

# GOLDEN DAYS FOR FENLAND

## ROUND 2

*(The Indies – plus one or two others - In East Anglia during the late 60s)*



#### **4) The Story So Far**

In Round One we looked at International Promotions' Indie offerings across the Fens, notably in March and Kings Lynn. In Lynn they competed with Dale Martin Promotions, and we'll look at some of DMP's shows later. Right now, we're off to Downham Market (and a sneaky peak at Fakenham, Diss and Swaffham) where Trans World Promotions flew the flag for the Indies ....

#### **5) Downham Market's Town Hall**

The Town Hall in Downham Market was very much the centre of things in the late sixties and early seventies. Now there's a debate about how to use it because it's "not making any money." It had been built by public subscription in 1887 to mark Queen Victoria's Jubilee. As far as wrestling was concerned it was compact but large enough to allow for a good grappling atmosphere.

It wasn't the size of hall (R) to interest the likes of Dale Martin Promotions, but if it ran at near capacity indie promoters could more than wash their face with the takings.

It's also worth noting that quite a few wrestlers lived in and around Norfolk, including one Terry Goodrum, who was just cutting his teeth with the wrestling game in the mid to late sixties, but was to become quite a controversial character in rings up and down the country over the following decade.



This is from the Kings Lynn News and Advertiser in the late sixties, probably 1968:

**Lynn's 'Tiger Kid' on Corn Hall bill**

WHEN he married, Mr. Terry Goodrum gave up his hobby, amateur boxing, because his wife objected. Now he is a professional wrestler, appearing under the name, Tiger Kid White.

The "grunting and groaning" on the canvas may look far more brutal than boxing, but Mrs. Margaret Goodrum says she does not mind because "he doesn't get his face punched and broken any more."

Tiger Kid White, 24-year-old welterweight, has been wrestling up and down the country for about a year, and tomorrow he is making his Lynn debut in a "tag" match at Lynn Corn Exchange, in another programme arranged by Lynn Walks United Promotions.

He was born at Downham, and now lives with his wife and small daughter at 13A St. John's Terrace, Lynn.

Mr. Goodrum had been boxing since he was 13, and became interested in wrestling as a career when he met fellow Lynn wrestler, Mr. Mike Taylor, who wrestles as Sheik Abdul Singh.

The "Sheik" gave him a few training bouts on a concrete floor. "When he found I could land all right on that, the 'Sheik' knew I'd be all right in the ring," said Mr. Goodrum.

He does weight training and practice bouts at Lynn Y.M.C.A. and fights three bouts in a week.

Tiger Kid White has wrestled in 56 contests during his career. He has won 47 of the fights and been knocked out only once.

He says: "My hardest fight was with Jack Taylor, from Accrington, the triple welter-weight champion. I lasted six rounds, but lost the contest."

**LYNN PARTNER**

Wrestlers are not considered to be real professionals until they have been in the business for five years or so. Tiger Kid White hopes to continue building up his career and reputation.

His partner for the "tag" wrestling bout on Saturday is to be an amateur wrestler, also from Lynn, "Digger" Somerton. They are challenging "The Undertakers".

Mr. Goodrum says that "tag" wrestling requires even more skill than the usual bouts. "You have really got to know your partner, and work hard at practices so that there is good co-ordination in these really fast bouts," he said.

Tiger Kid White is also appearing at Downham on February 21.



It was never clear to me if Terry Goodrum (or Tiger-Kid White, or Kib White, Don Kovacs, or even Sandor Kovacs as he would later style himself) actually ran Trans World Promotions, but he must, surely, at the very least have been the booker – as he appeared in virtually every show! He certainly took his skills forward in the following decades with Cape Promotions before achieving notoriety in his King Kendo dealings with his mate, Bill Clark.

## 6) The Downham Bills

Terry is no longer with us. He was married to Margaret who wrestled as Saucy Suzie Parkin, and he became a real tearaway in his Downham days, wrestling, of course, as the local boy. He was a terrific worker, had amazing stamina and wasn't averse to taking the hood every now and again! His name is somewhat ubiquitous when trawling through the matches at Downham.

