



Claims Department

This is a short one, sadly.

I'd hoped to get a lot more done, but alas, work and life and family and so much more.

I did, however, get a grant to acquire a new computer! I'll start working with it in the coming weeks and I'm excited! I have needed one for a good while, and now...MORE!!!!

If you like your GarciaZines wrestling free, this one ain't for you!

The coffee this time is Kauai Coffee's Garden Isle Blend, but with added blueberries!









The Tragical Historie of CM Punk

CM Punk started wrestling all the way back in 1999. He had a 15 year run working almost constantly, and then disappeared for a while, only to come back in an attempt to catch the wave of what looked like a changing business.

And this week, he got fired.

Let's go back.

He really came to the eyes of many wrestling fans with the feud against Chris Hero in IWA Mid-South. These were the kind of indy matches that folks manage to get ahold of, in the

old days through trading tapes, and more recently through YouTube. In an interesting twist, Punk, real name Phil Brooks, quit because he didn't like the way that IWA Mid-South owner Axl Rotten had treated Hero. This has been disputed, including by Hero, but it was the first tie that Punk had been talked about as being difficult.

Punk's gimmick and life aren't that different. His gimmick is that he's a straight-edge; he doesn't drink, doesn't do drugs, doesn't smoke. Famously, he's kinda a ladies' man, but that doesn't count...right? He's anti-establishment, always saying what's on his mind and never holding back.

He ended up in Ring of Honor wrestling, where he had major feuds with Raven and Samoa Joe. He eventually beat Austin Aries to win the Ring of Honor title, but it was clear that he was going to be heading to the WWE in the very near term.

Plus, he often butted heads with folks over various issues. Once, Teddy Hart, the problem child of the legendary Canadian Hart family, and Punk got in a fight outside a restaurant (I've heard it was a Shoney's, but also that it was just a local place) because he thought Hart was reckless. There's no doubt that Hart often is, but this was seen by some as Punk over-reacting.

He started in the development territory, and then debuted in the WWE's version of ECW, but then he came onto the main roster and ended up making a splash, eventually ending up winning the World Title. After a while, he cut an interview that has been called the 'pipebomb' interview. It was really close to the bone, with just about everything he said being real, and calling out the actual power structure of WWE. Not long after, he ended up having one of the best



matches of all-time in Chicago with John Cena, winning Match of the Year. He was one of the biggest stars in the WWE. He and HHH had some classic interviews where each basically told the truth about the other – Punk that H refused to put over young talent and kissed ass to get where he was, while H said that Punk spent so much time complaining about his place and speaking up for the boys in the back, but refusing to do business unless it put him in the spotlight.

And Punk just stopped showing up.

While still the biggest star in the company, he just told Vince McMahon and HHH that he was going home. At one point, he'd had an infection on his back, but the WWE brass was pressuring him to get back on the shows. He was suspended for not showing up, and when it was over, no one from WWE contacted him to try and get him back. On the day of his wedding, he finally got notice that he had been fired.

On that, the day of his wedding!

He had that infection checked out finally and it turned

out to be MRSA, or so he's claimed though testified that it was never diagnosed as such. He took time off, trained for MMA, fought a couple of times in UFC (losing) and then he basically sat back and enjoyed his money.

Now, WWF had been a near-monopoly since buying WCW, and though some significant competition had showed up (notably TNA/Impact, and Ring of Honor at times) none were ever any kind of threat.

AEW, which rose out of the popularity of Indy and Japanese wrestling throughout the 2010s, had come to be a legitimate second-place promotion, putting on great shows on the backs of guys like Kenny Omega and The Young Bucks. They recognised that CM Punk was the biggest name available, and in 2021, they signed him, and his first appearance brought them the top ratings.

But, he butted heads behind the scenes.

There was an incident. He basically went to the media scrum after winning the AEW title, and complained the people were blaming him for throwing his weight around and getting Colt Cabana, his one-time best friend, fired, and saying that the Executive Vice-Presidents, Kenny Omega and the Young Bucks, were the ones spreading the rumors.

This led to the group confronting Punk afterwards, and then an actual fight going down. Everyone was suspended, and everything was up in the air.

The thing is, they wanted to expand their TV deal, they were getting good ratings for their Wednesday show Dynamite, but they had pitched Punk as the focus of a new show. Thus, Punk came back when Collision debuted.

Now, there were still a lot of hard feelings, but Punk

had been a part of the deal to get the show on Saturdays. So, after some negotiations, Punk was brought in for Collision, and there was an agreement; the Bucks and Omega would be nowhere near the show, and Punk would be the main star.

Now, what got him fired?

Punk has always seen himself as a leader in the locker-room and a mentor. Jack Perry, formerly known as Jungle Boy, and the legit son of actor Luke Perry, had wanted to do an angle using real glass. Now, real glass has been used for ages in wrestling, and if you've read my Terry Funk issue, you'll know that it was a big part of IWA Japan, which was affiliated with IWA Mid-South, where Punk had worked. Punk took Jack aside and told him it was a bad idea. Jack didn't like it, felt that he was being talked down to.

Fast forward to last Sunday, Wembley Stadium in England.

