



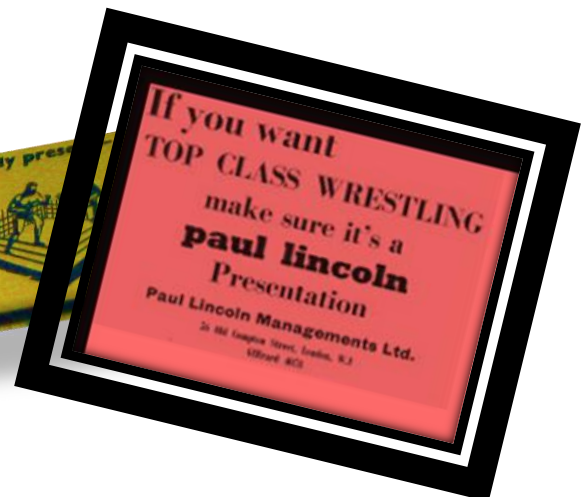
**Martin Campbell fights to keep the memory torch of the independents alight ... and who better to run through some of the great independent figures, both wrestlers and promoters, than a man at the centre of it all? Dwight J Ingleburgh was there, he did it all, he got the tee-shirt ... and here he shares just some of his behind-the-scenes tales about the men who shunned TV but filled halls all over the country. Read on ... it's the Indies and its Warriors ...**



Dwight J Ingleburgh not only travelled the length and breadth of the UK, he saw grappling service overseas in India, Sweden, Pakistan, Singapore and is one of the greatest ambassadors the independent wrestling circuit has had.

It was as Dwight J Ingleburgh that Floyd Patterson's New Jersey-based former sparring partner climbed through the ropes from the mid fifties to the late seventies. It's as Sam Betts from Barnsley that he tells about the men he faced and the men he worked for, and why he turned his back on TV exposure.

The number of independent promotions staged in the Golden Days is incalculable. As is the number of different promoters who went up against the Joint Promotion companies and their stranglehold on Saturday afternoon television.



Just a few ...



R & A proudly present  
In cooperation with June Promotions Ltd

WRESTLING  
Baverstock Cooter proudly present

AVILION  
CORWEN WRESTLING PROMOTIONS



PAUL LINCOLN PROMOTIONS LTD

SPORTS ENTERPRISES Proudly Present

ANGLIA PROMOTIONS

INDEPENDENT JOINT PROMOTIONS proudly present

TRANS-WORLD PROMOTIONS proudly present

WRESTLING CENTRE  
WRESTLING FESTIVAL

C.M.P. PROMOTIONS proudly present

WRESTLING  
Don Robinsons Promotions proudly present

OLYMPIC PROMOTIONS proudly present

INTERNATIONAL PROMOTIONS of Leicester, The Midlands  
WRESTLING  
All-Star

MAX PROMOTIONS  
Stupendous Attraction at Enormous Expense  
Commence 7-45 p.m.

WRESTLING ENTERPRISES of Birkenhead proudly present

WRESTLING

STARR PROMOTIONS proudly present

UNIVERSAL PROMOTIONS

EUROPEAN PROMOTIONS proudly present

## **1 THE PROLOGUE :**

Dwight J Ingleburgh's story is set out well in Heritage, Facebook and the net. It is a riveting story of a man who travelled the world entertaining thousands, and all without a minute of television exposure. So I don't propose to replicate his biography here. What we have here is, I hope, something equally as riveting.

Sam takes us through a cast-list of just some of those men ... many of them gone, many of them forgotten ... who battled away in the indie sector. What were they like outside the ring? Could you trust them IN the ring? Who were the shooters? Who were the craftsmen ... and who were the strugglers?



Dwight's Fights. Or Betts' Best. Call it what you will. I prefer to call it ...

# INDIE WARRIORS

## **2 WHY THE INDIES?**

Don't run away with the idea that appearing on the box filled your pockets. Sam says if you were good you could make just as much money, and in many cases much more money, working for the indies.

"And the camaraderie was amazing," he says. "I made so many, many friends and had such a good time. There were dozens and dozens of indie promoters. Some of them only ever put on one or two shows. Others were promoting all over the country. Some good. Some not so good. The likes of Jack Taylor, Don Robinson and Cyril Knowles were great guys. They never rolled you over financially. I wrestled for them no end of times and they never let you down."

Sam had plenty of opportunities and plenty of invitations to wrestle for the Joint Promotions bills, but always gave them the thumbs down. And he has never regretted it.

The Golden Days wrestling cash question is one that fascinates fans, and Sam lifts the lid a little for us. For instance ... if you want to know which big TV star would appear on the box for nothing if he was allowed to win, then read on .....



### 3 KARL VON KRAMMER

As we start a trawl through some of the shakers and movers of the indie scene, we begin with Sam's great mate. Karl Von Krammer (or Kramer, depending) was one of the indies' big names and has even had a play based on his exploits.

Jack Land became by far the best-known 'German' from Barnsley, just as Sam became its best-known 'American.' The roots of their friendship were deep indeed.

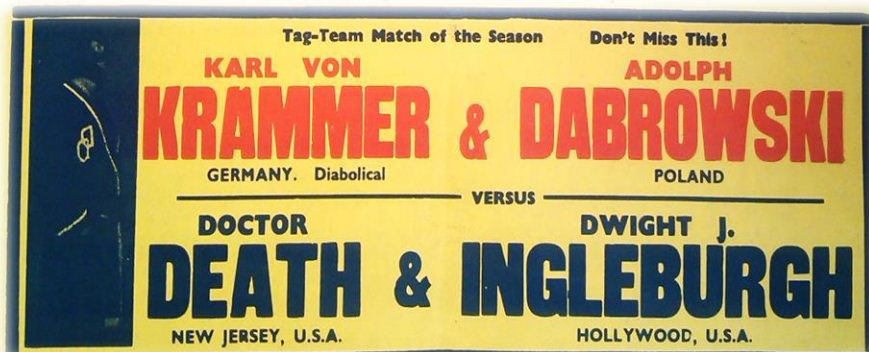
"We went to the same school. We grew up together. We lived in the same neighbourhood. We trained together. We were lifelong friends. Ask me how many times we went in with each other ... countless. Dozens of times. Maybe even hundreds.



Germany



South Yorks



"We never once hurt each other but did we put on a show! Jack was one of the best villains on the circuit. Bar none. He could work a crowd like no-one else. He looked fierce but was a fabulous light worker. We could go for ages.



"Jack did eventually go over to Joint towards the end. And he did well there, too. I remember him doing a show for Relwyskow back in Barnsley".

As well as his feuds with Dwight J Ingleburgh all over the country, Karl Von Krammer often teamed with another indie hero, Butcher Goodman. They wrestled as The Toffs (L) and excelled at winding up the paying public in halls up and down the United Kingdom.