Trans World advertised their shows in the local papers, although some of their posters and programmes had a bit of a d-i-y to look to them. We'll go through a few:

Not a bad opener, this one (R). The Ghoul was always a draw. (I often thought a Ghoul Diet Plan would sell well, as he appeared to gain and lose up to three stones from week to week!) We will also come across appearances from the mysterious Tiny De-Mann who was clearly Ghoul-ish without the hood. Once again we meet the conundrum regarding the question of ex-suicide pilots' ability to carry on performing!

**TRANS-WORLD PROMOTIONS**  
proudly present

# WRESTLING

**TOWN HALL, DOWNHAM MARKET**

Doors open 7 p.m. **FRIDAY, APRIL 19th** Commence 8 p.m.

**STAR-STUDED OPENING PROGRAMME**

International heavyweight <b>THE GHOUL</b> 23 stone American v. <b>CHICK ROLFE</b> New Zealand	Middleweight thriller <b>'SHEIK' MIKE TAYLOR</b> from the Dave Allen Show v. <b>DIGGER SUMMERS</b> Australia
Curtain Raiser <b>PETER KEEN</b> West Hartlepool v. <b>'LORD' THOMAS ROTHCHILD</b> Mayfair, with his valet, Ruben	Catchweight clash <b>KAMIKAZE</b> Japanese ex-suicide pilot v. <b>TIGER KIB-WHITE</b> Downham Market's local boy

**PRICES 10/-, 7/6, 5/-**  
Advance Booking at the Snack Bar, Downham Market.

**TRANS-WORLD PROMOTIONS**  
proudly present

# WRESTLING

**THE TOWN HALL, DOWNHAM MARKET**

Doors open 7 p.m. **FRIDAY, MAY 17th** Commence 8 p.m.

Sensational Top-of-the-bill contest

## THE WHITE ANGEL

The famous French-Canadian masked star

v.

## 'DIRTY' BRETT MARTIN

The Nottingham Barnstormer

Welterweight Sizzler  
**MICK COLLINS** v. **KIB WHITE**  
Belfast Downham's local boy

Mid-Heavyweight Clash <b>PETER KEEN</b> West Hartlepool v. <b>THE PLOUGHBOY</b> Beccles Strongboy	Heavyweight Thriller <b>RIC CHARLES</b> Yarmouth ex-Coastguard v. <b>CHICK ROLFE</b> New Zealand Champion
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**PRICES: 10/-, 7/6, 5/-**  
Advance booking at the Snack Bar, Downham Market.

If memory serves, the White Angel (L) in show two was Ric Charles' son, Mick LaRoach, who would also crop up bare-faced at Downham. Mick was another good worker. For show three I wrote a quick preview (R) for the local paper to whip up interest :

## CONTEST FOR WRESTLERS

Lynn wrestler, **Sheik Mike Taylor** has received a challenge from Downham wrestler **Chick Rolfe**.

The Sheik was wrestling at Downham Town Hall on April 26 when Chick Rolfe jumped into the ring and challenged him. They are each to put up £25 and to wrestle at Downham Town Hall next Friday.

The Sheik says the only thing worrying him is that he is a 12½-stone middleweight and his opponent is a 15-stone heavyweight, but he thinks he stands a good chance.

**REVISED BILL — JUNE 14th**  
**TOWN HALL, DOWNHAM MARKET**  
**WRESTLING**  
**FRIDAY, JUNE 14th** Comence 8 p.m.  
Doors open 7 p.m.  
-- great challenge catchweight clash with a £50 side stake. 10 x 5

**CHICK ROLFE**  
Downham's own  
v.  
**SHEIK MIKE TAYLOR**  
Anglo Arab Yogist  
The fight Downham has been waiting for.