Jack Perry is ending his feud with Hook. They have a wild brawl, and at one point, Perry puts Hook through a Limo's windshield, and then went to the camera and said "Real glass! Go cry me a river." Now, Punk is the kind of guy who watches the show while in the dressing room, so he heard. After a while, Perry came in, Punk's match was up next, and as he made his way to towards the curtain, and according to a fairly neutral witness, most believe a security guard, who said that Punk got in Perry's face, askign if they had a problem. Perry said no, that he was just trying to get heat since the issue between Punk and him was known through the internet, and Punk shoved Perry. Jack then got in Punk's face and then either punched him, or maybe he just made hard contact when going for a guillotine choke. Punk got the choke and people pulled him off. That led to Punk going after

Tony Khan.

There's some question as to whether or not Punk lunged at Khan or actually grabbed him or punched him or what. Those details are supposed to be forthcoming.

They suspended both Punk and Perry.

They had an investigation.

Punk was fired.

Now, part of this may be that there is surveillance footage that confirmed one version or another. Plus, it's likely that Punk had been told that he was on double secret probation after the Omega and Bucks confrontation. He was not entirely popular in the lockerroom, and there were folks who were lobbying to get him out, but he also had his friends. Brody King is a super talented guy who hasn't been given his due, and is one of Punk's friend, supposed punched a wall and broke his hand. Others have stood up for Punk, and that's going to be an issue in the future, potentially.

Khan fired Punk.

In an interview on Collision, he said that for the first time in thirty years of being backstage, he felt unsafe and that meant he had to fire Punk. That makes sense. The sad fact is that almost always it's the younger guy, the one that's not the bigger star who gets the boot, so this shows some evolution. Who knows what it means for the company, but for a company who has locker room issues, and not just Punk, it's probably a step in the right direction.





I'm working on a few new things, but social media is getting a lot more of my attention. Partly because I'm trying to sell my book, *Food and Crime* from Pen & Sword, and partly because I'm having a lot of fun!

I write a lot about social media, because, in case you haven't noticed, I'm more or less a hermit these days. Combination of money, energy, COVID still lurking like a teen on a Rec.Arts newsgroup, and the kidses. We get out once in a while, but it's usually to something where we can run around or at the very least keep Bella corralled.

The new contender in the Twitter replacement game is Blue Sky. I'm really enjoying it, and it has a bonus that I doubt it will be able to keep for too long. Folks like Neil Gaiman and John Scalzi will interact with nearly every post someone tags them in. It's a nice thing to get to ask Neil direct questions and he'll likely answer!

Overall, in look and feel, it's Twitter, and I often get the two confused just based on look. I like it a lot and I can see it catching on once more people get on it.

Threads is very similar, and a lot more of my friends are on it. Again, it's clearly Twitter in style, but the community is actually very nice, probably also a bonus of not yet having critical mass.

Threads is where my Furry friends, my pornstar friends, and my general influencer-type friends seem to have gone. Slowly, the one group I really want to gather, the Horror community I have discovered from TikTok has only slightly appeared, so I'll need to try and pull more in!

Speaking of TikTok, and especially the horror community that's built there, we're all kinda reeling from the announcement that one of our own, Andrew (aka AndrewHorror) and queer horror fan who has been one of the most popular of all the folks we've found, has stage 4 pancreatic cancer, and we're all shocked, though we've known for a month that he had it, and are sad to know that we're gonna lose him sooner than later. Parasocial relationships are relationships, and this one hits home. I remember when Jay Lake was dying, and he shared all that with us. This brought those memories up quite strongly.

TikTok is still my over-all favorite online site, I'm on it everyday, and my kids like it.



I am loving my time on Spoutible, which is kinda flying under the radar with most folks. It's visually quite different, brighter, and there's a whale theme which I like. The crowd is small, but smart. The one thing is that if you're trying to build a crew you actually like, that's the place.

Post.news is just for news, there's great journalism, including the fantastic Mueller She Wrote, and it's the place where you all should go when there's a new indictment. It's exceptionally liberal, which can get annoying, but it's easily the smartest social media and I dig it.

Clubhouse, which was the voice equivalent of an AOL chatroom, is still clutching to survival after a heyday of 2020 and early 2021, but really, it's doomed. The new version, more of a voice messenger app, is lame. The one thing about it is that it showed there's still a market for voice in social and that for all the benefits of Zoom, it ain't a social network.

I'm on Facebook less these days, largely in response to most of the folks I follow being on Facebook less and less. I still post there a fair bit, but it's not first tier anymore.

The thing I'm now looking for is a social media that can allow for posting zines. That was the original idea behind Scribd and Issuu, but neither are really that anymore, besides they both charge for use. If I could have a place to post an issue, have folks read and even comment! Boy howdy, that'd be great!





Alright, that's that!

Next week, there'll be a lot more. I've got UFO stuff, and ACTUAL SCIENCE FICTION FANDOM CONTENT!

I'll also be talking more about Stanford, and some other random stuff.

I want to also say how deeply saddened I am by the recent deaths of Steve Harwell, of San Jose's own Smash Mouth, and the incredible Tmpt1, the graffiti artist who fought ALS, discovered a way to keep creating art using a program designed for him called EyeWriter. An amazing story that has not been told enough.

And, of course, I'll have more to say about whatever pops into my head. Thanks for reading! johnnyeponymous@gmail.com



