

Better Than A Bollard: Another Show In The British Wrestling Bag



IMG Credit: Preston City Wrestling

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Date: May 18, 2018

Location: Envoque, Preston, England

Commentators: Greg Lambert, Stallion

This is the final show from the Independentwrestling.TV cycle I've been on and it's from a company I've actually heard of. It's a Preston City Wrestling event and while I've heard mixed reviews from the company, there are at least some names on the card I'm familiar with, at least to a certain extent. Let's get to it.

Usual disclaimer: I don't follow this company and know nothing about them.

After some quick graphics of a special appearance and one match, what seems to be the main interviewer gets the show's name wrong (bigger instead of better). She talks about how we're in a smaller show at the moment because that big company (guess) is in England. We talk to some fans at ringside, which is as painful as you can probably imagine. The interviewer talks to a fan, who is rather confused about what he's seeing

tonight because his favorite wrestler isn't on the card.

Another fan likes T-Bone to retain the title because he's muscular and has nice tattoos. Other fans want to see other matches as I'm not sure why this is airing on a show that is less than two and a half hours in the first place. Another fan is here on her birthday and wants Lionheart to win the PCW Title tonight. A member of the Preston City Council is here and wants Lionheart to win as well. He does seem to know what he's talking about here and sounds like a longtime fan for a bit of a surprise. For the future, he wants us to come to the upcoming charity show. Nothing wrong with that.

We're still not ready for the actual matches so here's Cruiserweight Champion Dean Allmark to talk about being ready to defend against Johnny Storm. They've both been around for a long time but tonight should be a good match. The interviewer suggests that Allmark was on a WWE show earlier this week and he doesn't disagree.

After ten minutes of chattering, we're ready to go. Was that some bonus pre-show that they just threw on here as an extra?

Opening sequence, which is mainly featuring former WWE stars.

The ring announcer, who gets his own entrance, welcomes us to the show and hypes things up as you would expect him to do.

Adam Brooks vs. Matt Cross

Cross was Son of Havoc in Lucha Underground though he's unmasked here. Brooks hits an early shoulder so Cross backflips into a superhero pose for a standoff. A handspring elbow in the corner is caught so Cross elbows him in the face to send Brooks outside. It's too early for Cross' slingshot dive and Brooks sends him into the apron. Back in and some shots to the face in the corner have Cross in trouble, followed by a running kick to the face for two. Three straight covers get three straight twos as Brooks seems to be a bit stubborn.

The chinlock goes on and naturally just fires Cross up, allowing him to send Brooks outside for a suicide dive. A top rope double stomp to the

back (with Cross having to be careful of the low ceiling) gets two on Brooks as you can hear fans talking over commentary. Brooks gets his own two off a slingshot DDT and frustration is setting in. They trade jumping strikes to the face until Cross hits a cutter for two. Brooks is right back with a middle rope Codebreaker for the very fast pin at 7:35.

Rating: C. Not bad here with two guys who have strong enough reputations. It's a lot better than starting with people most fans have never heard of and gets you off on a better foot. Brooks is someone who has enough talent to work well against most people so putting him in there with a veteran like Cross was a good way to go. It's a perfectly fine opener and the company feels professional off the bat.

Here's Sheikh El Sham (with Maxwell Jacob Friedman (not that well known yet), though the graphic lists him as Maxwell Jacob Feinstein, which is likely a joke I'm not getting) for a match and an accompanying chat. He seems to be your standard evil/rich Sheikh, because that's the kind of thing that will never die. Before the match, Sheikh talks about gracing the fans with his presence, earning him some not very nice chants from the fans. Friedman tells them to NOT do that so Sheikh can brag about his wealth some more. With that out of the way, Friedman brags about his own wealth and does it as well as he usually does.

Sheikh El Sham vs. Danny Hope

This seems to be part of a long running feud. Hope has Joey Hayes with him to cancel Friedman out and wears a hat with a ribbon around it for a dashing look. He also has some kind of protection on his back. Hayes insults Friedman's scarf and the fight is almost on as a result. Sheikh's trip into the corner goes nowhere as Hope takes him to the mat and parades around a bit. With Sheikh tied in the ropes, Danny hits a walking chop, sending Sheikh outside for a pep talk from Friedman.

