

# 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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# **Wrestler of the Day – December 19: Luna Vachon**

Today we're looking at a non-traditional Diva: Luna Vachon.

Vachon, daughter of the legendary Butcher Vachon and niece of Mad Dog Vachon, got started in 1985, meaning we'll pick things up in 1986 at AWA Wrestlerock.

## Women's Battle Royal

There are ten girls in this and only three mean anything: Sherri Martel, Luna Vachon (didn't mean anything yet) and Candi Divine, who was awful but was popular in the AWA. She's also Women's Champion here. I have no idea who most of these women are. They're blondes in spandex. Someone is thrown out and I can't hear Capetta, nor do I particularly care to know.

Trongard and Capetta keep calling Luna Leona by mistake. Or by lack of intelligence, I'm not sure which. Two more go out but they're not important enough to announce. Somehow we got down to six. Luna (NOT LEONA) is gone. I think a Greek chick powerbombs Divine but it's not important enough to talk about. The Greek chick is out and we're down to Martel, Debbie Combs, Candi Divine and some chick that Trongard doesn't bother naming. Divine misses a charge and we're down to three. Her name is Joyce Grable. Ok then. Martel is knocked under the ropes, Combs throws out Grable and Martel sneaks in to steal the win.

**Rating:** F. I didn't know half of the names in this. That should tell you everything you need to know.

And another one at SuperClash III.

### Lingerie Battle Royal

Pali the Syrian Terrorist, Luna Vachon, Nina, Pocahontas, Malibu, Brandi Mae, Laurie Lynn, Peggy Lee Leather, Bambi

This is a Beverly Hills Street Fight Battle Royal. You can win by over the top rope or ripping clothes off so it's more like a bra and panties battle royal. Other than Nina (Ivory) and Luna, none of these girls ever meant anything. This is a POWW match and David McLane is on commentary here and sounds so horny he makes Lawler sound like a nun. The winner gets ten grand as well. The girls start in regular clothes and are as gimmicked as you could imagine. In short, the girl named Leather wears leather etc.

What exactly do you want me to say here? It's a lingerie battle royal with a total of 2/9 girls being known names. Nina vs. the Terrorist is the main rivalry here. Lynn is out. Various amounts of clothes are torn off and this is really boring. Apparently this started with a pair of jeans being torn up. Pocahontas is gone.

Nina is also and we're down to five. This is awful by the way. A loud TAKE IT OFF chant starts up. Peggy and Bambi are out, leaving us with Brandi, Luna and the Terrorist. Luna takes a bump from the top (called the third rope by McLane) and we're down to the two that started this. After far too long, the Terrorist wins.

**Rating:** F. Just horrible here on all levels and an embarrassment to say the least. McLane is considered scum in wrestling and I can't say I really disagree based on what I've seen from them. This was totally horrible and makes the Divas today look like Thesz vs. Gagne or something like that. Think

about that for a minute.

After several years in the indies, various women's promotions and as a manager, Luna would appear in the WWF as Bam Bam Bigelow's girlfriend and sometimes tag partner, including here at Wrestlemania X.

#### Bam Bam Bigelow/Luna Vachon vs. Doink the Clown/Dink

Bigelow runs over Doink to start with a clothesline and a dropkick to silence the crowd. A headbutt misses though and the Clown pounds away a bit. Bigelow misses an elbow drop and it's off to Dink, meaning Luna has to come in as well. This is your usual "comedy" but Luna does hit a running hip attack in 619 position but Dink starts running around in circles. The small clown goes up top but misses a dive.

Vachon goes up but misses a BIG splash, allowing the big boys to come back in. Doink pounds away but is clotheslined to the floor with one shot. Dink annoys both heels but Doink comes back in, only to be sat on in a sunset flip attempt. A charges misses the big clown though and a jumping DDT puts Bigelow down. The Whoopee Cushion (top rope seated senton) completely misses and Dink is knocked to the floor. Doink tries a suplex but Bigelow falls on him for two. The top rope headbutt is enough to finish off the clowns.

**Rating:** D. This was bad but not completely terrible. Doink wasn't doing his stupid comedy and thankfully Bigelow didn't have to look all that stupid, which is the worst thing they could have done. The match wasn't much but to be fair they needed something to give the crowd a breather after the awesome opener. This wasn't horrible.

