

Read Dynamite Kid's Autobiography And... Dang

I've been on a bit of a reading kick lately and that means trying to knock out some of my wrestling bookshelf. This time around that means Pure Dynamite, the autobiography of the Dynamite Kid Tom Billington from 2001. Kid is one of the most influential stars of all time and was more or less Chris Benoit before Chris Benoit (minus a few important details). Unfortunately he is also a cautionary tale of the horrors of steroid abuse in wrestling, as Kid was notorious for his usage.

If there was one word to sum up Kid, it would seem to be tough. That could mean a few things in his case, as he was certainly tough in the ring and had a reputation of standing up to anyone in the back, but also tough to deal with, tough to please and tough to tolerate. There are times where Kid comes off as just mean for the sake of being mean, with some of his "ribs" feeling like outright abuse of other wrestlers.

Kid also has no problem with flat out saying he thinks someone has no talent and will go on for a good while about how bad someone is. While he will praise some people, it is clear that he had a very specific view of what wrestling was supposed to be and if you didn't fit his description, he was not interested whatsoever. It got more than a bit tiring of hearing how bad he thought so many people were and how much he couldn't stand them (he all but HATED the British Bulldog), but it keeps going throughout.

Kid would wind up in a wheelchair after a back injury got far worse than expected. While there is a lot of sympathy to be had for anyone in his state, it isn't any kind of a surprise given the style and physical abuse (both in the ring and from a needle) that he put himself through. It was going to catch

up to him one day and it certainly did, which is probably a big reason why he passed away on his 60th birthday.

All in all, Kid was an amazing talent in the ring and deserves a lot of praise, but he was also a time bomb who went off more than once, often due to not being treated how he wanted. There is a difference between standing up for yourself and just arguing for the sake of arguing and I don't think he ever quite got that. The book, while short at 201 pages, packs in a ton about him, but it doesn't exactly make me sympathetic to him. Instead, it makes me wonder how he lasted as long as he did, because all that skill in the ring doesn't make up for the way he did pretty much everything else.