how many women he would get back in the Horsemen days. Anyway, Perfect Event is awesome but they'll be involved in a tag team battle royal on Thunder to determine the #1 contenders. This took WAY too long to get to the point but you had to expect something like that with Sanders on the mic.

### Buff Bagwell vs. Goldberg

It's a chase to start but Luger is waiting on the floor with a chair to hit Goldberg for the DQ at about thirty seconds. Why not hit Bagwell so Goldberg loses via DQ? Oh and a better question: WHY IS THIS FEUD GOING TO THREE FREAKING PAY PER VIEWS???

Goldberg gets beaten down until Sarge comes in for the save.

## Jeff Jarrett vs. Lance Storm

The winner goes to the title match at Sin. Feeling out process to start with Jarrett hiptossing him down but getting kicked away. Jeff takes him into the corner but gets tossed to the floor. Storm misses a dive to the floor and tweaks his knee, setting up a very quick Figure Four. The hold is turned over again and Storm gets two off a crucifix as this is the most technical match WCW has had in months. Jeff throws him onto the top for a superplex and a near fall. Jarrett's enziguri misses and he has to get over to the ropes to save himself. A Stroke out of nowhere sends Jeff to Sin.

**Rating:** C. This was BEGGING for five more minutes but we were lucky enough to get the Cat vs. Alex Wright instead. Other than that it was a fun match though with two guys who can work a basic yet still entertaining style as well as anyone else. It wasn't a classic or anything but what else were you expecting here?

Post match Steiner runs out and demands to know who the mystery man is. He heads to the back and sees Flair but a masked man jumps him and beats the champ down to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** B-. I'm as shocked as you are but there was a heck of a show and a masterpiece by WCW's standards. They kept the stupid things on low tonight and just had wrestling matches that advanced stories and helped set up the pay per view. Given that they're out of two weeks of Nitro due to the holidays, this was a night where they had to get A LOT done and believe it or not they actually pulled it off. This is likely the final good episode and I can actually live with that.

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# Starrcade 2000 (2016 Redo): They Used To Be Good At This

## Starrcade 2000

Date: December 17, 2000

Location: MCI Center, Washington, D.C.

Attendance: 6,596

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mark Madden, Scott Hudson

We've uh....arrived. It's the final edition of WCW's flagship show and it's looking somewhere between a bad C show and a horribly unfunny joke. The main event is Scott Steiner (won the title three weeks ago) defending against Sid Vicious (not in the promotion three weeks ago). Such is life in the dying days of this company. Let's get to it.

Before we start, here's a good idea of how bad it's gotten for WCW. The attendances for the last four Starrcades, all in the same arena.

1997 – 17,500

1998 – 16,066

1999 – 8,582

2000 – 6,596

In three years, the attendance has fallen by nearly two thirds. That's impossible to defend.

The opening video makes this look even more of a disaster than it's likely going to be.

3 Count vs. Noble and Karagias vs. Jung Dragons

Ladder match for the #1 contendership, which will somehow be give to one man, making me wonder why this isn't just a six way match. Champion Chavo Guerrero Jr. is on commentary. Oh and they're starting with tags because LADDER MATCHES (remember that this is after the first TLC match) needs law and order. Kaz and Moore hit the mat to start until they crash into each other to put both guys down.

Shannon goes for the ladder but Evan will have none of that because that's not how a well organized ladder match is supposed to go. Everyone goes for the ladders and it's 3 Count sneaking in to go up at the same time until the Dragons make the save. Yang dropkicks a ladder into Noble and Karagias, followed by Kaz moonsaulting onto the ladder and the two of them. A double flapjack sends Kaz into the ladder but Evan pulls Noble down, making the entire idea of the match a waste of time.

Yang sends Noble hard into the ladder and busts out Yang Time (phoenix splash) off a ladder on the middle rope to crush Shannon. Shane is back up and sends Yang to the floor for a big flip dive of his own. That's the start of the big set of dives (Chavo: "Keep killing yourselves boys.") until Yang shoves Noble off the ladder and onto the pile for a great crash. Yang bridges a ladder into another one but Evan slides back in for a suplex.

With Evan on the bridged ladder, Kaz tries to springboard in, only to get powerslammed out of the air for a great looking landing. Shannon springboards onto the ladder for a Fameasser onto Evan, leaving Shane to grab a neckbreaker to bring Noble off the ladder. Yang, Noble and 3 Count go up two different ladders so Noble sunset bombs Helms down and Shannon plants Yang with a sleeper drop.

Cue Leia to go after Noble as two more ladders are brought in. Yang flips Evan off a ladder in the corner and into a Kaz powerbomb (cool spot) before erecting a scaffold with one ladder bridged into three others. I've heard worse ideas actually. Noble and Karagias take out 3 Count before Kaz gets knocked off the scaffold. That leaves Shane and Yang on the scaffold, allowing Shannon to headscissor Yang down for another crash. Jamie gets hiptossed off as well, leaving 3 Count to pull down the contract at the same time, again defeating the point of the stipulations



one more time.

**Rating:** B. It has nothing on any of the WWF counterparts but this was a bunch of fun spots with six guys who wanted to show off out there. As always you can see people trying their hardest instead of just phoning it in as so often happens. Oh and well done having this match go on first so that it's going to be forgotten an hour and a half into the show while Bam Bam Bigelow or Shane Douglas are out there as the midcard draws because WCW exists as a haven for people like them.

Jim Duggan is polishing his board (dude CLOSE THE DOOR) when Lance Storm comes in to say no one is going to take Jim back. If Duggan wants a paycheck, his future is with Team Canada. After all those times where Duggan has screwed up, why would Storm want him around?

Jeff Jarrett asks Mike Sanders to make the six man against the Filthy Animal a Bunkhouse street fight.

Kronik is in a steam room and will be getting paid tonight, cash in hand. Adams: "Wow, am I baked."

#### Lance Storm vs. The Cat

No Duggan with the Canadians here. Storm has something to say before the match, which Hudson calls a Canadian gimmick. Lance rips on the Presidential elections again so here's Cat to do his usual "I'm going to beat you up" stuff. They start slowly with a lockup on the ropes and a clean break. You really can feel the hatred here. An armdrag puts Storm down but he comes right back with a wristlock.

That earns him a few kicks to the chest but Major Gunns grabs Cat's foot, nearly triggering a catfight. Tony: "Speaking of accidental and speaking of cleavage." The women get inside for no action until Storm takes over with a jawbreaker. You know, as part of the wrestling match. Storm spends too much time yelling to the crowd and has to kick out of a small package. Cat throws him into the air for a low blow (with the referee cringing) before being sent outside to hit Skipper in the head with a bottle of water.

Now the women actually get involved as Jones accidentally kicks Cat, earning herself a dropkick from Gunns. Back in and Storm missile dropkicks Cat for no count as the referee is still getting up. Cue Duggan to pull back the board to hit Cat but instead it's a halfhearted clothesline to set up the Mapleleaf to make Cat tap.

**Rating:** D. Not the worst match in the world but I'm getting tired of having everyone having to work down to Cat's level. Storm should be able to fly around with anyone but he's stuck with this dancing goon who can't work a straight seven minute match because it's beyond his physical capabilities. Now can we PLEASE get Duggan on to something else?

Team Canada beats Duggan down post match.

The ambulance arrives.

Buff Bagwell, now an interviewer, says he had to be on the show to draw a rating because pay per views have ratings. The Filthy Animals come in and aren't worried about Jarrett and the Harris Twins no matter what the stipulations are.

Reno and Vito tell the Thrillers to mind their own business tonight.

Hardcore Title: Terry Funk vs. Crowbar

Crowbar is defending but first Daffney has to yell at him over the 70s clothes. Thankfully Funk jumps him with a fire extinguisher to get things going in the back. Funk sends him into various objects for two as Hudson tries to figure out how Terry got a shot after just coming back. Uh, I believe it's because Crowbar said "yeah you can have a title shot." That gem is followed up by Tony talking about Terry retiring the same year that Starrcade debuted and having a title match seventeen years later.

They fight in the back of a production truck as Hudson gets the date of Clash of the Champions IX: New York Knockout wrong. Crowbar gets hiptossed out of the truck and through a table but comes back by slamming a door onto Funk's head. Funk pops up and does the same thing to Crowbar a few times over as Hudson says Crowbar is someone's son. You know, because Funk isn't.

Funk handcuffs him and blasts Crowbar in the head with a chair because the 1999 Royal Rumble is ripe for nostalgia. They head into the arena (not back into the arena Tony) with Funk bringing a car door with him to blast Crowbar in the head again. Now it's time for a table (ignore the thing bending in the middle along a line that clearly shows it's pre-cut) but Daffney pulls Crowbar off.

Terry goes after her but I'm sure he's still the face in the match because he's old and therefore awesome. Crowbar, still handcuffed, fights up and dives through Funk and the table for two. Another chair shot to the head sets up a piledriver onto the door to give Funk the pin and the title.

**Rating:** D. So Crowbar is built up as something special in the hardcore division and then he faces a legend and loses in a glorified squash. But hey, another old name gets to be a champion in WCW and that's what really matters. This is another head shake inducing moment and that's the sad part about WCW.

Storm rants about Duggan still being American and says it's time for Team Canada to move forward. Gunns screws up her only line so Gene tells her he's got a pole she can run that Canadian flag up.

Lex Luger has brass knuckles ready for Goldberg.