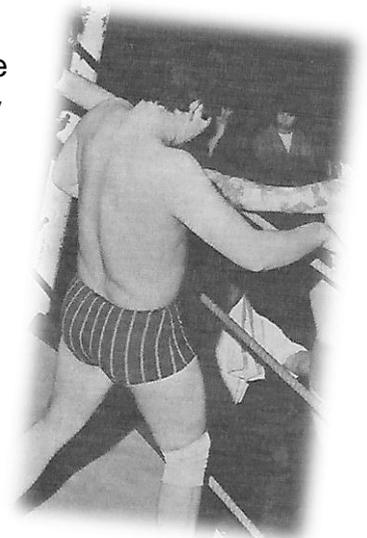
Heavyweight bout. 10 x 5  
**THE GHOUL**  
v.  
**STEVE CONROY**

Welterweight bout. 6 x 5  
**LORD THOMAS ROTHCHILD**  
with his valet, Rubens  
v.  
**MIKE LA ROACH**

TAG TEAM SIZZLER  
**THE BLACK KNIGHTS** v. **KIB WHITE**, Downham  
Never been beaten. **JIM MCLAREN**, Scotland

Prices 10/-, 7/6, 5/-  
Advance bookings. Snack Bar, Downham.

Trans World made the most of a very small roster of wrestlers, using every permutation possible. And Chick Rolfe (R)(switched as coming from New Zealand and



now from Downham Market, although I think he came from March!) did become a firm favourite and earned his money often facing the Ghoul (as well as Tiny De-Mann!)

**GRUDGE MATCH**  
The 30-stone globe-trotting wrestler from U.S.A., Giant Jumbo, tops the bill at a tournament in Downham Market Town Hall tonight (Thursday) at 8 p.m. when he meets the very capable, but much lighter, Graham Sellars from Grimsby in a heavyweight grudge match. Local-boy Chick Brittain and Stamford's Jack Brittain and Paul Rudean fights Young Ricardo.

Downham shows lacked the big names and Trans World found it difficult to fill the hall, although they didn't do a bad job given the number of performers who appeared to be on almost every bill!

**TOWN HALL, DOWNHAM MARKET**  
**TRANS-WORLD PROMOTIONS** proudly present  
**WRESTLING**  
**Wednesday, July 17th** Comence 8 p.m.  
Doors open 7 p.m.  
**INTERNATIONAL HEAVYWEIGHT CONTEST**  
**VINCE APOLLO**  
Nottingham Tough Guy  
v.  
**LENO LARAZZI**  
Brilliant Italian Star

**ONE NIGHT 4 MAN K.O. TOURNAMENT**  
**MICK COLLINS** Belfast  
**HARDY LINGUS** Leeds  
**BILLY DUKE** Brighton  
**KIB WHITE** Downham

TAG TEAM THRILLER  
**THE POACHERS**  
Rough and tough  
versus  
**Peter KEEN** West Hartlepool  
AND  
**Chick ROLFE** Downham

PRICES 10/-, 7/6, 5/-  
Advance booking at the Snack Bar, Market Place, Downham Market.

But they were good performers. They got Bill Clark's Poachers in to frighten the crowd to death with their gunshots, and the original Undertakers (Vince Apollo and Leno Larazzi) knew how to put on a bill-topper. But big names were needed. Call for Jim Lewis and the Doctor!

**TOWN HALL, DOWNHAM MARKET**  
**TRANS-WORLD PROMOTIONS** proudly present  
**WRESTLING**  
**FRIDAY, SEPT 20th** Comence 8 p.m.  
Doors open 7 p.m.  
Sensational return grudge tag match

**THE EVIL**  
**BLACK**  
**KNIGHTS** v. **PETER KEEN**  
Masked Mystery Men West Hartlepool

**WHITE** Downham and  
**DAVE VALENTINE** Australia

Catchweight Contest  
**JOHN HOWARD** Leicester v. **RON MARINO** Italy  
Supporting Welterweight Sizzler  
**LORD THOMAS ROTHCHILD** Mayfair, with his faithful valet, Ruben  
v.  
**BILLY DUKE** Brighton. Ex-Boxer.

PRICES: 10/-, 7/6, 5/-  
Advance booking at the Snack Bar, Market Place, Downham Market.

