

WWF Heavyweight Wrestling – May 9, 1965: The Great Great Grandfather (Includes Full Show)

WWF Heavyweight Wrestling

Date: May 9, 1965

Location: Capitol Arena, Washington D.C.

Commentator: Ray Morgan

Well this is a little out of my normal range. This is basically the WWF grandfather, as it's the promotion that would morph into the WWF several years later. I've done some of these shows before and they can be very interesting, though something this old is going to be more than a bit different. Let's get to it.

Ray Morgan welcomes us to the show and says it's the second half of the show, though this seems to be about the regular length. We hear the card with some familiar names, with Morgan casually holding a cigarette because 1965 was a very different time.

Before the first match, we get the card for an upcoming live event, which sounds rather awesome. The announcer also references something that happened here "tonight", which has me wondering how this show worked.

Tomas Marin vs. Bill Watts

Yes that Bill Watts and the fans DO NOT like him to put it mildly. Watts jumps him from behind to start and hits a forearm to put Marin on the floor early on. The knee drop sets up some jumping stomps and Watts sends him hard into the

corner. Marin is tossed over the top as commentary says this is the second hour of the show.

Watts drops him onto the apron and then kicks him outside, leaving Watts to shout to the crowd in a great heel touch. Marin's comeback lasts all of three seconds as he misses a dropkick and gets kneedropped again. The bulldog (called a bulldozer) gets two, as Watts pulls him up, followed by some elbows to the back ("50,000 watts" according to Morgan in a good line). Another bulldog finishes Marin at 5:06.

Rating: C+. Yeah it's easy to see the greatness in Watts, as he clearly got the idea of connecting with the fans. The people clearly hated him and let him know, which made for some great moments. The match is just a squash, but Watts looked like a star, which is why he was such a big deal for such a long time.

Chief Big Heart vs. Tony Newberry

Big Heart is your traditional Native American and Newberry is billed as a Big Game Hunter. Newberry jumps him from behind to start but Heart fights back and pulls Newberry's vest over his face. The big chops send Newberry outside where he yells a lot before coming back inside. Newberry tries to get the vest off again and Heart fires off more chops, much to the crowd's approval.

A big chop sends Newberry back to the floor, where he finds...what looks to be a foreign object but Heart beats him up again. Newberry takes the leg down to finally get control and a leglock keeps Heart down. Heart chops his way to freedom and Newberry hides in the ropes, meaning it's time for more chops.

A half nelson (you don't see that very often) has Newberry in more trouble but he gets in some judo shots. That just fires Heart up and the war dance is on, meaning even more chops. One heck of a chop puts Newberry down and the Bow And Arrow makes him give up at 8:25 (with Newberry tapping, though that didn't

mean anything for almost thirty years).

Rating: C+. I liked this more than I was expecting, with the deal with the vest being a nice touch. The thing is that while they were both rather gimmicky, you could instantly understand what you're getting. It might be a bit more simplistic than most matches but it was easy to understand. That's a nice feature and it helped the match overcome its only so great action.

Argentina Apollo vs. Bob Boyer

Apollo takes him down by the arm to start and they go to the mat. A fight over what we would call a Tombstone results in Boyer being sat on the apron and a pat on the head. Back in and they go back to the mat to grapple over the leg. That's broken up with a grab of the ropes and the fans seem to appreciate the clean break. Well that's rather nice of them. Apollo takes him down by the arm for a change so Boyer grabs the leg and twists for a smart break.

Boyer works on the arm and it's time to talk about upcoming shows. A backdrop puts Apollo down but he misses a splash, allowing Apollo to crank on the arms. They both go to the mat and tie their legs together with neither being able to get anywhere. A rather painful looking leglock has Boyer in more trouble, with Boyer having to turn it over to make the rope for the break.

Well kind of as they're so tied up that it takes a bit longer than usual. Even the referee is confused about what to do as they're really that stuck. Apollo finally stands up and grabs Boyer's leg, spinning it around to get him back up. Boyer has to rub some feeling back into his leg before they shake hands and we're finally back to normal.

Apollo cranks on the leg again and then cartwheels around into another leglock for a nice sequence. The half crab goes on, but Boyer slaps him on the back, which makes Apollo let go as

he thought it was the referee. Eh smart move. A snapmare puts Apollo down and some jawbreakers make it worse. Back up and they run the ropes until Apollo hits a crossbody for the pin at 14:22.