### Kronik vs. Big Vito/Reno

Before the match, Adams implies that Marie is the one paying them off. It's a brawl to start as Hudson suggests that Marie being the one behind this could be the story of the year. Is it even the story of the match? Vito powerslams Clark and drops a leg for two before Reno gets the same off a neckbreaker. An elbow stops Clark's comeback as Adams goes outside to yell at Marie. Vito goes to save his sister but the distraction lets Clark get in his flip dive from the apron.

Back in and Vito clotheslines Adams for two as we're just waiting for the big swerve. A full nelson slam and belly to back suplex drop Vito for two and it's off to a chinlock because this wasn't slow enough already. Cue the Thrillers to distract Reno so Kronik can get in a double big boot to

Vito. A double cross body body puts Vito and Clark down and it's the tag to Reno, who immediately Rolls the Dice on Vito...for a pinfall. Good thing they went that long before doing something else stupid.

**Rating:** F+. I hate these stories because it sets up the potential of something interesting and then rips it away in the span of a few weeks. Why bother having them get back together if they're going to be split up just a few weeks later to get us back to where we started? Why bother having them even be brothers in the first place? Huge waste of time here and a bad match on top of that.

Post match Reno pays Kronik off and rejoins the Thrillers, making this whole story a complete waste of time. Kronik beats Vito up a bit more.

3 Count argues over who gets the title shot tomorrow night so Chavo comes in and beats them down.

Hugh Morrus goes on a rant about how he's not going to be a stepping stone for Shane Douglas.

#### Bam Bam Bigelow vs. Mike Awesome

Ambulance match because that's what Awesome does, or at least did months ago before the 70s nonsense. Madden: "Mike Awesome has never won an ambulance match." But it's his SPECIALTY right? Awesome climbs the buckle for a jumping back elbow to the face to start but Bigelow takes it outside and drives Awesome into the post. Bigelow sets up a chair in the aisle and they ram each other into the side of the ambulance.

Awesome ducks a right hand to send Bigelow's fist through the window so let's go back to the ring because this thing MUST KEEP GOING. Both guys are sent into the announcers' table before Bigelow backdrops him through a regular table. They head back to the ambulance (with the driver still in the cab looking more bored than most of the fans) and Bigelow goes up top, only to be knocked through the roof to give Awesome the win.

**Rating:** F. Just nothing here with both guys beating on each other minus any particular rhyme or reason. I don't know why I'm supposed to care about these hardcore guys when Bigelow is WAY over the hill, Awesome has

been a comedy guy for months and Terry Funk is the champion after having beaten the other 70s guy. I'm sick of these matches eating up so much time and going nowhere but it was something in ECW and that's what matters I guess.

Reno says the Thrillers are his real family. Sanders and the Perfect Event are sure they'll retain the titles. Gene promises to slap Stasiak one day.

#### US Title: Shane Douglas vs. Hugh Morrus

Morrus is defending and we'll go with the old name because they're being used interchangeably at this point. Shane promises to rip a hole in Morrus' heart, meaning it won't take 36 days to determine who won this contest. A bunch of chops don't do much damage to Morrus early on but a poke to the eye works a bit better. We almost get a crash into the referee but the second attempt hits Shane as it was supposed to. A low blow and right hands have no effect either so Hugh grabs a bearhug. This draws a GOLDBERG chant of all things until Shane finally bites his way out.

No Laughing Matter is broken up and Shane gets in a piledriver but opts to pose instead of covering. Off to a neck crank for a bit before they go back outside for more nothing. Shane goes hard into the post to draw some blood (hardway it seems) but another moonsault misses. That means it's chain time but Morrus breaks it up with a belly to back suplex. Cue Chavo to throw the chain back to a stunned Douglas....before telling the referee about it to draw a DQ.

**Rating:** D-. Gah this story continues to do nothing for me. Shane Douglas really isn't interesting but Morrus is even worse now that he's finished with the war against Canada. I still don't see Morrus as someone who should be at this level either and it's really hard to buy him here. Unfortunately he's one of WCW's only options as everyone on the roster is FIRMLY stuck in the places with little opportunity to move up without turning 40 years old.

Shane beats on him with the chain post match until Chavo comes in for the failed save. The Misfits come in to clear Shane out but Lash sides with

Chavo and AWALL sides with Morrus.

Steiner goes on about how he's going to win tonight and then have a great night with the freaks.

Glacier is still coming back.

Nash and Page laugh off the idea of Perfect Event as any kind of a threat and make jokes with Buff.

### Jeff Jarrett/Harris Twins vs. Filthy Animals

Bunkhouse street fight, meaning the third hardcore based match assuming you ignore the ladder match. There are weapons all around and in the ring, including a bar and a popcorn machine. The Animals quickly clean house as Tygress sits in on commentary. The spray painted trashcans have the Nashville World Order (commentators' words) as this is even more mindless brawling.

Jarrett is sent face first into the popcorn and the Twins both get Bronco Busters. Back in and Jarrett gets slammed off the middle rope and through the bar for two. Well at least the wood erupting looked good. Rey comes off the top with an atomic Arabian facebuster with a Wrong Way sign on Don. There's nothing going on between these big spots other than some punches and kicks.

Jarrett finally counters a hurricanrana and powerbombs Rey over the top into a dumpster. The match actually settles down into a regular tag match because the words STREET FIGHT are lost about seven minutes in. A double big boot drops Kidman as the fans start getting into things. It's almost like presenting old school wrestling on a wrestling show instead of hardcore match after hardcore match is a good idea. Ron cuts off a hot tag attempt and hands it back to Jarrett for a chinlock.

Kidman finally flips out and grabs a Bodog, setting up the hot tag off to Konnan. You can actually see the fans paying attention and caring about the match with such a simple story. Take that Russo. The H-Bomb puts Konnan down and it's table time but Rey comes out of the dumpster with a broom for a double clothesline. Another H Bomb puts Rey through a table

though, leaving Kidman mostly on his own. The Kid Crusher looks to set up the shooting star but a bottle to the head lets Jarrett get in the Stroke for the pin.

**Rating:** C. Other than the ladder match, I think I liked the wrestling section in the middle of this match better than anything else on the show tonight. It was so nice to hit the brakes for a bit and just watch something out of a wrestling match. But hey, where would we be without an exploding bar and a popcorn machine?

Sarge thinks Goldberg is ready for Luger. Lex runs in and beats him down until Buff gets rid of him.

We cut away from this and look at the weapons being taken away.

The announcers talk about Goldberg to kill time.

#### Tag Team Titles: Insiders vs. Perfect Event

Perfect Event is defending and this is a rematch from last month where the Insiders won the titles but had them stripped away because they pinned the wrong man. Before the match, Flair says the title change hands if Sanders goes anywhere near the ring. You know, aside from being at ringside as a manager. Nash and Palumbo get things going with Kevin hitting some running clotheslines in the corner.

Chuck wants a timeout so Stasiak gets in a cheap shot from the apron, only to have Page get tagged in a few seconds later for a flying shoulder. Page ducks a boot in the corner and crotches Stasiak against the post. A belly to belly gets two but Shawn gets out of the Diamond Cutter. Page hits a quick Rock Bottom (called a chokeslam which is close enough) but Palumbo sneaks in with a Jungle kick to put Page down.

After a few near falls, Page throws Palumbo into the corner for some right hands, only to be thrown into the wrong corner for a double stomping. Some kicks to the ribs have Page in trouble because a three year old injury still isn't fully healed. That's a very slow healing injury. Palumbo hits him low to stop a comeback but a single forearm allows the tag off to Nash.

Sanders low blows Page on the floor and Stasiak gets two off a top rope clothesline. The camera misses a Diamond Cutter to Stasiak on the floor (because Page doesn't sell low blows) and here are Jindrak and O'Haire to get laid out as well. Nash kicks Chuck in the face and the Jackknife gives the Insiders the titles back.

**Rating:** D+. The match was actually decent with the old school formula but the same problem stands: the Insiders, a team thrown together about five weeks ago, have now decisively beaten the Thrillers twice in a row to give them another unnecessary title. As late as it is, this is another on the long list of things that killed WCW. At some point, you have to have these old guys lay down and take a big fall from someone under the age of thirty.

Recap of Goldberg vs. Luger, which is happening because Luger was a big deal ten years ago and therefore should have a prominent role on the show instead of having Goldberg winning the title like he should. Goldberg beat Luger last month but a referee was speared so it should have been a DQ, requiring this rematch. There's also been stuff with Luger beating up Goldberg's trainer to try to add more interest to a match no one wanted to see in the first place, let alone a rematch.

### Goldberg vs. Lex Luger

No DQ to add a fourth hardcore based match on a ten match card. They fight at the announcers' table to start with Goldberg easily taking over. A clothesline puts Luger down in the ring and a powerslam puts him out on the floor. Luger sends him into the post and barricade so here are Sarge and Bagwell for no apparent reason.

Back in and Luger hides behind the referee to avoid the spear before the brass knuckles knock Goldberg silly for two. The Blockbuster hits Goldberg "by mistake", ignoring the fact that Luger was touching the turnbuckle when Bagwell jumped. Bagwell hits Sarge to officially turn heel, leaving Goldberg to hit the two moves to reach 31-0.

**Rating:** D. Just like last month, no one cares about Luger but for some reason he was pushed in this spot instead of having Goldberg get a major push and win the title again as he should have done. The Sarge stuff was



fine but there was no logical reason to have Luger here. Goldberg is way past the point of needing a worthless rub from Lex Luger and since we need Sid in the main event, here's what we're stuck with for no apparent reason. The match was a somewhat passable brawl but Goldberg squashed him for the most part, as you would expect.