TOWN HALL, DOWNHAM MARKET  
 TRANS-WORLD PROMOTIONS proudly present  
**WRESTLING**  
 Doors open 7 p.m. **FRIDAY, OCTOBER 11** Commence 8 p.m.  
 Sensational Top-of-the-Bill Contest  
 'GENTLEMAN'  
**JIM LEWIS**  
 Manchester. Welterweight champion of the world. v.  
**KIB WHITE**  
 Downham's own brilliant star.  
 Catchweight thriller Middleweight clash  
**BRETT MARTIN** v. **YOUNG GALLAGHER**  
 Midlands area champ. v. Ireland. v.  
**DIGGER SUMMERS** v. **MIKE LA ROACH**  
 Australia Young Canadian sensation.  
 Heavyweight Grudge Contest  
**THE GHOUL**  
 23 stone American La Savate Star v.  
**CHICK ROLFE**  
 Downham's favourite.  
 PRICES: 10/-, 7/6, 5/-.  
 Advance booking at the Snack Bar, Market Place,  
 Downham Market. (C11.10)

Sadly, the Sharky Mayes vs Doctor Death was a bit of a no-hoper and the promotion did start to get a bit of a cheap-and-cheerful look about it. The poster advertising the Black Knights (over) didn't help. And there's also a reproduction of Roneo'd (remember them?) programme notes containing an 'interview' with referee John Campbell (no relation) along with a typed bill of fayre.

Nevertheless, Downham Market hosted some fabulous evenings of wrestling and Trans World can be proud of its achievements both in Downham and across the region, which we'll look at next.

TOWN HALL, DOWNHAM MARKET  
 TRANS-WORLD PROMOTIONS proudly present  
**WRESTLING**  
 Doors Open 7.0 p.m. **WEDNESDAY 18th DECEMBER** Commence 8.0 p.m.  
 International Top-of-the-Bill Contest 10 x 5  
**DOCTOR DEATH**  
 HOLLYWOOD. Infamous American Masked Star v.  
**SHARKY MAYES**  
 The Sensation of the Wrestling World  
 Light-Heavyweight Classic **BILLY DUKE** v **STEVE CONROY** 4 x 5  
 BRIGHTON. Ex-Boxer DARLINGTON. Rising young star  
 Heavyweight Clash **TINY DE-MANN** v **CHICK ROLFE** 8 x 5  
 12 stone Giant Downham's Own  
 Welterweight Challenge **LORD THOMAS ROTHCHILD** v **KIB WHITE** 8 x 5  
 MAYFAIR. With his valet Ruben  
 PRICES 10/-

SPOT - LIGHT

It is with great pleasure that in this edition of THE WRESTLING TRAIL we turn the spotlight on one of the most popular personalities currently active in the sport today. Five star Referee JOHN CAMPBELL.

John first became interested in Wrestling while at College in his home town of Kingstone, Jamaica. He spent two years as an Amateur winning several area titles during that time.

After graduating with a degree in Civil Engineering he decided to come to England where his prowess as a Wrestler soon came to the notice of the professional promoters and he turned professional having his first bouts in Scotland and the North of England.

It was while he was travelling to a hall in the far north he met with a serious car accident, suffering severe back injuries which, unfortunately, terminated his ring career. After spending six months recovering in hospital and a long holiday in sunny Spain he made a highly successful comeback as a Referee, and it is a tribute to his determination that at a recent meeting of the Wrestling Board of Control, he was named among the top five Referees in the country.

When interviewed by our Reporter John had some very forthright comments on the Wrestling scene today.

Question: John, do you think that the standard of Wrestling in this country is higher or lower than when you were active. ?

Answer: I think that the standard is definitely higher now than when I was Wrestling with all youngsters coming into the sport the competition is much tougher.

Question: Who do you think is the most improved Wrestler during 1968?

Answer: Without a doubt it must be that tough little Welterweight from King's Lynn KIB WHITE. I think his recent victory over 'Gentleman' JIM LEWIS must rate as one of his best.

Question: What effect do you think Television has on Wrestling in this country today?

Answer: I think there is too much Wrestling on Television today. The fans sit at home in front of 'the box', and will not come out to support the 'live show'.

Question: Who are your favourite wrestlers?

Answer: Along with the KIB WHITE I like to watch CHICK ROLFE and BOBBY CANNON. I think they are two of the best young Heavyweights around today.