Luna wound up in WCW in 1997, setting up this match at Slamboree 1997.

#### Madusa vs. Luna Vachon

This is the fallout from last month. Luna is billed from the Other Side of Darkness. Lee Marshall is brought in as a women's wrestling expert here. Luna takes her down to start and chokes a lot. Madusa tries to throw punches but gets beaten down again. Marshall talks about Martina Navratilova as Madusa kicks Luna's head off with a SWEET spin kick. Luna

comes back with a stomach claw which that schnook Marshall calls scandalous. Madusa hits something like a Stinger Splash and screams a lot. Clothesline gets two. Luna manages a thumb in the eye, misses a top rope splash, and gets German suplexed for the pin.

**Rating:** D-. Nothing at all to see here as neither girl cared and none of the fans cared either. Bad match and there was nothing going on. The division didn't exist but we got this stuff every now and then so that WCW could claim they had women's wrestlers. Bad match but Madusa is kind of cute at times.

It was back to the WWF for Luna's longest in ring run, starting at Wrestlemania XIV.

#### The Artist Formerly Known As Goldust/Luna Vachon vs. Marc Mero/Sable

The guys start things off with Mero hitting a fast headscissors and a clothesline. Off to the women folk but Luna wants to fight Mero. She gets Sable instead and Luna runs away instead of fighting. We get a lap around the ring and the men come back in before we get any contact. Goldie gets backdropped by Mero and kicked in the ribs by Sable for good measure. Luna won't tag in so it's back to Mero so that the genitals match.

Mero pounds away on Goldust in the corner but gets clotheslined down to change control. A quick cross body gets two for Marc but Goldust hits an uppercut to put him right back down. The fans chant for Sable as the men collide. A double tag brings in the girls and Sable spears Luna down. She pounds away and kicks Luna in the corner before bealing her across the ring.

Sable pounds on Goldust as well but it's back to Mero who doesn't fare as well. With Sable trying to get back in, Mero hits Goldust low but can't hit the TKO. Instead Goldust counters into a DDT for two but he can't hook the Curtain Call. Mero hits a running knee lift and a moonsault press for two. Goldust goes up but gets crotched, setting up a top rope rana by Mero for two.

Marc threatens to hit Luna and ducks just in time to make the heels collide. The TKO on Goldust gets two more as Luna makes the save. Sable



tags herself in and covers Goldust but has to avoid a splash from Luna. A Sable Bomb gets two on Luna and she's back up in seconds. Not that it matters as the TKO (it's a cutter out of a fireman's carry) from Sable ends Luna a few seconds later.

**Rating:** C. This was WAY better than I was expecting it to be. The saddest part of this match though was what happened after: in the back Sable had praise heaped onto her while Luna was basically ignored. Sable could barely do anything in the ring while Luna was a seasoned veteran who received no credit for her work with Sable. Only Owen Hart congratulated her on her success. That's rather sad when you think about it.

From eight days later on Raw, April 6, 1998.

#### Luna vs. Matt Knowles

Knowles is semi-famous for his time as HC Loc from the very old days of ROH. Goldust beats the tiny man up and Luna gets a top rope headbutt for the pin in like 30 seconds.

This set up the showdown with Sable at In Your House XXI.

#### Sable vs. Luna Vachon

This is the first evening gown match, meaning they start in gowns and the first to be stripped to their underwear loses. They walk around very slowly with both girls losing a sleeve each. Luna, an actual wrestler, drives in some shoulders in the corner before ripping off Sable's skirt. Lawler is thrilled and Sable charges at Luna to take over. Mero comes out to yell at Sable, allowing Luna to strip the rest of Sable's dress off for the win. There wasn't enough to rate here but this wasn't wrestling anyway.

Luna stuck around for once, including this match on Raw, August 10, 1998.

#### Luna vs. Jacqueline

Luna slams Jackie into the mat to start and Sable takes Mero down on the floor. Kurrigan glares Mero down when he comes after Sable and the match grinds to a halt. Jackie goes up top but gets crotched. A neckbreaker

puts Jackie down and Luna goes up for a splash. Her hip kind of almost hits Jackie's face but it gets the pin anyway. What a mess.

