

# HEAT SHEET

## ISSUE #5



Nova-ember 2019  
Venom's High Voltage 4  
IPW's Escape from Nerang  
PWL's Project: Revolution 2  
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What's Coming up

## A Letter from the Editor

Not everyone I know is into wrestling. Crazy as it sounds, I have acquaintances, friends, even family who don't 'get' wrestling, and while it would be tempting to just cut them off, I often feel obliged to try and win them over.

It's about storytelling, I tell them. Story telling through the medium of violence, and then I have to admit that there are certain limitations in the form. Because wrestling can tell all sorts of stories, stories about family conflict, or personal redemption, stories about overcoming the odds, or being brought down by pride, stories about love or revenge or monsters or heroes, and the last chapter of every one of those stories is a fight.

Let's be honest, the first chapter is usually a fight too. Sometimes the second, and maybe the third... look a lot of the chapters are fights, and amongst less creative types that would definitely be a draw back. But wrestling has created the 'stipulation' because no two fights need ever be the same.

Some stipulations are fun, some deadly, dangerously serious. Some highlight grappling, others highlight athleticism, still others revert to basic violence.

Some stipulations lend themselves to starting stories. In the chaos of a rumble, a meaningful face off or perhaps an unexpected elimination can plant the seed of a feud, which can be watered to full bloom at a later date.

Others can move the story forward, building tension without releasing it. An impromptu tag match can bring the combatants into conflict without requiring either of them to lose (or win) before the payoff. A time limit draw, an inconclusive finish in a standard match, or entourage interference can take us through the second act.

Some lend themselves to the pay off. When the rules of wrestling have failed to provide a conclusion, it must be time for a No DQ or No Holds Barred match. When the ring itself cannot contain the action maybe it's time to forget the ring and make it Falls Count Anywhere or reinforce the ring with a steel cage.

And the great thing about stipulations is you don't need a TV deal, and pyro and a stadium to do them. If the last month in Queensland wrestling has shown us anything, it is that even the wildest stipulations can and will be used by our south east Queensland Promotions. Skhorn can destroy Tim Hayden in a steel cage at IPW: Escape from Nerang. Renegade and Sebastian Matters can damage each other with boards and barbed wire at Venom: High Voltage 4, and Jaxon Cross, Jesse Daniels, Mick Moretti, Renegade and Mitch McCarthy can put their bodies on the line 12 feet above the ring in a ladder match at PWL Project Revolution 2.

Every match different. Every story different.

**Matt McQueen**

### Our Cover this month:

Jake Nova teaching Tim Kade the wrong way to sit on a ladder

## The Round up

### Venom: High Voltage 4

By Aisling Taylor

Unlike all other Venom shows we have seen so far, High Voltage 4 was not at the Showman's club. Instead it was at Beenleigh Bowls Club, so we were interested to see if the venue would have a different vibe. This was also a Halloween show, so we can't be sure that the foam gravestones and the motion sensing witch (that worked tirelessly to be the night's ultimate Heel) weren't staples of the location all year round.

The first match made ample work of the aforementioned gravestones because it was an unsanctioned match between the biggest boi Renegade and the skinniest guy in this particular match, Sebastian Matters (not counting any referees of course). In a fun match that made great use of the space, Renegade even made use of the staple gun (an essential component in any under ring kit) by stapling Matters in the forehead. An official comment from VPW suggests that this is in fact the correct use of a staple gun, meaning that offices around the world have been incorrectly using them all along. Renegade took the win, after putting Matters through a makeshift table made up of pre-barbed wire board and two chairs. Later Sebastian took to Instagram to acknowledge Renegade's win, potentially ending the heated feud – for now.

The second match of the night saw a newly heeled Flashman and Diablo, former rivals turned allies, taking on Venom's best, worst and only detective: Detective Dick Riggs, and, making his Venom debut, Pepsi's spokesman Charlie D. Diablo and Flashman, who have since dubbed themselves El Cartel, worked quickly to show everyone at the show that they are on a war path, a path that may lead to taking out the Retro Bro Bobby Bishop. Bishop did make an appearance that night after he was called out by Flashman over social media. In the end the Detective and Charlie D weren't able to close the case as Flashman and Diablo won the match.

