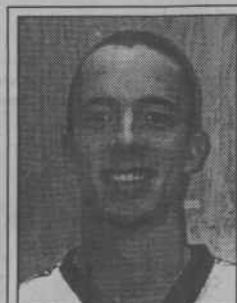


Piper abuses power, loses to Hogan



Jeremy Touzel
The Razor's Edge

Monday's Nitro in Tampa, Fla., was the worst edition I've seen in a while.

The "action" started off with Arn Anderson laying the smack down for the Disco Inferno.

Eric Bischoff's newest job saw him chauffeuring Ric Flair to the arena. Bischoff took a "detour" on the way that led him to a cornfield in the middle of nowhere.

The NWO then ganged the WCW president, taking turns beating him, first with fists, then with lead pipes.

The action in the ring began with a six-man tag match featuring the team of Psychosis, Juventud Guerrero and last week's exciting newcomer, Blitzkrieg.

The match displayed some impressive maneuvers, especially by Blitzkrieg, who's amazingly light on his feet.

Despite the high-flying, exciting nature of the luchadores, the wrestlers made four significantly noticeable errors during the match.

Hey, guys! Practice makes perfect. Nitro continued to show boring segments of last week's Bret Hart vs. Roddy Piper match as well as footage of DDP's wife getting thrown from a speeding car.

The feud between Bret Hart and "Mad TV's" Will Sasso continued as the two faced off in the squared circle.

Hart destroyed the actor, but the match was silly to begin with.

Hulk Hogan came out to the ring and challenged Flair to a match, knowing Flair would be unable to wrestle because of the beating he received from the NWO.

Piper then came out and abused his power as commissioner, forcing Hogan to fight him. Piper was winning for

the majority of the match until Scott Hall shocked him with a cattle prod.

Buzz!

This was the last Nitro before SuperBrawl IX.

Despite the recent trend by WCW to bore its viewers, SuperBrawl actually looks exciting this year. The card is filled with many matches of personal conflict, with every title belt on the line.

WCW desperately needs an exciting show, as RAW is killing it in the ratings.

I swore last year I would never watch the WWF over WCW, but Nitro has been absolutely pathetic as of late. I'm giving WCW one more week to win me over, or I'll start watching RAW.

Nevertheless, the Nitros that follow pay-per-view events are traditionally the best, so next week should be good.

Trivia

Last week's question was: "What is the best way to get out of a sleeper hold?"

There are many ways to get out of a sleeper, but none are as effective as a Jawbreaker. Some of you suggested backing your opponent into the turnbuckle, but that doesn't work well if you're in the middle of the ring.

Appealing to the crowd also works unless you're a heel (i.e. a bad guy). I received plenty of correct answers, but the first correct response came from Johnathon Tillman, a computer science major.

This week's trivia is: "Name three second-generation wrestlers."

E-mail your answers to me at JamesTimmy@aol.com.

Notes

Lex Luger tore his bicep last week and should be out for three weeks. Whether he'll fight with Kevin Nash at SuperBrawl remains a mystery.

Buff Bagwell is scheduled to make his return to the ring within the next few weeks. Many of you will remember Bagwell was injured in Columbia last year on Thunder by Ric Steiner.

Bagwell is one of WCW's most entertaining personalities, and it'll be good to see him back in the ring.

Speaking of returns... the Ultimo Dragon is supposed to make his return to WCW sometime soon. Look for him to return as a manager, possibly for Kaz Hayashi.

Bischoff just realized he's wasting the money he spent signing Hart.

Hart is one of the best wrestlers in the business and hasn't been used anywhere near as much as he deserves. Bischoff wanted him to renew his feud with Booker T, with Hart losing enough of the matches in order to boost Booker T's popularity.

Hart questioned the logistics of this since he's being scheduled to fight Hogan at Halloween Havoc. The Hitman argued that it wouldn't make much sense for him to lose to Booker T since WCW needs to be pushing Hart's character for the Hogan fight.

Other rumors have Booker T starting a rivalry with Earnest "The Cat" Miller. This would be great for both wrestlers, especially considering how effective "The Cat" is in the heel role.

Finally, The Giant made his WWF debut on St. Valentine's Day Massacre, ripping through the bottom of the ring and throwing Stone Cold across the ring.

The Giant's old WCW contract forbids him from wrestling for three months, so he'll be making "appearances" until then.

Also, it was rumored that he would be called "The Titan," but that name is trademarked by a wrestler in Japan, so he's being called by his real name, Paul Wight.

One of the most important aspects of wrestling is the ability of a wrestler to give a dynamic and entertaining interview.