Another Raw on January 11, 1999.

#### Gillberg vs. Luna Vachon

Gillberg misses a spear, gets his eyes raked across the top rope, has his Jackhammer countered into a cross body, and is pinned by Luna in about thirty seconds.

Here's another showdown with Sable at Royal Rumble 1999.

#### Women's Title: Luna Vachon vs. Sable

Scratch that ring announcer line as apparently he's here to accept Sable's forfeiture of the title. This was supposed to be a strap match which had a total of 18 seconds of build on Raw. That's not an exaggeration either. They came out during another match and that was the only mention. Luna attacked Sable on Heat before the show tonight and injured the champ's back, but Sable wants to fight anyway.

This is the four corners variety so Sable can look TOUGH here. Sable shoves her into the corner and whips Luna to the floor. She keeps whipping Luna and gets three corners but Luna makes the stop. We get more choking and whipping before Luna drags Sable around with both of them getting the buckles at the same time. You know, like in every other strap match EVER. Shane gets up on the apron before Sable gets the buckle, but Sable's psycho fan Tori uses the distraction to deck Luna, giving Sable the win.

**Rating:** D. Sable was insanely over back in 98, but at this point it was starting to wear thin. I always felt sorry for Luna who never got to win the Women's Title. She really would have been a good choice for an evil chick for some blonde heroine to beat, but instead we got worthless lumps like Jackie. Nothing to see here but it could have been worse.

We'll jump ahead to Unforgiven 1999.

#### Women's Title: Ivory vs. Luna Vachon

Ok then. They're in an office and fighting with a copier and phone. Ivory is champion here in case you were wondering. It's your standard match in this genre and is just various weapons shots and throwing people into things. Odd to see women doing it though. A splash onto some cardboard boxes as Luna channels her inner Foley. This is about as pointless as you could ask for. And here's Tori to save Luna for no apparent reason. Ivory hits Luna with a wooden pole for the pin. That was as pointless as I could have imagined.

**Rating:** N/A. Way too short here. This was like 3 minutes long and random as all goodness. That's a shame too as Luna could have had a decent match with someone like Ivory, who actually had some decent training and could work a match. That's one of Luna's biggest issues: she keeps getting stuck with these opponents that can't actually do anything but brawl, when Luna needed a regular worker.

Luna's next title shot was at Rebellion 1999.

Women's Title: Tori vs. Jacqueline vs. Luna Vachon vs. Ivory

Tori is the former lesbian stalker that is now just sexy as all goodness. Jackie is just annoying and no one cares about her. Ross is freaking over the Bulldog thing to further emphasize that he is a HEEL. Luna is a face. That's just odd. Wow this division is dying to have Trish and Lita show up, if nothing else for their looks. No tagging here. Please make it quick. Various people do various teams and no one cares.

The division was a bigger joke than it is today if you can believe that. Crowd is more or less dead here but not quite. The ECW Triple Sleeper is added to as it's a quadruple sleeper. This is just a series of really stupid looking spots in a row. And Ivory hits Jackie with a belt and wins it. Wow I really could not have cared less there. Ross says he didn't care because of Stephanie. Nice cover up there Jimbo.

**Rating:** F. These matches had a tendency to be awful. Awful

sounds like a nice thing here as this was just annoying to have to sit through. Terrible match to say the least.

Time to continue the stupid at Survivor Series 1999.

Fabulous Moolah/Mae Young/Tori/Debra vs. Ivory/Luna Vachon/Terri Runnels/Jacqueline

Thank goodness this isn't an elimination match. For some reason Moolah and Mae were wrestling in 99 with Moolah even winning the Women's Title at one point. Jerry's face when Debra comes out is hilarious. Ivory is Women's Champion at this point. Moolah jumps the champion in the aisle to start but gets shoved down for her efforts. We officially start with Tori vs. Jackie but Luna comes in for some double teaming.

Keep in mind that Tori is a wrestler in name only, Mae and Moolah combined to be over 150 years old, and Terri and Debra are there as eye candy. After less than two minutes, a double clothesline from the old chicks gives Moolah the pin on Ivory. This may have been the worst idea this side of the birth of a hand. This is what Raw is for people.

