



Foreign Objectionables

paul mitchell

Interested on thoughts on any visitors who were underwhelming and others came to these shores and really impressed, hope Bernard can give some input always learn from his comments on the 50s scene.

Ron Historyo

George Gordienko for me must be the number one wrestler to visit.

I was only a boy and saw Two Rivers as early as 1959 , he seemed magic to a young lad. But in the 1970's he was underwhelming when I saw him live.

I missed the Zebra Kid who seemed to fight all our top men , he was , I would have thought , a top man.

I was most impressed by Goro Tanaka , he really did look class.

My father-in-law said Carnera was a flop.

frank thomas

One who really impressed me in the 70s, was a giant heavyweight called Jean-Louis\ Jacques Breston. 28 stone I believe, saw him knock the daylights out of Gwyn Davies at Liverpool Stadium, he also did the same to Pat\Pete Curry. For a big man he was nimble, and had a fair bit of wrestling "nous" last time I saw him was against I think, Terry Rudge "on the box" and he later challenged Andy Robin, saying that Andy wouldn't be able to apply his "powerlock" submission hold on him because his legs were too thick! Never came off I don't think.

frank thomas

After my previous post, two who left me distinctly underwhelmed were Bill "tornado" Torontos, and the "second coming" of Billy Two Rivers..

paul mitchell

Well great response Tanaka was a cracking worker and iv got a little tale later about Breston later.

maskedmummy

Agree 100% about Tanaka also looked forward to the visits of Quinn Molnar and Dave Morgan after he moved to Germany also Indiro Guajiro later times It would Broady Steele

james morton

Quasimodo always put on a good show

Tom H

James Brown from Harlem, he was billed as the coloured junior light-heavyweight champion of the world, very agile with spectacular flying head scissors and dropkicks.

frank thomas

Another who impressed me was the "martial arts" expert, Jon Guil Don, had all the moves..

Anglo Italian

Yes Frank, Jon Guil Don was one of the best wrestlers I ever saw.

Johnny War Eagle was a great villain.

The Outlaw was a brilliant masked wrestler.

Ahmet Chong was desperately poor. An embarrassment. How they billed him as the Scourge of the East was an absolute liberty.

Poor Bill Torontos features on all these lists, but I personally have to love him nevertheless simply because I saw him so very often. He never ever surprised.

Le Hippy got a scathing write up in The Wrestler magazine.

Jean Ferre was a great attraction and could wrestle.

Los Halcones Doros / Golden Falcons never flew south ... please don't tell me they were Eddie Rose. Both of them.

Red Ivan had great potential but was wasted in his tv bouts as his whole stay was just to stooge for Big Daddy, basically.

A few I would love to have seen were Scarface Laval, N'Boa the Snakeman, Wolfgang Starck and Le Bourreau de Béthune.

There is no doubt that having a genuine foreigner on the bill was a great attraction for serious punters like ourselves.

PS I love the topic title!

frank thomas

Hi Anglo saw Ahmet Chong myself a couple of times and wasn't impressed he got into a "scene" at ringside with some fans, then when he got back into the ring, Wayne Bridges knocked him from pillar to post. Agreed about Red Ivan, Anglo, a terrible waste of what could have been a heavyweight in the John Quinn mould..

james morton

I know he came here but I only ever saw Andre Bollet in Paris. He was a class villain there.

Bill Smith

Bill Howes versus Andre Bollet

Palais De Sports France.

Rebel Ray Hunter and Alfie Hayes also tagged together against Karl Von Kramer and Adolph Kaiser same venue.March 1959

John

I think Sammy Lee (real name Satoru Sayama) must be one of the greatest foreign wrestlers ever to visit the U.K. I could not believe how good he was, the first time that I saw him in 1980. As most of you will know, he later wrestled in Japan as the legendary Tiger Mask.

matey dave

let's be honest children about billy, he was never billed as the second coming, simply was comic relief and a worker. out of curosity was there ever any bad word against from the workers.

djmask

I would love to of seen Ricki Starr in his prime but even in his later Tv appearances in the 1970's their was something captivating about his appearances.

david franklin

The list of unimpressive foreign visitors would be very long, but it was always interesting as a fan to go along to see some exciting new arrival at your local hall, even when they disappointed.

