

LUCHA LIBRE • PURORESU • GRAPPLING • INDIE WRESTLING

— WORLD WIDE WRESTLING — INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT

A SUPPLEMENT FOR THE WORLD WIDE WRESTLING ROLEPLAYING GAME



BY NATHAN D. PAOLETTA



NATHAN D. PAOLETTA



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If you obtained this publication in digital form without paying for it and have enjoyed it, please consider purchasing a copy as well so that I can continue making these games in the future.

Please create and share your own material for playing this game! Join the conversation and find more resources at: **NDPDESIGN.COM/WWWRPG**

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THE WORLD WIDE WRESTLING RPG



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In addition to the many authors, designers and creators of both games and wrestling-related media, I am indebted to all of the people who have read, played and talked about *World Wide Wrestling* since it was originally released. Without your enthusiasm, I wouldn't have seen the possibility for making this supplement a reality!

One great thing about working on this project is that it got me into whole new worlds of professional wrestling, which in turn drove many of the new rules and guidelines found here. Specifically:

New Japan Pro Wrestling (and its streaming service NJPW World)

CHIKARA, AAW and Freelance Wrestling (local and touring indies)

CMLL, AAA and Lucha Underground (premier *Lucha Libre*)

World Of Sport (primarily as archived on YouTube)

Do yourself a favor and check some of those out; even better, find live pro wrestling in your area and go to a show!

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

I found these books to be invaluable in making this book happen and in my general wrestling education.

Charlton, Chris. *Lion's Pride: The Turbulent History of New Japan Pro Wrestling*. Christopher Charlton, 2015.

Levi, Heather. *The World of Lucha Libre: Secrets, Revelations, and Mexican National Identity*. Duke University Press, 2008.

Matysik, Larry. *Drawing Heat the Hard Way: How Wrestling Really Works*. ECW Press, 2009.

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Thanks to my Chicago wrestling bud crew for making being a wrestling fan such a positive life experience. Y'all are the best.

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**THE BASICS:
INTERNATIONAL
WRESTLING**

**THE OPTIONS:
ADDITIONS TO AND
INSPIRATIONS FOR
YOUR GAME**

**THE EXTRAS:
EXAMPLE
WRESTLERS
AND
PROMOTIONS**

**REFERENCE:
EVERYTHING YOU
NEED DURING PLAY**

ABOUT INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT

CHAPTER ONE

Welcome to an exploration of professional wrestling around the globe! While the art of professional wrestling was born in the United States, it quickly spread worldwide. Each region that embraces wrestling blends it with their own local traditions, creating unique versions of the form. It's changed over time, evolving from the carnival sideshow to find a place in the cultural landscape of each era. Different places showcase fresh ways of enjoying professional wrestling as the various contexts, audiences and competitions give fans different ways to engage with the product.

This supplement for the *World Wide Wrestling Roleplaying Game* considers four prominent modern professional wrestling traditions: *Lucha Libre* (Mexico and Central America), *Puroresu* (Japan), Catch Wrestling (United Kingdom) and contemporary Indie style wrestling (the international independent circuit). All share attributes of the wrestling covered in *World Wide Wrestling*, but they also contain unique features worth integrating into your game, especially for fans of these styles. *International Incident* explains some of the basic differences that set each style apart and why they're important, and then provides new Gimmicks, Match Stipulations and other rules to support these different styles. Whether you want to run an entire *Lucha Libre* promotion or simply have the ability to bring an international talent into your current *World Wide Wrestling* game, this supplement will make it happen!

To reflect the unique archetypes of each style, this text includes:

- ★ 6 New Gimmicks
- ★ 2 New Roles
- ★ 7 New Match Stipulations
- ★ 3 Guest Essays exploring fan perspectives on these new styles



EVERYONE POPS FOR
THE BRAINBUSTER

In addition to the international styles, you will find optional rules for adding additional depth and breadth to any game of *World Wide Wrestling*. None of these completely replace or overrule anything in the core game; you can simply select the features that support the most interesting aspects of your Promotion. These optional rules include:

- ★ Mythic Moments, an expansion to the Basic Moves that enable experienced wrestlers to become truly legendary (**PAGE 43**).
- ★ Stroke, a system for determining who has power backstage based on how popular they are on camera (**PAGE 46**).
- ★ Audience Moves, giving the audience a personality (**PAGE 54**).
- ★ Promotion tags and troubles, a system for tracking how your promotion changes over time based on the successes (and failures) of the wrestlers in the ring (**PAGE 50**).
- ★ Alternate Advancement, allowing for modification of the overall pace of play by changing how Advances are earned (**PAGE 52**).
- ★ Multi-Promotion Events, advice and structure for handling invasions, inter-promotional wars and other types of multi-table play (**PAGE 60**).

This supplement also includes a chapter for Creative which goes more in-depth about running the game. From how to handle swerves to how to guide players unfamiliar with wrestling through an Episode, *Being More Creative* (**PAGE 63**) is the result of play experience with the basic game in the years since its release.

Finally, you'll find the Season Two Roster and set of Promotions and additional frameworks within which to set your game of *World Wide Wrestling*. Contributed by backers and supporters of the Kickstarter that funded the creation of *International Incident*, the Season Two material is full of unique talent and evocative federations for you to pick and choose from to fill out your game.

Welcome to *World Wide Wrestling: International Incident*!

GLOBAL WRESTLING

CHAPTER TWO

As variations on a form, professional wrestling traditions across the globe have much in common. It's easily possible to watch a match in a different language and still be able to enjoy and understand what's going on in the ring. However, the styles covered here do have identifying traits which set them apart from "mainstream" American pro wrestling. These traits add new dimensions to your game, whether you simply want to add a couple of new Gimmicks to your roster, or set an entire game in (say) 1980s Japan and explore how that kind of promotion works at your table.

The international wrestling traditions are outlined here with some basic background and description about some of the unique traits which differentiate them from the basic *World Wide Wrestling* experience. The game is designed to accommodate many different kinds of wrestling, so the new Gimmicks and Match Stipulations here highlight only the most significant new aspects of each tradition.

You will also find guest essays that showcase different perspectives on *Lucha Libre*, *Puroresu* and the *World of Sport* era of British grappling. These essays are the product of fans of those styles reflecting on what they love about them, and highlighting features for you to potentially use in your game.

I am not a deep expert in any of these traditions. In service of making them

In addition to the rules, use the descriptions to inform your choices in booking Episodes and showcasing the relationships in your game. This is just as meaningful as the formal rules are in generating a play experience emulates the new styles. Use the information given in the write-

ups and the associated guest essays to pick what you want to add to your game - and, of course, you can always do some primary research!

Each description notes associated new Gimmicks and Match Stipulations. You will find all of the new rules gathered together in the reference section at the end of this text (starting on **PAGE 99**).

I am not a deep expert in any of these traditions. In service of making them enjoyable to play inside the *World Wide Wrestling* framework I have necessarily elided detail and nuance that fans and true experts will probably notice. I encourage readers who do find those gaps to fill them in with your own expertise at the table, perhaps by building your own custom Moves to demonstrate how they work!

LUCHA LIBRE

This vibrant form of professional wrestling arose from the combination of wrestling performance with local and indigenous religious, cultural and sport traditions throughout Latin America. Most closely associated with Mexico, *luchadores* and their colorful masks have mainstream cultural resonance of a degree rarely seen in the English-speaking wrestling world. Even casual observers of Mexican media see *luchadores* in mainstream movies and TV shows, let alone comic books and action figures. Masked representatives even appear in very real political arenas, both as revolutionaries and keepers of the peace. A wrestling character, represented by their mask, often encapsulates a host of social, historical and political issues relevant to what's going on in that *luchador's* community or society at large.

The mask has an almost fetishistic aspect to it, extending deep into the rules and customs of *Lucha Libre* wrestling. Being unmasked is the ultimate insult and tends to represent the death of the character, either in symbolic terms (leading to the *luchador* becoming a bad guy, for example) or even the actual retirement of the performer. When retained, however, masks and the characters they represent can be and are passed on to other performers, often blood relatives or protégés of the *luchador*. Sometimes the inheritor becomes "El Hijo de..." (son of...), though there are *luchadores* who use this construction without reference to an actual "father" character. Of course, not all *luchadores* are masked, either by choice or because they were unmasked at some point earlier in their career, but the mask as a symbol is a consistent element of *Lucha Libre*.

A lot of what made *Lucha Libre* stand out to American audiences in the territory era was the high-flying, fast-paced match style. Throughout the 80s and 90s, this became integrated more and more into mainstream wrestling, eventually reaching a point at which most modern fans are aware of what a *Lucha* match generally looks like. However, the roles of *luchadores* during a match are subtly different than the basic babyface/heel dynamic and most *Lucha Libre* promotions tend to privilege matches on a card differently than American pro wrestling. Dynamic 2- and 3-wrestler tag team matches make up the bulk of a *Lucha Libre* show, with singles matches being rarer and often growing out of feuds started inside a set of tag team matches. In addition, the roles of *Técnico* (good guy) and *Rudo* (bad guy) don't map one-to-one with the roles of Babyface and Heel as presented in *World Wide Wrestling*. It is not

simply a matter of following or breaking rules; it's a difference in both wrestling style and the amount of respect the character has for others.

There are no bright line divisions between these roles; many performers do what's needed depending on the mix of opponent, audience and popularity in any given match. However, in general, *Técnicos* wrestle a more technical style (hence the name), including mat wrestling and grappling in addition to high flying acrobatics. *Rudos* generally do more brawling and striking, wrestling with less precision but more impact. More importantly, *Rudos* fundamentally have no respect for anyone else in the ring, including the referee and their teammates. *Técnicos*, on the other hand, respect the spirit of the contest and listen to the referee, even if they sometimes technically break the rules in order to redress a grievance committed by a *Rudo*. Further, *Rudos* only care about themselves, including choosing self-preservation over victory.

In addition to these differences in the roles of the performers, there are a number of signature matches that are quintessentially *Lucha Libre*. In the *luchas de apuestas* ("match with wagers"), the competitors put something valuable on the line, traditionally their masks or hair, in the culmination of a long-running feud. These are traditionally mask-vs-mask, hair-vs-hair or mask-vs-hair wagers, with the loser immediately unmasking or having their head shaved at the end of the match. Wagers can also be other valuable items, such as championship titles or even careers.

Tag team wrestling is as or more common than singles wrestling, with cards consisting of two- (*parejas*), three- (*trios*) and four- (*atomicos*) man tag teams battling it out. *Tríos* matches are the most common, and *Lucha Libre* tag team rules make for more fast-paced and chaotic matches than the general American counterpart. Tag matches are generally wrestled to two-out-of-three falls. As soon as a *luchador's* feet hit the floor, one of their teammates can enter the ring without needing a physical tag, so action tends to be fluid and continuous both in and out of the ring, with little or no concern for who's legal. Simultaneous pinfalls are common, as long as there's a referee counting them (there can be multiple referees as well). Finally, each team has a captain, and a pinfall is awarded either for pinning the captain or both of the other team members (hence the need for simultaneous pins). *Lucha Libre* generally uses a 20 count before disqualification outside of the ring, as opposed to the American standard 10 count. Disqualifications can be called for excessive force or other unsportsmanlike behavior, including unmasking another wrestler in the ring.

LUCHA LIBRE RULES

GIMMICK: THE CULTURAL CHAMPION. You started in the ring, but are now legitimately more famous for your appearances in other media than your wrestling career. You're a little older and slower now, but you have real emotional and financial investment behind you. Is it possible to keep your broad appeal or have you hit market saturation? See **PAGE 104** for full details.

GIMMICK: THE LUCHADOR. You are an iconic *Lucha Libre* competitor. Whether you were born into the business or you took up the mask out of love for the sport, you represent the unique culture of Mexican professional wrestling. What will you do with your skills and your heritage? See **PAGE 108** for full details.

BASIC ROLE: TÉCNICO. You obey the rules of honor and respect. Counting as a babyface for Heat purposes, *Técnicos* use this Role Move instead of the **BABYFACE MOVE**:

- ★ When you demonstrate your technical prowess in the ring or make a show of respect, spend 2 Momentum and pick 1:
 - o gain +1 Heat with your opponent
 - o an ally comes to your aid
 - o win the match (regardless of booking)

BASIC ROLE: RUDO. You're selfish, disobedient and disrespectful. You count as a heel for Heat purposes. *Rudos* use this Role Move instead of the **HEEL MOVE**:

- ★ When you do something to save yourself at the expense of another in the ring or show disrespect for an authority figure or teammate, spend 2 Momentum and pick 1:
 - o gain +1 Heat with your opponent
 - o cause a legit injury
 - o win the match (regardless of booking)

BECOMING A LUCHADOR: Any wrestler established as studying *Lucha Libre* can replace Babyface/Heel with *Técnico/Rudo* whenever they could take an Advanced Role. From then on, they switch between these roles instead of Babyface/Heel, unless they abandon the path of *Lucha Libre* (in which case they go back to taking Babyface and Heel Roles). If someone with a Lucha Libre Role takes an Advanced Role, it replaces their Lucha Libre Role.

