

# CONTENTS: OCTOBER 2019

## DEPARTMENTS

- 3 FROM THE DESK OF ...**  
BY STU SAKS
- 6 RINGSIDE**  
BY HARRY BURKETT
- 70 THE BUSINESS PAGE**  
BY HARRY BURKETT
- 74 INDEPENDENT ROUNDUP**  
BY MIKE BESSLER
- 76 INTERNATIONAL REPORT**  
BY DAN MURPHY
- 78 BETWEEN FALLS**
- 80 OFFICIAL WRESTLING RATINGS**
- 82 DRAWING BLOOD**  
BY JASON CONLAN

## STAY CONNECTED!

### REACHING YOU ...

**Pro Wrestling Illustrated**—December 2019 (*PWI* 500): Digital edition on sale August 29; print edition on sale September 24  
**Website:** [www.pwi-online.com](http://www.pwi-online.com)  
**The PWI Podcast:** [pwi.podbean.com](http://pwi.podbean.com); iTunes Store  
**Back Issues:** Every *PWI* cover since 1979 can be viewed at our website. Back issue availability is noted

### REACHING US ...

**General e-mail:** [pwi@kappapublishing.com](mailto:pwi@kappapublishing.com)  
**Letters to the editor:** [prowrestlingillustrated@yahoo.com](mailto:prowrestlingillustrated@yahoo.com)  
**Editorial mail:** P.O. Box 96, Fort Washington, PA 19034  
**Arena Reports e-mail:** [pwiresults@yahoo.com](mailto:pwiresults@yahoo.com)  
**Podcast e-mail:** [pwipodcast@outlook.com](mailto:pwipodcast@outlook.com)  
**Independent news e-mail:** [officialpwi@gmail.com](mailto:officialpwi@gmail.com)  
**Subscription Inquiries:** Kappa Publishing Group Inc., P.O. Box 433120, Palm Coast, FL 32143-3120  
**Subscription phone:** 386-246-0114  
**Subscription e-mail:** [custsrvc@kappapublishing.com](mailto:custsrvc@kappapublishing.com)

### REACHING EACH OTHER ...

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/pages/PWI/127711697289232?fref=ts](https://www.facebook.com/pages/PWI/127711697289232?fref=ts)  
**Twitter:** [twitter.com/officialpwi](https://twitter.com/officialpwi)  
**Instagram:** [instagram.com/officialpwi/](https://www.instagram.com/officialpwi/)

## FEATURES

- 10 HOTSEAT: KOFI KINGSTON**  
He's been all around the world, he's made numerous WWE heavyweight title defenses, he's participated in tag team matches with The New Day—and, yet, Kingston had 40 minutes to chat on the phone with *PWI* Senior Writer Al Castle. Kofi made it clear: He doesn't know how long this ride will last, and he's going to get everything out of it that he possibly can!
- 16 UNCAGED FURY!  
NEW CHAMP'S MOMENT OF IMPACT  
WOULD NOT BE DENIED**  
Brian Cage knew early on during his title challenge of Johnny Impact that he would have to summon something from deep within to win the Impact heavyweight championship. It turned out to be a handicap match: Johnny Impact & Back Injury vs. Brian Cage. We don't have to tell you who prevailed.
- 20 WHAT'S THE FUTURE OF  
ALL ELITE WRESTLING?  
PWI SENIOR WRITERS DEBATE**  
Whether or not AEW succeeds is probably the most important question in the industry right now. Everybody—fans, wrestlers, and executives of all wrestling companies—has a stake in what occurs in AEW over the coming months and years
- 24 WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT NXT'S  
HOTTEST SUPERSTAR?  
DON'T ASK THE VELVETEEN DREAM!**  
That's because he's not going to give you an answer that tells you any more about him than he feels you have a right to know. Okay, no problem. We'll just watch and enjoy.
- 29 40TH ANNIVERSARY:  
THE 40 WHO SHAPED THE PWI YEARS**  
As we reach our ruby anniversary, join us as we celebrate the wrestlers who were most vital to the pages of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* over the decades.
- COVER PHOTOS:**  
CODY & DUSTIN RHODES BY RICKY HAVLIK/AEW  
TONY KHAN BY STU SAKS  
BRET HART BY RICKY HAVLIK/AEW  
KENNY OMEGA, NICK JACKSON, BRANDI RHODES, MATT JACKSON, & CODY RHODES BY JAMES MUSSELWHITE/AEW
- COVER DESIGN:**  
LAURA BRUBAKER