Bagwell lays Goldberg out with the chair post match.

We recap Sid Vicious vs. Scott Steiner. Basically Sid never lost the title back in April, then he disappeared for about seven months and came back to fight Steiner here. That's really about it for the story, which sums up this show so well.

### WCW World Title: Scott Steiner vs. Sid Vicious

Sid is challenging. Steiner pounds him into the corner to start but Sid catches him with some clotheslines and a side slam to send the champ outside. Back in and Steiner poses a lot before easily winning a test of strength. Sid gets back up and puts Scott down, setting up a legdrop across the face for two.

They head outside where Midajah gets in a steel pipe to Sid's back, followed by some chair shots from Steiner. Back in and Steiner easily presses Sid for a few curls, followed by the spinning belly to belly. The Recliner goes on but Sid is too close to the ropes to make sure this continues.

Scott gets it on again and good grief it looks HORRIBLE as Sid's back is straight and Steiner is clearly not even pulling back. You can make that hold look devastating but this is worse than Rock's Sharpshooter ever hoped to be. Sid starts to fight back so Midajah comes off the top for a high cross body which hits the champ by mistake. The chokeslam (Sid's back is fine. Why are you asking?) gets two on Steiner so we hit a cobra clutch of all things.

Steiner slaps the referee before getting slammed, meaning there's no count. Pipe to the back gets two and here's Jarrett with the guitar to hit Scott by mistake. In an awesome moment, Sid covers for two but Jeff pulls Robinson to the floor and tries a clothesline, only to have

Robinson duck underneath and slide back in for the two count. Two low blows set up a t-bone suplex and the Recliner makes Sid pass out (of course) to retain.

**Rating:** D. And that's probably very generous. The highlight of this match was a referee ducking a clothesline and sliding back into the ring to count a near fall. Not the wrestling, not the brawling and not the finish, but a referee. Among its many obvious problems, the issue here was how nothing this match was. There's no reason for these two to really be fighting other than the title being stripped eight months ago and that's barely been mentioned. This whole main event has been treated like an afterthought and that's perfect after this mess of a show.

Steiner holds up the belt, with one of the side plates hanging off, and flips off the fans to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** F. You can add Starrcade to the list of things that this company has wrecked. Looking at the show and its buildup, this was just about exactly what I expected. The main event was nothing, Goldberg's match was an excuse to have Luger on the show for whatever reason.....and I'm already having issues thinking of the rest of the card because it was that forgettable.

The show felt like a card they scraped together with whatever leftovers they had at the time and then slapped STARRCADE on the marquee. Nothing on this show felt like it mattered or seemed important or had any other purpose than making sure the same people were in the same spots as we head into 2001. The really fun ladder match at the beginning was forgotten by the end of the show due to all of the other hardcore messes in the middle, which was probably the idea at some point. Why let them get over when the made men can get over even more?

Above all else, this show was disappointing. Any given Wrestlemania card can be lackluster and still feel like something special on the strength of being Wrestlemania alone. That should be the case with Starrcade but I might as well have been watching Uncensored or Souled Out with what we got here.

What happened on this show? Steiner retains the title, Sid is treated

like a nothing wrestler (fair enough), Goldberg wins as he always does, we've set up a tag match involving a career jobber who is now a big deal because he trains wrestlers, the Insiders got the titles back and Rey Mysterio was powerbombed into a dumpster. Why not have Steiner win the title here instead of at Mayhem? Ah yes, because Mayhem fit his name and that's going to save the company. Steiner winning like a monster is fine but give him the big moment at the big show instead of at the nothing show.

This show was a huge mess but in a different and much more disappointing way than the Russo shows. Those things were all about someone having no idea what he was doing flying off a cliff because no one told him no. This show was a bunch of people who might have been interesting at some point giving up and just fulfilling obligations with no ambition or plans on how to make things feel interesting or important for the fans. Here lies Starrcade and it's very sad to see it go down like this.

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## **Thunder – December 13, 2000:**

# Just Picture Steve Austin Doing This

## Thunder

Date: December 13, 2000

Location: Centurytel Center, Bossier City, Louisiana

Commentators: Konnan, Tony Schiavone, Mike Tenay

It's the final show before the biggest show of the year and the big match announced for tonight is Sgt. Dwayne Bruce vs. Lex Luger. Odds are Sid and Steiner aren't going to be in the arena tonight because the idea for the match seems to be based on them being apart as long as possible before we get to the pay per view. Let's get to it.

We open with the traditional Nitro recap, which begins with Crowbar and Terry Funk. Not the World Title situation, but a guy in the 70s with a female friend who dresses in 60's clothes getting beaten up by a guy who won his first World Title nearly thirty years before this show. Only in WCW.

Mike Sanders welcomes us to the show and gives Chavo Guerrero Jr. the Perfect Event. He's welcome to find a partner if he wants but otherwise, we'll just make it a handicap match.

Ric Flair cuts into the interview and demands that Sanders makes sure Lance Storm sings the National Anthem. Sid and Steiner are welcome to fight tonight because Ric is tired of trying to keep them apart. Finally, Sanders will be facing Diamond Dallas Page tonight.

Opening sequence.

Tony: "THIS MUST BE THUNDER!"

Evan Karagias/Jamie Noble vs. 3 Count

Evan is still in the 3 Count entrance video because no one cares enough to fix it. They start brawling and here are the Jung Dragons to make it a three way dance.

## Evan Karagias/Jamie Noble vs. 3 Count vs. Jung Dragons

Karagias springboards in with a double clothesline to take out the Dragons before grabbing a neckbreaker on Yang. We settle down to Evan vs. Noble vs. Shane because teams mean nothing around here. Jamie suplexes Shannon and Konnan seems to be having a great time on commentary.

It's off to Kaz as Konnan talks about what sounds like OMEGA, which isn't something you often hear about. Everything breaks down and a Vertebreaker (no reaction from commentary) plants Kaz. We get a ladder brought in before Shannon plants Evan with a Fameasser (Bottoms Up here), only to have Noble and Karagias superplex Shane, allowing Evan to steal the pin.

**Rating:** C. Best match WCW has had in weeks and it was just ok by these guys' standards. The ladder match should be a blast and at least they have Chavo waiting on the winners instead of whatever nightmare a match against Sanders would have been. It's also nice of WCW to get this out of the way before it could pick the show up later on.

Scott Steiner beats up Kwee Wee as part of a contest where you can win an ATV.

Storm says he doesn't know the words to the National Anthem so he can't sing it. Duggan: "I KNOW THE WORDS! I'LL TEACH YOU!"

## Chavo Guerrero Jr. vs. Perfect Event

Non-title and Chavo doesn't have a partner. Stasiak gets things going as Konnan makes some references to bathhouses. We see the Misfits watching from the back as Chavo gets in Stasiak's face and takes Palumbo out to the floor. Palumbo can't get a delayed vertical suplex and gets clotheslined for two, only to have Stasiak make an easy save. Stasiak puts Chavo down again and we see the Misfits clearly wanting to come out and make the save. Chuck dropkicks Chavo in the back as Stasiak flapjacks him for a near fall. In the back again, Lash is told to stay in the back and we cut to a double flapjack putting Chavo away.

**Rating:** D+. Did Chavo turn face and no one told us? He was slapping hands on the way to the ring and you can't expect someone to be booed when

they're fighting two heels at a time. If nothing else this makes the Misfits look like heels, which certainly wasn't what they were going for here. This was a mess of an idea and as usual I doubt they have any idea what's going on.

Sid is on the phone and says to not let Steiner leave the building because he's ten to fifteen minutes away.

Meng finds Kwee Wee down on the floor (because he hasn't gotten any assistance in roughly fifteen minutes) and wants revenge on Steiner.

Reno and Big Vito beat up Bam Bam Bigelow for hitting on Marie. Well at least he has good taste.

Sarge is ready to fight Luger tonight.

The music lessons continue. Duggan: "OH SAY CAN YOU SEE???" Storm: "Who is Jose?"

Luger yawns and reads a magazine.

Video on Sid vs. Steiner.

Video of Goldberg on the Man Show.

Flair gives Meng a World Title shot tonight.

Here's Storm to sing the National Anthem. Storm doesn't want to sing so here are the Cat and Ms. Jones to interrupt, complete with a picnic basket to enjoy the performance. The music sings and Storm misses his start before going into "blah blah blah" for the lyrics. Storm screws up again so Cat tells Duggan to sing instead. Duggan is glad to do it and gets about halfway through until Cat throws hot dogs at Storm. That's enough to set up a match.

### The Cat vs. Jim Duggan

Duggan forearms him a few times but tells Storm he doesn't want to fight. Cat is sent outside for a beating from Skipper but Duggan says not so fast. The 2x4 is loaded up but Duggan sees a "Hacksaw, come home" sign. He hits Storm by mistake and that's enough to make Duggan rip off the

Canadian shirt. The Feliner (more like a kick to the arm) puts Duggan away in a hurry.

Post match, Storm gives Cat one of the best looking superkicks I've ever seen, including some tuning up the band. Tony: "What was he stomping on the mat for?" After the Canadians leave, Cat helps Duggan to his feet.

Video of Sarge training people. It's two people but they are indeed people.

Steiner isn't worried about Sid or Meng.