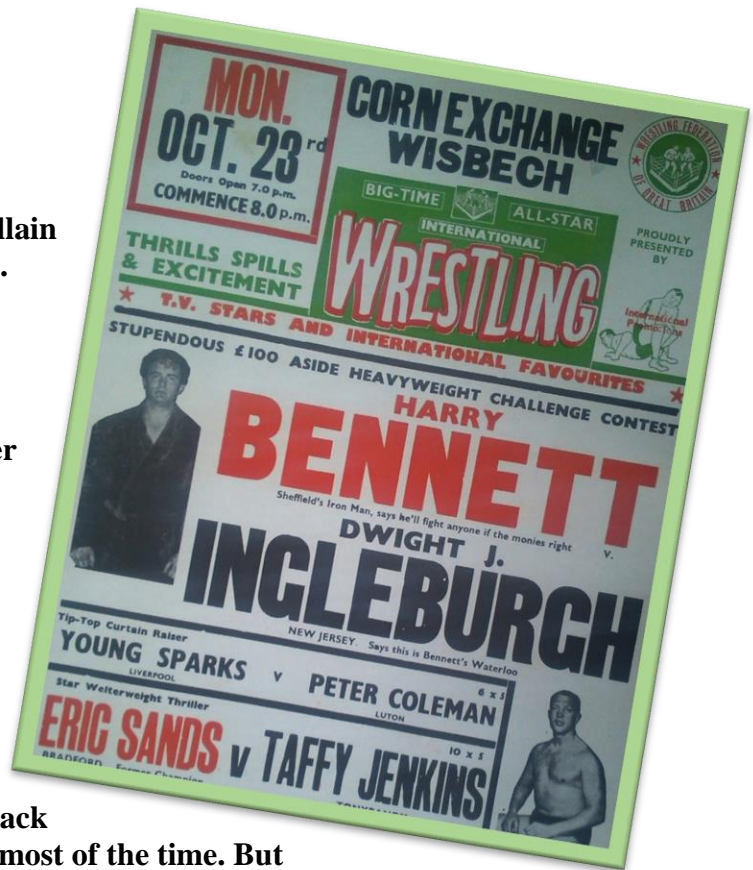


## 4 'ROUGH-HOUSE' HARRY BENNETT

Also known as 'Licker' Harry Bennett, here is another indie villain who feuded with Mr Ingleburgh. And another villain who could raise the heat to boiling point before he reached the ring.

His straggly hair and his swagger were inevitably met with cat-calls and boos, and this was a joy for Rough-House Harry Bennett.

"He was actually already in the business when I started out around '57 or '58. Harry Bennett was another man I worked with many times. Like Jack Land, he was easy to work with most of the time. But he wasn't in the same league as Jack.



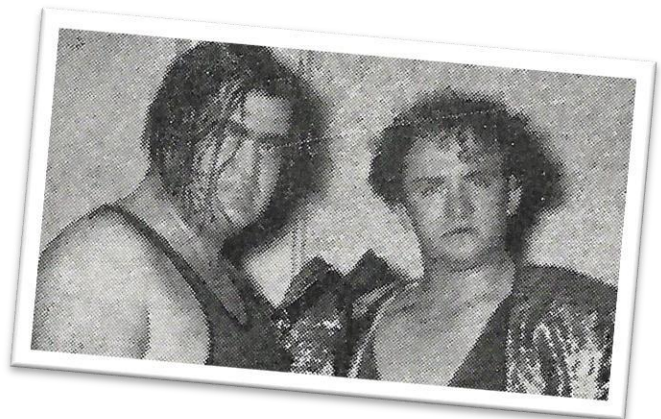
"When I say he was easy to work with most of the time ... sometimes he could be unpredictable. I think he had delusions of grandeur!"

"One night Geoff Portz and Hans Streiger were at ringside, and Harry tried to impress them by pulling some strokes on me.

"The thing is, he wasn't good enough to sling me around and I reversed the whole thing on him.

"Jack Taylor was the man who built him up and made him a star. He did great business for Jack, but Harry didn't go down too well with some of the other promoters. A good villain, though.."

Harry took on a new name later in his career(R). He became the long-lost newly-found 'brother'to Dominic Pye .....



## 5 DOMINIC PYE

“When Harry left to go and live in Blackpool to work with Dominic Pye it was the worst move he could have made,” says Sam.

“Dominic was into buying and selling furniture and so on. Harry was in the same business in a small way ... but Dominic said he had no real business head and when he joined the firm with Dominic it didn’t go very well for him.”

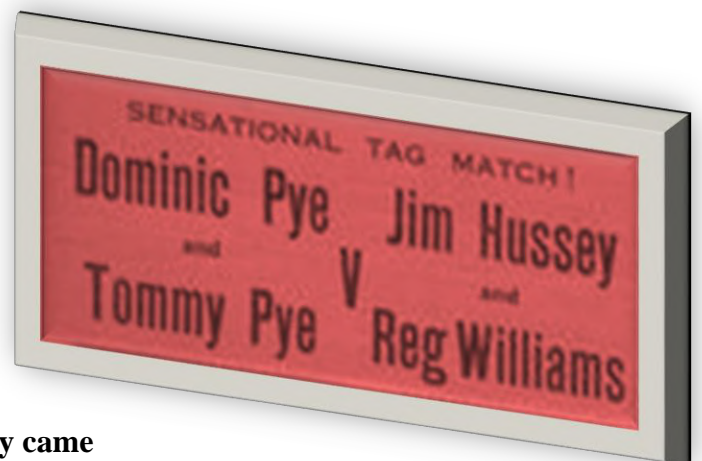
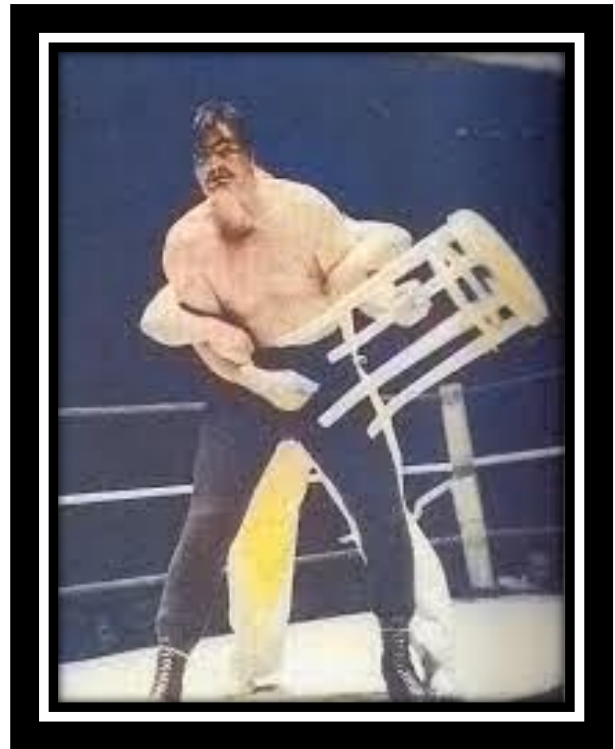
Dominic was keeping alive one of the most famous names in wrestling ... and did it superbly.

If you want a reference, how about this one : “Dominic Pye was the best man I’ve ever been in the ring with,” says Sam.

“He could have beaten Bert Assirati. I mean it. Dominic was very highly respected in the business. In his younger days he represented Bolton wrestling club and won everything in front him.