Rating: C. There was a good match in there but the extra time hurt it. I liked the technical aspect of things here, with the referee getting confused about untying them being something that felt realistic. It's easy to see why Apollo got a following, as he was quite the athletic star. Cut off about five minutes and this is far better.

Post match...they actually keep fighting, which isn't something you would often see back in the day.

Chief White Owl vs. Steve Stanlee

Stanlee strikes away to start but Owl goes into the war dance and knocks him out to the floor rather quickly. Back in and Stanlee knocks him into the ropes for some slow kicking but Owl gets it into the corner. Owl's clean break earns him a kick to the ribs so he ties Stanlee up in the ropes. Stanlee gets loose and charges right into a forearm to the chest. Well that didn't work. Back up and Stanlee hammers away in the corner so Owl fires off some dropkicks. Owl fights back but the time runs out for the curfew at 6:05.

Rating: C. You can only do so much with the short run time and it was only going to be so good in the first place. It also didn't help that we already had a Native American gimmick on the show. Commentary mentioned that White Owl and Big Heart were a team, but it doesn't work so well when you have both of them fighting on the same show. Stanlee is someone I've seen before and I still don't quite get the appeal.

Post match Owl chops him down and is declared the winner by referee's decision.

Morgan talks to an older fan on a cane to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. While this is basically the great great grandfather of modern wrestling, I had a good time with the show. You can easily tell the good guys from the bad guys and the action is fine at times. No you won't be seeing any of the high flying stuff of today, but it's straight up pro wrestling and it still works. While I wouldn't want to watch a ton of it, there is something to be said about seeing the origins of what we watch today.

Results

Bill Watts b. Tomas Marin – Bulldog

Chief Big Heart b. Tony Newberry – Bow And Arrow

Argentina Apollo b. Bob Boyer – Crossbody

Chief White Owl b. Steve Stanlee via referee's decision

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WWA Television – September 1965: Go Back To Jobber School

WWA Television

Date: September 1965

Location: Southside Armory, Indianapolis, Indiana

God bless Youtube. The WWA is an old territory that actually had two offices: one in Los Angeles and the other in Indianapolis. This show aired sometime in the 1960s but it's almost impossible to track down the exact date. This might not even be the WWA but there's only so much research you can do on a show that's (possibly) nearly fifty years old. Let's get to it.

Tom Jones vs. Gene Kiniski

Kiniski is world champion (not sure if that's WWA or NWA) and this is a non-title match. Jones is a plucky little face who grabs a headlock to start but Kiniski takes him into the corner and pounds away on the back. The announcer answers a fan letter about what the ring is made of in great detail which is more interesting than the match itself.

Kiniski kicks him in the face but Jones comes back in with rights and lefts before stomping the champion down in the corner. Kiniski comes back with boots of his own and gets two off a slam. A lot of choking ensues and Kiniski chops him in the chest a few times. Jones finally comes back with a headbutt but gets chopped right back down. Three straight backbreakers (Kiniski's finisher) are enough to end Jones with relative ease.

Rating: D+. Kiniski is a guy that I've never actually seen wrestle before but he was a solid heel in there. He acted like a jerk and choked a lot which had the fans wanting to see him lose but Jones just wasn't the guy that was going to be able to do it. Jones was decent but there was only so much he could do out there.

House show ad with a main event of Larry Hennig/Harley Race vs. Dick the Bruiser/The Crusher. Those guys would be big deals in the AWA which makes me think this is WWA given how close the territories were to each other. Wildbur Snyder comes in to talk about the tag match and how much the teams hate each other. Snyder was co-owner of the WWA which confirms this as much as anything can. The house show is Saturday November 2, which would put this in 1968, meaning Kiniski is NWA World Champion. I love figuring that stuff out.

Assassins vs. Prince Pullins/Rocky Montero

This is 2/3 falls. The Assassins are masked guys with whips who the announcer says "claim the title of World Tag Team Champions." That might mean they're champions, which would confuse things even more because the Assassins last held the WWA Tag Titles in 1965. The announcer now says the Assassins ARE Tag Team Champions, so this is sometime between 1965 and 1968. Pullins vs. Assassin #1, who is the smaller of the two, gets things going. The Prince avoids a right hand as they stall early on.

