

HEAT SHEET



ISSUE #13

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Coming Up

A Letter from the Editor

It occurred to me as we were putting together this issue that we have done a lot of articles about wrestling training. Where to do it, how to do it, and why we here at HeatSheet HQ can't do it.

Of course there are some good reasons for that.

Each of our South East Queensland promotions have their own wrestling schools. The performers they train form the nucleus of their respective rosters and it's all but impossible to talk about a wrestling company without also talking about their training school.

It's also a significant investment in the improvement and development of Queensland wrestling, both on the part of the companies but also on the part of the performers. Wrestlers are giving up their time and money, and putting their bodies on the line to improve their craft, and that deserves acknowledgement.

Finally though, it comes back to what we said in the first paragraph. We aren't doing it. We are writers, not fighters, and that means we have enormous respect for the men and women who do.

It's not just the physicality.

It's the physicality combined with the melodramatic character work, combined with the improvisational performance demands. And one of those things would be outside the comfort zone of your average person on the street. To combine all three, and still be prepared to step in front of an audience for your art, that is special, so we aren't going to apologise for wanting to shine a light on how you start down that path.

Which is a long way of saying we are doing it again. This month, we talk to Blair Seeker and EC Diamond about what it was like going to train in North America. We also see the return of Inside Voice, with some of Queensland's refs letting us in on their personal favourite matches. We have Heat Seeker, What's Coming Up, and in our most exciting development for three months: a live show review from UPW's Back. So sit back, put your feet up and read on, and...

... support local wrestling.

Our cover this issue

Jason Hyde moves so fast not even the amazing Barb can get a photo where he is not in motion.

- Photo by Barb's Photos from IPW: Reload

The Round Up

UPW: Caboolture is back!

By Lachlan Albert

Most people in Queensland will be going longer than 126 days between wrestling events. I was lucky enough to be watching wrestling the last time it was on in Queensland, and I'm watching it as soon as it's returned. 126 days is still a long time, though, and with the event Caboolture Is Back, UPW both celebrated a return to the ring and reminded us of how a wrestling show is done.

When HeatSheet big cheese Matt McQueen wrote about UPW's first Caboolture show, Welcome To The Neighbourhood, he talked about how the show seemed laid out to introduce wrestling gradually to any new fans, giving them the feel for how a show plays out. After such a long absence, UPW has once again made their show inside the UPW training facility an educational one, so let's explore the curriculum.



We waited a long time to see the Gospel picking on someone who wasn't his own size.

Lesson one: Skilled good guys beat physically imposing bad guys. Sitting socially distanced in a warehouse-turned-gym-turned-show venue, I was a little apprehensive about how coming back to wrestling would feel, but the first competitor out of the curtain being Ricky Rembrandt put my fears to rest. His opponent, 'Gospel' Matthew Gabriel, came out to boos as sizeable as Ricky's cheers. Even if you'd never seen these two before, it was obvious that Ricky's quick and technical wrestling was a fan favourite, especially compared to the powerful and methodical style of Gospel. Gabriel held most of the match in his hands, shoulder-blocking Rembrandt to the mat at any sign of a comeback. However, this is wrestling, and you can never keep a beloved hero down: Ricky eventually

took the momentum back, whizzed around the ring to knock Gospel down with a codebreaker, and hit a big elbow drop from the top for the victory.

Lesson two: Promo and look. Vegas Starr came to the ring to a shower of boos to talk up his client's chances in a title match later in the night. His client arrived and didn't speak much, but the physically imposing presence of The Stockman did as much as Starr's words to convince the crowd of his chances at becoming the new UPW Heavyweight champion.