Luger hits Goldberg in the head with a baseball bat. And I'm sure charges are coming later tonight right? Naturally the announcers treat this like Luger going to catering.

Sid calls in and needs directions.

#### Sgt. Dewayne Bruce vs. Lex Luger

Luger has his old face music here. The fans chant for Goldberg as Luger drops to a knee and offers a test of strength. Bruce kicks him down a few times so Luger pulls out a wooden baseball bat to knock him cold. The Rack gives Luger the easy win.

Luger keeps stomping on Bruce and shouts for Goldberg to get out here.

Post break Luger bails as fast as he can.

Page thinks it's funny that he's almost twenty years older than Sanders.

Reno and Vito are ready for Kronik. They'll be having the same match on Sunday so you might as well just do the swerve tonight.

Bruce is checked out for neck and rib injuries.

Daffney wants Crowbar to drop the 70's thing.

Video on Starrcade's big matches, the same one that aired on Nitro.

#### Reno/Big Vito vs. Kronik

Reno and Adams start it off with Brian hitting a cool gorilla press gutbuster for an early two. A double elbow drops Adams though as the crowd is just gone for this. The full nelson slam plants Reno and it's off to Clark for a beating in the corner. For some reason Clark sends Reno into the corner for a tag off to Vito. That's quite the arrogance.

Vito Mafia Kicks him for two, only to get suplexed down for the same. They head outside and this is more intense than it really should be but at least they're working hard. A Russian legsweep sends Vito into the barricade and seems to wake him up a bit, only to have Adams put on a chinlock. Cue Jarrett and the Harris Twins to knock Konnan out cold in an attempt to wake the crowd up. An F5 gets two on Vito and it's off to Reno, who walks into High Times for a very quick pin.

**Rating:** C. This was much better than I was expecting but the swerve that you can almost guarantee for Sunday really isn't something I'm looking forward to. It's ok to just have a team be a team for a bit without having some big screwy finish thrown in. Vito and Reno are basically the new and improved Mamalukes and the idea is actually working better than it has any right to.

Kronik keeps up the beating but Vito fights them off.

The sitdown interview this week is with Shane Douglas, who talks about coming through the ranks to get here and wanting the best competition. There are a lot of demons in his closet but he wants to face them all. We hear about Torrie being gone without the words "Torrie" or "Wilson" actually being used and Shane insists that they were much closer than just friends. Shane is ready for Murrus on Sunday and wants to use the US Title as a stepping stone to the World Title.

The Thrillers have laid out Kevin Nash.

#### Mike Sanders vs. Diamond Dallas Page

We recap the Thrillers attacking Nash's knee (which was either last night if you listen to Tony or Monday night if you follow the graphic) before we get going. They slap each other in the face to start before Page easily takes over and sends Sanders to the floor with a Cactus



Clothesline.

Back to the announcers' table for the first time in a whole match and it's time to hear from Sid. He's STILL lost because it takes an hour and a half to find what is likely the biggest building in a city whose population was 56,000 people at the time. Page starts slugging away in the corner before Pancaking him down for two. The Diamond Cutter hits but the Thrillers come in for the DQ.

**Rating:** D. Of course this was about Page beating up one of the younger guys who was treated like a joke of a threat. I think I've vented about my issues enough times now, assuming there's any doubt about what's wrong with this mess. Just give Page and Nash the titles back so they can have their second big moment.

Page beats up four Thrillers for a bit until Palumbo and Stasiak come in for the real beatdown.

WCW World Title: Meng vs. Scott Steiner

Steiner is defending and Meng has Paisley in his corner for reasons that still aren't exactly clear. Before the match, Steiner talks about how Flair's hired killer can't even find the arena. Meng goes right after him to start and stomps Steiner down like any given jobber. The champ bails out to the floor for a bit before taking Meng down with a belly to belly.

A belly to belly superplex is broken up and Meng hits a half decent middle rope clothesline. He follows it up with a top rope splash for two but Steiner suplexes him again to take over. Midajah goes after Meng and it's time for a catfight. The Tongan Death Grip is easily broken up and a t-bone sends Meng flying. Sid comes out as Steiner grabs the Recliner to retain.

**Rating:** C+. I'm a fan of Meng and the few times he's gotten a chance to have a big match have turned out quite well. He did just fine beating on Steiner and looking good as a monster for the champ to survive while never being any kind of a real threat to take the title. Plus he found the arena.

Sid beats Steiner up in slow motion and chokeslams him to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D+. Why do I have a feeling that Thunder is never going to reach this level again? There was some good action tonight in spite of the traditional bad booking. I still can't get over the fact that Sid COULDN'T FIND THE ARENA. That's their big idea: he got lost on the way there. I mean, you can't just say he's there or doing an interview or anything else besides making him look stupid? As usual, WCW decides to go with the worst possible idea and the company suffers as a result.

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# 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 – December 6, 2000: Ric Flair Changes His Mind

## Thunder

Date: December 6, 2000

Location: Pershing Auditorium, Lincoln, Nebraska

Attendance: 3,433

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mike Tenay, Stevie Ray

I'm really not sure what to talk about with this one. As weak as Monday Nitro has gotten in recent weeks it's almost scary to think about how bad Thunder could get at this point. We're getting closer to Starrcade and the night of many rematches, which is exactly what I want to see after such a horrible Mayhem. Let's get to it.

Long Nitro recap opens things up.

Ric Flair is on his way to the ring.

Stevie Ray comes out to take over Madden's spot because....well it's an upgrade in a way.

Here's Ric Flair with something to say. After what happened on Monday, Scott Steiner and Sid aren't allowed here tonight. That's not all though: due to Steiner attacking Arn Anderson, he's stripped of the World Title. This brings out Mike Sanders to say that Flair is just jealous of Steiner's body but Ric tells him to keep bringing the insults. Cue Arn Anderson on the screen to say he can take care of Sanders anytime. Steiner should keep the title though because if they're going to take him down, it might as well be when he's on top. This is of course enough to change Flair's mind and Steiner is champion again.

Post break, Flair makes Sanders vs. Chavo Guerrero Jr. for the Cruiserweight Title.

Crowbar tells Daffney he has a new outfit for her.

AWALL doesn't like Chavo's new attitude.

### Mark Jindrak/Sean O'Haire vs. Noble and Karagias

Noble gets annoyed at Karagias for dancing to the ring. Jindrak and O'Haire throw both guys over the top but spend too much time posing, allowing the small guys to come back in with dropkicks. That means it's time to drive the Cadillac before Noble starts with Jindrak. Jamie's top rope clothesline gets two but Evan tags himself in for a springboard cross body. O'Haire gets in a great looking gorilla press into a Falcon's Arrow as Tony goes on about how much better Jindrak and O'Haire are because of their size.

Noble takes a middle rope Hennig neck snap followed by a tilt-a-whirl slam for no cover. Evan comes in off the hot tag and faceplants Jindrak before pulling out a ladder to take out both Thrillers. Yeah sure why not. Noble and Karagias argue over the ladder though, allowing Sean to clothesline both of them down. The double toss sends Karagias inside and another puts Noble on top of him. A top rope hurricanrana sets up the Seanton Bomb to pin Noble.

**Rating:** C+. Jindrak and O'Haire looked awesome here and are pretty easily the best team in the company right now, of course save for the two old guys who squashed 3 Count after taking the belts from Perfect Event at Mayhem. I'm sure the rematch will be FAR more competitive though and O'Haire and Jindrak will be treated as serious challengers.

Whoever hired Kronik on Nitro has another job for them tonight.

Shane Douglas is ready for Morrus at Starrcade and Goldberg tonight.

### Sgt. AWALL vs. Bam Bam Bigelow

Winner gets Crowbar for the Hardcore Title at Starrcade so Crowbar is on commentary. Daffney has on her 60s attire because WCW can't even get old school fashion right. They start with the usual weapons exchanges as this hopefully doesn't go on very long. A trashcan lid shot takes Bigelow down and it's already table time. AWALL takes too much time setting everything up though and gets sent over the announcers' table. That's not enough

though as Bigelow sends him into the regular table for a bonus. Cue Mike Awesome with a chair to knock both guys out though and that's a no contest in a hardcore match.

**Rating:** D-. More of the same here but now they're having no contests in matches designed to have the toughest guys in wrestling. To the shock of no one who pays attention, Crowbar was the highlight here as he was basically doing an over the top Gordon Solie impression, which of course made him funnier than any commentator has been in years.

The Filthy Animals arrive but get jumped by Jeff Jarrett and the Harris Twins.

The Cat talks strategy with the Jung Dragons.....who don't understand English. It's funny you see.

Video on Sid vs. Steiner.

Buff Bagwell goes on a rant about how tired he is of jobbing to B-Level talent like Scott Steiner. Tonight he has Alex Wright which doesn't make things any better. This feels like a flashback to the Russo days and that's not a good thing.

#### Team Canada vs. The Cat/Jung Dragons

Before the match, Storm implies that he's going to punish Duggan for screwing up on Monday in the near future. Kaz starts with Skipper who avoids an early clothesline with a Matrix move. Yang comes in and hammers away in the corner so Skipper shoves him away and it's off to Duggan. That goes as far as you would expect so Storm comes in for a jawbreaker. There's the Mapleleaf but everything breaks down and the referee doesn't see Yang tap. An enziguri drops Storm so it's off to Cat for some shots to Skipper's head. Everyone else fights on the floor and the Feliner puts Skipper away.