The first title match of the night was Tequila Young's first title defence that wasn't against JL Gold. This time his opponent was Venom's current angstiest teen Zac Reynolds, fresh from his appearance at PWA's Colosseum event. Young continued to prove that he is strong and a worthy champ, though in a surprising twist Reynolds fought this match with the air of someone invested in winning a title. While both men are quite young (no pun intended) they both showed that they can hold their own, so when Reynolds ended up winning the match, it was hard to argue that he didn't deserve it.



Sebastian Matters increasing his chances of getting haunted by a Styrofoam ghost

The last match before intermission was a tag title match between the Night Terrors and GenNext Level. With Ryan Thorne out on injury, Kobra Jones stepped in to help defend the tag team titles against Mitch Ryder and Cedric Brave. Armed with the sharp tongue of Todd Eastman, this was



Cedric Brave learning firsthand that pink and green don't match

GenNext Level's first match after losing the tag title to Night Terrors in their first defence. It was a great match that did a brilliant job of getting the crowd heated and invested with GenNext Level dominating the match early, but the tide turned when Brave experienced the full force of Kobra's green mist, allowing for Night Terrors to win the match (via some slight cheating).

After intermission there was the Halloween Battle Royale: 10 men entered with the intention of becoming the new number one contender for the Origins title. The match saw the return of Detective Dick Riggs and Charlie D, and also featured John Skyfall, Cyprien and Black Jack. The match did a great job of showcasing the athletic ability of

some of the less well known wrestlers at Venom. In the end John Skyfall managed to eliminate Black Jack and become the Zac Reynolds next challenger.

The Women's match of the night saw Tarlee defend her title for the first time after reclaiming it from Steph De Lander at the last show. Charli Rose was Tarlee's challenger for this match and she markets herself as the only female wrestler in Tasmania. Tarlee immediately had the audience on her side, causing her to point out the need for chant distinction between Tar-lee and Char-li. Aside from Charli's undeniable prominence in her home state of Tassie, it wasn't quite enough to take the title from Tarlee.

The night's main event was billed as being between Eddie Jones and Jaxon Cross, however before the match could begin, Jones was attacked by Diablo and Flashman in retaliation for Jones being the reason Diablo had to leave Tasmania. With no clear opponent to challenge Jaxon Cross, many were expecting Xander Sullivan to step up. Instead Renegade entered to take on Armbar Jesus.

Xander Sullivan wasn't missing from the match however, because he was the guest referee. Renegade showed no signs of being tired from his match at the beginning of the night, holding his own against Cross. There were a few pins that Sullivan refused to acknowledge to make Cross work harder to retain his title. Ultimately the meddling from Xander wasn't enough to stop Jaxon from holding onto his belt for another show, though after the match Xander and Renegade announced the return of both the Street Revolution and Headstrong to VPW for the last show of the season.

We aren't sure who the tag teams will take on, but our money is on GenNext Level to continue the demolition of the short lived reign of Next Level.

\*Photos Courtesy of Barb's Photos

## IPW- Escape from Nerang Recap

IPW have put every match from their 6 November Recap show on YouTube, which is a great chance to catch up on the matches if you weren't able to get to the show.

The UnAustralians, (with Si and Dallas Mead) couldn't get the job done against team Australia at Reunion. Escape from Nerang saw Kiwi Thriller and Mead take out their frustration on Bodhi Jackson in a handicap match and while Jackson started with some fire, the numbers and the Heel's clever use of double team moves on the tag, soon took their toll. A late rally provided some hope, but it was not to be, and Dallas Mead picked up the win for the New Zealanders.



McCarthy, mixing it up and smashing the chest of his opponent Mick Moretti

CJ returned to an IPW ring and beat Reaper and Rip Reilly in an entertaining match. What was most intriguing though was what came after, with recent rumble winner Ashe making an appearance post-match and forcing CJ to make a hasty exit.

Mick Moretti was in full Rapsallion mode for his IPW debut against "SmashFace" Mitch McCarthy. The mind games started before the bell and didn't let up until Moretti had scored the pin fall victory. McCarthy may be a QLD wrestling institution, but it seemed from the video that the crowd were right behind Moretti throughout.

