

Rev Pro – Orlando: England Comes to America...with a Bunch of Americans

Rev Pro: Orlando

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Location: Wyndham Orlando Resort, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Andy Quidlan, Gilligan Gordon

Somehow I hadn't gotten around to this one. This is another Wrestlemania weekend show that I got to take in live and the only regular wrestling show I went to all weekend that wasn't run by WWE. I've never seen a Rev Pro show before this so I'm coming in entirely blind. All I know is a little about their roster and that they're usually in the UK. Let's get to it.

Ring announcer Andy Quidlan (also a commentator) welcomes us to the show and thanks us for coming out. He also dedicates the show to Kris Travis, a British wrestler who died one year ago to the day. This was a major theme tonight and there's nothing wrong with that.

Sami Callihan vs. Jay White

White is billed as the Death Machine and odds are you've seen him if you've watched any indy show in the last year or two. You might have seen White in Ring of Honor where he had some outstanding matches with Jay Briscoe. Callihan starts the clapping, which normally would imply that he's a face, even though he's against a guy named White who wears white.

Sami kicks him in the face at the bell and sends Jay outside for a suicide dive. White hits one of his own and they take turns sending each other into the barricade for running shots to the face. Callihan does the clapping again but in a more mocking tone. So now he's the heel? Or is this one of those indy companies where there are no faces or heels? Sami sends him into the barricade and does a full run around the ring before crashing into Jay. He tries it again

but this time White follows him around and scores with some chops. Jay FINALLY gets back in, over three full minutes after he went to the floor. Now the referee starts counting, which had the fans around me wondering why he was even bothering at this point. Back in and Jay grabs a Muta Lock, only to have Sami bite the finger for the break. They chop it out again until Callihan puts him in the corner for some running kicks to the face. A Death Valley Driver into the corner puts both guys down, even though Sami hasn't really hadn't had anything done to him in a good while.

White slugs away and hits a running forearm for his comeback, followed by a suplex into the corner. Since it's a British promotion, it's time to fight over some submission attempts. A deadlift German suplex plants Sami but he comes right back with a sitout powerbomb into the Stretch Muffler (Brock Lock). Jay is right next to the ropes so Sami tries it again, only to be reversed into a Boston crab for the submission at 12:04.

Rating: C. This one didn't do much for me as it was mainly two guys hitting each other over and over. I didn't get any kind of a story out of this and that's not the best way to open up a show. It certainly wasn't bad but the match was pretty forgettable, which isn't something you want to be, especially not in this spot. The match was fine but just there.

Jeff Cobb vs. Martin Stone

Stone, possibly better known as Danny Burch in NXT, is a big deal in the promotion and a former two time British Heavyweight Champion. Cobb is better known as Matanza in Lucha Underground, making this power vs. technical. Jeff takes him to the mat to start as the announcers praise Cobb for his wrestling abilities. The technical sequence goes to a stalemate and the sequel does exactly the same. Cobb tries to take him down into a headscissors but Martin pops up and shakes a finger in his face. After a bit of a standoff, Cobb throws him up into a delayed vertical suplex for two, which the announcers refer to as "ginormous". It's off to a waistlock on the mat, followed by a standing moonsault and standing shooting star

press from the slightly rotund Cobb. Stone comes back with a dropkick and a SUCK IT (which feels incredibly out of place) into a clothesline for two.

To crank up the evil (despite seeming like a face), Stone snaps the finger and chops away in the corner. You can see the sweat flying off of Stone as Cobb chops him back and grabs a swinging belly to back. Stone shouts OUTTA NOWHERE and hits an RKO for two, because WWE is still the most influential force in wrestling companies that want to be independent from it.

A bad looking t-bone suplex and a hard right hand give Stone two and it's off to a Crossface, which was used in the previous match. Cobb drops him with a headbutt but misses a charge to the apron, allowing Stone to hit a hanging DDT (London Bridge) for the pin at 10:37.

Rating: B-. This is a match where commentary helped a lot as the announcers told the story of Stone needing a big win after time away from the company. Cobb doesn't seem to have much of a history with the promotion but he was treated as a big opponent for Stone, making the story easy to follow and something that helped a lot. Good match too.

They shake hands after the match because a broken finger is nothing between friends.

The ring announcer gets us ready for the next match when Lord Gideon Grey staggers out to the ring, looking like a zombie. He even bounces off the barricade, seemingly not knowing that it's there. He's introduced anyway, even though he's not supposed to be here at the moment. Grey introduces himself to the crowd and says his whole life has fallen apart since Swoggle has brought Colt Cabana back into his life. People had started taking him seriously and now it's gone. That means a challenge for Swoggle.