Question: Is there any wrestlers whose contests you hate to referee?

Answer: Yes, there is one Tag-Team who I hate to be in the ring with. They are THE BLACK KNIGHTS. I can remember one contest when they inflicted severe head injuries on one of their opponents. I understand that they have now been fined and suspended by the Board of Control for their diabolical tactics.

Well, there you have it, an insight into one of the most respected and popular officials in the Wrestling World today. The best of luck for the future, John.

## 7) Trans World (or at least Trans Fans!)

A quick look, then, at one or two other halls Trans World took its of stable wrestlers to. Seat belts on to go to Swaffham, Fakenham, Brandon, Watton, Diss and even a quick sojourn to Kings Lynn.

FAKENHAM CORN EXCHANGE

**WRESTLING**  
THURSDAY 15th AUGUST  
Sensational Tag-Team Thriller  
**THE TEARWAYS**  
MICK COLLINS vs KIB WHITE  
**THE BARONS**  
DAVE & GRAHAM SELLARS  
Lightweight Challenge  
RUBEN vs ROG LADAIRE  
Middleweight Sizzler  
PEPE LAPAQUE  
PETER KEEN  
ALSO A GREAT TAG CAPTAIN'S MATCH  
Between MICK COLLINS & DAVE SELLARS  
PRICES 10/- 7/6 5/-

**TOWN HALL - DOWNHAM MKT.**  
TRANS-WORLD PROMOTIONS PROUDLY PRESENT  
**WRESTLING**  
DOORS OPEN 7 PM. FRID. JUNE 14 COMMENCE 8 P.M.  
EXCITING TAG TEAM CONTEST  
THE DIABOLICAL  
**BLACK KNIGHTS** vs JIMMY McLAREN  
NEVER BEEN BEATEN v YOUNG SCOTTISH STAR  
DIGGER SUMMERS  
AUSTRALIA  
EXCITING TAG CAPTAIN BOUT  
MIDDLEWEIGHT SIZZLER  
LORD ROTHCHILD 8x5  
WITH HIS VALET RUBEN MAYFAIR  
v MIKE LAROACH CANADIAN SENSATION  
INTERNATIONAL HEAVYWEIGHT CLASH  
SHEIK MIKE TAYLOR 15x5  
AFTER THE GHOUL HE SAID "I WILL HAVE CHIC ROLFE AND BEAT HIM"  
THE GHOUL  
25th AMERICAN L.A. SAUAT EXPONENT  
PRICES 10/- 7/6 5/-

**TOWN HALL, DOWNHAM MARKET**  
TRANS-WORLD PROMOTIONS PROUDLY PRESENT  
**WRESTLING**  
THURSDAY 8th AUGUST  
Sensational International Heavyweight Grudge Match  
JACK BRITTAIN vs PAUL RUDEAN  
A Super Catchweight Challenge Contest  
MICK COLLINS vs BRETT MARTIN  
PRICES 10/- 7/6 5/-

In Diss, in Norfolk, (R) they didn't bother to go through the card in the advert. In actual fact the line-up was almost a mirror image of the July 17 night in Downham Market. Leno Larazzi and Vince Apollo once again topping the bill, Mick Collins vs Kib White, Peter Keen vs Billy Duke, and Brett

Martin vs Pepe Lapaque (sic). A cosy family set-up indeed!