Chad Atlas scored an upset win over Dick Brutal. Brutal was in control for most of a short match, but an error by the big man left an opening and Atlas took the opportunity to roll Brutal up for the win.

Sometimes what you really need is 20 minutes of top-quality technical grappling. For those moments there is Obie Cartel v Aj Istria. Obie got the win over his one-time trainee in a match that showcased the class of both performers.

The main event saw Skhorn defend his title in a steel cage match against Tim Hayden. At Reunion these two had shared the ring in an impromptu match that had been very brief and very one sided in favour of the champion. This match was significantly longer but ultimately to the same result. Hayden got in some offense and there were a few points at which he got enough separation to make

it look like he would get out of the cage first, but for the most part it felt very much like the champion was toying with him, before beating him down and climbing out of the cage for the win.

We wouldn't normally comment on an 'angle' during a recap, but it's worth noting, after giving a decent account of herself in the Rumble at Reunion, that Zara Delarosa was on the receiving end of an attack from Morgan Frye at this show. It certainly looks like we will be seeing women's wrestling in IPW in the coming months.

\*Photos by Jason Kryger



Obie Cartel throwing Istria's weight around

## PWL's Project: Revolution 2

By Charlie Anderson

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of November, at the Griffith Uni Bar on the Gold Coast, Pro Wrestling League brought us Project: Revolution 2 and *what a show*. Top to bottom of the card, the show was full of entertaining and enthralling action. The show catered to every type of wrestling fan, from diehard fans who have watched since childhood and love a ladder match, to newer fans who attended to see how the Sullivan vs Matters feud ends. PWL accepts all fans, which makes the show even better.

The opening match was the Big Boy Triple Threat of Jade Diamond v Tommy Knight v Tim Kade. This was one of my favourites of the night. It set the tone for the evening perfectly. The much bigger Diamond and Knight used their size to their advantage – picking up Kade and tossing him around like he weighed nothing. Bullying has never been so fun to watch. Tim tried to fight back, using *his* size to his advantage and flipping off the top rope, but it wasn't enough, and Tommy Knight eventually picked up the victory. A big thank you to Tommy flying all the way from Adelaide just so he could bully Timmy. Please come back soon, I miss you and Rat Daddy already.

Next came the eight-man tag team match for the AWA Tag Team Championship. The champions Bobby Bishop and Rip Reilly (The Retro Bros) defended against Cedric Brave and Mitch Ryder (GenNext), JL Gold and Jason Hyde, and Johnny Skyfall and Zac Reynolds, fresh from his... 'victory' in the Tag Team Gauntlet Match at PWA's Colosseum. My heart was torn asunder in this match; as a lifelong Sonic fan I have to support the Retro Bros, but as a Heat Sheet writer, I'm contractually obliged to cheer for GenNext, our favourite boys in pink. The crowd didn't have this same problem though, and were fully behind the Retro Bros.

This match was contested under Lucha rules, making it a chaotic and frantic bout. It was fast paced, and hard to follow at points, but an overall very enjoyable match. GenNext were very aggressive,

eager to finally snatch these titles, and were many people's pick to win. Jason Hyde's athletic prowess was on full display. Every time I see him, I get more impressed by how agile he is, despite his size. Johnny Skyfall took a ton of punishment from all sides and laughed it all off. We saw an impressive show of strength from both Skyfall and Reynolds, who used teamwork to suplex Rip Reilly off the top rope. None of this was enough, however, as The Retro Bros pick up the pinfall victory and retain again, continuing the reign they began in May.

Xander Sullivan versus Sebastian Matters in a No Holds Barred match for the AWA Openweight Championship was the next match. As any seasoned Heat Sheet reader will know, this matchup had Heat Sheet HQ at odds, with Aisling going for Seb and myself for Xander. This grudge match was hard hitting, and everyone felt it. As soon as Xander makes his entrance, you can see he's here for a fight; eschewing his regular gear for jeans and a tank top. This match came out of the gate roaring. Not soon after the bell, a Give Way sign is pulled out from under the ring, and the two batter each other with it. Sullivan was hit repeatedly by the sign, and Matters was even thrown over the top rope and onto the sign propped up on chairs. Both men continued to



Sebastian helping Xander with his impromptu Bane costume

beat each other senseless, until they both make their way over to the commentary desk, where Xander drives Sebastian through the table (causing Matt McQueen to utter the great heckle: 'I didn't know we had a Spanish announcer table!'). Once they make their way back to the ring, Sebastian continues his relentless onslaught, going so far as to *zip-tie* Xander's hands behind his back, and pummels him with a fist wrapped in chain, knocking him out.