Most of them spend the majority of their time in the weight room, but the best wrestlers are the ones that are defined by their personalities - not their bodies.

So for those of you enrolled in a course on public speaking, here are the five best and worst speakers in wrestling:

Top Five Best Speakers

5. Hollywood Hogan (tie) Ric Flair
4. Bret Hart
3. Chris Jericho
2. D-Generation X
1. The Rock

Top Five Worst Speakers

5. Stevie Ray
4. Scott Steiner
3. The Undertaker
2. The Warrior
1. Goldberg

Some of you weren't too pleased with my Top 10 list last week.

The main reason I think the PerfectPlex is the best finishing move in wrestling is because it's a pinning move.

All the others in the Top 10 (with the exception of the Seven-Year Itch) were either submission moves or normal finishing moves.

For those of you who think Goldberg deserved a spot in the Top 10, I have two words for you ...

BRADLEY LOOKS FOR TIGERS



Sean Rayford Photo Editor

Jamel Bradley and the Gamecocks travel to Baton Rouge, La., to take on the LSU Tigers at 8 p.m. today. Carolina hopes to pick up a conference win before the SEC Tournament, which begins March 4.

USC still in cellar

USC continued from page 8

including runs of six or seven times in a row.

The pattern consists of either BJ McKie or Aaron Lucas running the ball down to the left side of the court. Then, they pass it to the top of the key. Basic basketball, right?

Wrong.

There usually isn't any problem with that pattern, except our guys pass it to Bud Johnson. Why is he standing there in the first place?

I'm no expert, but isn't a center supposed to stand in the middle of the court, shuttling back and forth for the easy turnaround jumper?

Sure, there are variations, but I'm positive they don't include holding the ball above your head, passing to the other team or trying to drive to the hole, tripping, and then ending up looking like a proverbial fish out of water, trying desperately to stay alive.

The offense proceeds to pass the ball around the key three or four times until somebody takes a desperate shot, which is either blocked or has no chance of hitting the bucket.

Offensive rebounds? Not here, buddy. You have to be able to catch the ball before you can rebound.

This routine happened time and again Saturday as USC bumbled, stumbled and slid its way to a fourth consecutive conference loss, as well as killing most hopes of a miracle SEC

Tournament win and NCAA berth.

The Gamecocks' defense didn't even remotely resemble the types practiced by contenders, as USC tried to match up a 6-3 guard with a 6-10 center. Good planning there.

Of course, of the measly 40 points scored by our potent shooters, 13 were scored by McKie, who turned everybody in Rupp Arena into his personal whipping boy as he drove to the basket.

I could continue this laundry list of complaints, but, really, what's the point? The team knows what's wrong.

It's not exactly rocket science.

The point is, what's going to happen next year?

With no dominating presence inside, USC will perish before the season even begins.

Also, with no proven playmaker or solid scorer, luck will have to run rampant for the team to have a chance.

You can't rely on luck to win, though; that was made abundantly clear by USC's last two NCAA Tournament appearances.

Teams in the SEC give 110 percent every game.

The kind of lackluster effort the Gamecocks give isn't enough to keep the team from spiraling down to their familiar home — the basement.

The bottom line is, USC has got to recruit a big man and some kind of blue-chip point guard to lead and direct this miserable bunch.

Harrison attributes 'Ninja Training' to his collegiate success

HARRISON continued from page 8

"There are rumors about the South Carolina throwers being on drugs," he said.

"Just because... On the suggestion that it might be because they're the best," Harrison quietly agreed.

"Yeah, pretty much." The best they might be.

Harrison, Brad Snyder and Bert Sorin are all All-American throwers.

The three live, practice and compete together.

They've also started something called "Ninja Training."

"We decided that when you warm up, you should make yourself feel good about what you're about to do," Harrison said.

"So we just think of stupid things to do, balancing acts and weird stretches — we nicknamed it 'Ninja Training.' The national track meet is now about three weeks away.

"Nationals are all that matter now," Harrison said.

He's not dwelling on what has happened already with the record; he's focusing on what he wants to make happen.

"It's possible we could win, we could go 1-2 in the hurdles, Bert and I could take 1-2, and Brad could get us 10 points," Harrison said.

"Plus, there are five or six other guys who could score a lot of points.

"If everyone does what they are supposed to do, we could actually win the national championship."

Don't be surprised if you see the Gamecock track team on television soon, warming up for the national track meet doing handstands and crab walks as they popularize "Ninja Training."

It's got to be better than the Falcons' "Dirty Bird" dance or the new "Thai-Bo" fitness craze.

GOOD LUCK TO ALL THE GREEKS RUNNING FOR OFFICE!



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