The "impressive" list is headed by Georges Gordienko of course. Others that spring to mind are Josef Kovacs, Gordon Nelson (The Outlaw), Josef Molnar, Gaby Calderon (Adi Wasser), Axel Dieter, Jean Corne, Wolfgang Stark, and a bit later on Fuji Yamada, Rick Hunter, Yasa Fuji, and of course John Quinn.

Bernard Hughes

Hi Paul, Sorry for the delay, I have thought about this for a while and have used Ray's results to jog my memory.

I must have been a "home" fan , I can't say that I was too impressed with many foreign stars.

Kingston and Gable never impressed , because I thought that they were too weak to hold their own and at Newcastle, generally I was right.

The Australians that visited , all seemed much the same as each other . Big ,strong but not a lot of ringcraft (to my teenage eyes). All push and shove and punching.trying to overwhelm the opponent with their strength.

I'm talking about Verna Coverdale and McMasters.

Van de auwera and Gill ,I'm sorry I don't remember

Felix Kerschitz, I do remember. He was strong but once again not as much ringcraft as the men that he beat.

I remember him especially because this huge man came to my house with Norman and Flo Walsh to pick me up.

Prince Barnu, what a disappointment. It wasn't only his opponent that went to sleep in his bouts.

Used to spend round after round boring his knuckles into opponent's temples. I'm suppressing a yawn as I think about this.

Chief Thunderbird, I enjoyed, because of the novelty of his war dance and feathered headdress.

Didn't like his Indian deathlock which wasn't. He didn't like Alf Rawlings punch that sent him about 5 steps up the central aisle.

I enjoyed seeing Abdul the Turk, especially when Jack Pye kicked him over and kicked his prayer mat out of the ring. Strong man but not too skilful. Narrow range of moves.

Lastly, for strong men read Hassan Ali Bey. Most of his moves were strength based.

Interesting and different to youthful eyes.

Hope that some of you get some enjoyment out of this.

Tom H

Cowboy Ken Ackles was underwhelming. The photo of Ken on the handbill was obviously taken a good many years before he came here.

Dave Sutherland

Pedro La Chappelle or whichever of a dozen other names under which he was billed I found to be a massive let down. When I first saw him on TV he looked the business and a real villain to boot. However by the time I saw him live he was slipping down the bill and Andy Robin had no trouble gaining victory. The Zebra Kid, George Drake and, especially, Eduardo Carpentier were the real deal.

Hack

I was immensely disappointed when I saw Maurice La Rue. I think I might be on my own but I found the Outlaw a pretty tame masked man. Jose Rodrigues Questa was supposed to be a class act, but when I saw him against Colbeck it was a pretty dry affair.

I would have liked to have seen Ski Hi Lee and Zebra Kid.

Ricky Starr was a big attraction, of course, though I didn't see him live. I remember being quite struck with Le Grand Vladimir when I saw him on tv.

The real class overseas visitors have mostly been mentioned.

frank thomas

Another overseas visitor I saw that impressed me was a German heavyweight, Klaus Kauroff, again for a big man, it wasn't all about strength. He had a good wrestling knowkedge. ,

Anglo Italian

I never saw Prince Curtis Iauekea but we have had on here both complimentary and scathing comments - can we come to a verdict?

Hack

Saw Curtis once, against Leon Arras. A bit of difference in size. The match was predictable with Leon running rings around him literally and making his wise crack comments. Curtis seemed quite nimble for his size, but not impressive as a wrestler, had he been Leon would have been destroyed. Curtis did a splash on Leon and was disqualified by Don Branch.

