

My Wrestling Journey

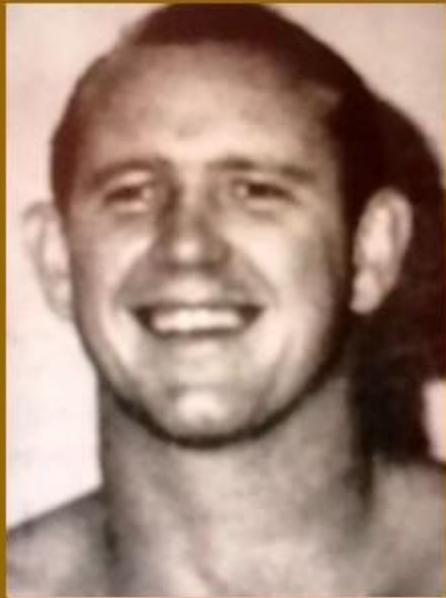


The travels of Our Man from Down Under

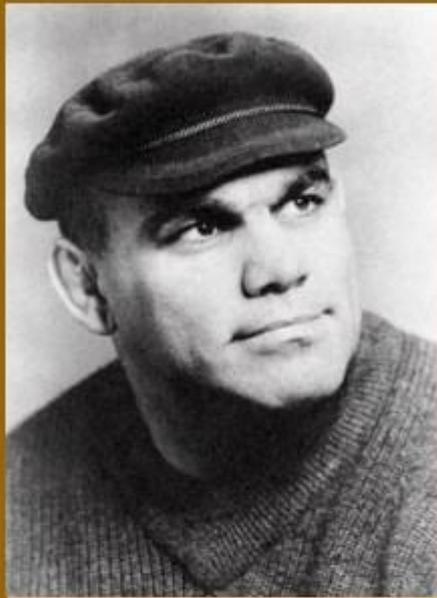
John Shelvey

Part Seven

'And now for something completely different'



Dory Jnr
At that time the wrestling
world was his oyster!



Mike Paidousis
Journeyman

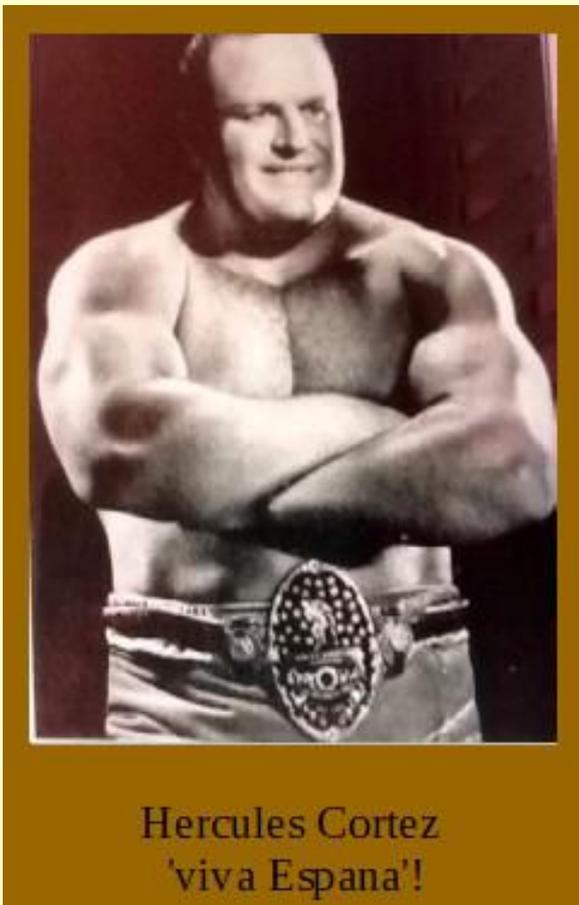
After the Lewin v Stevens stoush the Sydney wrestling public were salivating at the thought of what could come next, as many had never witnessed such legalised mayhem before. However mayhem took a back seat to boredom and numb derrières when Dory Funk Jnr. took to the ring and met Mike Paidousis one night. Funk, having wrestled professionally for about two years, would have a meteoric rise through the wrestling ranks and become the NWA heavyweight champion in just another four years, holding a title that was considered the premier wrestling championship around the world. (Bruno Sammartino fans would not concur).

Mike Paidousis was, both in looks and experience the young Dorys' opposite. A gnarled and stocky veteran of the mat, I thought he was perhaps a tad colourless, but he could wrestle, or brawl and with both guys in good shape



Ariel view of the Sydney Stadium. Upper left is Rushcutters Bay, from which I once saw a rock fisherman land a big blackfish, which he put into a small rock pool behind him. Five minutes later a wave broke over the rock, overflowing the pool and the returning water swept the fish past the horrified fisher! Score one for the fish!

their bout should have been a decent mid-card matchup. What the fans got was a one hour yawn fest. Both men barely used a wrestling hold, in not the worst match I've ever seen, but certainly the longest, most mind numbing bout I have ever witnessed. The match consisted of one or the other being thrown through, or rolling under the ropes and dropping to the floor. On returning to the ring, the other guy would be thrown out. Sometimes, just as a change of pace, one of the guys would simply roll out of the ring, return, walk across to the other side and roll or step out again. Why, you ask (along with about ten thousand others at the time)? Well, I can only guess that Dory and Mike, God bless their cotton (wrestling) socks were stalling for time. For a start, the match though only a mid carder, was announced as having a one hour time limit, which probably should have rung a warning bell. Also the card was held a week after Easter when there had been no Sydney show. It could be that a couple of the boys had flown home for the holidays and were delayed on their journey back, or maybe were interstate, or even just partying somewhere and whatever the reason the Funkster and Mikey were just whiling away the hour, in the hope that the guys would get to the stadium in time for their matches.



That night, I wasn't aware that the two rascals were matched, I was probably going along to see what I thought should be the main event, Lewin and Mitsu Arakawa, the actual main was positioned as Tex McKenzie and Kowalski. The only positive I could think of at the time, was that anyone viewing the bout who had thought wrestling was not a genuine contest, would be a convert afterwards as, if wrestling was an entertainment and the participants, did all within their power to entertain, then why would two wrestlers put on such an abject show?

Nearly a half century later, when I was a member of the Cauliflower Alley Club, I asked Dory jnr. also a member, via an email, if he remembered the match with Mike Paidousis and if so 'why oh why did they come up with that scenario' I didn't receive a reply. As Bootsie of Bootsie and Snudge would say, Never mind, eh?!

Hercules Cortez or as he was frequently addressed, The Mighty Hercules, arrived around the same time and the Herc lived up to his moniker early. On the little black and white, he performed press ups with nineteen stone Sammy

Menacker sitting on his back, while at the stadium he beat two Aussie enhancement talent guys in a handicap match, at one time pressing both men who were attempting to pin him and sending them over the top of the referee who was committed to counting a 'one two three' on the mighty Spaniard. When giving Braka Cortez a backdrop, Braka sailed up, up and over Hercules, landing on his feet just inside the ropes. The horrified look on his face, as he contemplated what might of become him, if he had travelled just a little further and landed on the concrete floor, was priceless!

Next time... 'Death by Karate chop'