**Rating:** D. As usual, not enough time for this to go anywhere but at least Storm didn't take another completely unnecessary pin. If they want Duggan out of there so badly just throw him out already instead of having the team take all these losses in a row. It's nice to see the Dragons getting

a few wins but there's no way it turns into anything important.

Storm blames Duggan post match and the winners dance a lot.

Post break Storm tells Duggan he's done for the night.

Vito and Marie argue about Reno.

### Cruiserweight Title: Chavo Guerrero Jr. vs. Mike Sanders

Sanders is defending and the Thrillers are banned from ringside. Chavo takes him to the mat to start and gets in a kick to the back. A whip sends Sanders chest first into the buckle and there's a belly to back to keep him in trouble. Sanders gets in a release pumphandle slam to take over, followed by the shaky fist drop.

We hit a cobra clutch to fill in some time They head outside with Sanders being sent into the barricade as this hasn't been the most competitive or interesting match so far. Back in and Chavo dropkicks him into the corner before a northern lights suplex gets two. The referee pulls Sanders away and Chavo gets in a quick belt shot, setting up a brainbuster for the pin and the title.

**Rating:** C-. The match was nothing to see but the ending was the exactly right call. Chavo is getting better every single week and Sanders only held the title as a joke for the last few weeks. I'm liking the idea of Chavo as a heel and he can more than back it up in the ring so this is a good result all around, even if the match was nothing to see.

Post break, Chavo says he won and screw the Misfits.

Sanders is livid.

Disco Inferno tells Alex Wright that he has a plan but Wright wants to do things himself.

Now we get a somewhat infamous moment as the Insiders talk about their history, which includes A LOT of references to Scott Hall. However, WCW had instituted a ban on any mentions of Hall so the name is edited every time, basically making this look like a bad comedy sketch. Oh and the

lighting is all screwy because WCW can't even get a light bulb right.

Anyway the interview itself is about what you would expect: they talk about how they came together after Page was coming back from his injury (Battledome sequence ignored of course) and their history with censored. The Hall stuff is much more odd as they talk about how much they want him back and how important he was to their careers but the editing makes it sound like they're talking about some illegal drug. They make fun of Stevie Ray (the interviewer) a bit to wrap things up.

Lex Luger is reading Goldberg's book and doesn't seem happy.

### Alex Wright vs. Buff Bagwell

Disco is on commentary. Buff dropkicks him a few times to start but eats a quick leg lariat. I've always liked that move. That means it's time for a very early chinlock which goes nowhere of course. Why would you even use that move, knowing it's just going to make a face come back? Wright dives onto a raised boot and misses a dropkick, setting up the Blockbuster for a quick pin.

### Bryan Clark vs. Big Vito

This is supposed to be one on one but both members of the team beat Vito down on the floor to start. Clark finally takes him inside but Vito grabs a snap suplex. The top rope elbow connects, only to have Vito come up holding his knee. They seem to go home really fast as Clark hits a quick Meltdown for the pin.

Post match Reno comes in for the save and it's a big family moment.

The Thrillers yell at Reno for making the save in the back.

Here's Shane Douglas for the main event but first of all he has something to say. Apparently everyone here in Nebraska who can afford television knows what General Rection did to Torrie Wilson ("my meal ticket") but the same people cheer for him. Great things happen in great places like New York, Los Angeles and Pittsburgh, but tonight the fans here in Nebraska get to see something special.

Shane talks about how he's going to beat Goldberg tonight and then tries to start a GOLDBERG chant. Somehow this makes Stevie talk about Shane being kicked out of college for his attitude. He goes on even more about how he'll win the title at Starrcade and then calls Goldberg out again. This went almost five minutes and really felt like they were stretching to fill in time.

### Goldberg vs. Shane Douglas

Shane gets smart by wrapping the chain around his hand before the bell. Three straight chain shots actually put Goldberg down but here's Luger with Sarge in the Rack on the stage. Goldberg starts to go for the save (in slow motion) but Shane jumps him from behind. That earns him a quick spear (really good one too) and Jackhammer, allowing Goldberg to get win #29 and then run up for the save to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D. Somehow this was an improvement over recent weeks. The problem here is the same as it has been lately: at some point, we're going to have to sit through Goldberg vs. Luger II and Sid vs. Steiner for the title at the biggest show of the year. Oh and the Insiders getting the titles back because they need them so badly. The booking is crippling anything else they could do and it's only going to get worse.

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# Monday Nitro – December 4, 2000: Those Little Teases

## Monday Nitro #269

Date: December 4, 2000

Location: Pershing Auditorium, Lincoln, Nebraska

Attendance: 3,433

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mark Madden, Scott Hudson

Starrcade is rapidly approaching and WCW is clearly on its (final) last legs. We're building towards a double main event of Goldberg vs. Lex Luger II and Scott Steiner vs. Sid for the World Title. If you need a better reason than that to explain why WCW is in the shape it's in, you haven't been paying close enough attention. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of most of the events from Mayhem and the fallout last week.

The Thrillers are in the back and they run into...oh sweet goodness they run into OKLAHOMA, who is reading a speech tonight which is going to require security. TNA wishes they could do this kind of stupid stuff.

Opening sequence.

Here's Oklahoma to get things going and for some reason he's carrying a bowl. He introduces himself a few times and then stops so the fans can chant for the University of Nebraska. Tony says we only have six minutes for this segment to further destroy any feeling of legitimacy this might have and make me scream SIX MINUTES??? Apparently the bowl is here so the fans can be close to a bowl for a change.

After that hilarious sports commentary, Oklahoma says he's here to issue a statement from Mike Sanders on Sid Vicious. After spending a minute or so talking about how awesome the security is, the announcement is that Sid isn't allowed in the building. Cue Sid to beat up Oklahoma, which draws out Sanders with security to arrest Sid. Somehow we're over eleven minutes into the show and the top face in the promotion (we're in



trouble) has been arrested. This is totally like Austin right?

After a break, Scott Steiner arrives and tells Sanders he wants Sid tonight. Sanders blames Flair for Sid being arrested so Steiner says no one is safe tonight.

Konnan isn't worried about facing Jeff Jarrett tonight and wants a six man street fight at Starrcade.

#### Chavo Guerrero Jr. vs. Kwee Wee

Yes it's Chavo again, which at least means I don't have to try to keep Lieutenant Loco and Corporal Cajun straight anymore. Chavo breaks up the pre-match kiss with Paisley and we're off in a hurry. Kwee Wee's throat is snapped across the top rope which seems to wake him up for some right hands to the face. Something like a tilt-a-whirl faceplant gets two but Chavo floats over into a DDT. Chavo goes after Paisley with a chair and the distraction lets Kwee Wee get in a sunset flip for two. Some hero. A quick launch into the buckle sets up a brainbuster to give Chavo the pin.

**Rating:** C-. I liked this more than I was expecting to as the more aggressive Chavo was one of the only good things in the last few months of WCW. Kwee Wee continues to be one of the guys who was so crushed by a horrible gimmick that he couldn't showcase all the natural talent he clearly has.

Sanders tells Flair what happened with Sid and Steiner so Ric is going to get Sid out of jail before the end of the show. At least going into Wrestlemania X7 Undertaker said it would take him twelve hours to get out of jail for going after HHH.

Kronik has a new client.

General Rection says what happened to Torrie was an accident because that's now what MIA is all about. He isn't worried about Chavo's new attitude because tonight he has a World Title match. I don't remember the last time the "US Champion is #1 contender" rule was enforced but I guess this is bringing it out of mothballs one last time.

#### Hardcore Title: Elix Skipper vs. Crowbar

Crowbar is defending and Storm wants the weapons taken away from ringside. This brings out the Cat and Ms. Jones while Storm sits in on commentary. Cat sits in as well to give us a five person booth. Daffney comes out with Crowbar to make sure this is as crowded as possible. Crowbar pulls out a bunch of weapons from under the ring, allowing Skipper to get in a few cheap shots to take over.

A shot with a steering wheel misses for the champ as Storm FINALLY talks about how Skipper didn't bring these weapons into the ring. Duggan and Major Gunns get in some cheap shots so it's time for a catfight. Cat and Madden get in a fight so Storm jumps Cat, only to have Duggan hit Storm by mistake. Crowbar gives Skipper the Mindbender over a car bumper for the pin to retain.

Jimmy Hart's DJ challenge. Why it says this is a "paid paid" announcement from Jimmy Hart isn't clear but I'd assume it's because WCW is really bad at this stuff.

Stacy Keibler and David Flair are in the back. She's happy to be back but won't say who the father is. Ric comes in and has security escort them out because of the whole Steiner thing.

Reno asks Marie why his family has ignored him since he got out of jail. She's just glad she has his brother back.

We look back at Luger attacking Goldberg on Monday and then running on Thunder.

Here's Lex Luger with a copy of Goldberg's book. Luger thanks the fans as they chant for Goldberg and talks about how Goldberg has thirteen days left in his career, unless he can win 150 matches in less than two weeks. Luger finally gets to the point as he talks about Sgt. Dwayne Bruce (Sarge, better known as Sgt. Buddy Lee Parker), the man who trained Goldberg to be a wrestler.

We get a selection from the book with Luger altering a bit of the book, much to Sarge's annoyance. The only think I can think of is how much Sarge looks like a small Brock Lesnar. Lex rambles on for a LONG time about how poor Sarge is to finally wrap this up. I have no idea why I'm

supposed to care about a former sergeant/leprechaun who trained Goldberg but for some reason this is what we're getting instead of Goldberg in the World Title match.