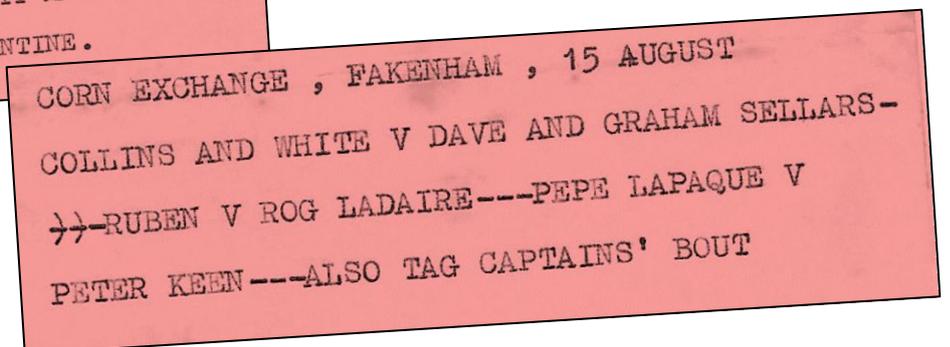
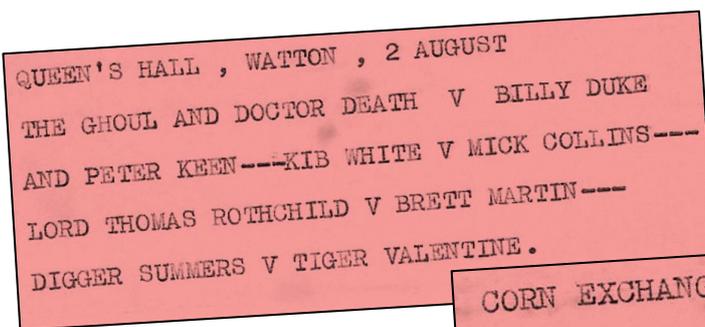
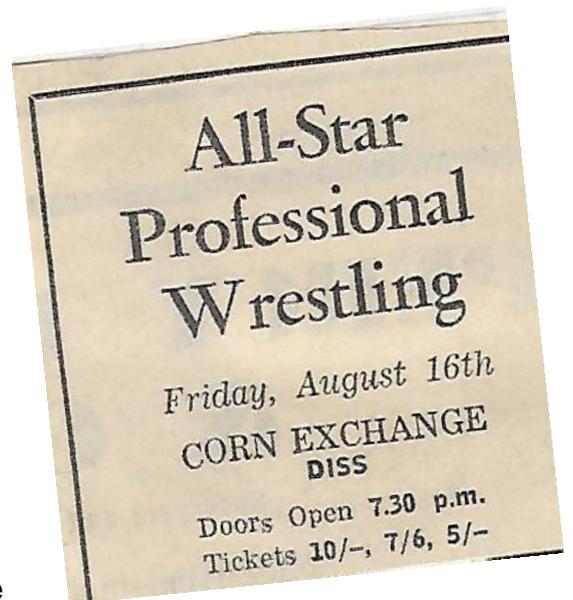
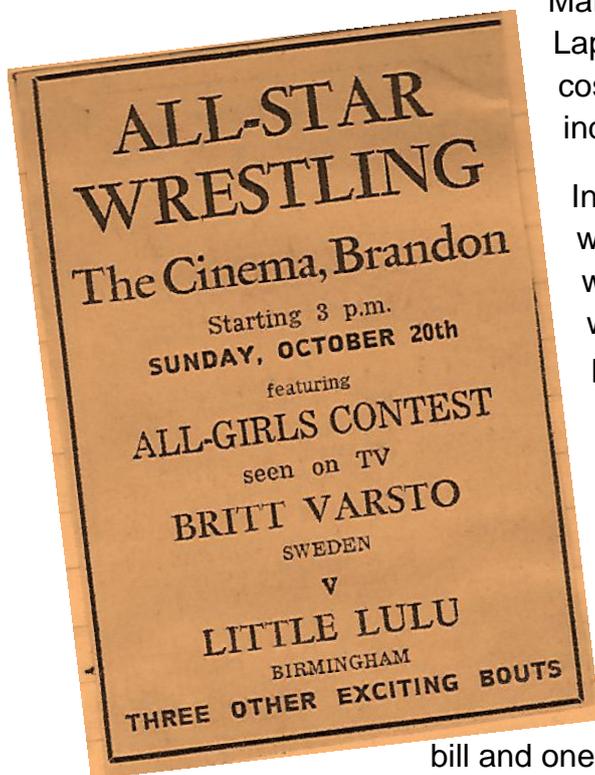
In Brandon (L) it was thought the women alone would bring in the

punters. It would seem to be a bit early for Little Lulu from Birmingham to be Clive Marshall's daughter. Maybe there were two?

And Britt Vartzo is labelled as "seen on TV" following Anglia Television's screening of part of the mixed male and female tag match from Wisbech Corn Exchange a few weeks before.