Lord Gideon Grey vs. Swoggle

Swoggle kicks him in the knee and gets a Stunner for two less than fifteen seconds in. That's followed by a bite to the trunks area with both Swoggle and the referee getting in on things. Grey misses

a charge and Swoggle does Suplex City (Announcer: "He's going to take him to Suplex Village!"), including a Brock Lesnar dance. Grey gets up and hits a sitout powerslam (50 Shades of Grey) for the pin at 2:07.

Grey's mental health seems to go up by roughly 15 points with the win.

Ricochet vs. Marty Scurll

Ricochet is a King and Scurll is a villain. Marty gets one heck of a reaction and it's easy to see why he's becoming such a big deal so fast. The announcers are smart enough to agree that it's going to be the match of the evening, which isn't really that big of a surprise. The fans are split as a technical sequence goes to a standoff.

Scurll shoulders him down but Ricochet nips right back up. Scurll: "THAT WAS SWEET! I'm going to try!" A front flip into a nipup freaks the fans out but Ricochet isn't dumb enough to go for a handshake. That turns into a YES chant with Scurll leading the way. Marty dances and offers a left hand instead, only to have Ricochet ready to block the eyepoke from the right hand.

Scurll bails to the floor so Ricochet handsprings into the ropes and backflips into a kneel. Back in and Ricochet bends him over his back and rams Marty's head into the buckle over and over, setting up Tye Dillinger's cartwheel into TEN. A spinebuster sets up the People's Moonsault (exactly what it sounds like) and Ricochet grabs a front facelock, only to stop to yell at a single fan in the crowd.

Ricochet couldn't understand what he said (I couldn't either) so he sends Marty outside but misses a moonsault. Naturally he lands on his feet anyway but Marty pops back to the apron for a superkick. Back in and Scurll loads up the Villain's Elbow but stomps away instead of dropping an elbow. Now that's a villainous thing: set up something the fans want and then go the other way. A kick to the face sets up a chinlock, only to have Ricochet flip over into one of his own.

It's time to crank it back up with Marty being sent outside for a

big flip dive, followed by a running cutter into a standing shooting star for two back inside. They both miss some strikes until Scurll kicks him in the knee and grabs a brainbuster for two. Ricochet starts the flips again but gets cut off by another kick to the chest. A cutter from the knees drops Marty again and a running shooting star headbutt has Scurll stunned.

Both guys are winded so they slap it out with Ricochet getting the better of it, including a knee to the face to avoid some broken fingers. Well that's one way to do it. The top rope shooting star press misses though and Scurll grabs a piledriver for two more. Now the finger is snapped and a piledriver into the chickenwing has Ricochet in trouble. The hold isn't all the way locked though and Ricochet kicks him in the head, only to moonsault into the full chickenwing for the tap at 16:42.

Rating: A-. This was the match that the show needed with both guys looking awesome in a great back and forth match. There was a great blend of comedy and action here with Ricochet finally trying to get a bit too high and getting caught in the hold to wrap it up. Marty's star is rising through the roof at this point and this was a big win for him over another top indy name.

Post match Marty says matches like these are why he loves professional wrestling. He thanks Trevor (Ricochet's real name) and then calls him Prince before saying he'd love a rematch anywhere anytime. Marty dedicates the match and show to Kris Travis before leaving. Ricochet says he doesn't remember his first Rev Pro show but he remembers Andy (the company's owner) and Marty opening their arms to him. He thanks everyone for everything he's gotten to do and mentions the merch tables being set up at intermission.

Speaking of intermission, it ran about half an hour (announced as being fifteen minutes) and there were indeed a host of wrestlers outside. During the break, I got to meet Ricochet, Colt Cabana, Will Ospreay, Marty Scurll, Swoggle, Brian Cage (that man has huge arms), Jay White, Martin Stone (picture any stereotypical incredibly polite British man), Jeff Cobb, Fenix, Pentagon Dark and Shane Strickland.

Everyone was very nice, which is always a perk.

Interim British Cruiserweight Title: David Starr vs. Josh Bodom

Bodom is defending and this title exists because the regular champion Will Ospreay was touring Japan. Starr's schtick is that he has about fifteen nicknames (Your Favorite Wrestler's Favorite Wrestler, the Cream in Your Coffee, Davey Wrestling, the 104 Minute Man and so on) which the ring announcer has to read off a card. Bodom is a big time heel who makes sure to do his own introduction where he calls himself the REAL Cruiserweight Champion. Since Ospreay won't defend his title, Bodom isn't either. Well to be fair he didn't even bring the belt with him. Starr: "Hey Slim Shady. Where's the strap?"

