

Wrestler of the Day – May 20: Brian Christopher

Turn it up. It's Brian Christopher.

Brian got his start in his dad's promotion in Memphis in the late 80s. We'll pick things up with Christopher in a tag team called the New Kids on February 2, 1991.

New Kids vs. Fabulous Ones

Tony Williams of the New Kids dropkicks Stan Lane down to start as Cornette is running his mouth on commentary. Referee Miller is kicked down by Lane the Karate Master so it's off to Christopher. Brian superkicks Steve Keirn down for two and Cornette is losing it. He goes to manage as Keirn can't figure Christopher out. A backdrop finally puts him down so it's off to Lane who gets caught in a quick sunset flip for two. Off to Tony who is slammed down with ease.

Jim is back on commentary to make the match that much better. The New Kids keep trying for a fast win because they can't go man to man vs. the Fabs. Keirn slams Tony's head into a chair on the floor and it's back inside. Tony gets between Stan's legs and makes the tag to Christopher. The Fabs double team him again and it's back to the outside. Keirn is illegal and piledrives Miller for the DQ. It was a DQ at times and at times it wasn't so it's hard to keep up with.

Rating: C-. Not much of a match but this is how you give someone a rub. The New Kids weren't proven yet so having them hang in there with a famous team like the Fabulous Ones and even pick up a win here is a great way to make the New Kids look a lot better. The Fabs couldn't pin them which is a major key. Not a great match, but a good rub.

Christopher would become a big deal as a heel in 1993. Here's

a match from that period on February 13, 1993.

Brian Christopher vs. Jeff Jarrett

Luger and two other guys that I don't recognize are here with Christopher. Brian says there's no need for Lex to be here for this one but then he changes his mind. Ok then. There are no apron curtains. That's not something I've seen outside of a tiny indy company. Lex sits in on commentary for this. There can't be more than 150 people at this. Ever heard me say someone is stalling like a man from Memphis? Here's a good example of something like that.

First contact: 63 seconds in. Christopher keeps shouting to Lex how awesome he is but in a sucking up way, not an evil way. Second contact: 100 seconds in. We're over two minutes in and we've had two tieups and that's it. Ok from what I can find, Christopher is also the Texas Champion. Jeff finally has enough and pops Brian in the face with a right hand. We finally get going as Brian hits a clothesline and stomps a bit. To be fair, Memphis was far more based on egging on the crowd than the in ring action.

A backbreaker gets two for Christopher. He misses an elbow though and Jeff grabs a rollup for two. How weird is it that these two would reach their biggest successes as totally different characters? Christopher as a dancing idiot and Jarrett as a self-obsessed heel. One of the guys that came out with Christopher grabs Jeff's leg but he manages a DDT to Christopher anyway. Not that it matters as the other guy comes in for the DQ.

Rating: C-. These matches are hard to rate as there isn't much action in them, but like I said there isn't supposed to be. These were two fairly big names and two acts that were over as a face and a heel, which is really all you can ask for. At the same time though, there's barely any wrestling and it was all set up for the ending, which is ok, but it's still nothing to

see.

After several more years in Memphis, Christopher would debut in the WWF as Jerry Lawler's mentee. He would enter the fledgling Light Heavyweight division and have a match at In Your House 17.

Scott Putski vs. Brian Christopher

Putski is the son of WWF Hall of Famer Ivan Putski while Christopher is the son of Jerry Lawler. However Lawler hasn't admitted to this yet, but instead is saying he's a big fan of Christopher and has helped him win matches. An immediate Jerry's Kid chant starts us off, which Lawler writes off as a reference to Jerry Lewis' Labor Day marathon. Putski gets in the first shot and drives Christopher into the corner before tossing him out to the floor.