Back in and Sheikh nails a dropkick, with Friedman getting in a few cheap shots from the floor as he should be doing. A hard whip into the corner stays on Hope's back, meaning that while he might not be a great promo, he can at least pay attention. We hit the strut from Sheikh, allowing Hope to come back with some chops. A powerslam plants Sheikh and the

comeback is on, including the atomic drop. Sheikh goes right back to the back though and grabs the completely original camel clutch for the tap at 7:04.

Rating: D+. That's quite the drop in quality from the opener as Sheikh might as well have been out of 1983 with nothing original or new whatsoever to a character that would have felt played out fifteen years ago. I kept waiting for a surprise or some kind of a twist here but it was every generic rich villain that you could imagine.

Post match Hayes calls MJF a chav, meaning he wants a match of his own.

Maxwell Jacob Friedman vs. Joey Hayes

This was scheduled for later so at least it isn't the dreaded impromptu surprise match. Good thing they were both in gear already, including Hayes' chest protector. Friedman is fired up and grabs a fired up wristlock, which is reversed with some rolls and a pull of the arm. A stomp on Friedman's hand sends him outside, where Sheikh kisses the hand to show what friendship is all about. Another one to the ear (Friedman: "Don't make this weird man!") lets Friedman get back in, allowing Joey to kick the rope for a low blow.

The Sheikh isn't kissing that one but Joey goes outside, kicks Sheikh in the leg, and sends him face first into Friedman's crotch. Stallion: "NOW THAT'S JUST OBSCENE!" Hayes gets a running start to set up a very soft dive to keep Friedman in trouble. Back in and an interfering referee lets Friedman gets in a forearm to the jaw to take over. Friedman starts in on the arm, including a stomp to the wrist and an armbar. Hayes fights out of an armbar on the top and hits a high crossbody to start the comeback.

There's a neckbreaker for two but Friedman gets an elbow up in the corner. A package piledriver shoulder breaker gives Friedman two off a nasty looking landing. The lack of paying attention gets Friedman in trouble though as he chops the chest protector and hurts his hand. The hand is fine enough to poke him in the eye though, only to have Hayes come back with an enziguri. An enziguri staggers Friedman though, meaning it's time for Sheikh to grab Hayes' foot. The armbar goes on but Hayes reverses into a Crossface to make Friedman tap at 10:40.

Rating: C. He didn't mean much yet at this point but you could see the star power all over Friedman here. There is such a natural charisma to him and not only do you want to see him get punched in the face, but he can wrestle a completely competent match with the arm work. Hope and Hayes had some noteworthy charisma to them as well, leaving the Sheikh as the only weak link for the pair of matches.

Commentator Greg Lambert, who is also the matchmaker, is brought to the ring for a chat. Lambert brings out PCW Champion Tyson T-Bone (now of NXT UK) while also picking up the Road To Glory Trophy. T-Bone has been around here since the beginning and as far as Lambert is concerned, T-Bone may be the best of all time in PCW. We hear about T-Bone's accomplishments and that brings Lambert to the Trophy. This is now going to be a permanent trophy for T-Bone for all of his career success.

Cue Lionheart, who is getting a title shot tonight, to complain about various things (with Stallion explaining what the Trophy means to Lionheart and why he should be angry). Lionheart wants to know where his trophy was when his PCW Title reign had this place jumping. That trophy means a lot more to him than it does to T-Bone so Lionheart is coming for the title.

Cue Sha Samuels, who is also in tonight's title match. He's beaten Lionheart twice this year, which draws a TWICE chant. A fan calls Lionheart trailer trash and Samuels even brings him the mic so we can hear it again. Lionheart storms off so Samuels sings him out. As for T-Bone, he deserves the trophy so Samuels hands it over. T-Bone leaves and here's CJ Banks, Lionheart's partner, to jump him from behind. Jack Jester, Samuels' partner, runs in and we've got a match.

