

Some Quick Wrestling Book Recaps

So I was at the Half Price Bookstore (praise be its name) and found a nice selection of reasonably priced wrestling books earlier in the week. Five days later and I've read them all so it's time for some quick recaps.

The first three are all by my, for lack of a better word, mentor Scott Keith, who has been doing what I do for about 20 years now. He wrote a bunch of books back in the day and here are a handful of them.

First up we have *The Buzz On Professional Wrestling* from 2001, which is more like a textbook for newcomers. It maps out the basic ideas of the major wrestling companies and professional wrestling in general. This was about 99.9% recaps for me and would be for most people reading this, but it's designed to be mainly the basics, which is an interesting concept.

Second was *Wrestling's One Ring Circus* from 2004, which is much more focused on a single period. In this case, the focus is on the time period from the InVasion up through *Wrestlemania XIX*, breaking down each time period and all major points in between. This was a quick read and is meant as more of a mockery of HHH and Stephanie during this period, but there are definitely some valid criticisms of a time period that not a lot of people are fans of. It's also interesting to see John Cena mentioned as a young potential star without the tongue planted firmly in cheek.

Finally from Mr. Keith we have 2006's *Wrestling's Made Men*, which is the same concept as *One Ring Circus* but focusing on post *Wrestlemania XIX* up through mid 2005. In this case it's a collection of pay per view recaps with extra details filled in. This isn't as interesting of a time but there is definitely a lot of stuff worth checking out in it.

Finally overall we have a more traditional wrestling book with Bill Watts' *The Cowboy and the Cross*. Watts is one of the more controversial figures in wrestling history as he's a very old school guy who pushed

Mid-South to a very impressive place in wrestling. He's one of the few bookers who was destroyed by a force completely outside his control (the collapse of the Texas oil industry), but that style didn't exactly work well in WCW.

The problem with Watts is he comes off as someone who has almost never been wrong in his entire life and seemed to have every great idea in the history of the business. If someone disagreed with him as a talent, it was time to throw hands and no one ever beat Watts. Like ever, including Verne Gagne, who would rather back down than fight him.

He also loved Danny Hodge at a level that is probably unhealthy. Don't get me wrong: Danny Hodge is one of the toughest men to ever live and probably the only wrestler who could defeat Kurt Angle in a shoot (note that I said could, not would), but you would think he cured cancer, invented pizza and single handedly got the Kardashians off TV and Justin Bieber deported to Mars.

Overall though, Watts is definitely someone whose story is worth reading, though you should take some of it with a grain of salt. He comes off as one of those guys who was successful, but I have some issues with a few of his stories. Also, there are some moments where he doesn't do himself any favors shaking the stereotypes of being a bit of a chauvinist and racist, but it's not the worst in the world.

One final note: a lot of his book is dedicated to talking about his Christianity. I have zero issue with that and always enjoy hearing someone talk about it, but there comes a point where even I was thinking "good grief man, we get it already." The book is worth checking out for some of the details on stuff, but like I said, some of the stuff he takes full or even majority credit for sound a bit shaky.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of Complete Monday Nitro Reviews Volume III at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00XOUNBEA>

And check out my Amazon author page with cheap wrestling books

at:

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

Thought of the Day: On The Outside Looking In

It's their world and we're just watching it. The other day, someone posted a comment on here praising me for my analysis, knowledge and reviews. I appreciated that quite a bit and still shake my head when I read such kind words written about me, but there's something everyone needs to keep in mind: wrestling journalists, reviewers, writers or whatever you want to call us are almost all on the outside looking in.

Unless there's something I'm unaware of, neither Dave Meltzer, Bryan Alvarez, Wade Keller, Scott Keith, certainly not myself, or any other wrestling writer have big time wrestling experience. I'm well aware that several of them have sources inside WWE, TNA and/or ROH, but that's the key to it: those sources are **inside** and reporting things to the people **outside**. There are things that we're never going to know about or understand no matter how smart we think we are, how well read we think we are, or how many reviews we browse, shows we watch or shoot interviews we download every day.

Side note: Shoot interviews are not some uncovered gospel. There's no one hooking the wrestlers up to a lie detector and threatening them with a bullet to the head if they tell the truth. I can't count how many times people have sworn something is true because it was a SHOOT. Wrestlers make their livings lying to us every single night, but I'm supposed

to take everything they say as true because they tell me it's true now? It doesn't work that way. Do you think a guy who might be able to get a job in WWE in the future is going to tell the truth and say he hates WWE's business practices and that it would be a nightmare to work there? Shoot interviews are another way for wrestlers to get us to pay for their stories, just like we do when we go to a show. Same idea.

At the end of the day, I'm a wrestling fan that has watched a lot of wrestling in my life. I have what I consider a fairly decent knowledge of modern wrestling history, but the only things I know for sure are what I'm given on screen. No matter how you look at it, everything we know is based on what people inside allow us to know. Take everything any wrestling writer or journalist (myself certainly included) with a grain of salt the size of a Buick. We're going on what we're told, but there's no guarantee that anything we're told is true.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of on the History of Summerslam at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

And check out my Amazon author page with wrestling books for under \$4 at:

WWE.Com Article On the Five Moves Of Doom

At least they've having a good time with some of this stuff.

<http://www.wwe.com/shows/raw/2013-08-12/john-cena-five-moves-o>

f-doom-26140514

Also since it's appropriate, I'm a contributor to Scott Keith's blog. Keith is credited with inventing the term Five Moves of Doom for Bret Hart back in the 1990s. I do NXT, Nitro, Thunder Smackdown and Impact (temporarily) reviews for him and there's a ton of great stuff over there. He's pretty much the reviewer I modeled my own style after. Check him out at:

rspwfaq.net