Lesson three: Physical condition wins matches. There's a lot to like about Verde Tonto. The green luchador is a fan favourite and an exciting prospect. Unfortunately for him, he stepped into the ring against the physically dominant Moko Kai. The warrior hit Tonto with a spear that could have ended the match, but Moko wasn't done. He then hit a Samoan drop that could've easily scored the pinfall. Again, though, Kai wanted to make sure his presence was being felt by the UPW roster. One more bone-rattling spear made sure that Tonto would stay down for the three count. Or, honestly, whatever count Moko felt like.

Lesson four: Bad guys win by being bad. UPW Tag Team Champions The Cluck and Duck Connection are, and I cannot emphasise this enough, a shower-loving Frenchman and a man raised by chickens. Every time these two bring team mascot Tugboat the rubber duck to the ring, I have to process it all over again. Their opponents are far clearer in their image if just as disconcerting – Thirteen leads the Circus of Tragedy to the ring, consisting of Pogo the Clown and the monster Kasm. Now students, if you think back to Lesson one, you'll recall that the technical skill of Jacque and Cluck keep them in control of the early match. The difference this time is who's not in the match. Thirteen keeps putting the Circus back in contention by pulling competitors off the apron, distracting people in the ring, throwing Cluck head-first into the ring post. In the ring, Kasm's Abyss powerslam finishes off the champs and makes the Circus of Tragedy your new UPW Tag Team Champions. This isn't good enough for Thirteen, who leads the circus in a calculated destruction of the good guys. The punctuation is put on the match when Jacque LeGrande's leg is trapped in a steel chair and jumped on, and the Circus are thrown backstage as medical personnel attend to Jacque.

Lesson five: Crowd support makes a difference. The debuting Mosca Rosa is a thrill to watch. His high-flying technical style was as fresh and crisp as a summer apple, and this was highlighted when he was presented with the equally electric Kanji Kid as his debut opponent. The two put on an excellent Featherweight Division match which showed how athletically gifted both men are. It was kind of unbelievable that this was Rosa's debut. The crowd supported both competitors but was clearly in the corner of Kanji, a long-term favourite. Fan support combined with a moment of overconfidence from Rosa, who attempted Kanji's signature Crane Kick but missed, gave the win to the Kanji Kid. After the match the two competitors shook hands and showed what two good guys look like coming up against each other.



Some of these wrestlers are greener than they might appear.

Lesson six: Sometimes you can't win the way you want. The Stockman had Vegas Starr in his corner for his UPW Heavyweight Championship match. Champion Malibu looked primed and ready to defend his title. New UPW General Manager Mr Marcus Crane came to the ring and told Stockman that, due to unsportsmanlike behaviour in the past, if Stockman didn't capture the title tonight, his undefeated streak wouldn't be enough to keep him in the UPW title picture and he would start again at the bottom of the totem pole. The match was as hard-hitting and frantic as you would expect, with Stockman attempting to use his power to slow down Malibu, who refused to stop throwing himself full-force at the immovable object. Malibu took the Stockman off his feet and sent him to the outside, before committing everything he had to a trio of suicide dives to keep the big man down. The last dive seemed to catch Malibu as well, because neither man was able to reach their feet and re-enter the ring before a count of ten, resulting in a double count-out and leaving Malibu as the champion.



Social distancing means having to sit with your family.

Lesson seven: At the end of the day, good triumphs over evil. The crowd was already against Thirteen from his antics during the tag team match, and bringing Pogo and Kasm to a singles match didn't help crowd opinion. Neither did bringing Tugboat to the ring as a trophy. The crowd had someone to rally behind, though, belting the lyrics to Working Class Man as Jack Tucker made his way to the ring. Tucker is highly underrated in my opinion, walking into a non-title main event match and feeling every inch the perfect fit. He's got the look, the charisma, and the in-ring talent, and it all added up to make a nightmare for Thirteen, who kept using his size and power to try and keep Tucker down, but it wouldn't work. Thirteen then used Pogo and Kasm to try to even the score, but even being attacked by the two men on the outside, Tucker refused to give in. Finally, Tucker disposed of Kasm and Pogo and took Thirteen down with the Working Class Cutter for the three count, earning a hard-fought victory. Thirteen wasn't happy with this and summoned the Circus to try and beat Tucker down, but the locker room had seen the aftermath of the tag title match earlier and wasn't about to let history repeat itself. Ricky Rembrandt, Moko Kai, Mosca Rosa, and the Kanji Kid rushed to the ring to hold the Circus off, allowing Tucker to recover from the brutal match, thank the fans for their support, and remind us of the reason we were all so thrilled.