Two typed notes (below) of another Fakenham bill and one from Watton. We now see Lord Thomas

Rothchild and his valet Ruben emerging ... both in solo bouts as well as "ganging up" for Rothchild battles, complete with tray and glass for the water!



Again, the old familiar names, although this troupe of grapplers did earn their cash.

They were hard workers and they kept a lot of these small halls alive. The Joints and Dale Martins wouldn't venture anywhere near these venues so the crowds, although not immense, were loyal and grateful. They could forgive the repetition ... and the doubling up to present "tag captains" fights.

Trans World also ventured into Kings Lynn. What a hotbed of wrestling this town was. International Promotions, Dale Martin Promotions, and local companies like the Walks and the Community Centres pitched in to use wrestling as a fair old money-raiser. Here's a community centre Garden fete fund-raiser which switched its venue to the Corn Exchange. (You might recognise a few names!)

You can't leave the Trans World story without a trip to the Assembly Rooms at Swaffham (below). Say what you like about Trans World they travelled

around the Fens like no other promoter. A couple of bills for you.



No prizes for guessing at least one of the top-of-the-bills. Yes, it's Leno Larazzi vs Vince Apollo. There would be no excuses for a bad battle given the number of times these two climbed in the ring together, both alongside and opposite each other and as the Undertakers.



**NORTH LYNN COMMUNITY CENTRE GARDEN FETE**  
**CORN EXCHANGE KING'S LYNN**  
 THE NORTH LYNN COMMUNITY CENTRE IN ASSOCIATION WITH  
 TRANS WORLD PROMOTIONS PROUDLY PRESENT

# WRESTLING

Doors Open 7.30 p.m. **FRIDAY 26th JULY** Commence 8.0 p.m.

The Mid-Heavyweight Championship of the World 15 x 5  
 THE CHAMPION

## ERIC TAYLOR

BRADFORD, Gold belt holder V.  
 THE CHALLENGER



## VINCE APOLLO

Nottingham's tip-top Challenge

Welterweight Thriller 6 x 5 International Heavyweight Clash 10 x 5

**KIB WHITE** vs **BILL CLARKE**  
 English Corn, local hero V. Boston Tough guy V.

**MICK COLLINS** vs **LENO LARAZZI**  
 Belfast Finn Italian Ace

Sensational Tag-Team Highlight 40 Minutes Duration

**PETER KEEN** vs **TREVOR McDONALD**  
 WEST HARTLEPOOL, partnered by The Suffolk Ploughboy, partnered by

**HARDY LINGUS** vs **BRETT MARTIN**  
 Leeds Nottingham's Bananaman

PRICES: 10/- : 7/6 : 5/-  
 Book early at King's Lynn Tel.

Trans-World Promotions  
 proudly present

# WRESTLING

ASSEMBLY ROOMS, SWAFFHAM  
 SATURDAY, JUNE 22nd  
 Doors open 7 p.m. Commence 8 p.m.

International Heavyweight Contest  
**VINCE APOLLO**  
 The American tough guy  
 v **LENO LARAZZI**  
 Brilliant Italian star

Welterweight Clash  
**DIGGER SUMMERS** v **STEVE CONROY**

Catchweight  
**PETER KEEN** v **MICK COLLINS**

Welterweight **LORD THOMAS ROTHCHILD**  
 with **RUBEN** v **KIB WHITE**

Prices 10/-, 7/6, 5/-  
 Advance Booking at The Chocolate Box,  
 Market Place, Swaffham

A couple of months' later a Black Knight returns to do battle with Terry G (Kib White).



We've also got Jumbo re-appearing to face the Gypsy, and Vartzo vs Snyder to keep the female flag flying.



So the next step through the Fens will take us travelling with Starr Promotions. The Terry Goodrum

story is linked here, too, because as the years rolled by Terry teamed up with Starr Promotions' main man to achieve some notoriety, outlined in the pages of Heritage, as they got together to become partners in 'Kendo Crime', which has tended to overshadow their other achievements. We will try to put that right ...

*To Be Continued ....*