CJ Banks vs. Jack Jester

Lionheart runs back out to jump T-Bone and Banks gets in a cheap shot from behind to get us started fast. Jester is right back with a swinging slam and an elbow for two as Stallion isn't sure what Lambert is talking about with Lionheart attacking T-Bone. Something was in his way you see. Banks gets in a few shots to the back to take over but they head outside with Jester sending him into the apron.

A legdrop across the apron has Banks in more trouble as Stallion is ripping into Lambert for giving him the trophy and not seeing how badly it would go. Back in and Banks gets in a knee to put Jester down in the corner but Jester is right back out with a shoulder. A clothesline gives Banks two so Jester tells Banks how many it was, earning him a double stomp on the hands. Jester hits another clothesline but Banks is right back with a rollup and grabs the tights for the pin at 6:58.

Rating: D+. Not much to see here as it seems to be setting up a match down the line between the two teams for Samuels/Jester's Tag Team Titles. It wasn't the worst match but it came after a pretty good angle so it felt like a downgrade after the stuff with Lionheart. Both guys felt pretty generic and I was expecting something to stand out a bit more from a guy named Jester.

Cruiserweight Title: Johnny Storm vs. Dean Allmark

Allmark is defending and Storm is a bit of a British wrestling legend, or at least a pioneer as he helped rebuild British wrestling. They go technical to start with Storm standing on his head to escape a wristlock. An exchange of headscissors and hurricanranas give us a standoff with Storm knocking him outside. That means a suicide dive as Lambert pines for Storm's glory days of 2002.

Back in and Dean hits a lifting swinging neckbreaker for two and the yelling at the referee allows Dean to nip up for an enziguri. Dean is right back up with a powerbomb into a spinning faceplant for two but misses a middle rope moonsault. Storm's connects just fine for two and it's off to a pinfall reversal sequence. Dean gets to the apron for his own enziguri and loads up a Styles Clash, only to sit down with a powerbomb for the pin to retain at 6:32.

Rating: C. Given that they were talking about Allmark having a big World Title match at the Anniversary Show, there wasn't much of a doubt about what was going to happen here. Storm felt like a big deal (with commentary being rather entertaining by arguing over whether he was a legend or needed to be taken care of due to his age) and it felt like a big match, even though Allmark winning wasn't quite in doubt.

Post match Storm hands him the title in the show of respect.

Rampage Brown vs. Charlie Sterling

Brown was the World of Sport Champion for most of its revival season. Sterling seems to be loathed but comes through the crowd anyway. A glare from Brown sends him to the ropes at the bell as the fans sing rather impolite songs about Sterling. The bigger guys tease some mat grappling but it's Sterling bailing to the ropes again as the cowardice is shining through.

Back in and Brown takes over on the arm before hitting a dropkick to send Sterling into the corner. Charlie tries a leapfrog and gets powerslammed down in an old Rick Steiner spot. Cue Iestyn Rees and Nightshade, who are scheduled for a mixed tag later, to yell at Brown. Sterling throws him outside so Rees can deck Brown for the DQ at 3:56.

Rating: D. Brown had some nice power stuff in here but the match existed for the sole purpose of getting us to the post match stuff, which isn't the most thrilling idea in the world. Sterling was just kind of there for Brown to do stuff to and as soon as you saw the other two come out, it was clear where this was going.

I think you know where this is going.

Ashton Smith/Riho/Rampage Brown vs. Nightshade/Charlie Sterling/Iestyn Rees

Riho is Women's Champion. The villains stall on the floor before the bell until Sterling can be in for the opening bell...and tag out to Rees less than two seconds later. Actually it's Riho vs. Nightshade (former champion) as we wait for the first actual contact. Riho snaps off some armdrags and a butterfly suplex to send it off to Sterling, who gets punched by Smith.