We'll wrap it up with an indy appearance at WWA Inception in 2001.

Luna Vachon vs. Vampire Warrior

This is a Black Wedding Match, which I think means hardcore but I have no idea for sure. Luna slaps him and Gangrel won't fight back because it's his wife. Gangrel finally kind of slams her down and we head outside. There's wedding themed stuff on the floor and Gangrel takes a cake to the face. Luna gets tongs and grabs Gangrel's balls with them. We get a pumpkin shot in and you can connect the dots on this one yourself I think. Luna throws down her wedding ring and spits at him, earning her an inverted DDT for the pin. Nothing here at all but ANOTHER comedy match.

As is often the case, looking back at Luna's career makes me feel sorry for her. She was a very talented worker but she kept getting stuck putting over the latest blonde of the month. Luna would have thrived in a modern promotion like TNA where they would let her brawl no matter how she looked. Imagine her against the Beautiful People and just destroying

them one by one. Think that might work? Vachon was very talented but unfortunately no one took advantage of it.

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## **Wrestler of the Day – October 4: Gangrel**

Today we're looking at the forgotten member of a trio: Gangrel.

Gangrel got his start back in 1988 and we'll pick things up on April 22, 1989 on WCW Pro under his real name of David Heath.

### David Heath vs. Iron Sheik

Sheik nails him from behind with the Iranian flag and drops Heath with a clothesline. A backdrop sets up chops and choking as we're in full squash territory here. Sheik suplexes him down and the camel clutch is good for the submission.

From the same day on another syndicated program called World Wide.

### David Heath vs. Great Muta

Muta poses a lot and blows mist into the air to start. Some chops put Heath down and some power drive elbows have him reeling early. We hit the chinlock for about two seconds before it's time to crank on the arm. Muta works on a wristlock and shoulder claw for a long time (well, long for a squash match at least)....and it actually gets a submission. That's a surprise but a good way to make Muta look even more dangerous.

He would head to the WWF as the Black Phantom to job a bit. From Superstars in February 1993.

### Razor Ramon vs. Black Phantom

Razor is Intercontinental Champion and this is non-title. A wristlock takes Phantom to the mat but he comes back with a middle rope DDT for two. The Phantom gets dropped by a chokeslam and the belly to back superplex followed by the Razor's Edge for the easy win.

Off to Raw on January 23, 1993.

### British Bulldog vs. Black Phantom

Shawn is on commentary so Bulldog has to yell a bit before we get going. Phantom uses the distraction to snap Davey's throat across the top rope and a jumping DDT gets two. Bulldog comes back with a suplex and chinlock. The masked man slams Davey down but misses a middle rope splash, setting up the powerslam for the pin.

He would have a few stops in ECW, including this match on July 28, 1995.

### Steiner Brothers vs. Vampire Warrior/Dudley Dudley

Vampire Warrior is more famous as Gangrel. Scott and Dudley get things going with the guy you've probably heard of throwing Dudley around with ease twice in a row. A butterfly powerbomb sends Dudley running for the corner and it's off to the Warrior and Rick. The Steiners are WAY over here. The Warrior gets in some chops to start but walks into a BIG powerslam to stop him cold.

Some double teaming slows Rick down for a bit and it's back to Dudley for some lame shots to the back and a neckbreaker for two. More double teaming ensues but Dudley jumps into Rick's boot. Hot tag brings in Scott and house is immediately cleaned as Scott busts out a bunch of suplexes. The Steiner bulldog ends the Warrior with ease.

**Rating:** D+. We'll file this one under "what else were you expecting?" The Steiners were still an awesome team at this point and two of the guys that could hang with anyone in the ring. Back when he was on his game, there wasn't much more fun to watch than Scott Steiner throwing people around like they were nothing.

Heath would get a few shots in WCW in their big run, including this match on World Wide on June 14, 1997.

#### Rey Mysterio Jr. vs. Vampire Warrior

Rey hammers away to start but gets dropped by a hard shoulder block. Mysterio flips to the apron but his springboard cross body is caught in midair. Warrior throws him out to the floor before a spinning vertical suplex gets two. A catapult into the bottom rope gets the same and we hit the chinlock. Rey is sent into the corner but crotches Warrior on the top to turn things around. A top rope hurricanrana is enough to give Mysterio the pin.