MATCH STIPULATION: TWO OUT OF THREE FALLS. A match with multiple falls proceeds according to the standard rules, except that Creative reveals the booking for each fall individually during the match. Each fall can be swerved or overridden by Moves as normal, but the match continues until a winner is declared. Once a fall is counted, the losing wrestler takes control of the match.

Generally, multiple-falls matches see the two wrestlers trade falls, with the match determined by the outcome of the last one; however, this trope is occasionally subverted to demonstrate supreme dominance or cunning trickery. A wrestler who's booked to win a multiple falls match only makes their **FINISHING MOVE** on the fall that wins them the match.

*** **EXAMPLE: TWO OUT OF THREE FALLS** ***

Tim's Luchador Hijo de Tigre Sangre challenges Megan's Provocateur Glitter Bomb Angel to a match. Megan **Cuts A Promo** about how she's been underestimated every step of the way and she's going to prove her worth tonight, defeating Tigre Sangre **TWICE**, and adding a Two Out Of Three Falls stipulation to the match.

Nathan, as Creative, books the three falls before the match starts. He wants to stoke this budding rivalry by giving the heel Glitter Bomb Angel something to seek revenge over, so he decides they'll split the first two falls but Tigre Sangre will win the third.

The match begins. After the initial back-and-forth action, Tim takes control of the match and Nathan reveals that Tigre Sangre is booked to win the first fall. Tim narrates the finish, hitting Glitter Bomb Angel with a hurricanrana takedown into a crossface submission, tapping her out for the first fall victory.

Megan takes control of the match (because she lost the first fall) and narrates a sequence of Glitter Bomb Angel begging off and playing possum, acting defeated and suckering in the Luchador for a flash rollup pin. This accords with Nathan's booking and he confirms that yes, that's absolutely the plan. Tim nods along with a smile and throws in details about how his overconfidence plays into the Provocateur's hands.

The wrestlers are tied at one fall apiece, so the final pin or submission will decide the match. Tim takes control (because he lost the second fall). The pace of the match picks up as Tigre Sangre leverages all of his lucha moves to keep Glitter Bomb Angel off balance. After a couple of back-and-forth exchanges, Nathan reveals that the Luchador is booked to win, and Tim narrates how he maneuvers Megan's wrestler into the center of the ring to set up Tigre Sangre's Phoenix Splash finisher.

Megan spends a Momentum to **INTERRUPT!** Glitter Bomb Angel starts yelling and pointing at her face, pretending that Tigre Sangre clawed her eyes; as the ref leans in to inspect it, she underhands a fistful of glitter into the Luchador's face, spending another 2 Momentum for the **HEEL MOVE** and booking herself to win the match! Glitter Bomb Angel "suddenly" recovers, pushes past the ref and gets another rollup pin to pick up her second fall, winning the match.

Since this was the last fall, Megan rolls for her wrestlers **FINISHING MOVE**, and the Episode continues on from there.

HÉROES Y MÁS

BY TIM RODRIGUEZ

I became aware of masked wrestlers via the *M.U.S.C.L.E.* toys of the 1980s. They're nice and flashy, easy to mold, and not just some person—they were someone you could *be*. I never remotely believed the kid across the street with the short-cropped hair when he played make-believe as the legendary Kerry Von Erich. But I could totally put a pyramid on top of my head, pull some pantyhose over it and be Musclemen. The mask opens the door to anyone who wants to be a wrestler.

Growing up in Texas, with Mexican roots, it was inevitable that I'd encounter *Lucha Libre*. Eddie Guerrero and Rey Mysterio were my earliest exposure to Lucha, but as part of the WWE, they were both very much overshadowed; by who I identified with at that age, by the storylines they were not a part of, and while they were fun to watch, they never stuck with me. I wasn't the acrobatic type, I was more of the giant.

After I'd grown a lot older and developed a stronger sense of heritage, I fixated strongly on the style and aesthetic of Lucha and tried to learn more. Unfortunately, that was fairly difficult in the days before the Internet. I remember browsing a bookstore in East Austin a few years ago and finding a book of *luchador* portraits. They were full body posed shots on a white background; simple and beautiful, along with their stories. Stories of putting on a costume and becoming someone new; stories of hair and mask matches. One that stood out to me in particular was secretly a dentist. He wrestled at night and on the weekends, and no one knew his secret identity. Looking through that book was an incredible eye opener to me. Most people discover that it's not really possible to become a superhero, but you can become a *luchador*.

It was a combination of Lucha movies and the excellent *HERO Lucha Libre* game supplement that rocketed my understanding of the world of Lucha. Movies like *Santo Contra Los Vampiros Mujeres*, and *Los Campeones Justicieros* became findable! They are gloriously psychotronic 1970s films, replete with monsters, fights, El Caminos, and outrageous villains. They cast *luchadores* as the superheroes that walk (and drive El Caminos) among us; as everyday people who just happen to be wrestlers, superheroes, and have wild adventures.

Mexicans didn't invent wrestling in a mask. But then, *enmascarados* are not just about the mask. Any idiot can put on a mask. Mexico gave masked wrestlers history, culture, heart, and soul. To be an

enmascarado is to be a superhero. But not just any superhero; a true Everyman hero. The dentist that puts on a mask fights for glory and to display his prowess. Sometimes the fight is for justice, and sometimes it's against mummies, or mad scientists. *Luchadores* put on a new face for the audience. They're playing pretend too, and everyone gets to be a part of that game.

Lucha Libre, with its associated athletic high-flying style, is a world-wide phenomenon, bringing incredible diversity to "Mexican" wrestling as wrestlers from all over the world become *enmascarados*. So what does this mean for the context of this game? It means that your wrestler has a freedom to play pretend in a world that doesn't necessarily accommodate that kind of story. Without the mask, you're still human, subject to the base petty elements that make up real life; you can explore the meta-level of real-life problems. It's interesting, and fun to play to be sure, but it's not Lucha. As an *enmascarado*, the world opens up: you can be a Fenix that rises from any apparent grave. You can be a skeleton, a saint, a dragon, or a vampire, or possibly even some combination of these things!

As an aside, my go-to character Doctor Moreau is a mad scientist who fuses himself and his opponents with animals! It's beyond unreal, but the mask gives us the space we need to believe. But there's another trick to this. Kayfabe. In American wrestling, kayfabe provides the separation of the person from the wrestler, but it's very different in *Lucha Libre*. The *mask* is the wrestler, not the person, and that's a crucial distinction to understanding what it means to be an *enmascarado*.

And it makes a huge difference in what it means for playing *World Wide Wrestling*. Large portions of the narratives of American wrestling plays with that space between the character and the wrestler. In Lucha, if you're masked, the person behind is subsumed. This doesn't mean you can't have interesting meta-level stories, it just means they take a very different form. Doctor Moreau's personal life *is* that mad scientist, and if another person takes up that mask when the person wearing it cannot wrestle any more, they can *become* Doctor Moreau (often, but not always, they'll take on a heritage name such as Hijo del Santo, though it's the same mask).

And it means that a mask match is life or death. If you lose your mask, the mask and its legacy ends there.

A straight Lucha out-of-ring story might look like a telenovela or movie, where kayfabe is no issue, because there's no person. It's just El Santo, Blue Demon, and Mil Mascaras taking a trip to a resort where

they suddenly get wrapped up into a mad scientist's plot, as in *Los Campeones Justicieros*. You could hybridize this story by adding an American wrestling stable who are suddenly way out of their league, but they discover that they have the skills to make a difference.

Modern American wrestling stories have more of a reality-show kind of drama to them where it's entirely interpersonal and they don't necessarily deal with external antagonists. Adding a *luchador's* antagonist to the mix, whether it's something to do with their shtick or something else entirely like mummies or mind control leads to strange and wonderful narratives when introduced into the backstage drama of an American wrestling promotion.

This kind of melded story really excites me. I mark out for it hard because the possibilities are endless and the stories that can emerge are so much fun. For me, lucha brings a certain depth of characterization that I never feel the need to be smart about. For me, kayfabe slides further into a seamless blur as the real mixes with the unreal, and ordinary people become, and even transcend, heroes.

Tim Rodriguez is the Pan-Oceanic World Champion, an *enmascarado* game designer, and a born *rudo*. He accepts all challengers, and remains undefeated. Find him on Twitter @dicefoodlodging.

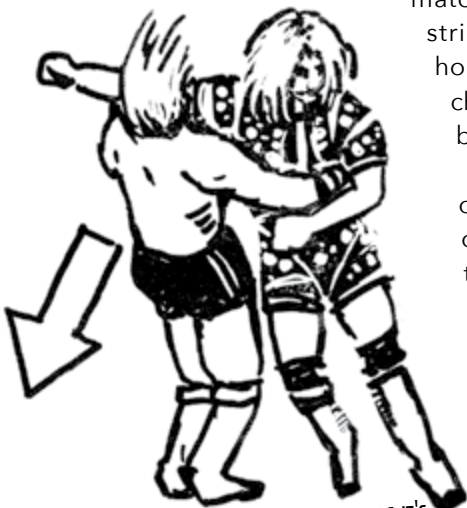
PURORESU

The word *Puroresu* (often abbreviated to “Puro”) is a transliteration of the way “pro wrestling” is pronounced by native Japanese speakers, generally applying to any professional wrestling, Japanese or otherwise. English-speaking fans tend to use it to refer to a uniquely Japanese hard-hitting, “shoot” style of performance. The predetermined variety of modern pro wrestling didn’t arrive in Japan until the 1950s; its rise in popularity in the post-World War II era can be seen as one of the many ways that the country used entertainment to come to terms with the nation’s defeat in the war. In particular, Japanese promotions have always imported foreign (*gaijin*) talent to compete and put over the Japanese stars (even while celebrating them as hard-hitting competitors in their own right). To this day, Japanese companies tend to include non-Japanese wrestlers on their rosters, often as heels (and sometimes as champions).

One of the distinctive aspects of Puro is its close relationship with mixed martial arts and other legitimate fighting sports. Japanese promotions have a history of putting shoot matches on the card, often cross-promoting with MMA or boxing promotions to bring in a “real” fighter. In addition, many main-roster wrestlers are either former MMA fighters or compete in the wrestling ring and in non-predetermined fights simultaneously. These trends have combined to create a very

stiff, hard-hitting flavor of professional wrestling referred to as “Strong Style.” Strong Style matches tend to center around hard strikes and devastating submission holds, with high-flying moves or more choreographed sequences tending to be outliers.

Another other core Puro trait is that of “fighting spirit”. Rather than focus on over-the-top characters or long-term storylines, matches tend to be about the moment of competition. The in-ring story revolves around who can overcome the pain and difficulty they face, pushing their limits and embracing the fire within to bring them victory.



A DEVASTATING LARIAT CLOTHESLINE—OR, AS IT'S OFTEN CALLED IN JAPAN, THE LARIATOOO!!!

Some basic fighting spirit tropes include:

- ★ Dropping your hands, encouraging your opponent to strike your face or chest with unprotected blows.
- ★ Grinding your head into your opponents to push them back across the ring.
- ★ Yelling at them for not hitting you hard enough.
- ★ No-selling a huge move in order to hit your own out sheer adrenaline.
- ★ Dropping to the mat but getting up immediately after each of your opponent's strikes.

Transcending even the fighting spirit of dedicated athletes is one of the most memorable aspects of Japanese wrestling: the extremely bloody hardcore death match. These matches involve hyperviolent stipulations including (but not limited to):

- ★ The use of seriously dangerous foreign objects (chairs, bricks, light tubes, trays or bags full of thumbtacks, actual bladed weapons, bats embedded with nails or glass or wrapped in barbed wire and even chainsaws).
- ★ Barbed-wire and barbed-wire no-rope matches (where barbed wire is strung in between, or instead of, the ring ropes), explosive rope or explosive barbed-wire matches (when a wrestler touches the ropes or wire, a small explosive goes off), "hell" and "double-hell" matches with boards rigged with barbed wire and explosives on the floor outside the ring.
- ★ The use of crushed glass (used with or instead of barbed wire) and fire (usually in troughs around the ring).