UPW is back.

Heat Seeker:

SHINJI

Q: Who is you 'all time' favourite Wrestler?

My all-time favourite wrestler? That's gotta be Kane. We have so many similarities. He wears red. I wear red. He gets angry. I get angry. He's athletic. I'm... wait. Nevermind.

Q: What is you 'all time' favourite match?

Any match with Kane in it.

Q: Where, when and against whom did you make your debut?

I debuted in 2017 at Brisbane City Wrestling. I don't remember who I debuted against; all I know is it wasn't against Kane.

Q: Your Favourite match you've been in?

I had a lot of fun in my match with Matt Hayter and that is probably one of my all-time favourites from recent memory. Unfortunately, I believe the footage of that match is being held hostage somewhere.

Q: Favourite match you've not yet had?

Shinji vs Kane.

Q: Favourite Move to perform?

Whatever move gets me the win, which is usually my Argentine Neckbreaker.

Q: Favourite opponent?

My favourite opponent is probably Punch-Drunk Istria. Had a hell of a match with him. I would wrestle him again any day.

Q: Least favourite opponent?

This guy called E-10. He's beat me twice, even though I try real hard and I even cheat. So he's probably my least favourite... can't seem to beat him.

Q: Who designs/ makes your ring gear?

My current gear was made by Dinky Di. She's incredible at making me look even better than I already do.

Q: Who has been the biggest influence on your career?