“He held weight-lifting records, and that’s how he got his physique. He was six feet three inches tall and lean, but the power ... unbelievable.

“You didn’t have to jump with body shots. He just dragged you up in the air. He did have a bit a nasty streak. If anyone tried it on as he made his way back to the dressing room he’d sort them out. No problem.”



Pye rarely came south, but his reputation certainly did.

“He was the King of Blackpool. No messing. He was the best”

## 6 'BOMBER' PAT ROACH



'Bomber' Pat Roach was a big, big man who was brought into the business by Jack Taylor. And to his credit Pat never let an opportunity go without crediting Taylor for kick-starting a career that made him world famous.

"Pat and Jack were good mates," says Sam. "And I worked with Pat in the early days. He wore rhubarb-coloured tights. I'll never forget those tights!"

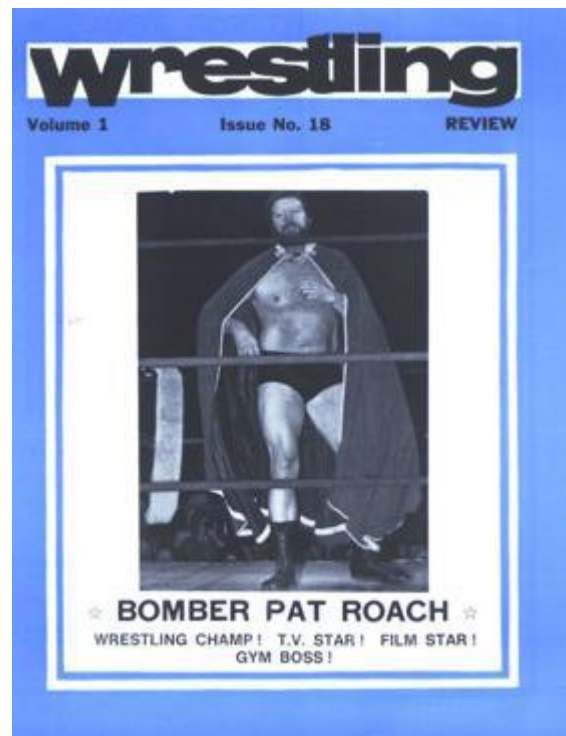


"He was always destined for bigger things. He learned the business from people like me and Jack, but always wanted to be on television to promote himself.

"The money they got for appearing on television was peanuts. In fact Pat would appear for nothing ... just as long as he could win.

"He used TV as a promoting tool. And for people like him and Banger Walsh it worked a treat to allow them to make more money from spin-offs. He became even more famous as an actor. He knew if he got that TV coverage he could use it. And he did."

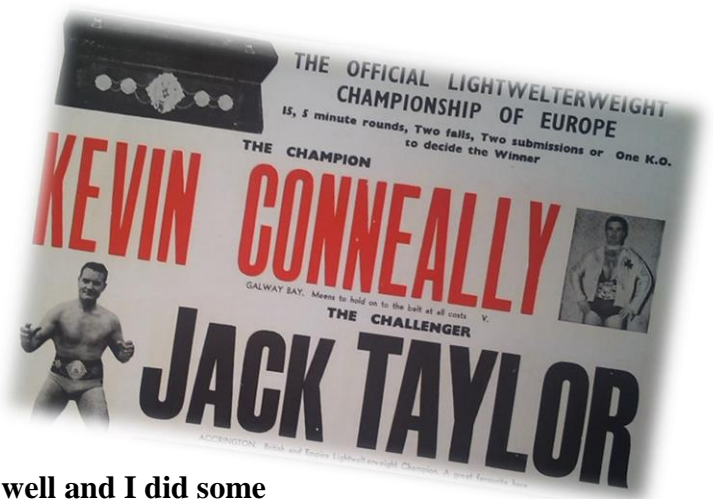
And this programme (R) from Pat's Joint Promotions days shows how they benefited from Pat's extra-curricular activities ... Wrestling Champ, TV Star, Film Star and Gym Boss ... and a truly nice guy. Birmingham's Pat Roach. Auf Wiedersehen, Pat.





# 7 JACK TAYLOR

The man who brought Pat Roach and dozens more into the grappling game is usually identified in articles as *Jack Taylor (Accrington)* to avoid confusion with the other Jack Taylor, another good worker, from Bradford. A top wrestler. A top trainer. And a top promoter.



Jack was the first wrestler I got to know well and I did some gofer-ring and seconding for him in the late sixties. You rarely hear a bad word about Jack, and you certainly won't hear one from Sam.

“Jack Taylor was 18-carat. Pure gold. I’ve kept a card he sent me shortly before he passed. And I’ll keep it forever.

“He was a fine wrestler. A real wrestler. Jack was a shooter. He could look after himself. A real shooter. He learned his stuff in gyms around Accrington.

“And as a promoter he was straight as a die. Not all of them were. But Jack was. I worked loads of halls for Jack and I remember him fondly.”

Jack Taylor ran International Promotions and was one of the busiest promoters in the country. “Remember, Joint was an alliance of many different promoters, so Jack on his own was probably the biggest.”

The jewel in his wrestling crown was The Granby Halls in Leicester and double-sized posters regaled the boards and shop windows of the city when Jack was promoting.



He gave a helping hand to the Crabtrees and Norman Berry in the early days and has left an indelible stamp on the history of independent wrestling in the UK.

## **8 DON ROBINSON**

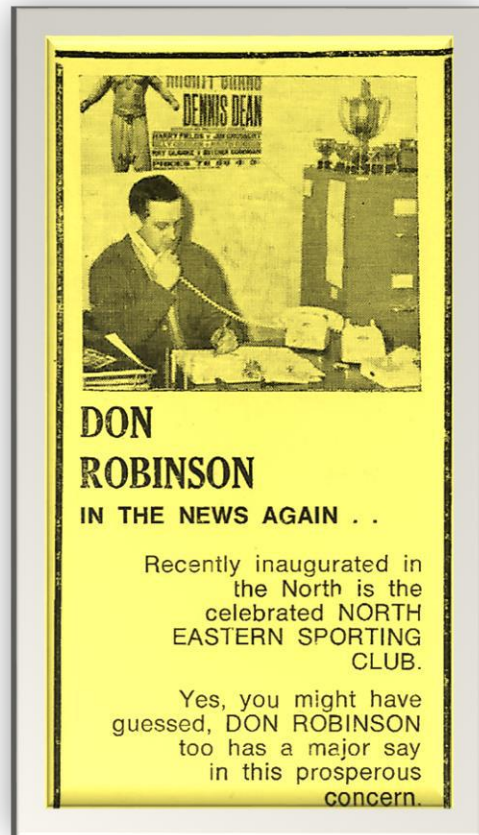
Another ‘Man in a Suit’ to promote in opposition to Joint was Don Robinson, and many a tale is told of his exploits – including many elsewhere on the Heritage site.

Sam worked with Don both in this country and abroad as, indeed, he did with Jack Taylor.