Death matches have taken place in the dark, in swimming pools, and over tanks full of scorpions. While death matches are still worked, in the sense that the wrestlers are still working together to entertain the audience, death match wrestlers tend to pick up gruesome injuries, from flesh ripped on barbed wire to terrible burns. As concerns about wrestler safety and well-being have become more dominant in modern wrestling, the trend of the extreme death match has diminished. However, this style is still one of the more memorable snapshots of Japanese wrestling to many fans.

Bringing *Puroresu* into your game is mostly a change in terms of match structure and how the action is described. The basic dynamics of babyface and heel are the same, though blatant cheating is rarer, with many Japanese heels gravitating more towards things like mocking their opponent, holding them in the ropes longer than they should, displaying disrespect and hitting their opponent when they're not ready. There tends to be less between-match talking (if any), so performers need to demonstrate their character and gimmick in the ring, with maybe a post-show monologue for the winner of the main event; that said, some promotions stage sports-style press conferences where all of the wrestlers have a chance to cut promos and answer questions. Individual matches operate by familiar rules, though Japanese promotions tend to use a 20-count outside of the ring instead of a 10-count. Even the occasional shoot fight, though it looks more like an MMA bout, is still decided by pinfall or submission.

Cards tend to be more stratified than the average American promotion, with differences in match style between the heavyweights (slower and longer-to-build matches with lots of counter sequences) and juniors (a more dynamic and high-flying style strongly influenced by *Lucha Libre*). The divisions aren't based on size so much as seniority and the needs of the card. Some wrestlers start their careers as juniors and become heavyweights later. Similarly, foreign talent is used in whichever division they fit best. Wrestlers going through training are integrated into the organization from the beginning, doing scut-work in the dojo alongside their training and wrestling in opening matches, often multi-wrestler tags, and then appearing at ringside later to assist main roster wrestlers to and from the ring.

*** THE DOJO ***

One of the legendary aspects of *Puroresu* is the dojo, the training school that houses trainee wrestlers (often generally referred to as "Young Boys"). Unlike most American wrestling schools, the dojo is a holistic 24/7 lifestyle. Trainees not only live in the building, drill and work out, they also do chores like clean the ring, scrub the toilets and serve meals to the older veterans. Many stories from this life include an element of hazing, to see if the prospective wrestlers can hack the lifestyle; the brutality of this regimen has changed over time and, in any case, is hard to tell from the outside.

If you are interested in incorporating the dojo, a young recruit, or both in your game, check out the Young One Gimmick on **PAGE 112** and the Developmental Territories Promotion on **PAGE 85**.

PURORRESU NEW RULES

GIMMICK: THE ACE. You are the top star of your division, consistently either holding the title or in contention for it. You're considered to carry the company both in and out of the ring. You also have the biggest target on your back. See **PAGE 102** for full details.

GIMMICK: THE SHOOT FIGHTER. Whether you have a legitimate fighting background or you're just a natural-born hardass, you know how to hurt people for real. How long will what you want from this company align with what it wants from you? See **PAGE 110** for full details.

GIMMICK: THE YOUNG ONE. You are a new trainee. You've toiled in the dojo and gone through strenuous physical conditioning. Finally, it's time to see how well you do in front of a live audience. Do you have what it takes to become the best? See **PAGE 112** for full details.

MATCH STIPULATION: DEATH MATCH. This match is built specifically to cause pain. Whether there's barbed wire instead of ropes, fire, exploding ropes, sheets of glass or poisonous creatures, it isn't *if* someone will get hurt, but *when*.

Everyone involved in a Death Match has to agree to be in it. If someone is booked into a Death Match by somebody else (like through the use of the **OVER** or **CUT A PROMO** Moves), they can decide to pull out of it with no negative repercussions (though using it as a storyline building moment could be relevant).

When a Death Match starts, each competitor gains +1 Momentum. The match proceeds using the standard rules for a match (**WRESTLING MOVE**, and probably the **HARDCORE/VIOLENCE MOVE** when appropriate). Anytime a wrestler narrates how they send their opponent into the barbed wire (or into the fire or through the pane of glass) it's called "being thrown into the Bad Shit". When someone is thrown into the Bad Shit (usually as the result of the **WRESTLING MOVE**), they can spend 1 Momentum to avoid it (representing them pulling up just short of going into the Bad Shit). This counts as the **INTERRUPT MOVE** if the wrestler going into the Bad Shit wants to take control of the match as a result.

Once each wrestler has paid 1 Momentum to avoid the Bad Shit, the cost goes to 2. Once each wrestler has paid 2, it goes to 3, and so on. Wrestlers can use the **INTERRUPT MOVE** as normal to interrupt the standard flow of the match; only in the case of stopping themselves from going into the Bad Shit must they pay the current Momentum cost.

Once someone goes into the Bad Shit, they immediately take an Injury, gain (1+ Current Injuries) Momentum and take control of the match. If this is their last Injury box, the match ends in a no contest.

The no contest ending applies to any case in which one of the wrestlers checks off their last Injury box, whether it's because of the Bad Shit or not. Other Move results that end or swerve a match can still impact a Death Match as well (though they're generally run under No DQ rules to accommodate all the violent action).

Whoever is booked to win a Death Match adds their +Real or +Audience to their **FINISHING MOVE**, whichever is higher.

After a Death Match, all participants roll +Real:

- ★ On a 10+, the wounds were mostly superficial or you're just tough enough that you can deal. Erase down to 1 Injury check if you have more than 1. Choose 1:
 - you and your opponent both gain +1 Heat with each other
 - appear in the next segment of the Episode and gain +1 Audience.
- ★ On a 7-9, you survived. Erase 1 Injury check if you have more than 1 (if you have only 1, you keep that Injury). Gain +1 Heat with your opponent.
- ★ On a Botch, you need serious medical care. You are evacuated to a local medical facility immediately and you must miss the next Episode as you recover (play another NPW if appropriate). When you return, you make the **OVER MOVE** even if you're not in the Top Spot, and erase 1 Injury check.

*** EXAMPLE: DEATH MATCH ***

Joe's Bella Bardot (the Shoot Fighter) has been challenged to a No-Ropes-Barbed-Wire match by Sarah's Hardcore Jace Shirai. Both players are in for the match, and start off gaining 1 Momentum. Over the course of the opening sequence, both wrestlers build up another Momentum. They get into the dangerous action at 2 for Bella and 3 for Jace.

Sarah has control of the match and narrates Jace throwing a hail of forearms, stunning Bella long enough to Irish whip her into the barbed wire. She hits the **WRESTLING MOVE** on a 8 and chooses to retain control, sending Bella into the Bad Shit. Joe doesn't want to go in yet! He spends 1 Momentum to pull up just short, and chooses to trigger the **INTERRUPT MOVE** (since he's not currently in control of the match). He narrates how, even though Bella is dazed, she has the instincts to reverse the Irish whip and instead send Jace into the barbed wire in the corner. This time, Sarah spends *her* 1 Momentum to keep from going into the Bad Shit, but chooses not to trigger **INTERRUPT**—she wants to see where Joe takes the match from here.

In the next sequence, Joe narrates how Bella brings Jace down on the mat for some chain wrestling, ending with a monkey flip into the barbed wire! He hits the **WRESTLING MOVE** on a 10, retaining control (and gaining +1 Heat with Jace).

EXAMPLE CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE

*** EXAMPLE CONTINUED: DEATH MATCH ***

Sarah shakes her head and spends 2 Momentum (all she has left) to avoid the Bad Shit—since both players already spent 1, now it costs 2. She does take the opportunity to **INTERRUPT** this time, however, and narrates how the monkey flips sends Jace sprawling but she keeps hold of Bella's hands. They regain their feet while entangled, and then Jace uses the leverage for a short-arm clothesline—right into the barbed wire! She rolls for the **WRESTLING MOVE** and manages to hit on a 7, choosing to gain +1 Momentum and turn narration over to Joe.

Joe is out of Momentum, so he can't spend to keep Bella out of the Bad Shit. He narrates how she yells as she rams into the barbed wire, and how the barbs shred her exposed back, leaving blood glinting in the lights of the arena.

Because Bella went into the Bad Shit, Joe checks one Injury for her (her first), gains 2 Momentum (1+Current Injuries), and takes control of the match.

The match continues. Bella pushes through the pain and takes control of Jace with an ankle lock, which she turns into a dragon-whip legscREW to send the Hardcore into the barbed wire herself. The Momentum threshold only goes up once *both* wrestlers have spent the same amount, and since Bella has only spent 1 Momentum to keep out of the Bad Shit it still only costs Sarah 2 to keep out this time. She narrates how Jace manages to barely roll out underneath the barbed wire without it cutting her.

After more back-and-forth action that sees each wrestler take another Injury, Creative finally calls for the end of the match, which is for Jace Shirai to get the win. Nobody makes any swerves (they're both out of Momentum at this point anyway), and Sarah narrates how Jace traps Bella's arms between two strands of the barbed wire and twists them together, making the Shoot Fighter tap from the pain.

Jace has Real +1 and Audience +2, so Sarah adds the higher score of +2 to her **FINISHING MOVE** (as opposed to the standard rule of no addition). She ends up hitting it on a 10+ and taking her +1 Audience as a reward.

Now that the match is over, both players roll +Real to see what the aftereffects are. Bella Bardot has Real -1, but Joe ends up rolling a 9, for a total of 8. Bella survives. Joe erases one Injury check (bringing Bella down to one) and adds +1 Heat with Jace (bringing that up to +3).

Sarah, however, rolls snake eyes for Jace! Sarah narrates how Jace collapses as soon as she gets to the back and gets rushed to a local medical facility— the loss of blood was just too much once the adrenaline of the match wore off. Sarah is going to have to play another wrestler for the next Episode of play while Jace recovers. When she comes back, however, she'll make the **OVER MOVE** on her +3 Audience even though she won't be in the top spot, as the audience pops for her triumphant return.

THE SPLENDOR OF PURORESU

BY SHELLY DEATHLOCK

Our ancestors have been grappling for as long as their opposable thumbs have allowed. As noted elsewhere in this book, the professional version arose throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the carnivals of the United States, the gyms of United Kingdom and the national arenas of Mexico. Professional wrestling in Japan (what many call “*Puroresu*,” pronounced “pro-wres,” a Romanization of the Japanese transliteration of the English for “pro wrestling” プロレス) developed later. Japan’s traditional wrestling is sumo, a sport with its own history but very unlike the professional wrestling we watch today. Japan’s first important professional wrestler, Rikidozan, was a sumo wrestler, but the similarities between pro wrestling and sumo in Japan end there. In other regions of the world, the predominant professional wrestling style was an early-century outgrowth of local styles, local interests, and tradition. In Japan, the predominant professional wrestling style was a wholesale import of all these other established wrestling styles in the 1950s and 60s.

BIRTH & GROWTH

Rikidozan, a Korean-Japanese sumo wrestler is now known as the “Father of *Puroresu*” in Japan. He wrestled his first match in 1951 and had much success as a hated opponent in matches on American soil. Upon his return to Japan, there was fervent interest in seeing Rikidozan turn the tables and play a Japanese hero defeating foreigners in this new entertainment style of pro wrestling. Rikidozan and American wrestler Lou Thesz traded a series of wins and losses across continents during their legendary careers.

Foreign wrestlers, especially Americans, have been an enormous part of Japanese wrestling since it began. In the wake of World War II, matches highlighting Japanese heroes vs. outsiders helped define Japanese identity in the sport. There was no shortage of foreign talent from the US and UK for Japan to import after the 1960s to serve this purpose, and we still see cross-promotional and international collaboration between companies today.

Though the roots of professional wrestling in Japan relied on competition between local heroes and foreign talent, wrestlers and organizations in Japan began diversifying their styles, stories, and traditions

almost immediately. "Japanese wrestling," doesn't just mean one style or philosophy, because Japanese wrestlers and wrestling organizations have excelled at every kind of wrestling at on a worldwide scale for decades. However, some of the iconically Japanese-associated styles, traditions, and philosophies are certainly worth exploration through gameplay. I'm going to look at three of them in more depth here.

JOSHI

Joshi *Puroresu* (女子プロレス) (literally "girl pro wrestling") predominantly happens in organizations dedicated entirely to women's wrestling. The most famous joshi organization, All Japan Women's Pro Wrestling (AJW) was founded in 1968 and stayed active until 2005. Women were wrestling in Japanese companies as early as the mid-1950s, and AJW was an attempt to organize and legitimize the sport. Organizations dedicated to women's matches and specific dojos where women wrestlers trained young girls created a space for incredible competition and innovation in women's wrestling in Japan. AJW was hugely popular throughout the 1980s, regularly selling out shows and performing to an adoring audience. The 1990s saw the peak of now legendary competitors Bull Nakano, Akira Hokuto, Aja Kong, and Manami Toyota.