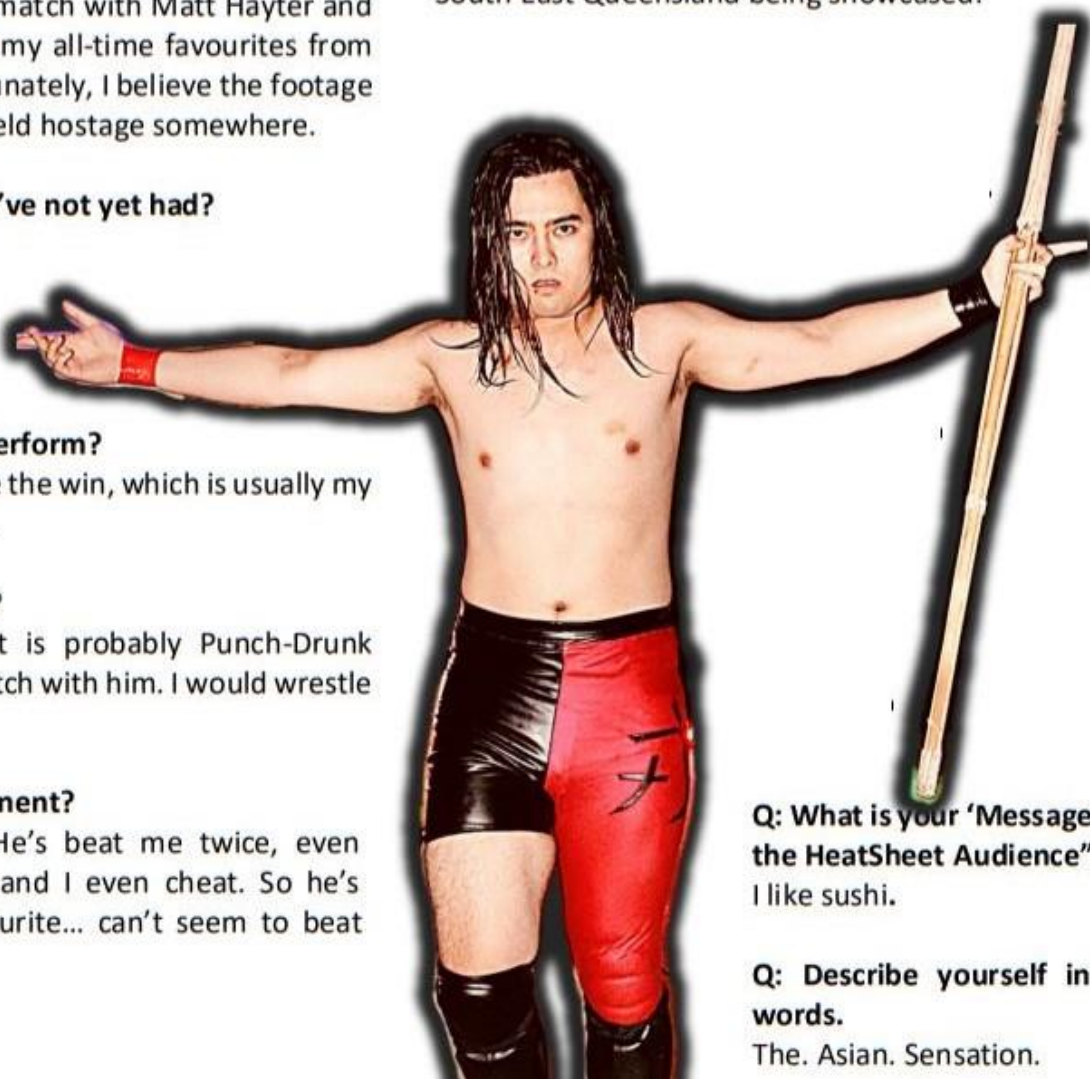
It's a difficult choice between Dallas Sommers and Kane. Dallas Sommers was my main trainer for the last 3 years and shaped my in ring style and character, so I'll have to go with Kane.

Q: Where have you wrestled apart from South East QLD, and where was your favourite and or least favourite?

I've wrestled up in North QLD –Cairns for PWP, NSW – NCPW and South Australia for PWSA. My favourite place outside of South East QLD to wrestle so far is probably South Australia.

Q: Favourite part of HeatSheet Magazine?

Heat Seeker is my favourite part of the HeatSheet Magazine. It's great to see wrestlers from all over South East Queensland being showcased.



Q: What is your 'Message to the HeatSheet Audience'?

I like sushi.

Q: Describe yourself in three words.

The. Asian. Sensation.

Inside Voice: The Referees Part 1

Sit back and enjoy as we continue our semi-regular series, getting the inside scoop on what goes through the mind of the men and women, behind the curtain that keep Queensland Wrestling ticking over. We have used the break to reach out to the Referees, and over the next few months we will be bringing you their personal favourites.

Sebbie Dagan- Zac Reynolds Vs Tequila Young (Venom Pro Wrestling: Flatline 4)

You've probably seen Sebbie Dagan in the stripes at Venom Pro Wrestling, but he also controls the action for Wide Bay Pro Wrestling, Nightfall Wrestling, AWF and is signed up to ref for new comer EWA when it kicks off.



Not content with laying his hands on an official, Reynolds lays hands on two officials.

The reason I've picked this match is not just because it was part of a great back and forth series but because it gave a couple of talented mid card carders a chance to shine. Both were still relatively new faces to the venom crowd having only debuted a few months earlier and Tequila had quickly get the fans behind him. Zac had just as quickly turned them against him.

Of the three matches my reason for choosing this one is a little biased.

The match was originally scheduled as a triple threat, but Skyfall jumped the gun with an attack on tequila and was thrown out of the building. The match continued under triple threat rules though, so no DQ and both wrestlers made the most of it with a great back and forth match.