Back in and Brian grabs a headlock before clotheslining him down with ease. Scott comes back with a hurricanrana for two but gets caught in a full nelson leg sweep faceplant (the Skull Crushing Finale or Chris Jericho's Breakdown) gets two. Jerry: "That's my boy!" JR: "What?" Putski falls to the floor and Brian follows with a nice dive to take him out again. The fall seems to have injured Scott's knee and Brian wins by countout.

Rating: D. I'm thinking there was something to that knee injury as there was no reason to end the match so soon. It didn't last that long and I have no idea why this was on a pay per view. Putski is a good example of a guy who had a great look but had the big problem of being his father's son. His dad Ivan was a popular wrestler and there was no way Scott could live up to his reputation.

Brian would enter a tournament for the restored Light Heavyweight Title, making the finals at In Your House 19.

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Light Heavyweight Title: Brian Christopher vs. Taka Michinoku

This is a tournament final to determine the new champion. The title had actually been around for years but was only defended in Mexico and Japan while never being mentioned in American. Christopher plays to the crowd before we get going but scores with a quick slam to take over. An armdrag puts Taka down again as the Jerry's Kid chant starts up again. Taka flips out of a German suplex and takes Brian down with a pair of kicks to the face and a clothesline to send him out to the floor. A HUGE springboard dive off the top takes Christopher out again and fires up the crowd a bit.

Brian crotches Taka on the top rope as they come back in and a dropkick sends Michinoku back to the floor. Taka avoids a dive off the apron to send Brian into the barricade but misses a cross body back inside to give Christopher control again. Now it's Brian's turn to miss a charge, allowing Taka to hit a tornado DDT for two. A hurricanrana sends Brian to the floor again and a top rope moonsault takes him out. Lawler goes to help his son back inside but Taka dropkicks Christopher right back down.

Back inside and a pair of dropkicks put Brian down again but Taka gets caught in a full nelson legsweep. There's a sitout powerbomb by Christopher but he poses too much, allowing Taka to grab a rollup for two. A missile dropkick to the back of Taka's head puts him down again and a backbreaker gets two.

Brian stays cocky by slapping Taka in the face over and over (Jerry: "Just like I slapped Andy Kaufman!") before clotheslining him down for two. Now the release German suplex connects but Brian takes forever to cover. Instead it's a powerslam to put Taka down but Christopher misses the top rope legdrop, allowing Taka to hit the Michinoku Driver for the pin and the title.

Rating: C. Really basic match here but it made sense to put the belt on Taka at first. Christopher was just a guy who happened to be in the weight division and never fight the style at all. The match wasn't bad or anything but the division never worked nearly as well as the company hoped it to.

Christopher would soon hook up with his long term partner Scott Taylor to form Too Much. Interestingly enough, they were going to get the Billy and Chuck gimmick but Christopher wouldn't go for it. Instead they got to fight Al Snow and Head at King of the Ring 1998.

Too Much vs. Al Snow/Head

Yes Head, a mannequin head, is Snow's partner. Too Much would later be known as Too Cool. We kept hearing about Snow wanting to stay but it wouldn't work. Snow kept getting in trouble but blaming it on Head. That's smart at least. This is in the video recap but I don't feel like going back and editing this to make it right. Head stole the crown and they get a meeting with Vince if they win tonight.

Scotty looks weird with short blonde hair. Christopher looks stupid no matter what. Snow is in the back and Lawler talks to them and he makes fun of them and it goes nowhere. This is pre cool music but post peak of Snow's powers. There are however a bunch of guys with Styrofoam heads bobbing them back and forth though. Jerry is announced as the guest referee to make it three on one. Oh sorry. Three on two.

Snow's talented enough to count I guess. Oh oddly enough, Snow used to be a character called Avatar, a genie. How sad is it that Snow is more talented than all three heels combined by about 100 miles? Taylor tags in Christopher, only a master sexay at this moment I guess. Lawler has his crown on by the way. More or less this was designed to let Snow show off, which really was a good idea and something they needed to do more often.