In 1995, New Japan Pro Wrestling and World Championship Wrestling hosted a joint event in Pyongyang with joshi wrestlers on the card. Day 2 of Collision in Korea featured Bull Nakano vs. Akira Hokuto for the CMLL Women's Championship in front of 190,000 attendees, just before a main event of Antonio Inoki vs. Ric Flair – to this day, the largest crowd for any wrestling event ever recorded. Women have been and continue to be integral to the popularity and legitimacy of professional wrestling in Japan. Women's wrestling companies still exist all across the nation, in large and small organizations, including both Japanese wrestlers and talented women wrestlers from all over the world, and they still exhibit some of the best wrestling that is available to see anywhere.

DEATH MATCH

The Japanese Death Match is legendary. If you're talking to someone about wrestling and they string an incomprehensibly violent series of words together, that match probably happened in Japan. No-Ropes Electrified Exploding Barbed Wire Match. Barbed Wire Boards & Piranha Fish Tank Death Match. Fluorescent Light Tube Boards, Barbed Wire Boards, Lemon & Salt Death Match. Dedicated men and women

have made their living and risked their lives in these kind of disastrous spectacles for decades. From the establishment of Frontier Martial-Arts Wrestling in 1989 to the Deathmatch division of Big Japan Pro Wrestling that continues today, performers of the style have found an audience and made a niche with real blood, real fire, and real glass. Wrestlers wear scars like trophies and cultivate personae with varying levels of bloodlust and insanity. The best performers are as good at the art of the death match as any straitlaced wrestler is at the art of traditional wrestling.

KING OF SPORTS

New Japan Pro Wrestling (NJPW) is the best known Japanese wrestling company. It was founded in 1972 by Antonio Inoki, a student of Rikidozan. NJPW was by no means the only company, or even a company that united the other competing wrestling organizations in the 1970s, but it's the one that saw the most success and considerable longevity. For a more in-depth look at NJPW's founding, history, and current scene, check out Chris Charlton's *Lion's Pride: The Turbulent History of New Japan Pro Wrestling*.

NJPW trained generations of young men to be real athletes: living and training in dojos together, climbing up through the ranks, leaving the dojo on a mandatory foreign excursion to learn to wrestle a different style, and returning to the company to show and share what they've learned. NJPW's main championship title, the IWGP (International Wrestling Grand Prix) Heavyweight Championship has changed hands just over 60 times and only between 27 men. Their names are listed on the sideplates of the title belt, and they are a stunning array of NJPW-grown Japanese talent, and five tremendous American wrestlers. Recent storylines in NJPW have been years-long feuds between the top wrestlers in the company for the IWGP Heavyweight Championship, but also for the right to be the "Ace," or the face and leader of NJPW in the coming years. A wrestler's loyalty to and pride in the wrestling company they work for has been a central trope in mainstream Japanese wrestling for decades.

Fundamentally, the styles of NJPW and its main competing organizations through the 70s, 80s, and 90s (All Japan Pro Wrestling, Pro Wrestling Noah, etc.) are what fans think of when they think of *Puroresu*. Their focus on tradition, athleticism, real relationships between competitors, and in-ring storytelling are tremendously appealing to any wrestling fan.

THE SPLENDOR

Japanese wrestling captures our imaginations by combining incredible physical and mental endurance; real martial arts skills, training, and techniques; and the drama, performance, and emotion of professional wrestling. Within these constraints there's room for everything: high flying stars who trained in Mexico with *luchadores*; tag teams who largely just brawl and pound each other with forearms; mat technicians who might prefer to be in a legitimate shoot fight; and glamorous, cocky rock stars who can work any style based on their opponent.

Professional wrestling in Japan has been hugely innovative and flexible since it began. Some of the best wrestlers in history have been Japanese stars who work globally, incorporate other styles into the skills they've learned in their dojos at home, and show the world something new. Anything goes, and anything has been allowable into the context of professional wrestling in Japan. Stars make themselves with their skill and savvy, and they're recognized worldwide by fans and critics for their accomplishments.

Today, Japanese wrestling feels like an organic, global network of artists and athletes fighting alongside and against each other to win honor and secure their legacies in a sport and art established by their predecessors. Competitors contribute to and carry on the stellar traditions of their trainers, their organizations, and their title lineages, but they don't hesitate to step outside of these boundaries and try something new to stand out. You can do anything in *Puroresu*, and I hope you take advantage of that in your game!

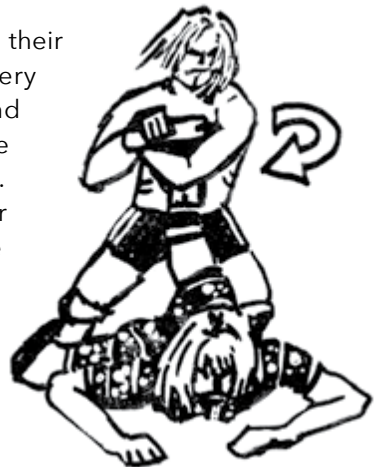
Shelly Deathlock is a life-long fan of the sport and art of professional wrestling. Sometimes she translates her wrestling enthusiasm into written pieces like the one for this fine game, but mostly she just yells excitedly online and buys a lot of magazines. Follow her shouting on twitter at @shellydeathlock.

CATCH WRESTLING

Catch wrestling, also known as All-In wrestling, describes the mix of amateur wrestling with rigged carnival exhibitions that developed into professional wrestling as we know it today. Though the combination flowered in the United States, the original catch-as-catch-can style was probably invented in the early 1870s in Britain, drawing from local grappling traditions as well as Greco-Roman contests. As in the US, wrestling saw much of its popularity at traveling funfairs and carnivals. The term “All-In” was coined by the 1930s and the style became very popular, eventually resulting in companies having trouble finding enough qualified wrestlers to compete. Promoters added more exhibition matches, like bouts with weapons and women’s mud wrestling to satisfy demand. Unfortunately, these “unsporting” additions got wrestling, still considered a sport, banned from the city of London in the late 1930s. Wrestling didn’t regain official recognition again until after World War II.

The new rules for British wrestling, created in 1947 and still technically in force through the 1990s, codified many aspects of the form and created a flavor of wrestling that hewed much closer to a legitimate sporting competition than the gaudy wrestling elsewhere. The results of matches were still predetermined, but the overall focus of a match was often about recognizing technique and strategy over creating “cheap” drama. In particular, matches featured more baby-face-vs-babyface tests of skill than American audiences were used to seeing. Many of the wrestlers of this era were trained in the infamous Snake Pit school in Wiggan, Lancashire, where they learned legitimate hooking and submission techniques.

On the strength of these grapplers and their skills, professional wrestling became very popular in the UK through the 1950s and early 60s, especially with its inclusion on the televised *World of Sport* program in 1964. Featured as the lead-in to the weekly soccer scores, wrestling was basically primetime viewing for the entire country. As a cultural phenomenon, British wrestling in the 1960s and 70s arguably reached more viewers than televised wrestling of any other era. Of course, with television



THE ANKLE LOCK CONTROLS THE BODY AND INFLECTS PAIN ON CRITICAL JOINTS

came the ability to showcase characters to a wide audience. Despite the tradition of British catch wrestling, the 70s saw the dominance of slow-moving but larger-than-life performers at the top of the cards.

Unfortunately for fans of grappling, *World of Sport* was canceled in 1985. Between the end of a primetime viewing slot and the same forces that ate away at the territory system in the US, professional wrestling lost its cultural position in the British consciousness. For the remaining promotions, All-In wrestling declined as a distinct form in favor of mainstream American styles. During the modern era, the tradition of catch wrestling has merged with American style sports entertainment; the pure catch-as-catch-can match is now rare. That said, modern British wrestlers retain a reputation for technical skill, grappling ability and a mean streak.

The distinctiveness of Catch wrestling comes from both the attention paid to detail in the ring and the culture of competition around those details. The formal rules surrounding the heyday of British All-In, "Mountevan's Rules", are quite a departure from modern match stipulations. The pace and tempo of a match based upon Mountevan's Rules (as most were during the *World of Sport* days) is a fascinating opportunity to showcase this more sports-oriented approach to wrestling and can be used in any suitable *World Wide Wrestling Promotion*.

Like everything in wrestling there are variations based on the promoter's goal for the match, but in general:

- ★ A classic *World of Sport* match is best two-out-of three falls. A fall is awarded for a pinfall, a submission, a knockout (if the wrestler fails to get up within a 10-count in *or* out of the ring), a technical knockout (the referee deems that the wrestler is unable to continue) or a disqualification on public warning.
- ★ The referee gives a public warning to a wrestler for breaking rules (like going over the top rope, striking with closed fists, holding their opponent in the ropes, etc); upon the third public warning received, their opponent is awarded a fall. This creates the additional tension of the wrestlers getting public warnings while being tied on falls, as well as opportunities to "trick" the opponent into taking warnings.
- ★ The referee counts as soon as a wrestler is down on the mat, both inside and outside of the ring.
- ★ Matches are usually fought in timed rounds, similar to boxing.

CATCH WRESTLING NEW RULES

GIMMICK: THE SHOOT FIGHTER. This Gimmick is appropriate for both Catch and *Puroresu* influenced promotions. See **PAGE 110** for full details.

MATCH STIPULATION: CATCH-AS-CATCH-CAN. This match is built around the wrestlers using their knowledge of legitimate grappling, holds and counters in order to demonstrate their ability. Under this stipulation, wrestlers can roll +Real for the **WRESTLING MOVE** when they use their legitimate grappling skills. Wrestlers only gain Momentum from the **WRESTLING MOVE** for rolling on +Work, +Real or +Heat (ignore any Momentum that would be gained from rolling +Power or +Look).

This is a suitable stipulation to run as a Straight Match (see **PAGE 39**).

MATCH STIPULATION: MOUNTEVAN'S RULES. The match proceeds according to the structure presented on the previous page. Use the standard **WRESTLING MOVE**, but replace the results list with this one:

- ★ On a 10+ you hit it great; retain control and pick one:
 - gain +2 Momentum
 - gain +1 Heat with your opponent
 - you trick your opponent into taking a Public Warning
- ★ On a 7-9 you hit it pretty well; pick one:
 - retain control and transition into the next sequence
 - give your opponent control and gain +1 Momentum
- ★ On a Botch, give your opponent 1 Momentum and pick one:
 - take a Public Warning and retain control of the match
 - your opponent counters you and takes control of the match

In addition, when you make the **INTERRUPT MOVE**, you can choose to take a Public Warning *instead* of spending 1 Momentum.

When you take your third Public Warning, your opponent is awarded a fall. Public Warnings concern any formal rules infraction (such as pulling the hair or tights, choking or striking with closed fists, throwing your opponent over the top rope on purpose, holding your opponent in the corner past a count of 3, etc), so make sure to narrate what the warning is actually for. If someone takes 3 Public Warnings, it overrides Creative's booking for the match and their opponent gets the victory (and makes their **FINISHING MOVE** if this is the deciding fall of the match).

You can run a Mountevan's Rules Match to a single fall or as best two-of-three falls. In this case, Creative should book each fall as normal (see **PAGE 13** for details on two-of-three-falls matches).

This is a suitable stipulation to run as a Straight Match (see **PAGE 39**).

*** EXAMPLE: MOUNTEVAN'S RULES MATCH ***

Matthew is entering the game with a new wrestler, a British Technician named Lord Victor Gray. To make his big debut into the company he issues an open challenge to wrestle anyone in a Mountevan's Rules Match. Bella Bardot has recovered from her injuries and is looking to regain some cred in the ring, so Joe jumps on the chance to bring her out to answer the challenge. Nathan declares that it will be a single-fall match, so the first pinfall, submission, countout or accumulation of 3 Public Warnings will end the match.

The first half of the match goes quickly, with both wrestlers showing off their different flavors of grappling expertise. Matthew and Joe play it as a show of respect, with each wrestler appreciating what the other can do—until Lord Gray catches Bella in a headlock and starts grinding his chin into the top of her head when the referee isn't looking! Matthew has control of the match and gets a 9 on the **WRESTLING MOVE**, takes the Momentum and turns control over to Joe. He narrates how Bella finally gets to the ropes and the referee calls on Gray to break the hold; then she quickly springs to the attack and shoulder-tackles Gray, rolling through the tackle into a pinning position.

Joe rolls for the **WRESTLING MOVE** and Botches. He doesn't want to relinquish control yet so he gives Matthew one of his poker chips he's using to track Momentum, and takes a Public Warning. He's not sure what that would be in this situation, and Nathan suggests that maybe Bella grabbed Lord Gray's tights for the pin. Joe goes with that, narrating how she "accidentally" grabbed the tights for give additional leverage—unfortunately, the referee sees it and breaks up the pin, throwing up his hand to indicate a Public Warning for Bella.