The finish is what makes it a favourite though. Tequila went down late in the match with a leg injury as the ref in the match and required medical assistance. I called for our trainer to come take a look at his knee and had my hands full keeping Reynolds in a neutral corner til I got the all clear form the trainer, Zac being Zac obviously saw the chance to to get an advantage and claim back the title he once held. After being restrained Zac had them placed his hands on the official (myself) and shoved me out of the way, I could have disqualified him for that action alone but in the heat of the moment I shoved him back which allowed Tequila the opportunity to get a surprising roll up pin for the 3 count.

Pat Lee- Rufio v Hugh Manatee (AWA Grindhouse 2017)

AWL's Ref Pat, had a couple of matches in mind when I asked him but eventually settled on a classic from 2017. Rufio and Hugh Manatee's Inter dimensional falls count anywhere match from the New Globe Theatre (and elsewhere).

As I referee I have to be prepared for everything, but nothing like this has ever been brought to the table in Queensland before.

I've seen the best of Rufio inside the ring with technical masters like AJ Istria, and I've seen him surviving the brutal offense from the likes of Jonah Rock and jag Hartley Jackson, this was different. Hugh brings agility and the lack of energy not expected from a man/aquatic mammal of his build. From hard hitting strikes, brutal slams to innovative environmental offense this match has it all.



... and then Rufio suggested they take it outside.

And if that were not enough all of this madness was to become the number one contender for Jake Nova's AWA title.

This match has recently been edited and posted to AWL's youtube channel and can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/c/AustralianWrestlingLeague/videos>.

If you haven't seen it check it out, as Pat very rightly says, QLD hadn't seen anything like this before.

International Relations

By Matt McQueen

Sit down by the fire young one and let me tell you a story. A story of a long ago time, when warriors fought for our entertainment, and the most driven, the most ambitious warriors travelled many miles to fight and learn and hone their craft.

Yes young one, even so far as the plague lands.

... or, words to that effect.

Calgary can probably make a decent claim to being a 'sacred site' for pro-wrestling. It was the home of the Hart family, and the legendary Hart Dungeon. It gave us Brett and Owen and the Anvil and the Bulldog, but also Jericho and Tyson Kidd and... Lance Storm.

While the Dungeon may be long gone, some of its energy lived on, until recently, in the Storm Wrestling Academy, run by Hart Alumnus Lance Storm. The Academy itself generated a pretty impressive list of graduates themselves: Tyler Breeze, Oney Lorcan, Tenille Dashwood, all trained at the Academy on their way to NXT and WWE success.

Alas, the Academy is no more. Its figurehead and head trainer closed the doors last year in order to take up an in-house role with the WWE, and while he was furloughed from that role in April due to COVID-19, there seems no plans to re-open the Academy doors just yet.



Someone comes to the ring in your gear? That's a paddlin'

As long as he has been training and performing as a wrestler, Blair Seeker had had plans to train and gain experience overseas, and it was always the Storm Academy that he was drawn to. The opportunity to train with someone like Lance Storm, who had achieved so much in the business and had in turn produced some of the most interesting and talented wrestlers around today, was a big part of that drive.

Seeker got that chance at the last possible moment, being part of the last ever Storm Academy class before it shut down, and getting a small taste of the Calgary wrestling magic.

The Academy program was a three month full time program, starting on the ground floor with rolls and bumps and basics, and building up from there. It was no free ride either – five days' training a week for three months took its toll on some. The class had started with 20, but only nine (including Seeker) got to the end of the program. While Seeker had some solid local experience under his belt, the ground up nature of the program meant that there were some in the class with no or limited wrestling experience starting off, so it's probably not surprising that some of them decided that the daily grind of wrestling training was not for them.