Mad Mac

Surprised to have seen no mention as yet of High Chief Peter Maivia, Grandfather of one Dwayne Johnson. I believe the Chief made it to the UK?

paul mitchell

Great comments guys and before I give my strictly personal view on the guys, ill throw a couple of names in Digger Nolan ,oh dear became a country and western singer watch him against martin Jones to remind you,I know we have a possibly the only Frank Dhont fan on here thoughts on him and Jacobo and Marc Mercier.

frank thomas

Remember seeing Jacobo at Liverpool Stadium, first time he got disqualified against I seem to recall Roy St Clair, then a tremendous tussle with Wayne Bridges, Jacobos tactics took Wayne by surprise, and for the first couple of rounds he got the better of Wayne, but then Wayne seemed to get exasperated at the tactics, and took over! Think there was very little "fixed" about the blow that brought about the knockout!

Bill Smith

There is footage of "The Prince" on Youtube.

ballymoss

I fully agree with an earlier comment concerning "Cowboy" Ken Ackles and another American import that was equally uninspiring was "Texas" Jack Bence. Both had very loud mouths but were certainly lacking in ability. I thought a little later the ill-fated George Drake would be similar, but he emerged as a pretty good wrestler.

matey dave

hate to say it but texas jack bence when he was at wembley was very good

SaxonWolf

Gordienko - outstanding, Sayama (Sammy Lee) - outstanding, Quinn - great on the Mic, Torontos - weak comedy act

Anglo Italian

Are we all guilty of straying off topic and basically just listing all foreigners?

Paul wants Objectionables.

I read that the referee had to tell the Hellenes to "get on with it" at the Royal Albert Hall - hardly a glowing commendation.

paul mitchell

Well for what its worth here's my observations Amet Chong was poor and immobile, Frank Dhont, no i'll leave That for another day, Two Rivers lazy arrogant limited and unfit, War Eagle stiff but professional gave 100 per cent, Rick Hunter came here too late. Jean Louis Breston watched two bouts on the cushions one he destroyed opponent all action big guy with skill mobility and value for money, Bartelli greatly admired him and Geoff applauded throughout Brestons loss to Ray Steele by 2 nil. now lets hopefully see comments on Sharkey Ward and Bert mychell.

Anglo Italian

Bert Mychel was brilliant. He had that rare ability that not all the technical wrestlers had: to be able to carry through a professional bout meaningfully.

Your red injun comments fit in exactly with what we have all observed on here on both counts, Paul.

Before you lay into Frank Dhont, we can only assess him as he was presented to us: a "good-looking boy" from the Continent, and in that role he did his inexperienced job. Ahmet Chong cannot be forgiven his inabilities because he was presented to us as "The Scourge of the East". Some scourge....

Bernard Hughes

Hi Paul, I just thought of another one.

Red Kirkpatrick, came to us from the USA.

I often doubt (Now), people billed from abroad, but this was right as I did some research on him later and we found out(probably) why he came here.

Evidently he got out of the ring and clouted a fan giving him some stick. He was banned in his state and he appeared over here.

He fought about 6 or 7 times at St. James Hall, and got disqualified in the first 5 bouts.

He was punching with the fist from the first bell to the disqualification, often into about round 5.

Because the crowd was howling from round one Les had to keep telling the crowd that Kirkpatrick did not know the Mount-Evans rules and punching was allowed in the States, so he had to have some leeway.

As I said at my original write-up of him, He would be a handy man to have by your side in a street fight.

Came over as a hard man, but evidently quite ordinary out of the ring.

Tell that to the man that he laid out in the States!

Hack

I don't think we've had mention of Crusher Verdu. He was pretty immobile and seemed to rely on a good hard working opponent.

frank thomas

The Big Daddy of his day then Hack?

David Mantell

Except that Verdu went on to a career in the WWWF.

Hack

Maybe that tells us something about the WWWF.

Anglo Italian

Good call, Hack. Crusher Verdu was rubbish. Just walked around and around preening. Then didn't engage at all meaningfully. The only wrestler I can ever seriously say I could see was only in the ring for the pay-cheque.

Most, even Torontos, seemed to crave a little glory. Had pride.