This is when Matthew spends the Momentum he just gained to **INTERRUPT** and take control of the match. Once the referee steps away, Lord Gray offers a classic test of strength lockup to Bella, which she takes on. They strain back and forth, and then Gray steps through her legs and sweeps her foot, bringing her down to the mat with him in control. The ref starts counting (as being unable to answer a count of 10 even inside the ring is still a fall under Lord Mountevan's Rules), and Matthew rolls for the **WRESTLING MOVE**. He gets a 9 and spends a Momentum to bring it to a 10—and he chooses to trick his opponent into taking a Public Warning, Bella's second. He narrates how Gray suddenly convulses and falls to the side covering his groin, as if he'd just been kneed by his opponent—this tricks the ref into thinking Bella threw a low blow to get out of the predicament, and he calls for a second Public Warning for the Shoot Fighter.

Matthew is still in control of the match, and now Bella Bardot is only one Public Warning away from losing the match, in addition to potential pinfall, countout or submission. Though Nathan hasn't revealed the booking to the match quite yet, if Joe ends up choosing another Public Warning on a Botch, or Matthew forces another on him, Bella will lose the match regardless of booking.

WORLD OF SPORT: A MOMENT IN TIME

GREGOR HUTTON

"Greetings, grapple fans"

— KENT WALTON, WORLD OF SPORT WRESTLING COMMENTATOR

Those three words are familiar to just about anyone in the United Kingdom who lived in a period when the wrestling was big business. And by "just about anyone" I don't mean "just about any wrestling fan," I mean just about anyone *in the country*.

That is mind blowing.

Especially when you consider that the relative current success of WWE, TNA and local promotions like ICW (in Glasgow, Scotland) get barely a fraction of the 12+ million viewers that *World of Sport* got as *standard* in its heyday (in a country of around 54 million people at the time).

THE SHOW

World of Sport was a television show on ITV, which was Britain's only commercial television channel, in a time when there were only three channels available to watch. Needless to say, any show on in primetime got a lot of exposure.

And *World of Sport* was in primetime.

It ran every Saturday afternoon for 20 years from 1965 to 1985, and predominantly featured football (still the most popular sport in the country – and in those pre-internet days was the quickest way to find out the final scores of all the games), horse racing and wrestling. The show also included a host of other sports (including speedway, darts and snooker) but hung its hat on the holy trinity of balls, betting and bone benders.

BRITISH STYLE

The wrestling matches featured the commentary of Kent Walton, who had a dry and crisp style, and a seemingly encyclopedic knowledge of moves, holds and feuds. The grappling itself differed from the more modern North American style (as described elsewhere in this text). A key element of the British style on show was that they were generally the best of three falls, with the referee counting upwards to ten when a wrestler fell to the mat. This technique by the referee readily

communicated to the audience swings in momentum and the wearing down of one wrestler by another – previously they got up at 3, then 5, but now they were struggling up at 8.

Wrestlers would also get “public warnings” from the referee for breaking the rules and you could lose a title on a DQ! And, while the mixture of singles and tag matches may seem familiar, they often featured blue-eyes (faces—heels were called “villains”) facing off with each other, rather than the more familiar face-heel contest of other promotions.

That is not to say there weren’t face-heel feuds. The most famous of these was Big Daddy versus Giant Haystacks, which achieved cultural resonance in the UK that would put Hogan-Andre to shame. The real shame, though, was that despite the huge viewing figures and the penetration into day-to-day life that the Daddy-Haystacks feud had, it featured such a terrible stiff (Big Daddy) that ultimately it killed the game for everyone else, but more of that later.

GROWING UP WITH GRAPPLING

I grew up in the seventies and have many fond memories of sitting on a rug at my grandparents watching the matches with my grandfather. He was a big Jackie Pallo fan, which is strange to me now. Pallo, “Mr TV,” has a bad reputation with modern “smart” fans and other wrestlers from the era. He wrote a book in 1986 titled *You Grunt, I’ll Groan* that blew the secrets of the business in a time when you didn’t do that sort of thing. I was glad that my grandfather wasn’t around in the mid-eighties to see that bubble burst.

In his day Pallo was a really big star, though. He was one of the very top faces and his prime feud was with a complete villain, Mick McManus, a real bruiser and a “nasty” wrestler, who also happened to book the matches. It’s said that the pay-off match to their feud had 22 million viewers. It really is something that the later Big Daddy-Giant Haystacks feud eclipsed the cultural reach of Pallo and McManus.

Still, the Pallo-McManus era maintained the image of professional wrestling as a legitimate sport and was one of the very highest points for *World of Sport*. That is perhaps why Pallo got such grief when he talked about what happened behind the curtain after he was done and *World of Sport* was gone. Doubly bad that he had made a decent living out of the game too before pissing in the soup.

FANTASTIC MATCHES

In the late seventies and early eighties, if you could turn your head away from the awful Big Daddy matches, you would find some of the greatest wrestling to have ever graced the planet.

Mark "Rollerball" Rocco, "Sammy Lee" and Tom Billington all put on master classes of grappling in halls up and down the country. Some fans will know them better from their names in Japan: the original Black Tiger, Tiger Mask and the Dynamite Kid. To think that one-hour matches at sold-out shows in Tokyo in the early eighties were worked out in segments in places like Wakefield and Wigan, and often shown for free on British TV on a Saturday afternoon.

Dynamite Kid was once asked by a wrestling journalist about his matches with Tiger Mask from that era, and whether they were really "five-star matches" in the modern sense. "No," he said, "they were better than that."

I would heartily recommend looking up Rollerball Rocco matches, especially against Dynamite Kid and Marty Jones. You can also see him take on "Fuji Yamada," more famously known as Jushin "Thunder" Liger.

What other wrestlers were household names from my youth? Kendo Nagasaki, Pat Roach, Tony St Clair (who trained Chris Adams, who trained Steve Austin), Adrian Street, Kung Fu and Johnny Kwango.

There were also some young wrestlers in the last days of *World of Sport* that would go on to have big success in WWF and WCW: Fit Finlay, the British Bulldog and William Regal. Seeing a youthful Fit Finlay on YouTube from that era is quite something.

To say I was spoiled as a child with great wrestling is an understatement. So how did it go wrong?

KILLING THE GOLDEN GOOSE WITH A PENCIL

I mentioned Big Daddy earlier, and anyone from the UK will know who I am talking about. To the uninitiated, Big Daddy was a large, round character clearly past his prime, with a top hat and cape who led the crowd in comical chants of "Easy, Easy." So, how on earth was he top of the card? Booking – and a sense of the surreal.

British wrestling featured old ladies in ringside seats, armed with handbags and umbrellas that they didn't hold back from using on the villains. So there was always a bit of pantomime even in the days where it appeared to be a legitimate competition.

But when Max Crabtree became the booker of Joint Promotions, the promoter featured on *World of Sport*, in the early seventies he hit

box office gold. He created the character “Big Daddy” for his brother Shirley Crabtree, who had been out of work for over 5 years and wasn’t very fit.

Big Daddy was a larger-than-life character, popular with children and old ladies, who, despite being in his forties and out of shape, easily defeated every heel in the country. He often did this in short matches owing to his shocking lack of conditioning. Still, the crowd lapped it up and business was booming. It couldn’t last forever though, and while Daddy stayed top of the card year-after-year it wore away the veneer of legitimacy that earlier grappling had been built upon.

The end of the era was when ITV got a new boss, who decided that this sort of wrestling had to go. *World of Sport* got canceled and while a wrestling show struggled on for a few more years, it was no longer in the primetime slot and that show too met its end. By then, satellite TV was beginning to show American wrestling and the British scene would never return to the heyday of *World of Sport* levels.

FURTHER READING AND WATCHING

I really can’t recommend *The Wrestling* by Simon Garfield (Faber & Faber) highly enough. Garfield is a serious journalist and his book is a fantastic read for anyone who wants to understand British wrestling from the *World of Sport* era. It also features a great cover image of Kendo Nagasaki.

YouTube is your friend. Watch some matches using the search terms “World of Sport” or “WoS.” A good starting point is to look up Rollerball Rocco as recommended earlier and just follow the breadcrumb trail of matches highlighted after each one. You should be immersed in grappling heaven, and occasionally hell, for a long time to come.

DVDs of the “The Best of ITV Wrestling” may be a trickier proposition. They tend to feature Big Daddy matches for the nostalgia value that they hold for the UK audience. Grapple fans of discerning taste (and as a reader of Nathan’s excellent *World Wide Wrestling* you are assuredly one of those) may find the Big Daddy “matches” less appealing than all the great bouts featuring genuine world-class grapplers that didn’t make the final cut. That observation may encapsulate why *World of Sport* was, in the end, a moment in time.

Gregor Hutton lives in Edinburgh, Scotland and writes and illustrates RPGs very occasionally. His favourite wrestlers are Scott Hall, Akira Hokuto and Rollerball Rocco. If he had a finishing move it would be some sort of suplex.

INDIE WRESTLING

The contemporary independent wrestling scene is the grand crossroads of professional wrestling. Green-as-grass novices share cards with ex-World Champions. International stars strut their stuff in front of local audiences. Journeyman workers hone their craft in front of both tiny auditorium crowds and sold-out performance halls. The territory days are long over, but the indie scene has managed to carve out a similar space, affording a platform for wrestlers to travel all over the world and try out new things in front of different crowds. While the money and fame are often lacking, it's no secret that the indies are where mainstream companies look to find their next generation of superstars. Plus, for those not tall enough, attractive enough or otherwise a good fit the big promotions, there is a living to be made on the indies as a full-time wrestler.

The loose term "the indies" covers everything from quarterly shows at the local VFW hall to regional supercards to established companies with cable TV deals. There are indie companies all over the world, some of them with formal talent exchange relationships and some simply booking whoever they can get to travel. Wrestling a full-time schedule on the indies generally entails being your own business manager in addition to a wrestler: scheduling bookings, getting merchandise designed and produced, maintaining a social media presence and non-stop traveling. Some indie fans just go to local shows because they're local, while others pay attention to the whole "scene" and follow particular wrestlers through different promotions.

Like the territory days, a wrestler can be a babyface in one promotion and a heel in another. Higher-tier talent may have a home promotion where they appear regularly or hold a title, making appearances on other cards without being in title contention. Promotions have to manage the tensions arising from maintaining homegrown talent on the card, bringing in big names from the scene to fill out shows and draw audiences and booking in such a way as



to build less experienced talent. It's notoriously hard to establish true heels on the indie scene. Fans like seeing wrestlers do cool stuff, and even when there's a clear good guy and bad guy established, the live crowd will cheer for both wrestlers as they execute signature maneuvers and take big bumps.

The actual wrestling on the indie scene varies widely depending on experience level, region and promotion. However, a recognizable indie style is discernible to fans, distinct from the mainstream televised wrestling style. The indie style tends to rely on a high level of athleticism, big show-stopping maneuvers executed from more and more high-risk positions, and the use (some say the overuse) of false finishes to build the end of the match to a crescendo. Unlike more storyline-driven wrestling, most indie performers only have one match at a time in which to establish their character. The big-impact, false finish-reliant style undeniably works towards those goals and hypes up the live experience, even as it can burn out an audience in the long-term to see such big moves over and over again.

Long-term storytelling on the indies depends on the promotion and the kind of wrestling they want to showcase. An indie show can be anything from a one-time-only supercard of must-see exhibition matches to a platform for high-concept, multi-threaded narrative. The best indie promotions provide some of both, so that first-time and occasional attendees can simply enjoy the matches while long-term fans are rewarded for their attention by callbacks and details within and between matches. When executed poorly, of course, an indie show can be an exercise in confusion, as fans who don't know what's going on wait while performers with unclear motivations jawjack endlessly.

Indie wrestling is wrestling at both its best and its worst.

INDIE WRESTLING NEW RULES

GIMMICK: THE INDIE DARLING. You've made a living on the road, wrestling for anyone who'll take you. You've got a cult following, a set of unique skills and a lot of experience. Finally, you have an opportunity to make your name at the next level. Will you take it? See **PAGE 106** for full details.

MATCH STIPULATION: SPOTFEST. You may never see this crowd or wrestle this opponent again, so why not pull out all the stops? A Spotfest ignores two standard rules for wrestling matches:

- ★ At the beginning of the match, Creative does not book the finish. Rather, the wrestlers attempt to use their **FINISHING MOVES** to win the match, but can **INTERRUPT** or otherwise swerve an attempt into a false finish. See below for all the details.
- ★ At the end of the match, ignore the +4 Heat rule to gain Audience (if you have +4 Heat with your opponent, you **DO NOT** gain an Audience). Opportunities for gaining Audience come from the false finishes during the match, instead of the storytelling payoff at the end.