“Don Robinson was a breath of fresh air,” he says. “As a showman, second to none. Superb. He brought a lot of the Joint lads over as well. People like Count Bartelli and Mike Marino (below) jumped ship for Don.

“I was with Don from day one. A lot of the north-east lads joined him, too. Don was in the same sort of promoting league as Jack Taylor. But not in the same wrestling league!”

Sam’s verdict on Don’s wrestling acumen? “No good! No bottle,” he says with a chuckle.



“We went to Sweden in the sixties. A gang of us went over and Don wrestled as the Outlaw. When someone jumped the ring and challenged him, he accepted – and then when the time came for the challenge he put the bonnet on me!

“This was the time that professional boxing and wrestling had only just been allowed in Sweden, so the press attention was heavy. All the papers covered the tour – and to give you an idea of the intensity of the coverage, when I turned up for the press conference before the challenge match in Don’s brand new Jaguar the press even went so far as to trace the number plate back to Don in the UK!”



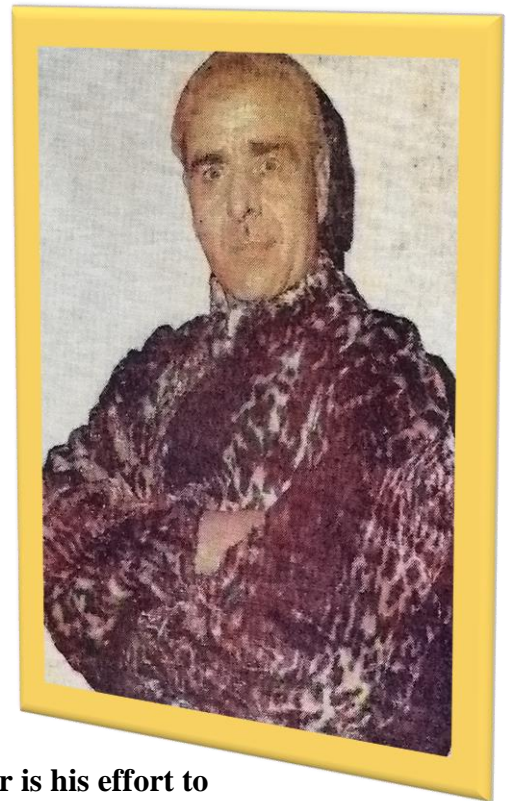
## 9 'GENTLEMAN' JIM LEWIS

Jim Lewis was another who dedicated many years to the game and will be remembered as a true gentleman, rather than his ring version of a gentleman.

Jim's sparkling career is set out in Heritage. He was the sort of wrestler who comes firmly into the 'once seen, never forgotten' category. His act borrowed bits from Gorgeous George but Jim himself was a real one-off with his gold boots and trunks and preening. Make no mistake, though, he was ultra-talented and took part in many a classic battle, particularly with Jack Dempsey and Jack Taylor.

It wasn't just his ring antics that give him his place in Indie Warriors. His out-of-ring activities were also top-notch.

"Jimmy Lewis was a top worker. A top wrestler and promoter. The main thing Jimmy will be remembered for is his effort to



get sensible wages for everyone. He worked tirelessly with another wrestler, Chick Elliott.

"It was Jimmy and Chick who got the wages fixed at six, eight and ten pounds. Ten

for the top-of-the-bill, eight for mid-card and six was a minimum," says Sam. "Jack Taylor paid it. And so did Twentieth Century Promotions ... when Norman Berry was running it. Norman had a great contacts list from his days with Morrell, and when he ran things they were good. He stuck by the rate, but when he got out of the business the Crabtrees took over and the wages dropped like a stone."

Sam gives this example of the Crabtrees' attitude to pay, when he and Jack Land travelled with others up from the north to the Edinburgh's Eldorado Hall in Leith.

"A group of us went up in a bus with a bunch of starters from Leeds. After the show Jack and I got our tenners straight away. Shirley Crabtree was driving the bus back, and when we got to Leeds the others queued up for their money. Two pounds fifty each they got! That was the Crabtrees for you."



## 10 MAL KIRK

Variously billed as King Kong Kirk, Mucky Mal Kirk, Kojak Kirk and even Val Kirk (Val being a heritage male name in Yorkshire, like Shirley). Mal's death in the ring against Big Daddy is chronicled in Heritage.

Sam's memories of Mal Kirk are bitter sweet. He was a big man and a big name for the indies in the late sixties.

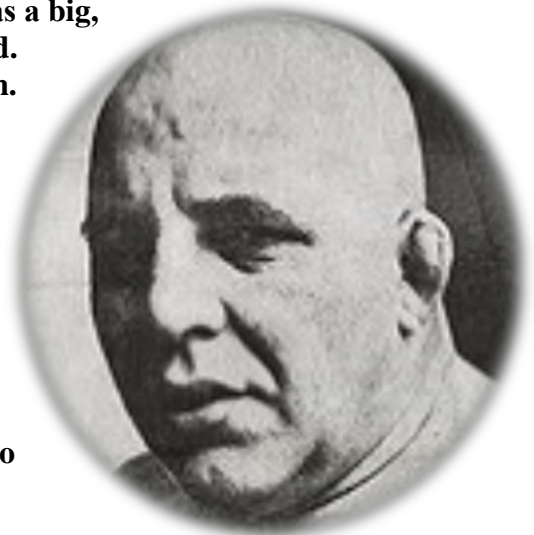
“Mal Kirk had his first fight with me, as did Don Vines. I was around to put these lads over. Kirk was stiff to start with. They all were. But they soon got into it.



“In those days he was a big, fit man. Nothing like the size he was at the end. That weight must have put such a strain on him. And the liberties Shirley Crabtree took with him in the ring were indefensible. Time after time he went down to Big Daddy. And Crabtree would often do the double elbows on him before his splash finish.

“The double elbows was a taboo move. You usually only did it if you really didn't like who you were in with. But Daddy used to do it to Mal. Of course Mal had to jump for Crabtree to get him off the floor ... and he did that many times. It was wrong.

“I'm afraid I never saw Mal again after he left for Joint and became famous.”



## 11 SHIRLEY CRABTREE

While many fans just think of Big Daddy as the “easy, easy” lumbering wrestler who was there at the end (and giving perhaps more than a little assistance to herald the end) of the glory days, he had been around on the indie scene for quite a while before the ‘second coming.’

Sam was never impressed. And it’s not just wrestling abilities that annoys him.

“Crabtree was pretty useless as a worker. Hopeless, in fact, and a trouble-stirrer in the dressing room” says Sam. However, the biggest blood-boiling aspect of Shirley Crabtree’s career for Sam concerns him billing himself as The Battling Guardsman ... complete with busby pics on the posters (below).