David Mantell

Crusher Verdu and Hercules Cortez - the two Old School Spanish Wrestlers to make it in America.

Hack

Any comments on Wolfgang Starck? Kent told us he was brill. I only saw him once live and he was pretty forgettable. Maybe it was an off day or maybe I didn't appreciate talent.

Melvin M Melvin

Does Zolly Boscik count as foreign? One of my faves...

Anglo Italian

That's interesting, Hack. I never saw Wolfgang but read about him and was intrigued.

What I have come to understand is that he was wrestling royalty, complete with silver spoon. The son of an overseas promoter given the ultimate prize of winning the RAH Trophy when it really meant something and against Britain's best.

We have a direct parallel with Yorkshire Terrier Steve Clements going on to win a world championship in America. A lowly undercarder in UK.

We have other examples of non-nepotism, with Barry Douglas maintaining a low profile over a couple of decades, and Dave Barrie fairly anonymous at the time.

I would love to know what was going on at the big international level between promoters for them to risk the credibility of the sport big time just to indulge in generous international back-slapping, as with Starck and Clements.

Hack

I was hoping you had seen him Anglo Italian and could put me right. I'm not saying that he wasn't capable. More that my memory of the time was of an uninspiring match. I can't remember the opponent or much about it.

David Mantell

Kent also said he (or at any rate Wolfgang "Saturski") was the man from whom Jorg Chenok won his Euro Welterweight title.

Anglo Italian

There's some nice footage of Wolfgang working in a very British style here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z3X5dtjlypA>

and fun to see German ring action for once. In the comments, someone has written that Wolfgang is third generation, so Rudi's dad must have been a wrestler or promoter, too?

At 4:47 he uses a move I remember Nagasaki using in the sixties, but don't recall seeing it on tv.

The Ost

It wasn't a 'career' he was there less than a year, brought in as a threat to Bruno Sammartino. They did draw two sellouts at MSG.

David Mantell

He was involved in the Big Trade between Lou Albano and Tony Marino - Verdu and cash for Ivan Koloff and the Mongols, all of whom won belts for Albano.

powerlock

I wonder if there is a similar site to this in Germany, has anyone checked

David Mantell

I know the French have a version of the Wrestlers Reunion. It would be great if old-school fandoms across Europe could pull together so we could get a proper overview about European Wrestling as a territorial system on a par with NWA-era American Wrestling.

SaxonWolf

Yes I have always found this interesting. We have a mix of real foreign wrestlers coming across to our shores, and then homegrown "foreigners" like Hans Strieger, Ivan Penzecoff and Kendo Nagasaki.

In the old NWA Territory system, when a wrestler went to a new region, the tradition was that the promoter they were going to wrestle for paid their travel cost into the territory, but not the travel when leaving, which was the job of the next promoter.

Was this the same over here in the UK, did Joint Promotions (or anyone else) pay for French, Spanish, German, etc., wrestlers to travel to the UK, pay ferry or air fares? Was it the same when our lads went overseas?, I assume that Tony St. Clair and Johnny Kincaid (and others) didn't have to pay for flights to the German tournaments (or to Africa come to that matter).

Who decided which European country held any particular titles? Interesting stuff

Ed Lock

G'day David,

The manager involved in the Verdu and cash for Ivan Koloff and the Mongols trade with Lou Albano was Tony Angelo - not Tony Marino.

Tony Angelo was a former wrestler who had also used the names Pat Kelly, Russian Angel and Russian Crusher, among others, during his in-ring career.

Tony Marino was a wrestler in the 1950s through to the 1980s. He held the WWF International Tag Team with Victor Rivera and also with Bruno Sammartino. Marino also wrestled as the masked Battman in Sammartino's Pittsburgh promotion. Marino wrestled in Australia as Dino Lanza.

Cheers!

David Mantell

Cheers for that, Ed.

Mad Mac

Just as a side note, the passing of Bruno Sammartino has been reported in the past hour.

The Ost

Lou and Tony Angelo later met in a series of manager vs manager bouts.