This match proceeds using the standard **WRESTLING MOVE**. However, Creative does not declare when to end the match. Instead, whoever is in control can go for their **FINISHING MOVE**. Any opponent can **INTERRUPT** after a **FINISHING MOVE** is made to continue the match, making it a false finish. If a **FINISHING MOVE** is Botched, the match continues with the opponent taking over as if they'd used the **INTERRUPT MOVE**. In every case, you apply the effects of the **FINISHING MOVE** (including gaining Heat or Audience).

The booking of the match changes with the **FINISHING MOVES**. A successful **FINISHING MOVE** (any 7-9 or 10+ result) wins the wrestler the match, unless an opponent uses the **INTERRUPT MOVE** (or another Move that lets them rebook on the fly). If a Gimmick has a **FINISHING MOVE** equivalent that doesn't trigger on them winning the match, they follow the fictional trigger for using it (e.g. if a Jobber narrates how they lie down for their opponent and successfully hits **Do THE JOB**, they lose the match). Using other Moves to change the booking (like the **HEEL MOVE**) can give that wrestler control and the opportunity to hit their **FINISHING MOVE**, but only rolling for the **FINISHING MOVE** will actually end this match.

The match ends once someone successfully hits a **FINISHING MOVE** without being subject to **INTERRUPT** or another swerve, winning the match. Remember not to apply the Audience gain for +4 Heat once the match is over; the opportunities to gain Audience come from the false finishes throughout the match as the wrestlers pop the crowd with bigger and bigger moves and closer and closer kickouts.

Depending on your Promotion, you may have an official name for this kind of match, or have it be an understood thing among the wrestlers what a Spotfest means, even if it doesn't have an official name.

*** EXAMPLE: SPOTFEST ***

Sarah's Jace Shirai is back and has something to prove—and what better opponent than Tim's Hijo de Tigre Sangre. After an off-camera segment where the two wrestlers discuss how they can "pull out all the stops," Nathan suggests that they use the Spotfest Stipulation, giving them the platform to really show off even though they don't have much Heat with each other. The players agree and Nathan sets it up as the main event of the Episode.

After the entrances, Tim starts off in control of the match. He has a stack of four Momentum he's built up over the course of the Episode and decides to start big, narrating how he immediately goes for his finisher off the top rope! He rolls for the Luchador's **FINISHING MOVE** and gets a 7, which would win him the match—but Sarah, who also has four Momentum, spends one to **INTERRUPT**, making it a false finish.

The effects of the Luchador's 7-9 result on the **FINISHING MOVE** are applied first. In this case, the wrestlers opponent (Sarah) decides which of the two of them loses 2 Momentum, and which gains 1. This high-risk maneuver doesn't go in Tigre Sangre's favor, and Sarah narrates how Jace kicks out of the pin at 2 and immediately drags the Luchador over to the corner post and slams his leg into the steel; she chooses that she gains the 1 and Tigre Sangre loses the 2, bringing Jace back to four and Tigre Sangre down to two.

Sarah has control of the match and narrates how she keeps working the knee as much as the ref will let her. Jace lets Tigre Sangre get up and have a brief comeback, setting up for a spot where she slingshots the smaller wrestler off the ropes, basement dropkicks his knee and then pulls the damaged leg into her single-leg submission, the Comet Breaker. Sarah rolls for her Hardcore's **FINISHING MOVE**, and rolls a 9. She decides to spend a Momentum to bring that to a 10, and then Tim throws in one of his remaining Momentum to **INTERRUPT**.

The Hardcore's **FINISHING MOVE** lets Sarah choose whether her or her opponent gains +1 Audience. Sarah is angling for making Jace the top heel in the company, and decides to take the +1 Audience for herself, but turns it over to Tim to narrate how Tigre Sangre gets out of the Comet Breaker (due to the **INTERRUPT** making it a false finish).

The two go back and forth for the rest of the match using the standard **WRESTLING MOVE**, and get to a point where Sarah is down to one Momentum. Tim, currently in control, narrates how he sends Jace crashing to the outside, and while she rolls around in pain he goes back up to the top rope, launching himself into his finisher to the outside; he rolls an 11! It's a picture-perfect corkscrew 450 onto Jace's prone body. Tim takes the +1 Audience for hitting his finisher—but Sarah spends her last Momentum to **INTERRUPT** again, making it another false finish! Jace kicks out at the last second, then uses her last burst of energy to bend him into another Comet Breaker. Sarah rolls for her **FINISHING MOVE**—and Botches! The Hardcore **FINISHING MOVE** still gives the Hardcore the win, but they choose whether they lose -1 Audience, or injure their opponent. Sarah declares that she will injure her opponent rather than take the Audience loss, and Tim shakes his head as he marks off two Injury boxes for the Luchador (as they tick off 2 per injury instead of 1).

Even though Jace's finisher still gives her the victory on a Botch, under this stipulation *all* Botches are still false finishes. Tim takes control back, narrating how he pulls his obviously injured leg out of the Hardcores grasp, goes to the top and goes for his Phoenix Splash *again*. Tim rolls a 8 for his **FINISHING MOVE**. Sarah again takes the Momentum, but doesn't interrupt this time, and finally Hijo de Tigre Sangre gets a big win!

OTHER MATCHES

Here are two more matches that aren't specifically associated with any international style, and can come up in any kind of promotion. Use them as formal stipulations as the result of Moves or to switch up the pace in a long-running game.

STRAIGHT MATCH: You may want to run a match without booking the finish ahead of time. This could be a standard match framed as being left to the wrestlers to call in the ring; as Creative you could have no particular attachment to an outcome; or it could fit the nature of an additional stipulation already applied to the match.

If you are not using a Stipulation (like Mountevan's Rules on **PAGE 29**, Spotfest on **PAGE 37** or the Regal Wrangle from *World Wide Wrestling*) that already provides a mechanism for determining the victor without needing book them in advance, add this rule to determine the outcome of a Straight Match:

- ★ When someone rolls a 10+ for the **WRESTLING MOVE**, this is the result list:
 - o gain +2 Momentum
 - o gain +1 Heat with your opponent
 - o go for the victory

Going for a victory entails anything which would win the match per its other stipulations. When you go for a victory, your opponent can use **INTERRUPT** or another Move to kick out or otherwise break the pin; if they cannot do so (or choose not to), then you roll for your **FINISHING MOVE** and abide by that result (remember that some **FINISHING MOVES** may end up with the other person winning the watch!)

If someone uses a Move to override Creative's booking before a pin attempt is made (such as the **HEEL Move** or making a **RUN-IN**), then that becomes the booking for the match, and can thus be overridden in turn by other Moves. Whoever's booked to win still needs to go for the victory to end the match and roll their **FINISHING MOVE**.

Creative still has oversight over the general events of a Straight Match, including declaring it a no contest or that there's no official winner if the events of the match push the result in that direction (e.g. if a **RUN-IN** leads to a pull-apart brawl).

Generally, Straight Matches should be matches between players wrestlers. If a player/NPW Straight Match does come up, Creative narrates for the NPW, and turns any Botches the player makes into victory attempts by the NPW.

EXHIBITION MATCH: This match showcases the art of wrestling for its own sake. This stipulation makes for a longer match, asks more of the players to bring their creativity to bear and rewards exploring every aspect of their wrestler as they seek to make a lasting impression.

In an Exhibition Match, the wrestlers are meant to display a spectrum of strategies to gain an advantage. Replace the standard **WRESTLING MOVE** result list with this one:

- ★ When you roll on a stat (+Work, +Power, +Look or +Heat*), make a checkmark next to it.
 - *If you have a Move that allows you to roll +Real for the **WRESTLING MOVE**, check off one of the other Stats instead
- ★ On a 10+, you hit it great, retain control and choose whether you gain +1 Heat with your opponent or cash in your checks for Momentum (see below)
- ★ On a 7-9, you hit it pretty well, give your opponent control and gain +1 Momentum.
- ★ On a Botch, you get countered. Erase a check and your opponent gains control of the match.

The 10+ result introduces a new rule, cashing in checks. As you roll on different Stats, you make a checkmark next to each one to note that you've used it. Cashing in represents reaping the rewards of displaying different styles of wrestling in the match. When you cash in your checks for Momentum, gain Momentum equal to the Stats you currently have checked, and erase all checks. You only check off each Stat the first time you roll on it during the match (so, you can end up cashing in your checks for up to +4 Momentum, if you've used +Look, +Power, +Work and +Heat without cashing in yet).

When someone makes their **FINISHING MOVE**, they roll +Stats Currently Checked. After the match concludes, all wrestlers involved in the match gain Momentum equal to the Stats they had checked at the end of the match (and erase all checks).

The changes to the **WRESTLING MOVE** encourage an Exhibition Match to be full of back-and-forth action and variety, with the bulk of Momentum coming in from cashing in on using the different Stats over the course of the match.

*** EXAMPLE: EXHIBITION MATCH ***

Matthew's Lord Victor Gray was impressed by Tim's Hijo de Tigre Sangre and calls for an opportunity to display his wrestling skills against such a high-profile opponent. This dovetails with events in the Promotion, as the company is getting a primetime television spot. Nathan declares that the two wrestlers are tasked with showing off everything they have in an Exhibition Match.

After cutting "pre-recorded" promos from the two wrestlers, the match starts off with Lord Gray in control. Matthew narrates the beginning by making a big display of respect, offering a handshake to his high-flying opponent, but then uses it to pull the Luchador into a standing hammerlock. This is a move that shows off Lord Gray's dastardly-but-technically-proficient character, so Matthew rolls +Look for the **WRESTLING MOVE** (and checks it off on his sheet). He gets a 8, decides to take the Momentum and turn the match over to Tim.

Tim narrates how Tigre Sangre reverses the hammerlock and go into a traditional lucha leapfrog/handspring combination with Lord Gray, just barely managing to outpace him and turn the final exchange into a hurricanrana. In this case he's showing off the basic, though critical elements of how his character wrestles, and also decides to roll on +Look. Tim checks it off on his sheet and then rolls a 5, a Botch. He erases the check he just made and turns control over to Matthew.

Lord Gray rolls through the 'rana takedown, pushes Tigre Sangre into the corner and then follows it up with a waistlock. Matthew narrates how they trade standing switches and then ends the sequence with Lord Gray showing off his understated strength, tossing the more compact man over his head with a big release German suplex! He rolls on +Power for this one, checking it off his sheet and rolling a 9. Matthews decides to spend 1 Momentum to bring it to a 10, takes +1 Heat with Tigre Sangre, and maintains control.

Matthew narrates how Lord Gray goes for the cover, Tigre Sangre kicks out, and then they enter into an extended sequence of mat wrestling. Lord Gray shows off a number of technical holds, each one on a different body part, and rolls +Work for the **WRESTLING MOVE**. He hits it on a 11, and decides that it's time to cash in his checks for Momentum. He has 3 stats checked (+Look, +Power and +Work), so he erases those three checks and gains +3 Momentum.

This is when Tim spends 1 Momentum to **INTERRUPT**. While Lord Gray soaks up the cheers of the crowd, Tigre Sangre manages to reverse the hold and pull the Technician into a Mexican surfboard submission! This kicks off the section of the match that sees the Luchador mount a fiery comeback.

Later, at the end of the match, El Hijo de Tigre Sangre is booked to win. Nobody swerves the ending, and Tim has 2 Stats currently checked (+Work and +Heat). He rolls +2 for his **FINISHING MOVE** (instead of the normal flat 2d6) and hits with an 11, gaining +1 Audience for himself in front of the primetime crowd. In addition, he gains 2 Momentum after the match for the two checked Stats. Matthew gains 1 Momentum for the single Stat Lord Gray had checked at the end of the match, +Work.