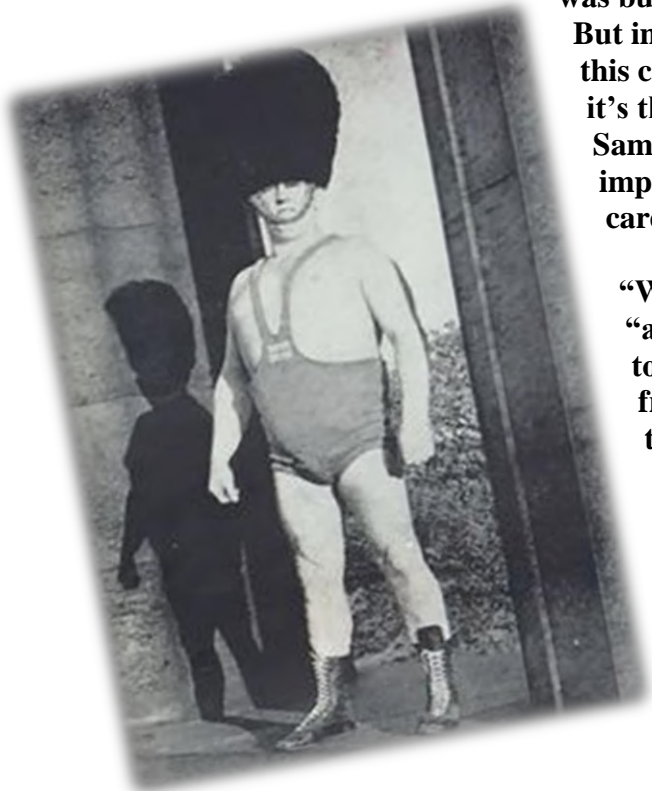
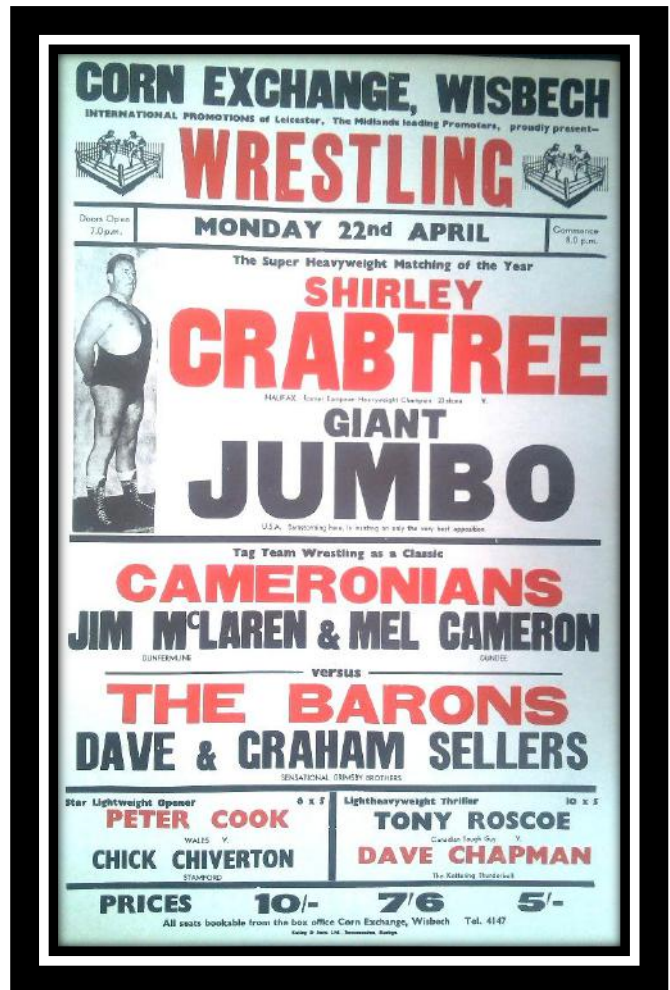
Fake identities were, of course, one of the main bases on which the industry was built.

But in this case

it’s the ‘grain’ of truth that rattles Sam’s cage. Sam Betts was in the Irish Guards and is not impressed by this chapter of Shirley Crabtree’s career.

“We trained at the same depot,” says Sam, “although at different times. Crabtree did train to be a guardsman. But I’m told definitely from people who were there training with him that he never even got through that training.

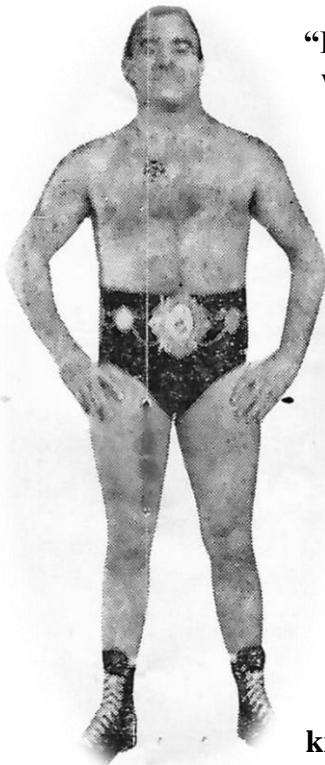
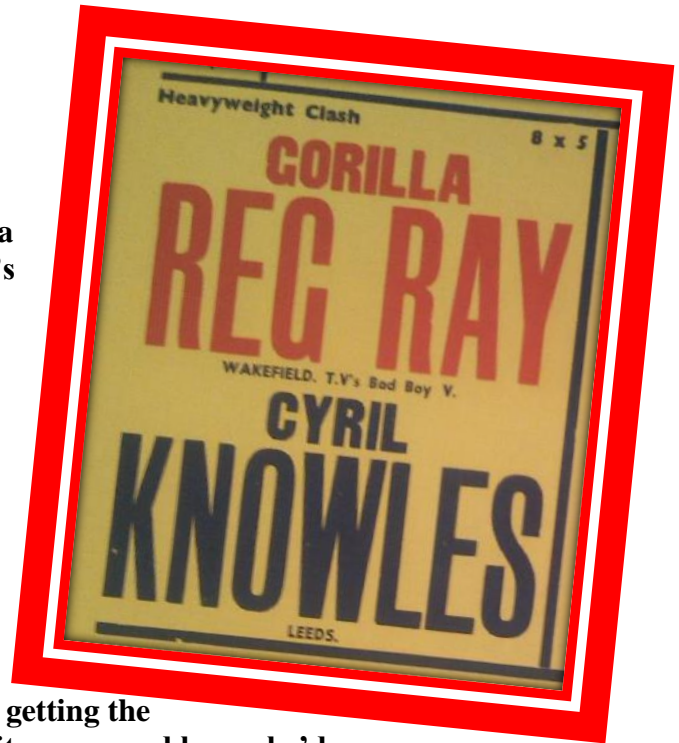
“So when he started parading the busby it upset a lot of people. Including me. He never, ever earned it”



## 12 CYRIL KNOWLES AND REG RAY

Cyril and his Gorilla mate were stalwarts of the indie industry, both as a tag team, as opponents, and with Cyril's skills to the fore, as promoters.

Hard working doesn't tell half the story. The number of posters you can still see on the web with Cyril Knowles (or Knowles Peters) glaring back at you is phenomenal.



“He was indeed a hard worker,” remembers Sam. “But I tell you this. It was hard work getting the money out of him! If it was a good house he'd swear blind it was a bad 'un! He'd pull every trick in the book.”