David Starr vs. Josh Bodom

The bell rings and I think this is now non-title. Starr trips him down and it's an early crotch to the face. An Emma Sandwich gives David two but Bodom slams him head first into the mat to take over. They trade some not great chops as the announcers talk about various wrestlers Bodom and Starr have come close to beating. Yeah that'll make us care about two guys who aren't that familiar.

Starr unloads with chops and punches in the corner until something like a tilt-a-whirl Big Ending sends Bodom to the floor. Bodom is sent outside for some dives with Andy declaring Starr "very good at professional wrestling". Josh comes right back by sending him into the barricade and going to the top for a flip dive off the post (that always makes it look better, even when the dive mostly missed) to drop Starr again.

Back in and a superkick sets up the running shooting star (too common of a move anymore) for two. Gilligan: "Who does Starr think he is???" Starr avoids what looked like a Swanton and hits a draping DDT onto the apron (that's a new one). Not that it matters as Bodom comes right back with a powerbomb into a backbreaker for a near fall of his own. The big chops send sweat flying but a ref bump allows Bodom to get in a low blow.

Bodom grabs what looks like a pipe but a second referee comes in and takes it away. The distraction allows Starr to hit Adam Cole's Last Shot for a close two. Back up and Starr runs the ropes, only to eat a superkick. Bodom grabs a Bliss Buster (picture Orton's hanging DDT but he jumps on the back of the head to turn it into a piledriver) for the pin at 12:15.

Rating: B-. This was much better with the commentary explaining how evil Bodom is and Gilligan basically playing Michael Cole to Bodom's Miz. That's quite the benefit when I have no idea who either of these people are and it made the match a lot easier to watch on the second viewing. Good match here as it's nice to have another storyline based match instead of all the specials.

Rey Fenix vs. Will Ospreay

Ospreay's British Cruiserweight Title isn't on the line. Fenix takes his sweet time coming through the curtain. These guys are both very high fliers so this should be quite the spectacle. Fenix takes him down by the knee to start as the announcers suggest this might be "era defining". Oh be quiet.

Both guys flip out of wristlocks and spin around a bit until Ospreay leaves a dropkick a bit short so Fenix can pose at him. Ospreay stops a charge and looks off into the crowd. Fenix looks too and is quickly headlocked in a spot that is far too simple to work as well as it did. They head outside with Fenix kicking at the chest, followed by something like the Rings of Saturn back inside.

The hold doesn't last long as Fenix gets up and kicks him down, setting up a Swanton for two. Ospreay handsprings into his signature pose, only to have Fenix right there with a cutter to drop him again. Smart move there. Another superkick sets up another running shooting star, followed by Ospreay's middle rope flip dive (something like a Phoenix splash into a Spiral Tap) for his own near fall.

They trade kicks to the head as the pace picks WAY up in a hurry. A reverse hurricanrana drops Ospreay but he pops up with one of his own to put both guys down. They try the same kicks and clotheslines

at the same time with Ospreay knocking him to the floor. That means a Flying Space Tiger Drop (cartwheel into a flip dive and still perhaps the coolest name for a move ever) to Fenix, followed by a Phenomenal Forearm.

This is where commentary comes in again as the announcers had mentioned Ospreay facing AJ Styles a little over a year ago and learning from him. I can always go for commentators adding to a match like that and it helps a lot here. Fenix takes him up top for a super Spanish Fly, only to get shoved down for an Essex Destroyer (Canadian Destroyer with a DDT instead of a piledriver). A very high Phoenix Splash gets two and Ospreay is getting frustrated.

The Oscutter (backwards springboard cutter) is blocked and a middle rope stomp to the face gives Fenix two. Ospreay is staggered so Fenix swings around into a flip piledriver for two more. It worked so well that Fenix tries it again but Ospreay flips out and knees him in the face. His really spinny kick to the back of the head sets up the Oscutter for the pin on Fenix at 12:38.

Rating: B+. This was the indy flippy style done quite well with Ospreay looking like a killer out there. Fenix more than hung with him and it's always cool to see some Lucha Underground people in person instead of on extreme tape delay. It might not be as good as Scurll vs. Ricochet but that's hardly a criticism. Really fun match.

Unbreakable F'N Machines vs. Ryan Smile/Shane Strickland

That would be Brian Cage/Michael Elgin. I'm not too familiar with Smile but Strickland is Lucha Underground's Killshot. Smile and Cage start things off with the massive Cage towering over him. Ryan flips off the ropes over Brian and tells him to suck it before offering a test of strength. Thankfully Smile is smart enough to kick him in the ribs and headscissor him into 619 position, only to have Cage take his head taken off with a clothesline.