The referee announces Xander is unable to continue, and Sebastian Matters is the new Openweight Champion. I got so caught up in the match, I felt myself almost tearing up as I watched Xander lying helplessly in the ring while Sebastian gloated. I was initially confused about the early placement on the card, given the intense build to the match, but once we were done and onto intermission, I fully understood. I needed a break, and I needed to process what I had just sat and watched.

We came back from intermission to the second triple threat of the night, featuring the second visitor from Adelaide (and a new favourite of mine) Rat Daddy. Along with Rodent Father was Adonis, and Jake Nova, accompanied, of course, by his manager and human selfie stick, Todd Eastman. Adonis always comes in ready to smooch, but it seems Rat Daddy *also* came in ready to smooch. The sexual tension was *thiccc*. Nova was also there. Let's not take away from Nova's performance in this match. He was aggressive and focused, it's not his fault there were more pressing matters in the ring. Adonis and Rat Daddy both wanted to win, but also wanted *each other*.



Jake Nova grappling with the fact that he is the least attractive person in the match

I need you all to understand how hard it is to write this paragraph without sounding like a total creep. The two finally embraced and smooched, but this distraction was just the window Nova needed to pick up the pinfall victory. All was not lost, however, as Daddy and Adonis passionately smooched one more time before leaving the ring, remaining in our hearts as a power couple for the ages. That kiss seems to have been a good luck charm, because the next weekend, Rat Daddy beat AJ Istria to become the new Australian National Champion over at Wrestle Rampage. The official Heat Sheet statement on Rat Daddy was 'weirdly compelling', but I'd like to revise it, to 'please come back soon, Daddy.'

I got no time to rest after that masterpiece, since up next was the penultimate match of the evening. A Revolution Royale – a sixteen-entrant Royal Rumble, with the participants entering four at a time. Most of the entrants were announced ahead of time on social media. To make this easier on me, here's the wrestlers who entered, and their entrance order (there might be some mistakes, it happens), in list format:

- Batch One (prompting the chant: 'Anyone but Draegen!')
  - Draegen
  - Flashman
  - Outback Adam
  - Lucille Brawl
- Batch Two (DDDD helped to usher in a couple of PWL debuts)
  - Jack Tarr
  - Raven Spears
  - James Jaeger
  - Double Denim Danger Dan
- Batch Three (a number of IPW staples becoming crossover stars)
  - Tim Hayden
  - Ashe
  - Sorrow
  - Ben Shaw
- Batch Four (a collection of various sized big boys)
  - Spaceman Dacey
  - Yng Chad
  - CJ
  - Adonis



\*Author's note: Aisling please make sure I take a f\*\*\*ing note pad to the next show

There was a ton to keep up with in this match. Even when all sixteen entrants had made their way to the ring, very few eliminations had occurred, so it was a busy and crowded affair. Notable events included the revelation that Adonis was not an official participant in this match, but had snuck in to get his hands on Sorrow. I enjoy seeing storylines bleed outside of their matches – in my opinion, it adds a feeling of legitimacy to feuds. Just after they were both eliminated, an enraged Ashe picked up Flashman and just... walked backstage, which, I'm pretty sure is kidnapping, or at the very least flashnapping. I'd also like to point out that Double Denim Danger Dan had a very sick looking jacket and did many stunts just as he had promised. Once the numbers started thinning out, we were left with a final three of Outback Adam, Lucille Brawl and (buff sailor boy) Jack Tarr. The crowd was vocal for their support of both Brawl and Outback Adam (I have reached out for a statement on the legality of the name Outback), but only one could win, and in a final push, Lucille Brawl became both the first woman to wrestle for PWL, and also the first woman to win a match in PWL. Lucille Brawl is now guaranteed any match of her choosing – any time, any PWL event.

