

Paragon Pro Wrestling – September 5, 2015: The Toll Man? REALLY?

Paragon Pro Wrestling

Date: September 5, 2015

Location: Sam's Town Hotel & Gambling Hall, Las Vegas, Nevada

Commentators: Jeff Aikin, Todd Keneley

This is an indy company that has managed to get TV time by paying the station to air them. I have no idea of what to expect here and I've only heard of a handful of the roster so I'm basically going in blind. I can't imagine this is going to be a full time thing but why not try it once? Let's get to it.

The opening video makes this look decent for a low budget act.

The announcers run down the card, including a casket match.

Interviewer Pat Kelly brings out a guy named Hammerstone, a champion who looks a bit like a more muscular Shane Douglas from the early 90s, who is facing Wes Brisco later tonight. Hammerstone has seen Brisco having great matches week after week, but he wouldn't be here without his famous name. One night thirty years from now, there will be a story of Hammerstone Jr. because he destroyed the legend of the Brisco family starting tonight.

Hammerstone vs. Wes Brisco

Non-title because Hammerstone is a Tag Team Champion. Hammerstone shoves him down a few times to start but Brisco comes back with a hiptoss and starts in on the arm. A running clothesline in the corner staggers Hammerstone (who I believe is the heel here) and Brisco puts on an armbar over the ropes. Hammerstone knocks him to the wooden floor (when do you ever see that?), followed by a fall away slam back inside. The wrestling here isn't the most intense in the world.

We hit the reverse chinlock on Brisco for a bit before he fights up makes

his comeback with every basic offensive move you can think of. Hammerstone is in trouble but here's a guy named Chamberlain (partner I'm assuming) comes out to distract Brisco, allowing Hammerstone to grab a rollup for the pin.

Rating: D+. I've seen far worse than this and they kept it basic. I'm assuming this sets up Brisco saying he can get a partner and win the titles to give us a title match and there's nothing wrong with booking that way. Brisco didn't do much for me in TNA but he looked acceptable here. That's a good way of describing this match: acceptable, which is far better than the usual drek you can see on an indy show.

American Title: Ethan HD vs. Darin Corbin

Corbin is defending and billed from the Dude Ranch. I'm not sure if this is the top title in the company but it's certainly billed as something important. Corbin elbows him in the face to start and stops for a dance, only to eat an elbow to his own face. A standing shooting star gets two on Corbin's overly ample gut. Ethan gets tied up in the ropes for a shot to the chest, allowing Corbin to tell the fans that he's naturally beautiful.

We get a Jimmy Del Ray name drop as Corbin loads up the Ginger Snap (looked like a McGillicutter) but Ethan counters into a headscissors into a Russian legsweep. A standing moonsault gets two and my goodness the announcers are underselling this stuff. Corbin gives us a terrible looking ref bump, immediately followed by Ethan kicking Darin in the head for no count. Back up and Corbin grabs a rollup and the trunks to retain at 6:04.

Rating: D. Corbin is called a dude and called himself beautiful and was played up as a hot tempered Irish guy at the same time. With all that, I'm still not sure what he's supposed to be. It wasn't much of a match either with both guys just doing moves to each other. Ethan wasn't bad but he feels like half a dozen wrestlers I can think of off the top of my head.

Post match Ethan snaps and beats up two referees before destroying a bunch of stuff at ringside. Two other wrestlers run in and take chair

shots to the ribs.

Kevin Kross, the walking definition of your stereotypical wrestler with short hair, tattoos and a good physique, is all intense and chilling. So he's their Randy Orton. His nickname is the Toll Man because he's coming to collect. Seriously? That's the best you can come up with? He's a guy who sits in a booth all day and takes someone's money?

Kevin Kross vs. Mikey O'Shea

Mikey is a good sized guy and dressed almost exactly like Bam Bam Bigelow. Kross goes after him in the corner to start and sends the big guy into the post. Some choking on the ropes has Mikey in more trouble and Kross counts along with the referee. Off to a front chancery on Mikey and a swinging neckbreaker gets two. O'Shea slams him out of the corner but has to elbow out of a Saito suplex. A spinebuster gets two on Kevin but Mikey decides for a sunset flip, only to have Kevin sit down on it and grab the ropes for the pin at 4:33.

Rating: D+. Decent power brawl here with Kross clearly being groomed as a star. I'm still not wild on THE TOLL MAN but at least he won like he should have. Mikey came off like a big power guy who is always going to slip up at the end. Nothing special to see here but Kross is a name I've heard of before and he has the intangibles that you need.

We recap Tyshaun Prince vs. Gangrel, which is due to some eliminations in a battle royal. Tonight is the blowoff in a Pine Box (casket) match. The feud looks to have been going on for a few weeks so this is a big deal. Prince has a very stereotypical guy named the Cuban Assassin as his manager and is scared of coffins.

Tyshaun Prince vs. Gangrel

Prince is a huge guy with height and muscle. The Assassin says this match isn't happening and they're leaving this horrible place. This brings out Matt Striker, who is the interim commissioner. Striker says this match is happening or there will be fines and suspensions. Gangrel comes out to the awesome Brood music (well at least a rap version with the music in the background) and you have to get a pin or submission before putting

your opponent in the coffin.

They circle each other for a bit as Gangrel is clearly the face here. That's not what I was expecting but it works well enough. Gangrel looks better than he did fifteen years ago. Prince slowly pounds him down and the Assassin guarantees that Gangrel is going in the box. Some right hands stagger Prince and they stop to stare at each other for a bit. Prince sends him into the apron and drives a knee into the ribs to stop a comeback. A bearhug on the floor stays on the back and Prince bends Gangrel's back around the post. Nice and simple.

Gangrel can't hit the Impaler on the floor and Prince chokeslams him (he's big, therefore he chokeslams) onto the ramp. Keneley: "That's got to be like getting hit by a hot bat." Huh? Anyway Prince misses a middle rope splash and the Impaler (just a regular DDT)...is pretty much no sold. The Assassin's interference backfires and another Impaler gives Gangrel the pin at 8:13. So what was the point of the coffin?

Rating: C. That's on a sliding scale. The match did feel like a big deal but the ending felt flat as it should have just been a regular casket match. Prince is someone who looks good but isn't much more than a big power guy but he could be something with some polishing. Not a bad match though and it felt like something big, at least for this size of a company.

Assassin is put in the casket instead of Prince, making this whole thing pointless.

Overall Rating: C-. This was fine. A bit boring but fine. They did a mostly decent job of letting me know why I should watch the matches and some of their guys have potential. It helps that they had some known names in there to give the fans someone to care about. I doubt I'll be watching this again but this was better than a lot of indies I've seen over the years.

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