Norman Smiley is with one of the Nitro Girls when Scott Steiner storms in. Steiner asks Norman who he has tonight. That would be Goldberg so Steiner hits Norman with a pipe.

Shane Douglas promises to take out Hugh Morrus just like Morrus did to Torrie Wilson.

Morrus and AWALL say they have business tonight but find Corporal Cajun talking with Chavo. This isn't cool of course.

#### Tag Team Titles: Insiders vs. 3 Count

So last week wasn't a title match. Good to know. The Insiders are defending while Moore and Helms are looking forward to their three team ladder match for the #1 contendership to the Cruiserweight Title. Nash throws Moore into the corner to start and drives knees into the ribs. Oh yeah we're firmly in squash territory here and it's even worse than it sounds.

A LOUD WE WANT HALL chant starts up and we cut to Mike Sanders who says he has something big planned for the champs. Back in the ring it's Page giving Helms the Pancake for two. A double suplex puts Page down as the fans (in theory at least) chant for DDP. The hot tag brings in Nash a few seconds later, setting up Snake Eyes and a super Diamond Cutter to put both guys down for the pin to retain the titles.

**Rating:** D-. Does this one really need an explanation? You have a team who is going to be competing for a title shot at the biggest show of the year getting squashed in less than five minutes by two veterans who probably just saw the titles and said "yeah we'll have those this week". Either give this match some time and let it be competitive (perhaps the time given to freaking Oklahoma where he made fun of Nebraska football fans) or just bring in local jobbers. I know it doesn't mean anything now but this stuff is so endemic of one of WCW's biggest problems.

Speaking of problems, post match here are Sanders and the Perfect Event to bring out Ric Flair. We see a clip from the title change at the pay per view showing the Insiders pinned the illegal man. Therefore, the titles are returned to the Perfect Event, likely so the Insiders can beat them again. Flair makes the rematch for Starrcade, which should complete the double beating.

Bam Bam Bigelow attacks Mike Awesome in the parking lot.

#### Reno vs. Kronik

This is the match where Kronik was hired but the referee throws it out after less than thirty seconds of double teaming.

Kronik keeps beating on him until Vito makes the save. Marie comes out to check on Reno as Vito walks away.

Glacier video.

Crowbar tells Daffney that they made a great team. She offers him a ride home but two women come up to leave with him instead. Daffney isn't pleased.

Flair tells security to watch out everywhere for Steiner.

We see Goldberg giving a kid a WCW World Title belt on the Maury show.

#### Goldberg vs. MI Smooth

Forty nine seconds this time and Goldberg hugs Sarge after the latest squash.

Steiner says Flair is next.

#### Jeff Jarrett vs. Konnan

Jarrett accepts the Animals' challenge for Starrcade but wants the Animals ejected before we get going. Konnan says it's fine so Jeff jumps him from behind. A kick to the ribs and an X-Factor sends Jarrett out to the floor. Jarrett chairs him in the back to take over but Konnan gets in a shot to the knee. It's a ruse of course as the Harris Twins come in for

an H Bomb on Konnan, setting up the Stroke to give Jeff the quick pin.

### WCW World Title: Scott Steiner vs. General Rection

Rection is challenging. Before the match, Steiner rants about all the guys he's put on the shelf. Now it's SID of all people so he wants Sid out here after this match. If Sid isn't here, Steiner is coming after Flair. Scott jumps Rection during the entrance so Rection comes back with heavy forearms and a top rope clothesline. Midajah jumps on Rection's back (Madden: "The luchador with implants.") for the distraction and Scott takes over again.

That means more forearms and kicks to the ribs with a spinning belly to belly to refresh things a bit. We get the Tree of Woe choke for a bit but Rection backdrops out of a tiger bomb. Rection hammers away and knocks Steiner to the floor for a plancha. Back in and a powerslam sets up the moonsault for two, making it clear that Rection has no chance here. Another moonsault hits knees though and the Recliner makes Rection tap in a hurry.

**Rating:** D+. The match could have been worse but it continues the problem of building someone up only to crush them all over again. I'm fine with Steiner getting a big title defense but there was no reason to have the US Champion take a clean loss like this. Was there no one else on the roster that could have been in this spot? No one at all? Just more bad decision making which isn't even a surprise at this point.

Post match Steiner heads to the back to get Flair as Shane Douglas comes in to hit Rection with a chain. Steiner finds Arn Anderson and beats him down to the ring for the Recliner. Flair tries to get out for help but Goldberg runs out instead, only to get jumped by Luger. You know, the guy who was just standing at ringside in case this happened. After that tease of Goldberg vs. Steiner in what should be the main event, Sid comes out but is held back by security to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D-. The booking here is such a disaster that there's almost no defending it. I have no idea why I'd want to see what they've got set up for Starrcade with mostly recaps from a show that wasn't very good in the first place. The wrestling was its usual bad stuff that you

had to expect but the real problem here is how badly they're doing everything else. Steiner's push has been acceptable but it should be setting up a showdown with Goldberg instead of Sid. Storyline or whatever aside, there's no logical reason to not be setting that up. As usual, it's a horribly run organization which has been the case for years now.

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# Thunder – November 29, 2000: They Quit

## Thunder

Date: November 29, 2000

Location: Metro Center, Moline, Illinois

Attendance: 3,800

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Tony Schiavone, Mark Madden

We're now in the post Stevie Ray era so I'm really not sure how well we're going to be able to survive. It's just such a sad world anymore and they might have to just close the promotion to let us heal. We're rapidly approaching Starrcade and the main event is going to be Sid vs. Scott Steiner because we live in a random and chaotic universe. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Nitro's highlights, which included Sid Vicious in a turtleneck.

Here's Ric Flair to get things going. Ric praises the idea of Steiner defending the title against Sid at Starrcade but tonight it's Buff Bagwell getting a shot. Based off what exactly? Anyway he brings out Sid, who says he defended that champion night after night (yes defended the champion). Sid has been watching from home and has seen Booker T. and General Rection take over in his place. Steiner is in the wrong place at the wrong time, which Sid somehow tries to tie into the Wright Brothers.

Shane Douglas wants the US Title so he can move on to the World Title. Torrie tells Pamela to not hate her because she's beautiful. Pamela isn't sure what to think of this and I'm much more on Torrie's side here. Pamela is the hot blonde but Torrie is just on another level.

### Lance Storm/Elix Skipper vs. Jung Dragons

Storm still has taped up ribs and seems to blame Duggan for the loss to Yang on Monday. The Dragons and Madden take turns oogling Leia Meow as Skipper rolls Yang up for two to start. Yang climbs the corner into an armdrag before it's off to Kaz for an enziguri. The Canadians regroup on the floor so the Dragons do some impressions to entertain the crowd.

Back in and Storm kicks Kaz in the back of the head to take over, allowing Skipper to walk the ropes into a hurricanrana. Kaz flips out of a powerbomb though and kicks a seated Elix in the head for the tag off to Yang. House is cleaned until a low blow gives Skipper a near fall as everything breaks down. Storm crotches Kaz on top so Skipper can hit a good looking butterfly superplex. The women have the required catfight as the Cat comes out to take care of Duggan. A top rope backsplash/legdrop is enough to put Skipper away.

**Rating:** C. Fun match but the announcers still act like the idea of the Dragons beating anyone other than Noble and Karagias or 3 Count is unthinkable. The match was fine for a high flying fight though which is something often overlooked about Team Canada: as much as people remember Storm's promos and catchphrases, both he and Skipper could go very well in the ring.

Storm yells at Duggan.

General Rection would love to fight Shane and AWALL wants Bam Bam Bigelow again.

### Lex Luger vs. Norman Smiley

They bring Smiley back for this? Madden: "Luger has the body fat of a paperclip." Tony: "A paperclip has body fat?" Norman gets in a dropkick to frustrate Luger early on, followed by a cross body for two. They head

outside with Luger sending him into the barricade and gets two off a belly to back suplex. Norman comes back with the spinning slam and the spanking dance, only to have Luger forearm him low. The forearm sets up the torture rack to end Norman.

**Rating:** D. Again: they brought Norman back for this? That's what Smiley gets for being talented and popular I guess, because somehow doing the opposite got Luger a two match feud with Goldberg of all people. As usual, WCW has no idea which people to push (not to say that Smiley should get a big push of course) as Luger has no business being there and it's been obvious since the day he returned.

Post match Luger keeps Norman in the hold until Goldberg makes the save.

Bigelow calls AWALL a freak and wants to hurt him in a tables match.

Crowbar is getting a massage when one of the Nitro Girls delivers him a present: a golden pipe wrench. Ok then.

Reno and Marie are with Pamela, who asks if they're dating. Apparently they're actually brother and sister, which makes Pamela realize that Reno and Vito are BROTHERS. Somehow this was never mentioned before, though it shouldn't be that hard for either of them to figure out.

Kronik seems to have a new client.

Jeff Jarrett has the Harris Brothers to fight the Filthy Animals.

Hardcore Title: Crowbar vs. David Flair

Crowbar is defending and has that wrench in his belt. The regular belt, not the title belt. They fight over a trashcan to start and David actually gets the better of it early on. Therefore, it's time to hit the champ in the face with a mop. Crowbar comes back with the wrench but the mop is right there for the save because they're the exact same thing.