Snow reaches for a tag and Christopher bites his hand. I'm not sure if I want to see him in the indys or not. He was terrible in the mainstream so how bad were they in a territory based company. Ross wonders who picked Lawler as the referee. My guess would be a combination of the writing team and Vince McMahon but what do I know?

I love that wheelbarrow suplex that Snow likes to use. Snow tags in Head and Ross has lost it. Snow covers Taylor as Lawler goes to the announce table and grabs something. Christopher covers head with a bottle of Head and Shoulders for the pin. Oh it was to make sure that the shoulders were down.

Rating: D+. Well it was a cute idea I guess and Snow got to show off out there, but seriously, Too Much being on my screen more than 5 minutes just makes my head hurt so this just failed completely for me. This wasn't much and it was really just a comedy match so take it for what it is I guess.

The team wouldn't do much for the rest of the year and then would miss a good chunk of 1999 due to injury. One of their first major matches back, now with Brian as Grandmaster Sexay and Taylor as Scotty Too Hotty, was at Survivor Series 1999.

Team Too Cool vs. Team Edge/Christian

Too Cool, The Hollys

Edge/Christian, Hardy Boys

This is just after the Hardys and the Canadians had the first tag team ladder match which would launch them into stardom soon after. Too Cool is still stupid here, as opposed to later on when they would be stupid and WAY over. The Hardys have Terri with them which wouldn't last long. Edge and Scotty get things started as Jerry talks about Scotty's pants. They chop it out in the corner before things speed up a bit and Edge spinwheel kicks him down.

Off to Crash vs. Matt with Matt getting two off a suplex. Crash gets crotched on the top and punched to the floor. Grandmaster sneaks up on Matt for a sunset bomb to the floor. We unleash the dives as everyone small enough to hits a big dive to take out everyone that was already on the floor with Jeff capping it off. Back in and Christian powerslams Crash for two. The Hollys hit a Hart Attack on Crash Christian for two of their own and Hardcore is in.

We're promised an update on Austin at the end of this match because THIS MATCH of all things is more important than a guy being hit by a car. Off to Grandmaster whose bulldog is countered and he goes flying so far that he kicks the camera, giving us a cool visual. Off to Hardcore vs. Edge who starts

spearing a lot of people. Grandmaster stops to dance and is immediately speared down. In the big melee, Hardcore rolls up Edge for the pin. Fifteen seconds later, Scotty hits a top rope DDT to eliminate Matt, making it 4-2.

Jeff and Scotty do a fast pinfall reversal sequence before Scotty hits the not yet popular Worm. A sitout powerbomb by Scotty with Grandmaster assisting gets two as does a middle rope missile dropkick from Sexay. Too Cool hits the second Hart Attack of the match which gets two on Jeff. Everything breaks down but the Hollys get in an argument. Terri gets on the apron for a distraction which lets Christian hit both of Too Cool low. Jeff hits a 450 on Scotty for the elimination.

So it's Crash/Grandmaster/Hardcore Holly vs. Jeff and Christian. JR goes on a rant about Austin as Christian and Jeff try some Poetry in Motion, but Hardcore comes off the top with a missile dropkick in a SWEET looking counter. Grandmaster adds a guillotine legdrop for the elimination. Christian immediately hits a reverse DDT on Grandmaster to get us down to Christian vs. the Hollys.

JR continues to brood and want an update about Austin. Jerry needling him makes me chuckle as he's awesome at being a jerk. Crash beats on Christian for a bit before it's off to Hardcore again. Back to Crash who gets caught in the Unprettier/Killswitch for the pin. Christian tries a victory roll on Hardcore but Bob (Hardcore for you schmucks out there) falls on top for the final pin.

Rating: C+. The problem here was that the pairing that this should have been based around, Edge and Christian and the Hardys, were on the same team rather than getting to tear the house down against each other. The other two teams didn't mean anything and the ending of this sucked. Once the Dudleys got involved with the brother teams, it was all gravy for almost two years.

teaming.