I was exhausted at this point in the night and was sure I'd have no energy left for the main event, but I was very wrong. Our main event for this show was a five man Ladder Match for *both* the AWA and PWL Heavyweight Championship titles. First man to unhook at least one of the belts hanging from the ceiling becomes a double champion. Competing in this match we had the Big Boi Renegade, Armbar Jesus Jaxon Cross, SmashFace Mitch McCarthy, reigning AWA Champion the Devil's Double Jessie Daniels, and reigning PWL Champion the RapsCALLION Mick Moretti.

As soon as the bell rang, chaos broke out. As you'd expect, there were many, many nasty

looking ladder spots that made me cringe. Moretti lost his temper with a ladder with fixed legs and decided he would *make* it bend to his will (literally) by throwing McCarthy into it. It was very broken, but it did close, so mission accomplished? My personal favourite spot was as they both got close to unhooking the belts, Renegade and Jaxon Cross starting exchanging blows, which resulted in Jaxon Cross locking in an armbar on Renegade *through the top of the ladder*. You can say what you want about Jaxon Cross, but he has earned his title of Armbar Jesus. This bout was very close throughout, with all competitors getting tantalizingly close to the victory on multiple occasions. Just as all hope



Mitch McCarthy reigning supreme after smashing his four opponents' faces

seemed lost, and Jessie Daniels looked to be about to unhook the belts, Mitch McCarthy appeared to save us all, to knock Daniels off the ladder, and to reach up and pull down a belt, winning the whole match.

After the bell, Mitch McCarthy gave an emotional speech, and announced that going forward into 2020, AWA and PWL would work together (something that began earlier in the year with the joint custody of the Openweight Title). The two brands would remain two, but the teams working on the show would combine and grow together, utilizing the AWA titles due to their lineage and prestige. The night's roster made their way to the ring to celebrate with SmashFace, and the night concluded on an emotionally high note.

It's crazy to think it's been a whole year since PWL's first show, and that it took me a whole year to get to a PWL show. Every time, something came up, but I made damn well sure that this time, nothing would stop me from going; and I am so, so, so glad I did. I loved this show *to bits*. There wasn't a match that I didn't love. I want to give a big thank you to all the performers and all the production crew who made this show what it is. You will absolutely see me back at the next show.

#### Differing Opinions: Aisling's Takes

While we here at HSHQ are a united team dedicated to wholeheartedly loving wrestling, there are occasionally differing opinions and I want to present some of my takes here. I really loved PWL Management's decision to format the event with a triple threat match, then a large group match, followed by a title match. This occurred both before and after intermission and helped pace the show brilliantly.

Watching Jade Diamond and Tommy Knight gang up on questionable big boy Tim Kade gave the night a light feel without destroying the events stakes.

I truly thought that GenNext were going to win the tag belts, which makes the Retro Bros even more strong (especially since they were the only title holders to retain their belts).

At Beers and Bruises in September, Xander Sullivan said to me: 'I'm gonna break your boy' referring to his at the time upcoming match with Sebastian Matters, and to that I say: who broke whom? But in all seriousness Xander did a great job building the Openweight title and I am excited to see what Sebastian does with it.

I would pay money to see a reality tv show where Rat Daddy and Adonis live together. #CoupleGoals

Lucille Brawl. 'nuff said.

A personal thanks to Renegade, Jaxon Cross, Mick Moretti and Mitch (Mitchy two belts) McCarthy for making my dreams come true and putting multiple ladders through Jesse Daniels. Also, it was a fantastic match that ended an already amazing night of wrestling!

\*Photos by Callum Rule Media

## What's Your Poison: Venom Pro Wrestling

By Matt McQueen

There is a distinct feel to a venom show.

Call it the vibe, but you notice it as soon as you arrive, and it's hard to immediately put your finger on exactly what it is.

There is the normal core of 20-30-year-old males, in black t-shirts, but you see them at most shows. There are families, parents with their kids enjoying a night out, with chips and gravy and getting into the action, but you will see that at any all-ages show in Queensland too. There is an immediacy about the performance and a closeness to the performers, but that exists at every other indie fed.



Tarlee showing Brandy Alexander how to stand on her tippy toes

And yet Venom has a vibe, and I've spent a lot of time trying to get to the bottom of what is the 'Venom Brand.'

For all that, when speaking to him, I get the impression that owner and GM Anthony Fermanian has always set out to put on a show, rather than to necessarily 'develop a brand'.