It's time for a paint tray with Crowbar beating David out to the floor and putting a chair on top of him for a Vader Bomb. Flair comes back with a chair shot of his own but the Figure Four is broken up by with a cookie sheet. Just picture Dusty and Ric doing that and see if you don't chuckle



or cry at least a little bit. Crowbar pops up and hits him with the wrench for the pin to retain.

**Rating:** D-. I'm still waiting on a point to this division other than giving the overly talented Crowbar something worthless to do. David is still insane and therefore not very interesting as you can only see that sort of thing so often, especially when the running joke seems to be that he's not very good but tries so hard. Naturally since it's professional wrestling, that sort of effort is to be mocked instead of rewarded or nurtured.

Post match Stacy Keibler and the trainer check on David, who wants to know about the wrench.

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

Shane, with Torrie, is challenging and they get in their standard pre-match stuff about how much better they are than all of us. Douglas is smart enough to go after the knee to start and gets in a few shots to slow the champion down early. We're already in the figure four so I can't imagine this is going to go long. Rection gets the rope and starts his comeback, only to have Torrie come in and jump on his back. Somehow not noticing that it's a smaller, lighter person or the long blonde hair, Rection drives her back first into the buckle. That's too much around here and the match is stopped, likely setting up a rematch at Starrcade.

Ever the gentleman, Lieutenant Loco tries to get her out of the ring so the fight can continue but basically everyone glares him off.

Post break, Loco yells at Rection for not following up and a split is teased.

#### Filthy Animals vs. Jeff Jarrett/Harris Twins

Great, the Band is back together. It's a huge brawl to start with Konnan staying on the floor instead of helping his smaller partners. We settle down to Konnan coming in to work on Ron's wrist as we hear about Torrie getting crushed again. Rey bulldogs Ron down as Tygress goes on about player hating.

Don comes in to help on a double spinebuster and a swinging Boss Man Slam gets two. Naturally this warrants a talk about paying the Harris Twins in sandwiches because WCW. Konnan isn't paying attention to a tag attempt from Rey so Jarrett knocks him off the apron. The referee tells the guys that they have three minutes as Kidman comes in to clean house. Everything breaks down and Jarrett guitars Kidman for the pin.

**Rating:** D+. That sounds like the mating call of a rubber match at Starrcade, likely with the guitar legal for a change. I really don't think I need to make fun of this one all that much when the story revolves around the Harris Brothers being willing to fight for sandwiches. Even David Flair is more respected than this. Oh and somehow the referee doesn't notice the pieces of the guitar around the ring.

Buff is ready for his title shot tonight.

Daffney returns to say she and Ozzy broke up so now she wants to be with Crowbar. He's not so keen on the idea though and turns her down, even though it seems to make him very sad.

This week's sitdown interview is with Stevie Ray because WCW actually thinks people care. We get right to the point as Stevie says no one has a brother in the business like he does. As usual I think I get the point but since Stevie is only a commentator, he isn't the best at getting his point across. Stevie made his debut here back in 1993 and is one of the most successful tag team wrestlers of all time. Now he thinks he might start a drag racing team (which I believe he actually did) and thanks the fans for their support over the years.

Glacier is still coming back.

Sgt. AWALL vs. Bam Bam Bigelow

Tables match and it's Bigelow pounding away to start. A powerbomb is countered with a backdrop to send Bigelow outside but instead of trying to put him through the table, it's time to brawl around ringside. Back in and a German suplex through the table.....doesn't count because both of them went through at the same time. Well of course they did. They head outside again so Mike Awesome can sneak in and blast Bigelow with a chair,

allowing AWALL to put him through the table.

**Rating:** F. Are they even ripping ECW off at this point? I mean, last year with Sandman and Raven was one thing but this is even less interesting than that was. I'm also not sure why none of these guys ever bother going after the Hardcore Title. It's not like what they're doing here is really all that much better than getting a belt out of it.

Awesome wants Bam Bam Bigelow at Starrcade. Somehow that's a big deal for Awesome.

#### WCW World Title: Buff Bagwell vs. Scott Steiner

Steiner is defending of course. Steiner gives Buff a chance to leave before the beating begins but Buff dropkicks him to the floor and sends him into the barricade. Back in and Buff's right hands don't get him anywhere as Scott ties him in the Tree of Woe for some choking. The elbow into the pushups gives us a signature spot as Madden does a bad Billy Graham impression.

The belly to belly gets two and it's time to grab the referee by the shirt. Buff misses a dropkick to stop a comeback bid because he's Buff Bagwell and this is a big match. A DDT puts Steiner down but Scott pops back up with ease. Cue Sid on the screen for a distraction though, allowing the Blockbuster to hit for two. Buff has to catch a diving Midajah though and a quick Recliner retains the title.

**Rating:** D. I actually like Buff as the one off challenger here even though he had no chance of winning because he's Buff Bagwell and never actually won a big singles match in WCW. The Sid thing was a waste of time but then again so is Sid in the main event in the first place. Bad match but perfect for a Thunder main event.

Sid comes out to jaw with Steiner to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D-. They've just given up. You can clearly see that there's no real effort being put into the writing (though the wrestling is tolerable at times) or storytelling and that's caused them to hit a very hard wall. The younger guys are putting in an effort as they so

often do but there's only so much you can do when it's Lex Luger, Scott Steiner with the horrible chinlock, Sid and the Insiders as some of the top names in the promotion.

This place really is just about the old guys and the worst part is that's how they're being presented: the older, cagey generation who is still around and hogging all the spots. There's almost nothing here worth watching and it's going to make the next few months much more sad than hard to sit through.

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# Monday Nitro – November 27, 2000: They Can't Even Get This Right

**Monday Nitro #268**

Date: November 27, 2000

Location: Metro Center, Rockford, Illinois

Attendance: 3,800

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mark Madden, Scott Hudson

We're past Mayhem and on the road to Starrcade with Scott Steiner now the World Champion for the first time. It's hard to say where things are going now but hopefully things pick up a little bit after we're done with another pay per view. If nothing else it should be interesting to see how things go to get to the biggest show of the year with less than three weeks of build. Let's get to it.

We open with a special announcement over the new President...and it's Jeff Jarrett hitting the guy making the announcement with a guitar. Thanks for that topical announcement.

### 3 Count vs. Corporal Cajun/Lieutenant Loco

It's a brawl to start as the Misfits interrupt the singing to clean house. The announcers actually try to push last night's show as a great event and a big deal with Steiner finally winning the title. Moore gets caught in the corner for a dropkick as things settle down a bit. The band takes Cajun into the corner as Madden tries to compare Helms and Moore to the Midnight Express. It's not quite the League of Nations as the Horsemen but it's still stupid.

Cajun springboards into an X-Factor on Shannon (Hudson: "Right onto his incredibly marketable face!" Clever line but I almost laughed at the idea of 3 Count ever being marketed.). It's off to Loco but here are Noble and Karagias with a ladder to beat up 3 Count, allowing Loco to hit a suplex (called a brainbuster) for the pin on Shannon.

**Rating:** C-. As usual we had what could have been a good match but it's brought down by interference to set up something else. That's WCW in a nutshell: matches don't exist to be matches because they're there to set up another match down the line. Yeah the three way ladder match is going to be fun but they need to do something with these teams down the line and that's just not going to happen.

Elix Skipper hits on Ms. Jones again so she knocks on a door to get the Cat out here. Wasn't this a one off story like a month ago? Lance Storm sneaks in and hits Cat with a chair. Storm: "That's why it's TEAM Canada!"

The announcers talk about Steiner winning the World Title last night and think Sting deserves a title shot for retaining the King of Europe Cup at one of the German shows. For those keeping track, he won it back in like 1994 and defended it six years later. Now he gets a title shot out of the thing. Such is life in WCW, as usual.

Here's Scott Steiner for his first chat as World Champion. After Hudson says this is Steiner's thirteenth year in WCW because he can't count (Steiner debuted in 1989 and wasn't around for 1993), Steiner rambles about how awesome he is and how much he wants to hurt people. He's already put Sting and Booker T. in the hospital and he's destroyed Goldberg at Fall Brawl so there's no one left for him to fight.

Cue Ric Flair so the announcers can again speculate that he'll come out of retirement to fight Steiner. Steiner is now the flagship of this company but he can't get off that easily. Flair has an opponent for Steiner at Starrcade and he's a big star. Steiner actually suggests that it's Austin or Rock and even does an imitation of the latter. Since this is WCW and they have no idea how the world works, Flair says that this star is just as big as Rock and Austin and will be around tonight.

We're still not done yet though as Stevie Ray gets up to challenge Steiner for tonight. Steiner agrees if Stevie will put his career on the line, which is accepted. His announcing career right? I mean, it's certainly not his wrestling career as he hasn't had a match in months at this point.

The Boogie Knights don't have the money to afford Kronik tonight. Yes this is still going.

Hugh Morrus is ready for Bam Bam Bigelow tonight.

### Yang vs. Lance Storm

Storm has heavily taped ribs and promises to get back at Rection later. Yang grabs a rollup for two during the Canadian national anthem before punching him in the ribs. Back up and Storm gets in a superkick, followed by a backbreaker for two. The fans chant USA, which is actually appropriate here as Yang is from California. Of course it's not likely

that the fans know that so they just sound stupid.

A Rock Bottom gets two for Yang and he fires off some kicks at the ribs before elbowing Storm in the face. Yang hits a moonsault for two more but walks into a piledriver, only to have the women get into a fight on the floor. Cue the Cat to hit Storm with a chair, giving the unconscious Yang the big upset win.