EXPANDING YOUR GAME

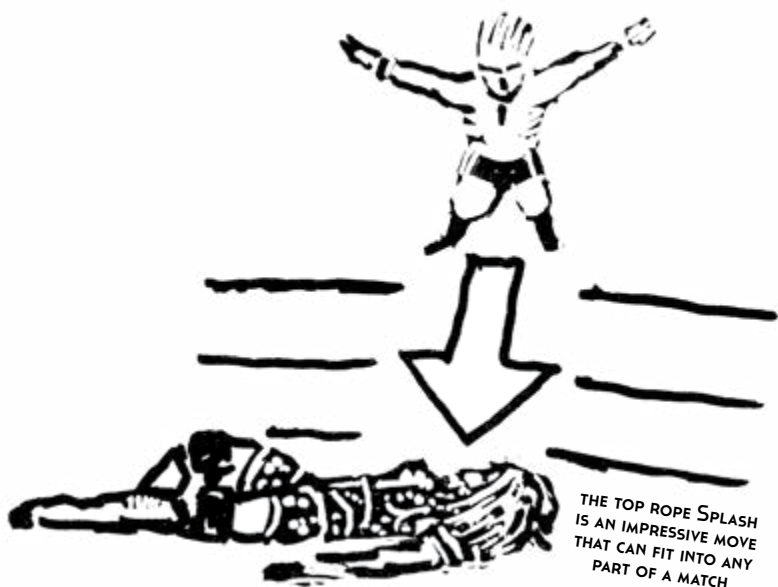
CHAPTER THREE

This section contains a number of optional systems and structures for your game. All of them use the basic rules as a foundation, so in general you should be comfortable with how *World Wide Wrestling* is played before adding these new systems. These optional rules expand the breadth of what wrestlers can do, the impact they have on the audience and the scale of the game itself. Creative picks which specific rules seem most suitable to their game; you do not have to use all of these at the same time and can add or drop them as needed.

*** THE HUNT PROTOCOL ***

Despite my advice to be familiar with the basic game before making changes, I strongly recommend instituting this optional rule for gaining Stats right at the beginning of your next Episode or Season. Ignore the Advance option "gain +1 to a stat." Instead, if a player wishes to raise one of their wrestler's stats, they need to use "take a Move from another Gimmick" to find an appropriate Move. Each Stat has multiple Moves that raise it by +1 distributed amongst the Gimmicks; this way there's some specific flavor built into the decision that can impact the wrestler's concept. This is also a good reason for players to check out the other Gimmicks and see what they have to offer!

For a list of all the Moves that give Stat bonuses, see **PAGE 122**.



THE TOP ROPE SPLASH
IS AN IMPRESSIVE MOVE
THAT CAN FIT INTO ANY
PART OF A MATCH

MYTHIC MOMENTS

Professional wrestling is larger than life. The best moments enter the collective memory of the audience; months or years later, fans who weren't even there still share stories of the big bumps or most exciting storylines. Some even start thinking that they saw it themselves. These moments become part of the collective fabric of the wrestling universe, creating the basis for the self-mythologizing so central to the art of pro wrestling. These are Mythic Moments.

In *World Wide Wrestling*, your wrestlers can create their own Mythic Moments. These are advanced results for the basic Moves, enabling players to use large amounts of Momentum to make a certain moment for their wrestler not just great, but mythic. It's up to Creative when Mythic Moments become available, but generally not before the Promotion has gained Audience (and the wrestlers have all reset to their starting Audience) at least once. By this point, players usually have enough experience with the system to reliably build pools of Momentum that, absent poor die rolls, are more than they need to achieve their goals in a given Episode. Mythic Moments provides a new application for that Momentum, and a new set of goals to strive for.

Once Creative declares that Mythic Moments are available, apply the following rules.

MAKING A MYTHIC MOMENT: When a player hits a “natural” 12+ (2d6+Stat equals 12+ *before* spending Momentum) on a basic Move, they can choose to spend all of their remaining Momentum to make it a Mythic Moment. If they have no Momentum, the Mythic Moment cannot be made. If they have a negative Stat and roll 12 on 2d6 *before* subtracting the Stat they still can make a Mythic Moment (it's thus more likely for wrestlers with positive stats, but not impossible for anyone). Players cannot make Mythic Moments by spending Momentum to bring their result to a 12 if they didn't hit it naturally as defined above.

TRACKING MYTHIC MOMENTS: Once a player has a Mythic Moment, check off that Basic Move (use a notecard to keep track, or download the Mythic Moments reference sheet at ndpdesign.com/wwwrpg). Once a Basic Move is checked off, it cannot provide another Mythic Moment until enough of them have been made that the Audience resets (described below)—that is, each Mythic Moment can only be made **once** until the crowd for the Promotion grows.

When you check off as many Basic Moves as you have players in the current Episode, Audience resets for your Promotion (even if the

current total Audience score for the wrestlers is not high enough to trigger a standard reset). The accumulation of amazing moments has spread your fame far and wide, bringing new fans in droves!

Erase the checks once you have an Audience reset caused by the Mythic Moments. You also reset Audience based on the cumulative Audience total of the wrestlers, but when this happens you do not erase the checks.

EFFECTS OF MYTHIC MOMENTS: When you have a Mythic Moment, use the Move results below instead of the standard result for that Move.

BREAK KAYFABE: Your action becomes the symbol of *when things changed*. Pick 1:

- ★ You have complete creative control over your wrestler's storyline and booking until the next Audience reset. Your "Audience starts and resets to" number permanently goes up by 1 (Max 3).
- ★ You expose backstage politics. This must be acknowledged on screen in some way, and you tell Creative what you want to change in the promotion as a result of your revelation. Creative must honor this demand over the rest of the Episodes booking. Gain +1 Audience.

CUT A PROMO: Your promo becomes part of professional wrestling lore. Pick 1:

- ★ Simply referencing this promo counts for the **CHEAP HEAT MOVE**, for everyone on the roster, forever.
- ★ Your promo goes viral; everybody knows it even if they don't know you. Your "Audience starts and resets to" number permanently goes up by 1 (Max 3).
- ★ This takes you to the next level. Take an Advanced Role immediately (without spending an Advance or taking an Episode off).

FEAT OF STRENGTH: You've exceeded human capacity, and with style. Pick 1:

- ★ The fans go bananas, and your feat becomes imitated world-wide. Gain +1 Audience, and your "Audience starts and resets to" number permanently goes up by 1 (Max 3).
- ★ You become immortalized in the highlight reels of the company. Describe exactly how that looks. Gain +1 Momentum when you make your first appearance in every Episode from now on.

RUN-IN: You've perfectly captured the turning point in the storyline. Book the result of your run-in on the fly (this overrides Creative's booking). Both you and your target gain +1 Heat with each other and you pick 1:

- ★ It's turned to a blood feud. You can only be booked against each other until this thing is resolved.
- ★ You've gained the upper hand. You can pick any stipulations you want for your opponents matches until the next Audience reset (whether you're booked in them or not).
- ★ This is going to get settled right now. Creative books a match with your opponent as the new main event of the Episode. You and your opponent both gain +1 Audience.

WORK THE AUDIENCE: They'll never forget being in *this* crowd. Pick 1:

- ★ You turn them against your opponent - they can no longer Work the Audience or get Cheap Heat for the rest of this Episode.
- ★ You whip them into a real frenzy. Gain +1 Audience as they storm the ring!

WRESTLING: This maneuver goes into your highlight reel. Keep control of the match, and pick 1:

- ★ You are now booked to win the match.
- ★ You steal the show. Gain +1 Audience.
- ★ You do your job. Your opponent gains +1 Audience.
- ★ You upstage someone. Say who comes out to interfere with the match, and you both gain +1 Heat with each other.



THE RAZOR'S EDGE IS BEST
PERFORMED BY THE BIGGEST
AND STRONGEST

STROKE

World Wide Wrestling deliberately leaves what happens off-camera in the hands of the players to resolve through improvisational roleplay. The mechanics of the game focus on the interplay between the wrestlers in front of The Imaginary Viewing Audience, leaving “real-world” interactions to the players’ ability to make in-character decisions regarding how their wrestlers act. When it’s difficult to decide, or if you want to have a more structured way to handle backstage interactions, you can use the optional rule of Stroke.

Stroke is a wrestling jargon term that simply means “pull” or “influence,” with the connotation that someone with a lot of stroke makes things happen, while someone with no stroke does what they’re told. Fictionally, your wrestler may have stroke with a specific manager or owner but for the use of the mechanic your wrestler is considered to have stroke with Creative in a general sense.

This may seem a little confusing to wrestling fans who think of heat as arising out of the use or overuse of stroke backstage. In *World Wide Wrestling* the +Heat Stat is an audience-facing metric – it represents how well the wrestlers relationship on-camera and in the ring pulls the audience into their storylines. Thus, when conflicts make that working relationship more difficult, it lowers the +Heat Stat, even though the performers may be “getting heat” with each other in the colloquial sense. It may help to think of informal, lower-case-h heat vs. mechanical, capital-H Heat when using the Stroke rules.

HAVING & SPENDING STROKE: Your wrestler always has Stroke equal to their current Audience. Whenever you have a backstage disagreement or altercation, you can say that you want to use your Stroke to turn the situation to your favor. Creative tells you how much you’ll need, based on this scale:

- ★ 1 Stroke—the situation is relatively minor or just for show.
- ★ 2 Stroke—the situation is significant.
- ★ 3 Stroke—the situation is important and what you want would disrupt some serious plans.
- ★ 4 Stroke—the situation is critical or dire.
- ★ +1 Stroke—there’s physical injury or other harm on the line (like if wrestlers get into a shoot fight or abuse substances as part of the situation).

If you get into a fight in the locker room with another wrestler and you want to win the fight decisively, Creative might tell you that you need 2 stroke to beat up a Jobber (relatively minor, +1 for physical fighting), but 4 to prove to the whole locker room that you can beat the Monster in a shoot fight (important situation, +1 for physicality).

If you have enough Stroke, you can use it to get what you want out of most situations. Examples include but aren't limited to:

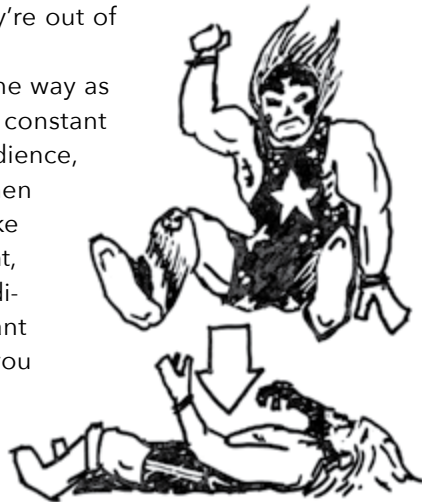
- * A booking change.
- * A storyline change.
- * Adding someone in or taking someone out of a match.
- * Adding or removing a stipulation to or from a match.
- * Establishing a new relationship.
- * Giving or receiving an injury.

The use of Stroke never directly adds or subtracts Momentum, Heat or Audience (though it can set you up to use a Move that does).

BOOSTING STROKE: If you don't have enough Stroke, you can spend Momentum on a 2-for-1 basis to give yourself more Stroke for that segment (e.g. if you need 3 and you only have 1, you can spend 4 Momentum to give yourself 2 more Stroke for the segment).

If another wrestler in the segment doesn't want what you want, whoever has more Stroke gets their way. Everyone can spend Momentum 2-for-1 for more Stroke, unless or until they're out of Momentum.

Stroke is not spent in the same way as Momentum. You always have a constant level of Stroke equal to your Audience, and simply look at that rating when you use it. If you want to use Stroke again in a later off-camera segment, you can. This includes if your Audience has gone up—you may want to circle back to get something you weren't able to secure the first time, for instance.



THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE LEG DROP
DEPENDS ON THE WRESTLER DELIVERING IT

CONSEQUENCES OF USING STROKE: Using your Stroke has a drawback: it engenders jealousy amongst those who don't have your pull, making them dislike you and making it harder to work with them. **Every time you use Stroke, you lose 1 Heat with anyone who's negatively affected by your actions.** This is up to them, not you.

At the conclusion of a segment in which Stroke was used, Creative asks the table who feels like they got buried, turned on or otherwise cold-shouldered. The wrestler who used Stroke loses 1 Heat with everyone who answers yes. Creative answers for NPWs. If multiple wrestlers used Stroke against each other, they lose 1 Heat with each other, in addition to anyone else who felt slighted.

Creative should absolutely use the fallout from Stroke to trigger immediate Hard Moves or create the context for later Hard Moves.

LONG-TERM ADVANCEMENT

World Wide Wrestling is designed for the Seasonal format, with each Season of play containing 5-10 individual Episodes. Playing through additional Seasons sees players bring in new wrestlers or take over NPWs and restart on the character level, even as the Promotion maintains a set of long-term storylines. However, it is possible that players want to play their wrestlers over the long-term without switching characters. It may also be that your group is simply more accustomed to long campaigns and you feel that Advances come too quickly for your preferred sense of character growth. Here are two strategies to slow down advancement that don't require changes to any other part of the game: high-cost advancement, and storyline-based advancement.

HIGH COST ADVANCEMENT

This strategy slows down advancement by requiring more individual Advances to buy Advance effects. Under the standard rules, each Advance effect (like taking a new Move from another Gimmick) costs 1 Advance. Under High Cost Advancement, each effect requires Advances to buy equal to the order in which they are taken.

- ★ Take First Effect = 1 Advance.
- ★ Take Second Effect = 2 Advances.
- ★ Take Third Effect = 3 Advances.
- ★ ...and so on.