However, it is clear that Sam remembers this trait with affection. “One night a masked wrestler missed his fall as he was actually outside of the ring. I asked him afterwards what he was playing at ... and he said he was counting the customers 'cos he knew there'd be a battle over the money!”

If you saw Cyril Knowles on a bill you'd know you there'd be at least one battle that wouldn't disappoint. “He was fantastic wrestler,” says Sam.



“I started watching wrestling in '46 with my mate Jack Land at the Public Hall in Barnsley. Relwyskow was the promoter. Cyril Knowles was often there, and was great. One of the old guard A lot of the lads were ex-servicemen. Cyril was one who'd been in the army. And, of course, there was Bomber Bates from the RAF, Dai Sullivan and many others.”

And that brings us nicely to ....



## 13 A TALE OF TWO (OR 3, OR MORE) GHOULS

It's generally thought that Carver Doone (below, right) was probably the first Ghoul to grace our rings, although arguments still rage about that.

There's little doubt that Bomber Bates then became the Ghoul that really got the headlines or, indeed, that Bill Coverdale took over the hood after that (although, again, there is a school of thought that the two operated at the same time for a while!) They certainly wrestled each other. Confused? You will be.



The one thing that does unite our three main Ghoul is the fact that they were all great characters. And they pulled in the punters. It's a real shame that the brand became devalued through the sixties

and into the seventies. The photo stayed the same ... but the size of the grey suit's occupant sadly did not.

Believe it or not, Sam faced the legendary Bomber Bates ... and Bill.



"I wrestled Bomber Bates twice towards the end of his career. The first time was when the lad who was due to be on with him couldn't turn up and they rang me .... because I lived only four miles away. Then I did work for him. Johnny was his real name. And you couldn't do much with Johnny. You couldn't put him on the floor, for instance. He was blind in one eye and he didn't like elbows! But my word, he was a showman. A real showman. And he could get the show over without really doing very much."



And how did he compare in the ring with Big Bill Coverdale, Ghoul Mark II? I certainly rated Coverdale," says Sam. "He was big man but he could really fly about. He could go over his head. A good performer for a big man. He was equally as effective as Johnny Bates but in my opinion he worked a lot harder in the ring."

Let's stay with big men and turn to another legend of the north. ...

## 14 MAN MOUNTAIN BIG BILL BENNY

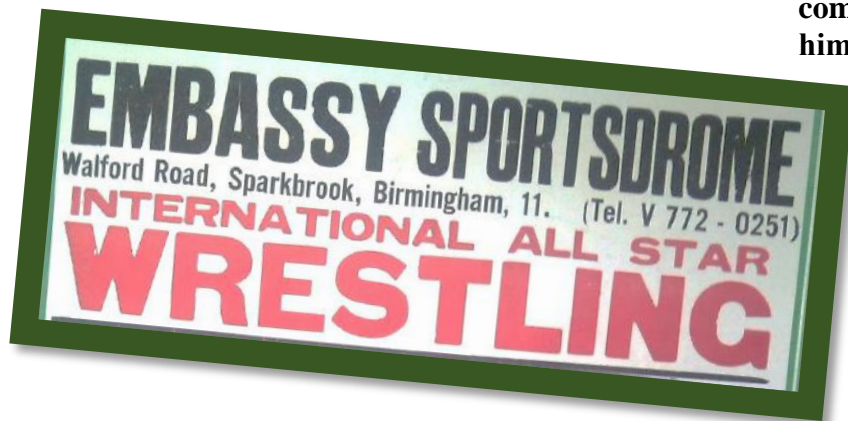
Tales of Bill Benny are plentiful. Many exaggerated. Many with a ring of truth. Controversy followed him like a sniffer dog.



Sam went into the ring with Bill Benny on two occasions and remembers the man with affection.

“There was a big show at the Embassy in Sparkbrook (Birmingham). Conrad Davis ran it and it was filled to capacity every week.

“Bill Benny was putting together one show for him, and they wanted him to come out of retirement and put himself on the bill. He said he’d only work with me.



“Well, he put a bandage on one arm and said to me: ‘You can only do one thing to me. That arm. That’s all. Grab that arm’. And that’s what we did! But it still worked!

“He was a super showman. He had the crowd going crazy. Now that’s skill. I worked for him in Manchester where he had clubs. When the cinemas closed down many of them re-opened as sporting clubs with wrestling, cabaret and bingo. Bill ran a few and you’d be doing two fights a night.



“Do one show, jump in the bus and whip over to another club for a second. We were sharing the bus with cabaret stars of the day like Marion Ryan and Lita Roza (R).... And they were doing *three* spots!

“We’re talking about six days a week here. We got a tenner a night.”

Sam wasn’t the only North American from the north of England. Here’s another legendary ‘Yank’ ....



## 15 COWBOY JACK CASSIDY

Sam was around when Cowboy Jack (or Bronco Jack) first started out. They stayed friends for many years before Jack's sad passing.

“Jimmy (Jack's real name) was a real tough guy. He was a street fighter. In actual fact he'd turned 40 before he began in the business.

“He was stiff as a board at first. As stiff as an old crutch but he got better and better and then started promoting. He made a fine promoter.

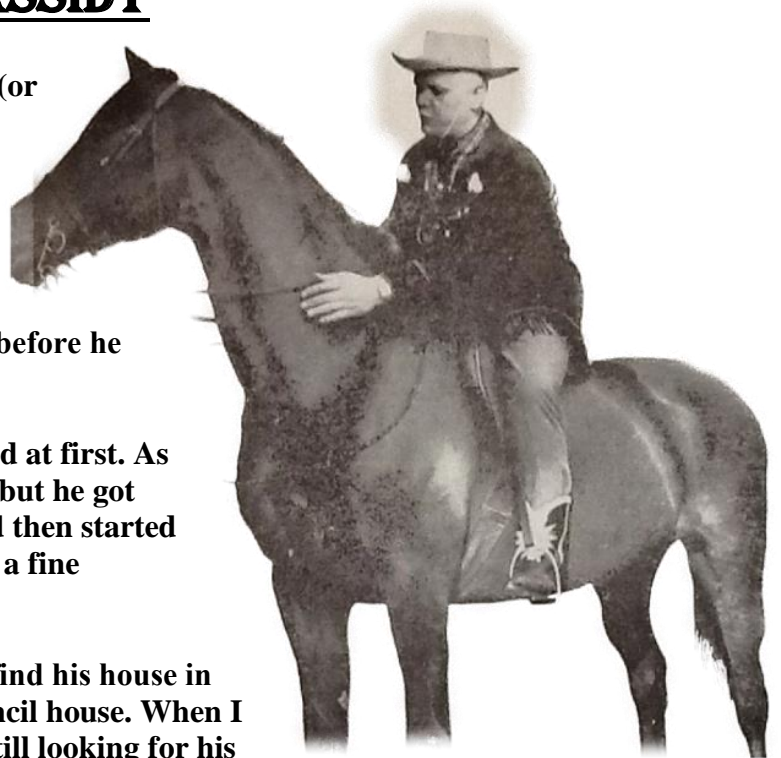
“I remember going to find his house in Manchester. It was a council house. When I was walking down one street, still looking for his house, I saw a wrestling ring packed up on a trailer and shackled to a lamp-post with a chain and lock. That was Jimmy Cassidy!