**Rating:** C-. Mysterio was sharp at this point and got to sell like only he can here. Warrior got in some offense of his own, even though it wasn't going to get him anywhere. I was surprised by how much he got to show off though and it made the match a bit better. Mysterio isn't the kind of guy that can dominate a match and then win with ease so there wasn't much else they could do here.

It was off to the WWF after this under the Gangrel name. We'll start things off on Raw, August 17, 1998.

#### Brian Christopher vs. Gangrel

This is Gangrel's Raw debut after he won last night on Heat with an Impaler. Edge is chilling in the crowd watching Gangrel. Brian jumps him

to start and hits a middle rope bulldog to take over. Gangrel hits a tiger driver and the Impaler to end this quick.

From Raw, November 2, 1998.

#### D-Generation X vs. The Brood

This would be the Outlaws and X-Pac. This is being written the day after Raw 1000 so they're pretty fresh in my mind. The Brood is Edge, Christian and the leader Gangrel. They may have picked the wrong guy to be in charge. Pac and Edge get us going and you know how fast that's going to go. Pac kicks Edge's head off for two but Edge comes back with a spinebuster.

Off to Christian who is in a long sleeve shirt for some reason which is really loose on him. It's a pretty odd look but he hits a gutbuster to take over. Hot tag brings in Road Dogg for some shaking punches and it's back to Edge. He DDTs Road Dogg and everything breaks down. The lights go out and it's Kane time. He clears the ring and we'll say it's thrown out too soon to rate. There was nothing to see here.

Gangrel would be on one of the European PPVs called Capital Carnage.

#### Gangrel vs. Al Snow

Well this is an interesting place to start. This is during the time the Brood was relatively new and no one knew what in the world to make of them. That music is still awesome. The announcers say nothing at all during his entrance which is odd to me. Snow has Head with him and is therefore ridiculously popular.

He does the dance which is always amusing for some reason. Ross and King are back all of a sudden. Well ok then. This is the JOB Squad era which really is a good idea in theory. I think it's just the tape but the audio is REALLY bad here. Oh look it's a British fan with an airhorn. You know I was waiting on that.

Snow starts by hitting all of his standard stuff, meaning that



the in ring stuff is overshadowed by the insanity of his character which is a shame. The fans always do the We Want Head thing which gets a bit annoying but is always funny. Edge and Christian hit the ring after about 4 minutes or so which was of course expected. With Christian distracting the referee, Snow gets a shot with Head but Edge hits a missile dropkick from the top for the pin.

**Rating:** C. Eh it was to get the Brood over so that's fine. Snow was by far the more talented guy and since he made the match coherent, that means it's good. You can't expect much out of Gangrel due to a high level of suck. Oh that was funny. Anyway, this was fine for an opener I guess as Snow got the fans awake, which is exactly what he was supposed to do, and since he's in the JOB Squad, no one expected him to win anyway.

Time for another six man at In Your House XXVI.

#### Brood vs. J.O.B. Squad

The brood is Gangrel, Edge and Christian while the J.O.B. Squad is Bob Holly, Scorpio and Al Snow, who have united together after getting sick of constantly losing to bigger stars. Edge pounds on Holly to start but walks into a powerslam and a falcon's arrow for two. A clothesline puts Holly down and it's off to Christian, who lost the Light Heavyweight Title to J.O.B. Squad member Duane Gill with help from Snow.

Scorpio comes in to kick Christian in the face and get a two count off a middle rope flipping legdrop. Off to the Squad's leader Al Snow for some headbutts to the chest but getting caught in a reverse DDT. Gangrel gets the tag and pounds away in the corner before clotheslining Snow down. They're not exactly getting out of first gear here. Snow comes back with a wheelbarrow suplex but Gangrel DDTs him down and brings in Edge. Off to a chinlock on Snow but he quickly fights up and a double clothesline drops both guys.

Scorpio and Christian come in to speed things up but everything quickly breaks down. Holly and Christian are left in the ring with Christian

being dropped long enough to allow Snow to blast him with Head. Scorpio hits a moonsault legdrop for two as Edge makes the save. Edge follows that up by diving over the top to take out Holly and Snow before Christian hits what would become the Unprettier and then the Killswitch for the pin on Scorpio.