Brown gets to beat up Sterling even more, including sending him into a big boot from Smith for two. Rees sneaks in for a cheap shot on Smith and the villains get to take over. That includes a chinlock/face rake from Sterling but Brown comes in and hits him in the back...to no avail

actually. Sterling shoves the referee and Lambert is aghast at the lack of a DQ. Fair point actually but what do you expect from a heel? Sterling tries to cannonball down onto Smith's back but lands on knees instead, meaning it's back to Riho for another fight with Nightshade.

Riho gets whipped into the corner and a Backstabber brings her right back out. Nightshade tells us to WATCH THIS, which is a pair of running knees into the back in the corner. They both hit kicks to the head at the same time and it's Riho up first for the tag off to Brown, who rampages quite well. A spinebuster gets two on Rees as everything breaks down. Smith hits the big running flip dive to the floor but the ref gets bumped back inside. Rees gets in a low blow and a spear for the pin on Brown at 9:53.

Rating: C-. This show is starting to drag a bit as they're getting to the point of not explaining who these people are while acting like we just know all of the vague stories they're referencing. The match itself wasn't terrible, but they need to get on to something a little more interesting than some of the people who made World of Sport so dull.

They all brawl to the back.

It's time for a contract signing for a Case vs. Voice match. In other words, Tel Banham, who has a Money in the Bank style briefcase, is putting his case on the line against Matthew Brooks, who likes to sing, who can never sing here again if he loses. Banham, all in white, is out first to brag about how handsome he is. He yells at a Brooks fan about how no one cares about his opinion. We need silence for the signing but since that won't happen, he opens his briefcase and busts out some fuzzy earmuffs.

Brooks comes out and sings his own version of My Way about how he's going to win the match and sign the contract. The song, which is quite good, goes on so long that Banham looks at his phone to fill in some time. They sit down and Banham says he can't hear anything Brooks says, so Brooks takes the earmuffs and throws them to the fans. They sign the contract but Banham teases cashing in tonight so Brooks might have nothing to win in their match.

Actually not so fast as the announcer says the match is locked in and

Banham CANNOT cash in until after the match. Oh and Banham is banned from the building, so Brooks sings the Goodbye Song. I could go for hearing how this started as hating a guy's singing voice probably had some funny lines to set this up. It's a unique enough story so they do have something good here.

Preston City Wrestling Title: Lionheart vs. Sha Samuels vs. Tyson T-Bone

T-Bone is defending and this is one fall to a finish. The brawl is on before the champ is out here so he hits the ring in a hurry and beats up Lionheart. A missed charge in the corner but Samuels pulls Lionheart outside to send him into some chairs. Samuels spits beer in Lionheart's face but walks into a spinebuster from T-Bone. A spinebuster from Samuels gets two on the champ though, making them even in at least one category. Lionheart gets back in and stomps on both of them but spends too much time yelling. That means right hands abound but Samuels clotheslines T-Bone by mistake.

Samuels hits a spinebuster for two on Lionheart but T-Bone gets in a shot of his own. Lionheart steals a few near falls apiece, including one with feet on the ropes. Hang on though as Lionheart calls out Banks for some help but Jester cuts him off. Now it's Brown to go after both of them, meaning all three people actually in the match have their partners here. Samuels slams Lionheart for no count from the distracted referee so T-Bone plants Samuels with a Tombstone. Lionheart breaks the trophy over T-Bone's head though and steals the pin and the title at 7:07.

Rating: C. The action was pretty good but what worked well here was the ending, with the trophy being brought in earlier today and then playing into the ending. It was good storytelling and sets up a rematch between the only three time World Champions in the company's history. It's not a great match but it's very good storytelling and that's more important.

Post match T-Bone yells about the loss and walks out on Rampage.

The announcer thanks us for watching to wrap up the night.

Overall Rating: C-. This was ok at best for the most part with nothing ever really taking off and getting them to that next level. I can't

imagine ever going out of my way to watch it again but it certainly wasn't horrible or even bad. It was another promotion that has a lot of familiar names and doesn't stand out above some of the other options available. You're better off watching Progress, but for a lower level alternative, this wasn't the worst thing you could pick.

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