Prince grabs a headlock and Montero comes in for no apparent reason, allowing #2 to come in and cheat. #1 is put down by a headlock takeover but a knee to the ribs put Prince down and allows the tag off to #2. The announcer talks about how big the wrestlers are as Montero keeps wandering around the ring, even winding up on the wrong corner at one point. Prince slugs away on #1 and tries some headbutts, which the announcer calls a popular move "among young negro wrestlers." Different times indeed.

More headbutts sent #2 into Montero in the corner as everything breaks down. Montero actually cleans house a bit and sends the Assassins outside until it's #2 inside again. #1 comes in as well but the good guys pick him up and ram him into #2. Not that it matters as #2 pops back up and hammers on Montero before bringing #1 in again for a slugout. Pullins comes back in again with headbutts and right hands but gets driven back into the corner. #2 slams him down and #1 adds a top rope stomp to Prince's ribs for the first fall.

Montero and #1 start, which confuses the announcer as the people who ended the previous fall are supposed to start the next. Rocky is sent outside and holds his eye due to some shots from the gauntlet on #1 hand. The match stops almost entirely until it's back to Pullins who is sent to the floor as well. Monster comes back in and rips at #1's eyes as everything breaks down yet again.

Prince comes back in and cleans house as the announcer talks about the legal issues of referees getting physical. A dropkick gets one on #2 and it's back to Montero with no tag. Prince is in almost immediately as Montero walks down the apron, meaning there's no one for Prince to tag. It breaks down again and the top rope stomp plus a seated senton are

enough to pin Montero.

Rating: D-. This was WAY too long and not good in the slightest. Montero was all over the place and looked like he had no idea what he was doing the entire time. The Assassins were just generic heels in masks which made the match pretty dull to sit through. Nothing to see here, other than Montero looking like he was lost in the match.

Danny Dolly vs. Dick the Bruiser

Bruiser owned the company and is a very terrifying looking human being. I looked this up online and was told it was September of 1965, making me think that the house show ad was wrong. Bruiser throws him around to start and fires off some knees in the corner. We hit the neck crank as the announcer talks about how no one has ever submitted to a chinlock. Back to the corner for choking by Dick but Dolly comes back with right hands and a headlock takeover. Bruiser easily comes back with kicks to the ribs before throwing Dolly out to the floor. Dick slams Dolly back inside and goes up for a flying knee drop and the pin.

Rating: D+. Total squash here but it was entertaining to see Bruiser clean house like that. He made a career out of destroying various jobbers and is one of the handful of old names that you'll see hear every now and then. His look reminds me of Brock Lesnar, which was was even scarier in the 60s.

Moose Cholak vs. Tony Parente

Cholak is a big monster who won't shake hands with the much smaller Tony. We're also in a different arena here as there are, I kid you not, less than fifteen fans visible in the crowd. Parente goes for the legs before trying an armbar instead. Cholak goes after the leg before the guys collide in the ring which should have been much more one sided than it was. A dropkick staggers the Moose and they trade forearms with neither getting anywhere.

Something resembling an armdrag puts Parente down but he comes back with a knee to Cholak's leg. There's a leg lock as Moose is in a bit of trouble now. Back up and Cholak grabs a bearhug for about two seconds

before sending Parente into the buckle. Tony slugs his way out of a wristlock but gets sent into the buckle again to stop his comeback. I don't know if you can even call it a comeback as neither guy has had a long advantage yet.

Parente takes him down with an armbar and cranks back on the arm Fujiwara style before being thrown outside. Back in and Tony scares Cholak into the corner before firing off some hard right hands. Moose shrugs them off, headbutts Tony down and drops a big splash for the pin.

Rating: D. WAY too much offense from Parente here as Moose looked like he won because he survived rather than being dominant at all. The match made Cholak look like he got lucky rather than being the better man, which isn't what you would want out of a monster like him. Bad match here but the crowd being so small was far more interesting.

Overall Rating: D-. Well at least it was short. This wasn't a good show for the most part as the most entertaining matches were the Kiniski and Bruiser squashes. The WWA never was a huge territory and if this is any indication of what their product was like, it's not hard to see why. Really dull show here with nothing that held my interest at all.

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