Benoit suplexes Sexay down for two and it's back to HHH. The heels are tagging incredibly fast. Grandmaster hits a double DDT out of nowhere on Benoit and HHH. There's the hot tag to Cactus but the referee didn't see it. Everything breaks down and HHH hits the Pedigree on Grandmaster followed by the Swan Dive from Benoit for the pin.

Rating: B. This seems like a match where the crowd reaction carried it to a higher level which is fine. It's certainly better than I remember but it's not as good as I've seen some people make it out to be. Anyway, you could see the great matches coming and this would give Too Cool a nice push, resulting in their only tag title run a few months after this.

The feud with the Radicalz continued at Wrestlemania 2000.

Radicalz vs. Too Cool/Chyna

This would be Saturn/Malenko/Guerrero. They're brand new at this point and Dean is already Light Heavyweight Champion. Too Cool was their first feud and it was a big enough deal that Too Cool rode it to a tag title reign in a few months. Eddie and Scotty start things off and Scott has his hat knocked off almost immediately. A tilt-a-whirl backbreaker puts Eddie down and it's off to Chyna, sending Guerrero running off to Dean.

Malenko loads up a fast powerbomb but Scotty clotheslines him down to break it up. Chyna and the Grandmaster suplex Malenko down and it's time to dance. Back to Eddie to face Grandmaster with Sexay hitting a quick suplex. Saturn breaks up the top rope legdrop though and the Radicalz take over. Perry comes in legally now and steals Grandmaster's dew rag, somehow making him look even more ridiculous.

Eddie comes back in and allows Grandmaster to make a tag to Scotty. That goes badly for the non Radicalzas Scotty charges into a hot shot followed by the slingshot hilo for no cover.

Grandmaster comes back in sans tag and throws Eddie to the floor as things fall apart. Scotty loads up a double Worm on Saturn and Malenko but an Eddie distraction lets them get back up. There's no one in the ring at the moment until we get back to Scotty vs. Eddie. Perry comes back in and superkicks Hotty down.

A top rope elbow hits Scotty but again there's no cover. Instead it's back to Guerrero who goes up but takes too long, allowing Scotty to crotch him. A superplex puts both guys down and there's the hot tag to Chyna. She cleans house with handspring elbows and a double low blow to Saturn and Malenko. Eddie decks her though, breaking part of her outfit in the process. Chyna escapes a powerbomb into one of her own, grabs Eddie's crotch and slams him down before finishing him with a sleeper drop.

Rating: D+. This didn't work for me for the most part but the main story of Chyna vs. Eddie was advanced which is the right idea. This would wind up meaning nothing (in a way) though as Chyna would fall victim to the Latino Heat the next day, starting a summer long relationship between the two. I guess that crotch grab changed her mind.

Remember that Tag Team Title run I mentioned? It started on Raw, May 29, 2000.

Tag Team Titles: Too Cool vs. Edge and Christian

Christian cranks on Grandmaster's arm to start but Brian fights back with a missile dropkick. Off to Scotty for some dancing and a double clothesline. Time for the Moonwalk but Christian takes Scotty down with a spinwheel kick. Edge comes in and tries a powerbomb but Scotty botches the hurricanrana counter.

Instead he has to settle for a small package for two before it's off to Grandmaster to clean house. His powerbomb on Christian works just fine before he and Edge fall to the

floor. Scotty hits the Worm on Christian as Edge brings in a title belt. He's knocked to the floor though and here's Kid Rock's midget friend Joe C. with a low blow, allowing Grandmaster to hit Edge with the belt for the pin and the titles in a big upset. The celebration is as low key as you can imagine.

Rating: D+. The match was nothing to see and I'm really surprised by how bored they seemed to win the belts. The title reign wouldn't last all that long but this was a good example of the company listening to the crowd and giving someone popular a push. Too Cool winning the belts for a month wasn't a stretch and the fans loved it. Everybody wins.