Now it's Cage hitting a 619 of his own and both guys try dropkicks into nipups. I mean Cage's nipup doesn't work but he tried. With the fans laughing at the nips, Elgin comes in for a front flip into a nipup, followed by Strickland mocking Cage's failure. That's fine

with Elgin, who busts out a Worm. Strickland: "NOPE!" And he grabs his jacket and walks out. He's back a few seconds later as the fans cheer for Big Mike.

It's off to Elgin, who gets caught in an ankle scissors. Everything breaks down for a second with Strickland and Smile hitting dropkicks to the side of Cage's head. That earns them a clothesline to the floor but Strickland gets right back up and kicks Elgin in the head. Mike is staggered so Strickland uses his huge chest for a springboard into a...well a mostly missed moonsault but it was a cool launch.

Back in and a pop up Big Ending gets two on Smile, followed by the delayed vertical suplex. That's not enough though as Elgin hands Smile off to Cage to actually drop him. Smile finally remembers what planet he's on and brings in Strickland for a series of dropkicks and a suicide dive to Elgin. A high crossbody gets two on Cage as the fans are oddly silent for this sequence.

For some reason, Smile and Strickland put Cage in his own corner for a kick to the face but Elgin comes back in to take them out. Perhaps for reasons of general bad psychology. Mike holds Smile upside down for a basement dropkick, followed by a powerbomb onto Cage's raised knees but Strickland makes a save. The Machines aren't done so they hit a double clothesline (one to the front and one to the back) followed by a double Hellevator but Strickland makes ANOTHER save.

Shane has worn out his welcome so it's a superkick into a German suplex into a wheelbarrow neckbreaker to send him outside. That leaves Smile to take a super Elgin Bomb and an F5 from Cage...for two. The fans IMMEDIATELY call that BS and I can't say I blame them. There's no reason for Smile (or anyone not named Hogan in 1987) to kick out of something like that.

Elgin gives Smile a spinning backslap to the face before hitting a Samoan drop/fall away slam at the same time. Somehow Smile has the nerve to get up and powerbomb Elgin off the middle rope with Strickland adding a top rope double stomp. Shane dives on Cage and Smile adds a frog splash to end Elgin at 16:18.

Rating: D+. This match was already going long and that kickout was pretty much inexcusable. Unless Strickland was late making a save (which wouldn't have made sense after the big moves he took), there's really no reason for him to kick out there. Then again, they kind of gave away the ending when it was announced that Smile and Strickland were getting a future Tag Team Title shot. If that's the case then, don't have Smile take such a big sequence, unless his partner is there for the save. There was good action here with Elgin being a highlight as always but that kickout was just awful.

Undisputed British Heavyweight Title: Zack Sabre Jr. vs. Penta El Zero M

Sabre is defending and also brings his Evolve and PWG World Titles. I'm pretty sure Sabre is a heel, as he has a custom rap entrance theme, talking about how great of a technical wrestler he is. A sample line: "If Dean Malenko has a thousand, he's at fifth thou." As expected, the fans sing a song about him but it's quickly drowned out by CERO MIEDO. They circle each other for the first minute as the announcers talk about Sabre joining a the Suzuki-Gun faction in New Japan.

Sabre starts in on the arm but Pentagon takes him down and stretches the neck a bit. Something like an Indian Deathlock has Pentagon in trouble and Zack throws in some middle fingers as a bonus. Pentagon is right back with a modified Haas of Pain and it's another standoff.

Back up and Pentagon grabs a surfboard with a chinlock only to let go and shout CERO MIEDO. Armdrags and a superkick send Zack to the floor for a posting. Pentagon hits the post by mistake though and Sabre sees a target on the arm. Sabre sits on the apron and throws up a peace sign as the fans serenade him a bit.

Back in and Zack stomps on the arm and cuts off a comeback with a penalty kick. A double underhook piledriver sets up a modified cross armbreaker. Pentagon makes the rope and pops right back up for a package piledriver onto the apron. Sabre is mostly dead but still manages a Canadian Destroyer into a triangle choke into a very

modified Rings of Saturn to knock Pentagon out and retain at 15:43.

Rating: B. Sabre is one of the best technical guys I've ever seen and there's something very cool about a character who is quite the jerk because he knows how much better he is than anyone else. Throw in the way he tortures people's arms and it's really hard to not be entertained by him in at least some way.

A quick goodbye takes us out. On the way out, I got to shake hands with Sabre Jr. as well.

Overall Rating: B. I had a good time with this show despite not knowing any of the stories coming in. The version with commentary is much better and it cuts out a lot of the dead time between the matches and intermission, thereby shortening the show by the better part of an hour. The wrestling is good and I'd check out another show from the promotion, which is about as high of a bit of praise as you can get.

You can see the show on Rev Pro's on demand service at <https://rpwondemand.pivotshare.com/.com> for \$8.49 a month with access to dozens of their shows.

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