**Rating:** D. This really didn't do much for me as it was a very dull match with a wild ending. Also, this makes the heels 0-4 on the show tonight which isn't the right way to get the crowd into things. The Brood would get better in the future while the J.O.B. Squad would never amount to anything, meaning they're living up to their name.

Gangrel actually got a title match at Royal Rumble 1999.

#### European Title: Gangrel vs. X-Pac

The vampire is challenging. This is another of those matches that is there so they can have another title match on the card, meaning there's no story that I can think of. Road Dogg might have gotten a blood bath recently but that's about it. They hit the ropes very quickly to start with Pac grabbing an armdrag to take over. Gangrel grabs a headlock but they speed things up almost immediately again.

Pac hits a quick legdrop but misses a kick in the corner to shift momentum again. We hit the chinlock to give the guys an earned breather. The champ fights up and gets thrown into the air for two. Gangrel misses a top rope elbow and Pac gets two off his jumping clothesline. A big spinwheel kick takes Gangrel down again and X-Pac hits the Bronco Buster.

The third spinwheel kick in about four minutes takes Gangrel down, but Pac gets crotched on the top, continuing a theme tonight. Pac tries a cross body but Gangrel rolls him through for a botched near fall by referee Teddy Long (he countered three but Pac's shoulder was up). Not that it matters as the X Factor retains the title a few seconds later.

**Rating:** C+. Referee's botch aside, this was a nice surprise. Gangrel is hardly known for his in ring abilities but he looked pretty good out there tonight. Pac was better here against a smaller guy as usual, and we got a good match out of it. After the two longer and not great matches

earlier, this was a nice pick up.

Gangrel would be in a Survivor Series match in 1999.

### Team Val Venis vs. Team British Bulldog

Val Venis, Mark Henry, Gangrel, Steve Blackman

British Bulldog, Mean Street Posse

Even JR says that Val's team has nothing in common at all. The Posse is a group of three guys from Greenwich, Connecticut who wear sweater vests and never won a match that wasn't a hardcore match that they won by mistake. I have no idea why this match exists but my guess is "we have no idea what else to do with these fifteen minutes." Bulldog is European Champion here which is likely a title Val wants.

The captains start things off and after some quick offense from both, it's off to Pete Gas (the Posse was Rodney, Pete Gas and Joey Abs). Pete is scared to death of having to actually wrestle so it's back to Bulldog. Once Venis is down it's off to Pete who hits a slingshot to send Val chest first into the buckle. A belly to back suplex gets two for Pete as Jerry asks where JR would get nice clothes in Oklahoma. JR: "Arkansas." Off to Blackman for the only thing he could do: martial arts. A bicycle kick gets the quick elimination for Blackman.

Off to Rodney who has even less luck against Blackman, immediately getting taken down. Gangrel comes in who gets caught in a crucifix for two before Gangrel realizes he's fighting Rodney. He pounds on the Posse dude, shrugs off a cheap shot from Joey, and plants Rodney with the implant DDT (Edgecution) for the elimination. Joey, by far the best of the three Posse members, comes in and gets to face Mark Henry. Joey actually hits a hot shot on Henry but crotches himself on the middle rope. Mark does about what you would expect him to and splashes him for the pin.

So it's 4-1 now and Bulldog comes in to fight Henry. Mark runs Bulldog over with ease and it's off to Gangrel. Gangrel goes up top and is immediately crotched and superplexed down to make it 3-1. Blackman is in

next but he misses a middle rope headbutt. He argues with the referee and gets caught in a fisherman's suplex to make it Henry/Val vs. Bulldog. Val gets to start but it's quickly a double team. Jerry: "Hey what's this?" JR: "Well it looks like Mark Henry and Val Venis double teaming the Bulldog King." Val gets sent to the floor but Henry splashes Bulldog, allowing Val to come in off the top with the Money Shot for the pin.

**Rating:** D-. This was as worthless as it was advertised. The Posse is one of those groups that is funny in retrospect but at the time they were wasting PPV time when there had to have been better options for this spot. Venis would have been a bigger deal a year ago so I'm not quite sure why he was in this spot either. Little trivia note: this is the shortest four on four Survivor Series match ever, breaking the record set about 20 minutes ago.