The title win would be the apex of the team's run as they would fall down the card soon after and never recover. Scotty would get hurt so Grandmaster would have to fight on his own, including this match at Insurrextion 2001.

Grandmaster Sexay vs. Eddie Guerrero

This is one of Grandmaster's final appearances with the company for reasons of suck I guess. Eddie lost the European Title to Matt Hardy of all people. It's not like being European meant anything with only Regal and Bulldog being European. Eddie would be gone soon for drugs anyway so there we are. This is a very hot crowd with one Phoenix being in attendance. Yeah he was the other request.

Eddie doing the Sexay dance is hilarious to say the least. I think Eddie was supposed to be champion here as he lost it like a week earlier. Grandmaster, how do you freaking suck so much? Your dad is a legend and you're just a freaking joke. And that's being nice. He's like an annoying indy gimmick that isn't sure what his gimmick is. The crowd is ALL OVER Eddie. That's not bad. Grandmaster misses a...something and gets rolled up with Eddie using the ropes to win from nowhere. That was really abrupt.

Rating: D+. Uh what the heck was that? Seriously it felt like it was 3 minutes short or something. Also, what the world is the idea of using these two in a match? It's just random as but whatever. Not bad I guess. Then again this is one of those British house shows called a pay per view so it's to be expected.

Christopher would hit the indies, including main eventing the first WWA PPV, the Revolution in a tournament final for the World Title.

WWA World Title: Brian Christopher vs. Jeff Jarrett

I've complained about Christopher enough so far. Christopher makes gay jokes about Jarrett to start but says he wants to death. Jarrett tosses him around to start and there's the strut. Christopher comes back with a clothesline to send Jeff to the floor...and then he lowers his pants. A neckbreaker puts Jarrett right back on the floor as we're firmly in a Memphis formula: do a move, play to the crowd a lot, then do another move and play to them more.

They fight into the crowd, and by fight I mean punch once and walk a lot, and we lose track of them. Brian gets a drink thrown in his face and Jeff chokes him a bit. We finally get back to ringside with Brian shaking off everything that's been done to him so far. A charge misses in the corner and Brian gets crotched. Naturally, Jarrett poses. A cross body gets two for Brian and it's off to a sleeper from Jeff.

After nearly two minutes of that, Brian hooks his own sleeper for a few seconds. A kick puts Jeff down and an enziguri (clearly missing by about six inches) gets two. Tornado DDT gets two more and they head to the floor. Brian superkicks a referee by mistake and we head back in. Christopher "hits" a guillotine legdrop for two from a replacement referee...and the referees start fighting. Jeff wins with a guitar shot and Stroke on the belt (there was a referee brawl in between the

moves).

Rating: D. Standard match that really was a big brawl with some wrestling moves thrown in. In other words, the WCW main event formula minus five run-ins. Christopher was never believable as a main event threat here because HE'S FREAKING BRIAN CHRISTOPHER. Nothing to see here but it was probably the best match of the second half of the show.

It would be off to TNA after this with Brian appearing on the second show.

K-Krush vs. Brian Christopher

They keep swapping between calling his Brian Christopher and Brian Lawler. Christopher does his Too Cool dance to the ring and the NASCAR guys with him look at him like the idiot he looks like. Krush is the evil one here which I doubt was clear coming into this. He jumps Christopher to start but Brian comes back with a neckbreaker. A bulldog out of the corner gets two for Brian but a second results in him getting crotched on the middle rope.

Krush suplexes him down to take over again, getting a delayed two in the process. He does the backflip into the splits into the side kick spot that he uses today for two. Off to a chinlock as this is going nowhere. Brian fights up, I guess doing what you would call Cooling Up. An enziguri puts Krush down as does a Stunner but Krush hits an atomic drop to put him down. The NASCAR guys shake the ropes to crotch Krush and he falls right into position for the guillotine legdrop from Christopher for the pin.