“I fought him many times. He used to fire off his guns to real effect. One night in Harrogate we were wrestling for Don Robinson and I'll never forget it. He had blanked off the gun so he could fire blanks.

“Unfortunately he never made any holes for the gas to escape. So it built up each time he fired it, and in Harrogate it blew!

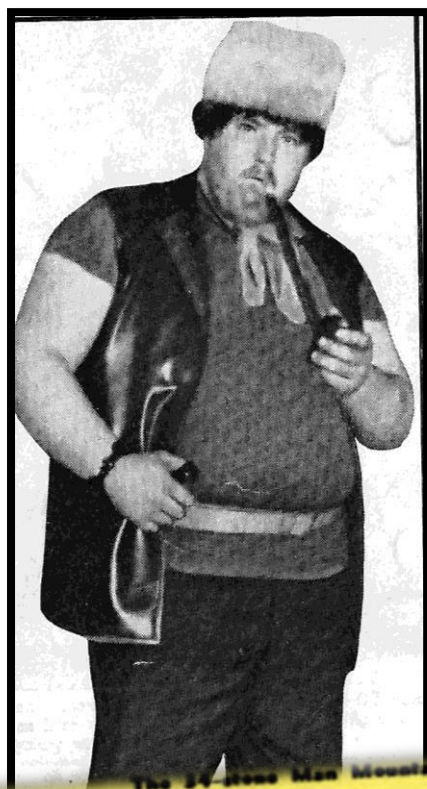
“Bits of the ceiling came down, and believe me, there was one unhappy promoter!”

Cowboy Jack struggled towards the end, but he and Sam kept in touch and some of Sam's fondest memories concern Jack Cassidy. “A good lad and a good promoter. As a promoter he really looked after me. A sad, sad loss.”



## 16 KLONDYKE BILL

Back to big, big men. Klondyke Bill and Dwight J Ingleburgh spent a lot of time together.



**KLONDYKE BILL**

(Discovered by top American promoter, Ruby Goldstein)

“I was with Bill from day one,” says Sam. “He came from East Yorkshire and worked in the local co-op. He was one big lad and he came to watch the wrestling.

“Don Robinson took him on, taught him, and I worked with him many times. Klondyke Bill was a great worker. A fantastic worker given his size. I would say he was the best of the big boys around at that time.

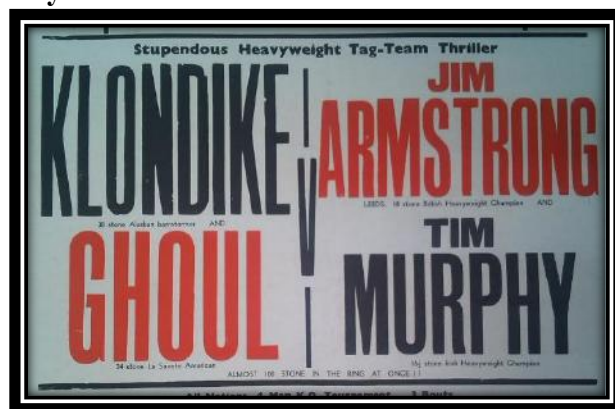
“You could easily do eight rounds with him. Not like Daddy and similar big men. He never failed to give value for money And we were good friends.

“I went out to India and Sweden with him. They were great times.”

Here we can see Bill described as having been ‘discovered by American promoter Ruby Goldstein.’ It’s a great example of wrestling fact and fiction colliding. Stay with me for this one .....

Dwight J Ingleburgh was billed having been Floyd Patterson’s sparring partner. (Fiction – although the fact is that Sam did an awful lot of boxing). Ruby Goldstein was a promoter (Fiction – although the fact is that he was a controversial American boxing referee and refereed one of Floyd Patterson’s most controversial fights – when he stopped the fight and awarded the world championship to .... a Swede, Ingemar Johansson) . And the fact is that Klondyke Bill and Sam were in Sweden when professional fighting was given the go-ahead.

A strange tangle indeed. I’m not sure what it shows – perhaps just that they had such a good time in Sweden that they liked to keep cryptic references to it on posters and flyers!



## 17 LORD BERTIE TOPHAM (...and some Ponsombys)

Indie wrestling certainly had its fair share of aristocracy, and one of the most unforgettable was one Lord Bertie Topham.

Sam smiles as he brings back memories of his Lordship.

“Topham was a cracker,” he says. Great to work with ... and I worked with him a lot. He learned to wrestle with the likes of Brian Maxine, Monty Swann (R) and Steve Veidor.

“He had a lot going for him. Good worker. Good showman. Not only that, I worked for him when he was promoting, and he was a fine, trustworthy promoter, too. I’d call him a good paymaster”



Lord Bertie Topham was usually accompanied to the ring by his valet, Ponsomby. The role of Ponsomby changed many times over the years, as outlined in Heritage. “He got through Ponsombys in no time at all.

They took more bumps than he did! One night Jack Land was in with Bertie and Ponsomby did his usual interference from outside the ring.



“Jack jumped out. Grabbed his tin tray. Whacked him so hard over the head that he looked as if he was wearing a German helmet! That was the last we saw of that particular Ponsomby.”

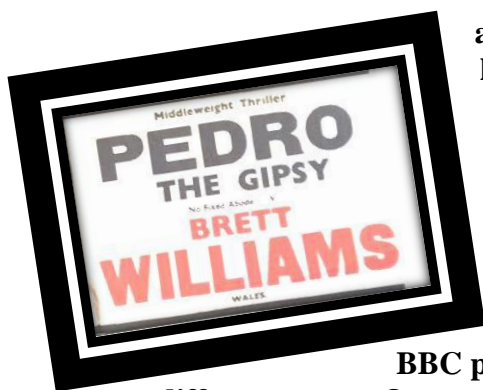
## 18 PEDRO THE GYPSY

If you thought wrestling didn't have its fun side, just ask Sam about Pedro the Gypsy. A clown in the ring and a clown outside the ring.

“We had plenty of long, long road trips in those days, but if you had Jack Land or Pedro in the car they were worth their weight in gold. You'd never stop laughing.”

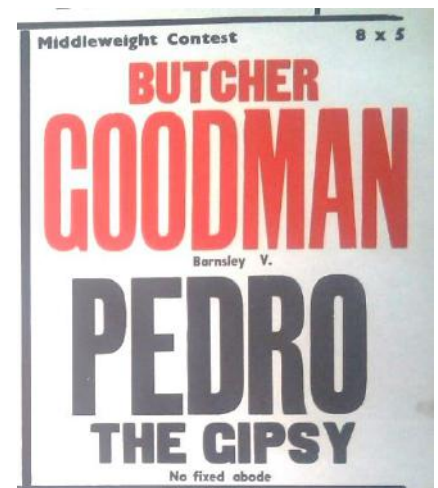
But what was he like to work with?