Gangrel actually made it all the way to 2000, including this match on Smackdown, February 3, 2000.

#### Intercontinental Title: Chris Jericho vs. Gangrel

Chris is defending. Jericho hammers away in the corner to start and drops Gangrel with a spinwheel kick. Gangrel sends him out to the floor where the seconds, Chyna and Luna Vachon respectfully, stare at each other. Back in and an elbow drop gets two on Chris but he sends Gangrel out to the floor. Gangrel scores with a Russian legsweep but tries a top rope sunset flip, only to get rolled through into the Walls to retain Chris' title.

Gangrel would head to the WWA promotion for their Inception PPV.

#### Luna Vachon vs. Vampire Warrior

This is a Black Wedding Match, which I think means hardcore but I have no idea for sure. Luna slaps him and Gangrel won't fight back because it's his wife. Gangrel finally kind of slams her down and we head outside. There's wedding themed stuff on the floor and Gangrel takes a cake to the face. Luna gets tongs and grabs Gangrel's balls with them. We get a pumpkin shot in and you can connect the dots on this one yourself I think. Luna throws down her wedding ring and spits at him, earning her an

inverted DDT for the pin. Nothing here at all but ANOTHER comedy match.

Time for the required TNA appearance, from Weekly PPV #57 on August 13, 2014.

### 3 Live Kru vs. Devon Storm/Sinn/Vampire Warrior

That would be Konnan/BG James/Ron Killings vs. Crowbar/Kizarny/Gangrel. Konnan and Storm get things going as Don West hypes up the Kru's growing popularity. Feeling out process to start with Storm being sent over the top but skinning the cat back in. Konnan goes to the old school idea of grabbing the arm before bringing in James to work it over even more.

Storm gets two off a northern lights suplex before suplexing Sinn into a moonsault. Warrior comes in for some elbow drops for two but James gets up for a double collision. Cue the Harris Brothers to watch the match as Killings comes in off the tag. An ax kick puts Warrior on the floor as everything breaks down. Konnan dropkicks Sinn for two and Killings hits a kind of Poetry in Motion. James pumphandle slams him for the pin.

**Rating:** D. This was a messy tag match and a bit much for just five minutes. The Kru actually would become a pretty big deal in TNA over the next few years and one of the few acts they had that mattered in the early days. Sinn was nothing at this point other than a guy in furry red pants.

We'll jump ahead about eleven years for one more match at Tommy Dreamer's House of Hardcore on June 14, 2014.

### Gangrel/Matt Striker vs. X-Pac/Rikishi

Striker and Rikishi get things going with Matt stopping for some pushups. Rikishi does the I say US you say O deal and they finally lock up. Striker fires off some right hands and hurts his hand on Rikishi's hand in a funny bit. Instead he steps on Rikishi's foot but the sight of Rikishi bent over scares him away. Seriously. A slam attempt goes as well as you would think and the threat of a Stinkface sends Striker over for a tag.

X-Pac comes in to chants of 1-2-3 and Syxx. A big spinwheel kick sends

Gangrel outside and Pac follows him out with a plancha. Striker tries to get in a cheap shot but eats a Bronco Buster for his efforts. Back to Matt legally for a hard back elbow to the jaw. Pac fights back against Gangrel but he walks into a belly to belly for two.

Gangrel charges into a boot and the real hot tag brings in Rikishi. House (of Hardcore) is cleaned but Gangrel low blows his way out of a Stinkface. It earns him an X-Factor but Striker makes the save and takes the real Stinkface. Gangrel shoves him for some reason and it's a chokeslam and fat Samoan sitdown splash for the pin.

**Rating:** D+. For four guys that wrestle on the indies or special events only, I've seen far worse. This was about 80% comedy and that's all you can really expect from someone like Rikishi anymore. Gangrel was just kind of there as a name you might remember and nothing more, which is a fine way to get a paycheck.

Gangrel is a guy who basically got by on his gimmick alone. To his credit though, it was quite the awesome gimmick. Vampires are always going to get people's attention and that cocky smile made him even better. The big problem for Gangrel is associating with two future World Champions as it gives you some almost impossible expectations to overcome.

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