Rating: D. This felt like a random match between two former WWF guys, and that's not something interesting. At the end of the day, why in the world am I supposed to care about the guy best known as K-Kwik yells at some NASCAR drivers? Christopher without his Too Cool partners isn't interesting either, at least not outside of Memphis. Nothing to see here.

And again at the tenth show.

Brian Lawler vs. Slash

Apparently this is a scheduled match for later but we're getting it now instead. Slash knocks him to the floor and throws Lawler into the barricade before peeling back the mats. He loads up a piledriver on the floor but Lawler backdrops him down to prevent presumably death. Lawler knocks Slash down and we head up the ramp for a bulldog on the ramp by Lawler. Brian tries to get a chair from a fan but the fan won't give it up.

Back in and Slash grabs a superplex for two, followed by what we would call the Eye of the Storm. Lawler comes back with a floatover DDT but stops to dance instead of covering. There's an enziguri from Brian and there's even more dancing. Both guys hit the other low (in front of the referee who is cool with this I guess) before Slash puts Lawler on top. Brian knocks him down and hits the guillotine legdrop for the pin.

Rating: D. This didn't quite work because Lawler is really hard to care about. I have no idea if he's a face or if he's a heel here and the lack of clarity is really annoying after awhile. Also, the dancing thing is dead but he keeps doing it anyway because it used to work a few years ago. Slash and the Disciples of the New Church continue their free fall as well.

After several more years in the indies, Christopher would fall off radar for a good while. He would eventually return to the WWE on Old School Raw, January 6, 2014.

3MB vs. Too Cool/Rikishi

This is as obvious of a match as you can get. Grandmaster and Jinder get things going with Grandmaster scoring with a quick dropkick. Off to Scotty who is still in good shape but gets punched down by McIntyre. Drew misses a charge in the corner and the bulldog sets up the WORM. Slater robs us of our gratification though and 3MB takes over again. The announcers

spend the entire match arguing over whether Too Cool can be called the Hip Hop Twins, thereby making the whole thing about them instead of the legends.

Scotty clotheslines McIntyre down and makes the hot tag to Rikishi who looks incredibly slow. He does manage a superkick to Mahal for two but Slater makes the save. Rikishi clotheslines two Band members down and the Hip Hop Drop takes out McIntyre. Mahal tries a sunset flip on Rikishi but gets sat on for the pin at 5:24.

Rating: D+. The match sucked and the commentary was annoying, but this is exactly what modern nostalgia should be about. Too Cool is an act that's old enough for people to reminisce but not old enough that they embarrass themselves in the ring. Nobody is hurt, the fans get to have a fun moment and everybody wins. Good stuff.

This appearance got Too Cool a surprise spot on the first NXT special called Arrival.

NXT Tag Titles: Ascension vs. ???

There's an open challenge from Ascension tonight and their opponents are.....TOO COOL??? That's a rather bizarre choice to put it mildly. Viktor slaps Sexay down to start and doesn't approve of the dancing. Off to Konor for a hard legdrop and even harder shoulder blocks. Viktor slams Sexay down and puts on a chinlock before driving in elbows. I think the fans say they want water and then gum. Sexay finally fights up and makes the hot tag to Scotty whose offense has very little effect. He gets the bulldog and loads up the Worm, only to have Viktor pop up and run him over. Fall of Man ends Scotty at 6:40.

Rating: D. This was WAY too long and Too Cool was the totally wrong choice for the challengers here. They're a fun team who had a month long title reign FOURTEEN YEARS AGO. This is the problem with nostalgia: it's fun to push every now and then,

but when it's pushed over teams that deserve the shots more, you've got a problem.

Brian Christopher is a guy who tried to get out of his dad's shadow but only succeeded to a degree. His run in Too Cool is definitely the high point of his career and the crowd ate the act up. Brian's talking in Memphis was great stuff but at the end of the day that act just didn't work outside of the territory. Still though, he certainly wasn't terrible and could fly well enough to get by.

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