Those (like Seeker) who stuck it out got to learn directly from Lance and trainer Chris Knight, and as the course progressed through the nuts and bolts of laying out a match, through to wrestling actual matches, got the chance to lock up with Lance Storm,

It will be no surprise to hear that a school run by Lance Storm focussed heavily on the basics, on realistic-looking technical wrestling, and on psychology. What might be a surprise was the extent to Storm himself was involved. Chris Jericho used to comment that while he trained at the Hart Brothers' School, the only time he saw a Hart was when they turned up to collect the money. That certainly wasn't the case in the Storm Academy, the man himself being (in Seeker's words) 'super hands-on,' both present and active in the training.

By the last month of the program they were wrestling matches every day, and watching them back with feedback from Storm himself.

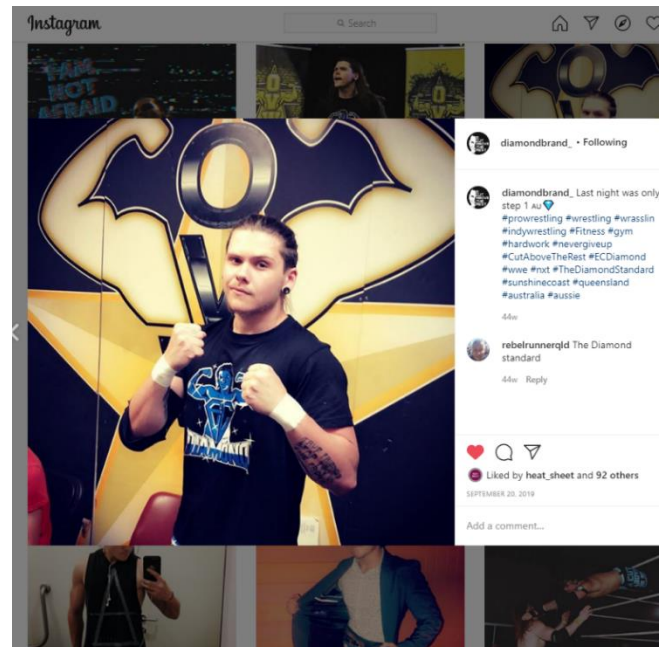
Three months is a long time to be away from home, and it can seem even longer when you have a partner and family waiting for your return. Seeker actually found out two weeks in to the 12 week course that his partner was pregnant, so knowing they were fully supportive became not just a bonus but an imperative.

While Blair Seeker was in Calgary being put through his paces by Storm, EC Diamond was in Louisville Kentucky, cutting his North American performance teeth at Ohio Valley Wrestling.

OVW has its own storied history: this is the same promotion that delivered the Prototype John Cena to the WWE, and Kane, Bautista and Dolph Ziggler. In the 27 years it has been operating as a promotion, school and developmental territory, it has seen the influence of some of the sharpest minds in pro-wrestling and is now presided over by Al Snow.

In fact it was meeting Snow as part of the Brisbane House of Hardcore event in 2018 that sold Diamond on OVW as his chosen school. Before that he had been trying to decide between Black and Brave (Seth Rollins and Marek Brave) or The Academy (Mr Kennedy). Of course having started his wrestling journey at UPW, Diamond already had an OVW connection through Mohammed Ali Vaez, and makes no bones about the fact that both Ali and UPW head trainer 13 were instrumental in getting him to OVW.

So on 4 September 2019, Diamond found himself in Louisville Kentucky, a city that would be home base (if not always home) for the next three months.



EC, didn't hide the fact that he was going OS.

Unlike the Storm Academy, OVW doesn't strip things completely back to the basics – they have a promotion to run and shows to put on after all. EC Diamond arrived on a Wednesday night, and by Saturday of the same week he was appearing on an OVW house show.

The OVW top brass may not have wasted too much time working out how to promote him (he admits they had him coming out to Men at Work's "Down Under"), but they believed in him enough to give him loads of opportunities. The fans took to him too, getting behind the newcomer straight away.