He admits that he wants to offer something for everyone, to cater for all sorts of fans, and accordingly there will be a range of matches across the show. Modern athleticism, but also matches and angles with character focus, hardcore barbed wire and blood affairs, rubbing shoulders with lighter comedy matches.

I can't help noticing some threads that run through the show, and whilst he may not like my use of the word 'brand', Anthony accepts they are there, and they lend Venom its own unique flavour.

First and perhaps most noticeably to the outsider, Venom is a place where there are Heels and Faces. There aren't many tweeners in a Venom ring. Even performers like Jake Nova or Jaxon Cross, who in other places are too cool, or too good in ring to really hate, are straight up bad guys once they get to Venom.

And the audience let them know it.

Because (secondly) a Venom Audience cheers the Faces and boos the Heels. I say boo, I mean lose their collective shit in an outpouring of rage, disgust and vitriol that would make their mothers blush, if their mother was not sitting beside them responding in exactly the same way. It can actually be a little confronting for a fan more used to adopting an air of knowing cynicism.

Thirdly, Venom is a local promotion. It's a local business and it feels like part of the local community, and Anthony leans into that. In a recent episode of the Bite (Venom's YouTube, promo wrap up show), Zac Reynolds, demands a contract with a throw away insult aimed at Fermanian along the lines of '*who are you, you run wrestling shows in Beenleigh*'. And GM Anthony wears it, because 'The Natural' Zac Reynolds may think he is too good for south east Queensland, and too good for the Venom audience, but Venom doesn't.

Taken together, those things give Venom its distinct feel. It would be unfair to call it old school, or eighties, the wrestling itself is too modern, generally quicker and more accomplished than that era, but it is distinctly territorial and pre-Montreal in its flavour.

Perhaps the best indication of what I am getting at is in the character of the GM Anthony, and the presentation of the Fed itself.

The McMahon family, and the corporate behemoth of the WWE, have spent 20+ years selling a product on the basis that the promotion is 'the man', and the performers who side with 'the man' are stooges and lackeys. The WWE invites the audience to cheer and get behind the heroic rebels fighting against the system.

Not Venom. Venom is a local business, GM Anthony is there on the door chatting to the audience, listening, getting to know what they want to see, what they like and what they don't. He is trying to put on a show for them. The bad guys are the Todd Eastmans who want to take it all away, or the Zac Reynolds who think they are too good for this, or the Sebastian Matters who come in and refuse to play by the rules.

So, the promotion is a good guy, with a genuine connection to its fans, and there are stories to be told in that connection.



Dolph Finn proving he doesn't need to be underwater to kick butt

Queensland wrestling thrives on bringing in name talent, from south of the border or from overseas. Venom is no different.

Anthony refers to it as an investment. Being able to Bring in a Ken Anderson (WWE's Mr Kennedy), as Venom did in January of 2017, or a Will Ospreay as they did in February 2018, gives the promotion a name performer with brand recognition it can promote to fans to get more bums on seats and more eyes on the product. It is also an investment in the locker room, both in terms of education, offering local wrestlers the chance to learn from more experienced well-travelled and knowledgeable talent but also in morale, giving talent a chance to rub shoulders with performers who they have admired or aspired to perform with.

In an industry with no shortage of egos, Anthony was effusive in his praise and appreciation for what the 'foreign talent' he has brought in have offered to his Fed, singling out Anderson (who is of now appearing on NWA POWERRR amongst other places), for his attitude and humility.

While they are an investment, the 'foreign legion' also represent a significant financial commitment for an Indie promotion, and Anthony is not above twisting that into a story line. In 2018, when his audience might have been asking how Anthony had been able to afford to bring in Will Ospreay and Mr Kennedy, Anthony and Todd Eastman used that as a springboard for their storyline. Running a long-term arc that Anthony had had to borrow money from Eastman to cover his costs. Unable to pay his debts, he had lost control of his promotion, only to earn/win it back in the only place that makes wrestling sense: inside a steel cage.

Again, I won't say 'old school', but there is something distinctly 'Hard Times' about a story line which casts the promoter as a local business owner, struggling to pay the bills and overcoming the odds to keep the doors open.