**Rating:** D+. This worked better than some of the matches but the ending continues to defy logic. Yang isn't getting a push out of this (due to reasons of "it's WCW") and now Storm gets another loss on his record while setting up something against the Cat. Like I said before: this wasn't a match because it was a way to set up a match down the line.

Post break Storm yells at Jim Duggan for not having his back.

The Boogie Knights go to the Harris Brothers for protection tonight but still don't have any money. That's fine with the Brothers because they want.....sandwiches. Egads this company can't die fast enough.

Here's Lex Luger with something to say. It's time for a celebration because Goldberg's career is coming to an end tonight. Luger rants about how awesome his life is but none of it means anything compared to this because he did wrestling a huge favor last night. See, last night when Goldberg speared a referee, that should have been a DQ and the end of the Streak. He's appealed to Ric Flair and demands an answer tonight. So yeah, it really does seem that we're getting Luger vs. Goldberg again at Starrcade and not THE ONLY LOGICAL MATCH WCW COULD HAVE FOR THE BIGGEST SHOW OF THE YEAR.

A limo arrives.

Jimmy Hart is still issuing challenges to DJ's.

Jeff Jarrett is talking to Gene when the Filthy Animals come up and throw eggs at him. Those boys need a role model.

Big Vito is making sure Marie is ok before she leaves. He leaves and Reno comes up to leave with her.

## Jamie Noble/Evan Karagias vs. Boogie Knights

Not so fast as this isn't happening.

## Jamie Noble/Evan Karagias vs. Alex Wright/Ron Harris

Let's get this over with. Ron throws Evan around to start and a slam gives Alex two. There's a suplex from Alex and it's off to Ron vs. Jamie for more squashification. Ron finally runs into a boot in the corner to give Jamie a hope spot in the form of a top rope clothesline. A big boot knocks Jamie down again to give Alex two more. Everything breaks down and a quick H Bomb puts Jamie away.

Can we PLEASE cut out this "beatdowns for hire" nonsense? It was dumb enough when Kronik was ripping off the APA but now the freaking Harris Brothers are doing this for SANDWICHES. It's not funny, it's not entertaining, it's not intelligent and it's not doing anything to mock the WWF. On top of that you have all these better teams losing to Alex and one half of the goons winning more often than not. Who does this help other than people who put it together and get a cheap laugh?

Another Glacier promo which thankfully is ripped apart again. Now that's kind of amusing.

Ric Flair says Goldberg is fine because Luger pulled the referee in the way of the spear. That should be a DQ on Luger, but since WCW is about winning and losing, there's going to be a rematch at Starrcade. So yeah, apparently winning via DQ isn't really winning so we're getting these two again because doing Goldberg vs. Steiner for the title LIKE EVERYONE THOUGHT THEY SHOULD DO is out of the question.

Here are Page and Nash with something to say. During the entrances (yes entrances because they're not even pretending that they're a real team), Hudson mentions them being partners many years ago. The fans want Hall because they love to cling to false hope as Page talks about their history, including managing Hall back in the day. The famous team is called the Outsiders but this team is called the Insiders.

Nash takes the mic but here are Sanders/Jindrak/O'Haire to the Wolfpac



theme. Sanders thinks Page is trying to ride Nash's coattails so they'll defend against the Thrillers at Starrcade. Page thinks they should have a fight right now, which I guess is for the titles though it's not quite clear.

#### Insiders vs. Mark Jindrak/Sean O'Haire

Jindrak and Page fight to the floor while Nash beats up Sean in the ring. Well of course he does. Nash gets in the framed elbows but charges into a boot. That's fine though as Page comes in, only to take a low blow. The young guys stomp him down in the corner but Page counters a whip into a headscissors of all things. Everything breaks down and Jindrak eats a Diamond Cutter with Sanders pulling the referee out. Cue the rest of the Thrillers to beat down the champs, allowing Jindrak to pin Page. The Thrillers leave with the belts but this doesn't seem to be a title match.

**Rating:** D. Other than that headscissors, this was a bunch of standing around punching because that's all Page and Nash know how to do at this point. Jindrak and O'Haire getting a win, albeit a cheap one, is fine enough and about as good as they're going to get because you know Nash and Page aren't laying down for them.

Stevie Ray calls Scott Steiner a sad sack cracker jack.

#### Reno vs. Goldberg

The announcers basically say Reno can only win on a miracle. This one actually gets some time as Goldberg knocks Reno across the ring and gorilla presses him into a drop. A quick Roll of the Dice attempt is countered into a powerslam, followed by the two moves to make Goldberg 26-0.

Post match Luger comes in and hits Goldberg with a chair....which Goldberg eventually sells. Luger Racks him for good measure.

The Filthy Animals don't have much to say.

#### US Title: General Rection vs. Bam Bam Bigelow

Rection is defending. Bigelow pounds on him in the corner and rakes the

eyes like a heel should. Rection works on the arm and there's just no reaction. Were you really expecting anything else here? He's a guy with a comedy name who has won his big battle against Team Canada and really doesn't have much of character outside of that. I really have no reason to care about him other than he was fighting for America but that doesn't really work when he's fighting against someone from New Jersey.

Bigelow slaps on a chinlock for a bit before some clotheslines and a suplex put him down. A top rope elbow misses so Bigelow powerbombs the champ....and goes for a table. Never mind though as here's AWALL to take it away, allowing Rection to kick Bigelow down and retain with the moonsault.

**Rating:** D. The crowd silence suggests that this wasn't working and again I can't say I'm surprised. At the end of the day, Rection isn't interesting and while it's nice to see them try and make a new star, this is about as far as things are going to go. It also doesn't help when you have another big power guy in there as an opponent and the stupid AWALL thing to continue that thrown together feud.

Scott Steiner steals a camera and goes to the limo to find out his opponent. Now why did no one else ever think of this? It turns out to be full of Smooth's women though because the other limo isn't here yet. Smooth gets beaten up for general purposes.

### Jeff Jarrett vs. Rey Mysterio

Before the match, Jarrett rails against Konnan for the prank earlier tonight. I mean it wasn't funny or anything but it was indeed a prank. Tygress trips Jarrett five seconds into the match and Rey gets two off a springboard bulldog. Konnan gets on the apron to distract Jarrett so Kidman can trip him as well. Dang it act like faces already. The Bronco Buster is stopped by a raised boot (as always) but Kidman grabs Jarrett to stop him again. Even the announcers are treating Rey as the heel here.

Jarrett misses his running crotch again and a Lionsault gets two for Rey. Now it's Konnan getting inside so Kidman can get in a low blow, followed by a Bronco Buster from Tygress. Rey's springboard hurricanrana is countered into a sweet powerbomb but the Animals break up the cover after

the Stroke. Jeff has had enough of this and blasts Rey with the guitar for the DQ. Madden brings up the obvious point: after everything the Animals did in front of the referee, THAT'S A DQ???

**Rating:** D-. This is another example of the biggest problem with WCW at the moment. Jeff Jarrett vs. Rey Mysterio could be an entertaining match between two very talented guys but instead we're getting the Animals being all goofy and flat out stupid referees who either don't notice or don't care about what's right in front of them. This was an insult to the fans' intelligence and a waste of something that could have been entertaining.

Post break Jarrett challenges the Animals to a six man on Thunder.

The Starrcade opponent's limo arrives.

#### WCW World Title: Stevie Ray vs. Scott Steiner

Steiner is defending and Stevie's career is on the line. Stevie jumps him in the aisle to start until Midajah gets in a pipe shot to the back. Hudson tries to push the idea of a ten year feud between the Steiners and Harlem Heat because a team that formed in 1993 can have a ten year feud in just seven years.

Steiner takes it inside for the big pounding before cutting off a comeback with a shot to the ribs. After a quick trip outside to yell at some fans, Steiner plants him with a belly to belly for two. Stevie kicks him in the face and grabs a bad DDT, only to have Midajah offer a distraction.

An even worse looking Book End puts Steiner down again for no cover. We get an awkward sequence where Stevie can't get his boot up to Steiner's ribs so they head outside where Steiner is sent into the barricade. Back in and another suplex gets two for the champ but he walks into the Slap Jack for one. The announcers are just burying Stevie for being blown up here. An electric chair drop sets up the Recliner to end this mess.

**Rating:** F. Yeah there's no defending this and it's clear that Stevie Ray had no business being in the ring at this point. You can't be blown up

five minutes into a match and drag the World Champion down in his first title defense. I get the idea behind the match but this was a disaster and one of the worst matches I've seen in a long time.

Post match Sid Vicious returns as the challenger for Starrcade. It makes sense given that he was never defeated for the title but it's December 2000 and Sid Vicious is challenging for the World Title while Goldberg has another match with Lex Luger.

**Overall Rating:** F. Oh yeah they've given up. It's clear that they're just setting up a bunch of rematches and/or stupid matches at Starrcade because Sid is their idea of a draw. Yeah Goldberg vs. Luger is happening again for absolutely no logical reason and it seems that we're still getting the Insiders vs. the Thrillers again, plus the three team ladder match.

WCW has given up on trying to do their best and is just throwing out whatever old names they have because for some reason it took them this long to get to Steiner. Why Goldberg, as in the guy who could conceivably draw money as the World Champion, is stuck carrying Luger to another bad match is beyond me but that's what we're getting because Steiner needs to beat up a "legend" at the biggest show of the year. This is another great example of an idea that should have been a layup but somehow WCW has managed to screw it up because that's how things work around here.

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