In no time at all Diamond was gaining a boatload of pro experience, learning to work on TV, travelling between towns and doing shows throughout the territory. It's an experience that Diamond is keen to revisit as soon as the opportunity arises.

Which is not to say that he is going to forget his roots: when I put him on the spot Diamond confirmed he was a Queenslander, and Queensland wrestling will always be home. Even before Covid hit, he was excited about what he still had to achieve here in his own backyard



As a young boy EC Diamond used to dream of one day growing up to be EC Diamond.

I asked both Seeker and Diamond what tips they would give to anyone looking to train in North America.

Diamond was adamant. *If you're going to go anywhere to learn in America, OVW IS THE PLACE TO GO! Open your ears and pay attention is the key... it may be an expensive trip but the knowledge is priceless and you will not regret a single thing!*

Blair Seeker, of course had to be more general, since Storm had announced in the last week of the course that the Storm Academy was closing and he was moving on to WWE, but his answer is very much what you would expect from someone who trained under Lance Storm:

You are never too good to train or work on the basics. Always look for improvement. For newer guys just starting out, you are just trying to get off the bench, so give as much value to the promotion you are working for or trying to work for. Give them a reason to give you an opportunity. It is the wrestler who is "over" not the moves he does.

And perhaps most importantly if your destination is the frozen north... *'don't go in winter'*.

There are a lot of wrestling schools in North America, and while it may be impossible to get to them for the moment, there will no doubt be a lot of them when things open up again. The landscape may change. Since Blair Seeker was there, the Storm Academy has closed. Since EC Diamond did his first tour of duty, OVW has transitioned into being a dedicated pro wrestling trade school offering a two year trade certificate course. Chikara's 'wrestle factory' has closed. But Black and Brave still exists, The Academy still exists, and a quick google search can turn up loads of options for anyone looking to learn the trade.

There are schools in Japan, in Europe and in New Zealand, and of course great schools and great teachers all around Australia.

The simple fact is that no matter how small and closed-in things may feel at the moment, it's a big wide wrestling world, and when it opens, anyone who is ready to learn something new from someone new will find they are spoiled for choice.

Coming Up

United Pro Wrestling are not just the first promotion to resume shows, they have also announced they will be running two shows per month from UPW HQ Caboolture until Aussie World is up and running again.

August 8 will be UPW: Showdown. The announced main event will see UPW Champion Malibu take on 'Mr Queensland Wrestling' Rip Rielly in what I think will be a first ever match-up between those two. Also announced is Kanji Kid v Vegas Starr, with more matches no doubt to be revealed over the coming days. I don't know what Vegas Starr weighs, but Kanji Kid, Cluck, Ricky Rembrandt, and now La Mosca Rosa, all fall within the 'featherweight' class, and it could be interesting to see what happens with that division in the coming weeks and months.



UPW have also announced their return to the Shed at Aussie World on 21 August for Over the Top III, because, lets face it every body loves a rumble.



Rebranded and now rebooted, Impact Pro Wrestling Australia returns to William Duncan State School on 15 August with the aptly named IPW: Reboot.

A pretty full card has been announced so far, with Bodhi Jackson defending the main title against Jesse Love, LFB seeking to extend his streak in a triple threat tables match against Tim Hayden, and CJ and Skhorn putting relative newcomer Chad Atlas through his paces. Atlas of course got his first (surprise) win against Dick Brutal last year so he is capable of an upset, and has Flashman in his corner to try and make that happen. Due to Covid restrictions this show will be pre-sale only, so book online.

Our Back Cover

IPW is all about family. And nothing says family like putting your brother through a table. *Photo by Jason Kryger from IPW Reunion 2019

Coming Up in Heat Sheet

We will be at IPW: Reboot and will be hanging around backstage and making a nuisance of ourselves in order to bring you a full feature on Queensland's longest running promotion in Issue 14.

We will also bring you reviews of all the action from all the shows, a RIP Rielly (w)retrospective, and much more.