“Let's just say 'not great' but he knew how to make audiences laugh. He was a good weight-lifter but as a wrestler he couldn't go over his head or anything like that.



“When he started out he was a bit of a joke, but he did learn a bit in later years, and people used to enjoy watching him. They loved him.

“He was very friendly with Klondyke Bill, and they sometimes appeared on the BBC programme that visited different towns. One appearance ended up with Pedro being thrown into a swimming pool.



“Unfortunately he couldn't swim ... and Klondyke had to jump in and get him out!” Now there's a scene I'd like to have witnessed.



“The thing I remember most about Pedro is how tight he was. You couldn't get him to part with money at the bar, and when he finally got a car he never wanted to use it to give anyone a lift. Jack Land turned up at his house once and the car was on bricks so Pedro could get out of driving it. Jack just kicked the bricks away!”

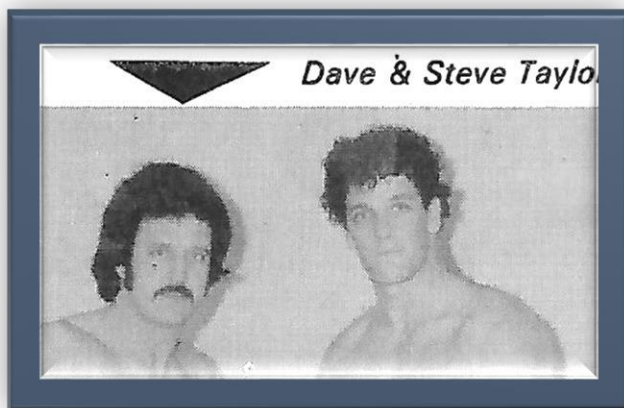
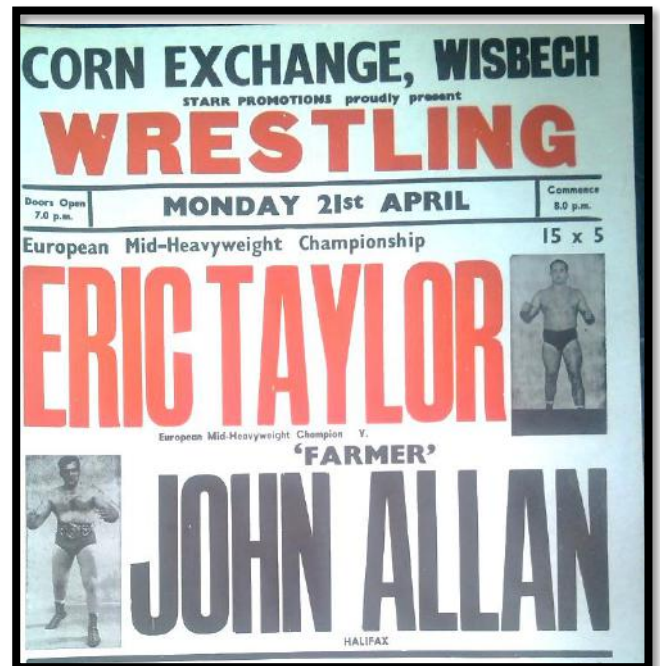
Pedro's social life was also something of a talking point. “Very often we'd pick him up from one house and drop him off at another. The tightest man in the world ... but great fun.”

## 19 HONOURABLE MENTIONS (and one not so ...)

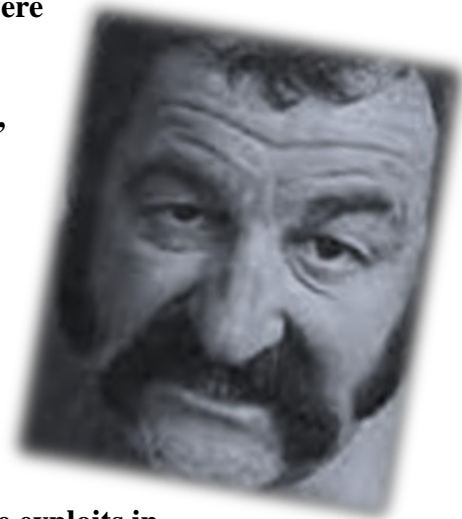
To conclude I threw a few more names at Sam. Eric Taylor and Farmer Johnny Allan wrestled together and promoted together as A&T Promotions. Johnny Allan also supplemented his wages with four different roles in Coronation Street. In the ring his role was supreme, says Sam.

“Working with Johnny Allan was like having a night off. He was that good. Same as Count Bartelli. Both were a joy to face.

“Eric Taylor I remember so well. His wife would help out with the organising when Eric promoted. In fact I worked with all the Taylors – Eric, Steve and David. All top men and I got to know them all,”



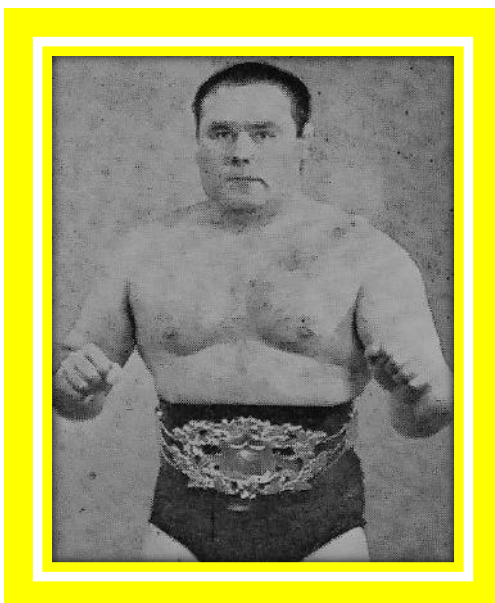
It is difficult to get Sam to criticise his fellow workers, but a couple of names were clearly not on his birthday card list. Orig Williams (R), the self-styled Mexican king of Wales, is one wrestler Sam didn't have a lot of time for.



“Overrated in my book,” he says. And talking of books, he's seen Williams' biography and is not impressed. “I've read about these exploits in Pakistan. I was there. It didn't happen like that.”

Jim Armstrong and Raymond Glendenning were two stalwarts of the indie scene, and two grapplers that Sam did have a lot of time for.

“Jim was a great grafter. Worked with Eric Leiderman at the start with 20<sup>th</sup> Century Promotions. I believe he became a car dealer in Leeds. But he died young. Very sad.”





“One strange story about Ray Glendenning (L). When I went out to India he came with us. But they had to send him home ... because he was too short for the Indians! But he was a another good worker. “

So ... we’ve only just scratched the surface and there are many more names that could be raised and tales that could be told.

Nevertheless, Sam’s recollections help us piece together some of the mysteries of the times. Times which have taken their toll. I told Sam of my meeting with Wayne Bridges and my sadness to see him stand up and walk only with the aid of two sticks.

“Yes ... you were fighting for your life sometimes,” Sam said. “Some took liberties with you. You had to be aware of that and put them in their place. We took knocks. I have to walk with a frame now. I’m like Quasimodo ...” (Now, see, there’s one wrestler we haven’t talked about! Maybe another time.)

Sam, we salute the Indies ....

And we salute you!