Beenleigh might not be the first place that comes to mind when you think of feminism, but the Venom Women's belt is currently the only active women's belt in South East Queensland, and Venom has been promoting women's wrestling consistently for as long as it has been running. It hasn't always

### Bedtime Stories

I was keen to talk to Anthony about his booking philosophy.

Venom tries to run to a season format, with a head storyline that will play out across the main event over the course of most of the year. Alongside that will be shorter stories, playing out in ring, and supported by promos and character development online.

Like any soap opera though, the storylines wind around each other: Sebastian Matters v Renegade is an example of a shorter storyline, ending with staple guns and barbed wire chairs at High Voltage. But even that can be traced all the way back to May of this year, and over the course of the telling, that storyline has highlighted Bruiser, introduced Jason Hyde to the Venom ring, and provided the opportunity for Flashman's shocking Heel turn, and the program teaming him and Diablo against Rip Reilly and Bobby Bishop. Zac Reynold's online demands for an opportunity have flowed into his successful challenge for the origins title, and now, in their most recent promos provides an opportunity for John Skyfall to feature.

The way the shorter story arcs weave through and around the main narrative adds to the fun.

But Anthony doesn't fly solo on this and won't take all the credit. He engages a booking team, and shakes up that team annually, to keep ideas flowing and fresh.

been easy. The Venom audience has seen such emerging talent as Kellyanne, Sofia Morales, Brie Lee, and now NXT recruit Indi Hartwell.

But there are fewer women wrestlers than men in Australia, and at the moment, very few in Queensland. Showcasing women's wrestling in South East Queensland in recent years has meant bringing in talent, and it hasn't always gone without a hitch. In 2016 when the women's belt was first launched with what was planned to be an eight woman tournament, cancellations and flight difficulties mean even that had to be rebooked on the fly, before Kira Sommers could walk away as the first VPW women's champion.

From late 2017, until early this year, the belt was actually put into hiatus. While Anthony continued to put on women's matches, it did not feel right to present it as a division, with its own championship. At the start of this year however with Tarlee booked to take on both Arya Reign and Indie Hartwell, the VPW Booking Committee made the spur of the moment decision to make it for the title, the belt was re-activated and Tarlee won, commencing her reign as VPW women's champion. Over the course of 2019 she has defended the belt, lost the belt to Steph De Lander (after interference from Brandy Alexander), and eventually regained the belt, on the way connecting with the vocal Venom crowd.



Sebastian Matters using a barbed wire chair to make things more black and white

There are signs that women's wrestling in Queensland may be on the verge of bouncing back. IPW has a semi regular Women's title, AWA and PWL have recently put Lucille Brawl over in intergender matches and used Arya Reigns in a similar manner before her injury. If we are seeing a resurgence in women's wrestling in Queensland, then Venom deserve credit for keeping the flame lit, these last few years.

There is a certain amount of cross pollination in Queensland wrestling. With 4 or 5 regular promotions it is not surprising that performers can be seen in more than one Fed. But promotions have, through their own trainees and particular characters, a core who can define the product and set it apart. In Venom, you have the Night Terrors, Kobra Jones and Venom stalwart Damien Thorne, who Anthony has been training for seven years, together with newer trainee crowd favourite Ryan Thorne, as well as recently dethroned Origins title holder Tequila Young. Anthony admits to having a long list of performers training with him at the moment, who we can expect to see featured more heavily over the next twelve months. Bruiser is a Venom trainee who has looked a natural in the role of Sebastian Matters hired muscle. Detective Dick Riggs made his debut in a rumble in August

before returning to partner Charlie D in a tag match at High Voltage 4. In addition, there are performers like Shinji, John Skyfall and Jason Hyde who have trained and worked elsewhere but who we can expect to see more of in a Venom ring.



*I don't know who that guy is between Jake Nova and Jaxon Cross but I reckon he is trying too hard.*

In a theme that I have heard echoed elsewhere, Anthony insists that Queensland wrestling is at its best when it is cooperating. There will always be some tensions. In a small geographic area, with four or five promotions, and only so many Fridays and Saturdays, in a month the search for clear air will inevitably cause clashes. When there are limited quality venues (and every promoter wants to keep his venues on side), and given what will continue to be talent sharing, those clashes can be damaging to inter-fed relations.

In a practical sense it means that while not all feds will necessarily work together, there has to be some level of mutual respect between promotions, so that they are not working against the scene as a whole. Anthony supports that, and while Venom may have its own flavour, its brand, its vibe, it is still very much part of that Queensland Scene.

\*Photos by Barb's Photos

### Coming up in Heat Sheet

It's almost the end of the year, and for wrestling fans that mean end of the year/ best of lists. For December we will be bringing you a bunch of Fives. Our Five Favourite matches, our Five Favourite Characters, our Five Favourite Wrestlers and many more. Get in contact with us on Facebook or Twitter or Instagram to let us know your favourite Queensland Wrestling moments of 2019.

And then in January we will bringing you a host of all new features, new writers, new articles and new perspectives on Queensland Wrestling.

In the meantime, don't forget to follow us on Instagram @heat\_sheet, on Facebook @heatsheetmag, and on Twitter @sheet\_heat, and as always: Support Local Wrestling.

## Coming Up

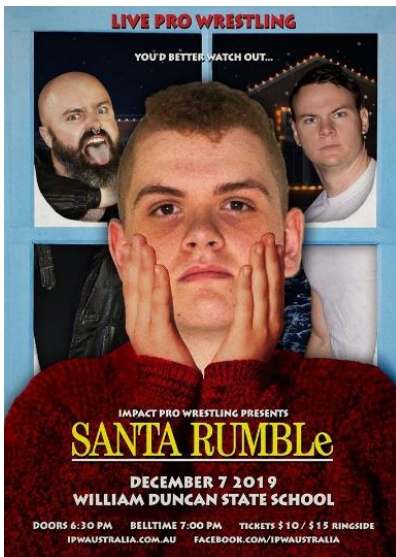


Venom Pro Wrestling will be back at Yatala Showmen's Guild for *Flatline IV*, a show that will see the return of HeadStrong and Street Revolution, and a continuation of the building feud between Flashman and Bobby Bishop.

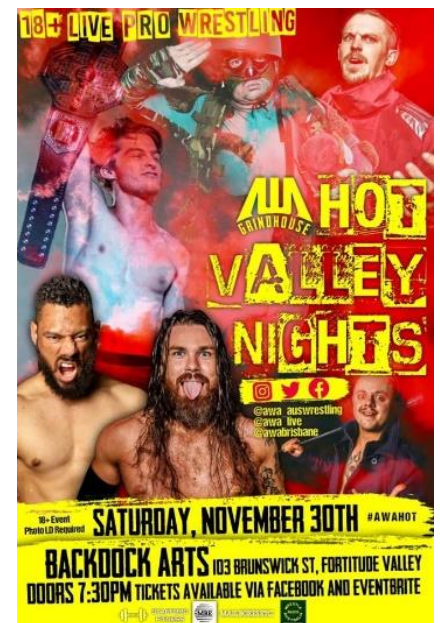
UPW: *Jingle Jam 2* will be held at the Shed, at Aussie World on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December. UPW are still looking to find a new champion after the Stockman had to surrender the title at Ascension, but the big news so far has been the announced return of previous champion EC Diamond, returning to the Shed after what has by all accounts been a very successful trip to the US and Al Snow's Ohia Valley Wrestling.



IPW: *Santa Rumble* is on 7<sup>th</sup> December at William Duncan State School. In addition to the Rumble which will include a host of IPW regulars, a huge main event will see the Champion Skhorn defend against RIP Reilly in what will be the 'biggest' test he has faced.



AWA had said that they were wrapping up for the year after Beer and Bruises in October, but after having formally announced they would be merging/co-promoting with PWL moving forward, they have had a change of heart and will deliver two shows in the next month.



They test out a new venue with *Hot Valley Nights* on 30 November at Backdock Arts on Brunswick Street, where Jesse Daniels will take on Hugh Manatee for a shot at Mitch McCarthy's title(s). And Sebastian Matters will make his first defence of the Open Weight title against the other half of Headstrong, JL Gold.



Less than two weeks later, they are back in the Valley, this time at the Triffid, for *Holiday Hell*. Both shows are 18+ Grindhouse events.



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'Showtime Baby  
\*Slaps Chest\*  
Wooo' — Jake Nova