You still have to wait until after you buy your third effect to buy any of the “advanced” effects – that is, after you spend 9 Advances, you can start buying effects off of the “and after you buy 3 of these” list. If you spend an Advance to retire this wrestler or create a new one to play, the Advance count resets for your new wrestler. If you change Gimmicks to continue playing this same wrestler, however, it does not.

Under high-cost advancement you will see the first couple of Advances within the early part of the Season, and then they’ll get rarer and rarer as the threshold to buy them grows. Using this system also creates the opportunity for Custom Moves built around discounting certain Advance expenditures.

STORYLINE-BASED ADVANCEMENT

This strategy links advancement directly to ongoing storylines, instead of the mechanical Advance cycle. While wrestlers still earn Advances in play, they have fewer opportunities to spend them. Make the following modifications to the standard Advance rules:

- ★ Advances are gained as normal, but are banked instead of spent at will.
- ★ A player only spends Advances when a storyline or feud is ended, resolved or otherwise feels “done” to Creative’s satisfaction (you gain an Advance for that resolution, as usual).
- ★ When a storyline wraps up you spend your banked Advances at the start of the *next* Episode.
- ★ After you spend Advances, all remaining Advances turn into your starting Momentum for the Episode. Ignore your usual starting Momentum from your Audience score.

Storyline-based advancement is more unpredictable and context-dependent, but it puts the spotlight on ending feuds and creating discrete endings and beginnings between storylines. It is possible for wrestlers to end up with different rates of advancement in this system, which may require Creative to manage screen time by giving wrestlers who aren’t advancing quickly more, smaller feuds, and those who manage to break out early longer-term, more complicated feuds. In general, however, the wrestlers will see fewer Advances actually spent over the same amount of time of play as the standard Advance system.

PROMOTIONS

CHAPTER FOUR

Your Promotion can be as much a character as any wrestler. This is expressed through choice of NPWs, match stipulations, audience descriptions, venues chosen and the tone of the interaction of the wrestlers with these elements. *World Wide Wrestling* leaves these choices in the hands of each group. Some choose to decide on their Promotions look and feel ahead of time (as shown in the example Promotions given in *World Wide Wrestling* and this supplement), while others start with a sketchy outline and allow the nature of their company to emerge over time. Either way, the Promotion has the potential to fill an ever more meaningful role, gaining new attributes and growing over time as the wrestlers do. The optional rules here are a framework for tracking the growth of your Promotion, along with some options for different audience types and guidelines for running multi-Promotion storylines.

TAGS & TROUBLES

Tags and troubles specify the attributes that make your Promotion unique. Tags are simple descriptors which describe what makes your Promotion compelling to its fans. Troubles reflect logistical challenges to its continued existence. When you start a new game of *World Wide Wrestling*, Creative picks 2 tags that give your Promotion its special character, and 2 troubles which give management something to worry about. You can pick these before play starts or have a conversation as a group about what kind of Promotion it is. If you want to pick tags and troubles that seem contradictory, decide how they co-exist (e.g. you could pick both “regional reach” and “international reach” because the promotion only tours regionally but has an international broadcast deal)—they don’t cancel each other out.

In addition to tracking the general state of the company, you should use tags and troubles to make principled decisions about storylines, and as the context in which to make Hard Moves and bring pressure to bear on wrestlers who cross management.

Here's a list of example tags and troubles for you to use, but you should come up with new ones that fit your specific game as well.

TAGS

- * Devoted Following
- * Mainstream Appeal
- * Regional Reach
- * National Reach
- * International Reach
- * Home Arena
- * Touring Shows
- * Broadcast Deal
- * Cable Deal
- * High-Concept
- * Theatrical
- * Trustworthy Management
- * Strongly Kayfabe
- * Inclusive
- * Traditional
- * Motivated Roster
- * Large War Chest
- * Elite Production Staff
- * Kid-Friendly/PG
- * Well-Connected
- * Social Media Expertise
- * Unbroken Title Lineage

TROUBLES

- * Niche Fanbase
- * In Debt
- * Hostile Silent Partner
- * Disgruntled Talent
- * Green As Grass Roster
- * Overreaching
- * Poor Maintenance
- * No Merch
- * Strong Competition
- * Unlicensed
- * Tax Write-off For Unrelated Venture
- * Bad Sponsorship Deal
- * Blacklisted
- * Outlaw Federation
- * Umbrella Federation For Unrelated Companies
- * Fractured Creative Committee
- * Bloated Roster
- * Behind the Times
- * Pointlessly Bureaucratic
- * Inmates Running the Asylum
- * Convoluted Lore
- * Theatrical...Pretensions

See the Season Two Promotions (starting on **PAGE 83**) to see five different sets of starting tags and troubles in context. Some are from these lists and some were picked to suit the peculiarities of the Promotion.

PROMOTION ADVANCEMENT

At the start of each Episode, Creative checks to see if the Promotion gains new viewers based on the Audience total of the wrestlers (see sidebar). If it has, the wrestlers reset to their starting Audience scores, representing how they need to win over new viewers.

When Audience resets, pick one option reflecting what this means for the Promotion:

- ★ *Add a tag* reflecting the nature of the new Audience.
- ★ *Remove a tag* reflecting a pivot away from an old strategy.
- ★ *Remove a trouble*, reflecting how having new fans helps.
- ★ *Add a trouble* reflecting an unintended consequence of the new Audience. If the Promotion currently has no troubles, you *must* add a trouble. Nothing is perfect.

When using tags and troubles, you also use this version of the **OVER MOVE** for the wrestler in the Top Spot:

OVER: If you have +4 Audience at the top of the show, gain +2 Momentum and **ROLL +LOOK**.

- ★ On a 10+ choose whether you remove or replace a Promotion trouble, add or replace a Promotion tag, *or* pick 2 from the 7-9 list.
- ★ On a 7-9 choose whether you add or replace a Promotion tag *or* pick 1:
 - o demand, and be granted, any match you want
 - o call out anyone on the roster to explain themselves, and gain +1 Heat with them
 - o gain +1 Momentum
- ★ On a Botch, choose whether Creative books you with your lowest-Heat opponent (or debuts and books you with a new NPW with Heat 0), *or* whether the Promotion gains a new trouble.
- ★ Any change in tags or troubles must reflect what you, personally, have done (or failed to do) for the Promotion recently.

GAINING NEW AUDIENCE

The Promotion grows if the total Audience among all wrestlers at the start of an Episode is equal to or greater than (number of players x3). See **PAGES 76-77** of *World Wide Wrestling* for all the details.

In addition, if you are using Mythic Moments, the Promotion grows once you've checked off a number of Basic Moves equal to the number of players. See **PAGE 43** for all the details.

TAGS AND TROUBLES IN PLAY

Creative uses tags and troubles as aids to play. They align with your Principles, giving you an additional framework for making decisions during the game. They also inform your Moves, especially Hard Moves. Use the tags and troubles to add tension to storylines and bring in new NPWs. Change tags and remove troubles to demonstrate how the roster is working well together; remove tags and add troubles to reflect how conflict between the wrestlers is driving away viewers or shaking the trust of investors.

During the course of the game, any Botch is an opportunity to remove a tag or add a trouble, especially if they come from +Real rolls pertaining to the inner workings of the company. If you are also using the Stroke rules (**PAGE 46**), the overuse or abuse of Stroke is an opportune time to add troubles to the Promotion.

The list of tags and troubles presented previously are examples. You and your players should define new ones as they come up. However, don't use self-definition to get around the essential nature of tags (that they distinguish you from other wrestling companies in generally positive ways) and troubles (that they are things that really trouble the company and could lead to its downfall). From the perspective of the Promotion, tags are always desirable things, while troubles are always things to avoid or get rid of.

After a tag or trouble is added or removed is a good time to use an Audience Move (**PAGE 54**) for the next Episode. Tags and troubles will be picked up on by the fans of your Promotion. Good things may make them excited to see what's next, bringing out your hardest-core fans (Indie Crowd) or creating an air of celebration (Starstruck Crowd); bad things or changes to the core of your promotion can make the crowd suspicious (Hostile Crowd), drain the enthusiasm from ticker holders (Bored Crowd) or maybe put you in front of a new audience entirely (Old-School Crowd).

AUDIENCE MOVES

The audience for a wrestling show has an enormous effect on the experience. A sparsely attended arena show has less energy than a packed gymnasium, a small group of dedicated hecklers can turn a crowd against a performer and a stadium full of devoted fans can make even the most by-the-numbers match seem magic. *World Wide Wrestling* abstracts the audience experience out to The Imaginary Viewing Audience, enabling Creative and the group to project the nature of the audience based on what's going on in the ring. However, if you want to give the audience a more concrete role in the interplay between players and the crowd, use these Audience Moves to reflect their impact on the show.

You announce which Audience Move is in effect for the Episode, if any. Each Audience Move includes some suggested benchmarks for when to use it. You can also impose an Audience Move mid-Episode as a Hard Move to reflect a sudden shift in the tenor of the crowd.

Audience Moves are a subset of Creative's Moves. You always announce when an Audience Move is in effect (whether from the top of the Episode or being applied as the result of a segment in play). When an Audience Move is in effect, apply the rules listed. Some of the rules apply to or replace specific Basic Moves, some are triggered by certain actions and some replace parts of standard rules interactions. There may be a lot to keep track of during an Episode with an Audience Move in effect, especially if you also include a new Match Stipulation. Just remember that part of your job is to make judgment calls about how the various effects in play interact.



A BLATANT CHOKEHOLD! SOMETIMES HURTING
YOUR OPPONENT IS WORTH LOSING THE MATCH

HOSTILE CROWD

This audience is generally unhappy with what's been going on in your company. They're looking for things to boo and don't have much goodwill to spread around. Some cities just have legendarily hostile crowds, or they may be restless due to a particular event. Either way, you'll really need to work to win these folks over.

A Hostile Crowd is appropriate for an Episode that takes place after some kind of big problem, such as a high-profile firing or return to a town where the Promotion bombed. Or, if there's been a run of success and general good luck and good rolls, use a Hostile Crowd to remind the wrestlers that they still have to work at success.

When working in front of a Hostile Crowd:

- ★ Whenever you would gain an Audience, you must spend 2 Momentum; if you don't have it to spend, you don't gain the Audience. The crowd is just hard to impress.
- ★ When you **WORK THE AUDIENCE**, replace the standard result list with this one:
 - on a 10+ you get them on your side, gain +2 Momentum OR they stop being Hostile for the duration of this segment
 - on a 7-9 they pop; pick whether you gain +1 Momentum OR they see right through you and cheer ironically for your opponent—someone else in the segment or match gains +1 Momentum (you choose who)
 - on a Botch they're not feeling it; you can't Work the Audience again this Episode. Choose whether you lose all your Momentum or -1 Audience
- ★ When you Botch a Move, you lose *all* your Momentum, or lose -1 Audience, your choice. If you have no Momentum to lose, you must take the Audience loss. This crowd is out for blood!
- ★ If you would be fired at the end of this Episode, it's Creative's call whether management recognizes that it was the crowd that was the problem and not their performance. If so, you stay employed, but still start the next Episode at 0 Audience. Otherwise, even if it wasn't technically your fault, somebody's gotta take the blame.

INDIE CROWD

This crowd is made up of die-hard fans who follow not just your fed, but most of the important companies on the indie scene. They know the biographies and histories of most, if not all, of your wrestlers and probably have favorites based on what those wrestlers used to do, not what they're doing currently. This crowd is ready to cheer for wrestlers but not necessarily for the booking; they may even be actively hostile to the creative decisions being made backstage. They're generally just more interested in the wrestlers than the company.

An Indie Crowd is appropriate for a big homecoming show for a rising star, or to represent an audience in a smaller town or terrible venue. You can use an Indie Crowd to slow down the promotions overall Audience progression. This is also an appropriate audience for an Episode that features Guest Stars or other one-off or drop-in wrestlers.

When working in front of an Indie Crowd:

- ★ Every wrestler who is established as having worked extensively on the indies has +2 Audience.
- ★ Every wrestler who is homegrown, and has had no career outside of this company has 0 Audience.
- ★ Everyone who fits into neither of those categories or hasn't been established either way has +1 Audience.
- ★ At the top of the next Episode, anyone who gained Audience in front of the Indie Crowd gains +1 Momentum, then everyone reverts to their original Audience stats. If the Promotion gained enough total Audience to reset at the top of this Episode, delay the reset until the next Episode.
- ★ This crowd is here to see wrestling. Whenever you hit the **WRESTLING MOVE** on a 10+, you gain +1 Momentum in addition to any other results.
- ★ When you Botch on any Move, the crowd is either bored with that moment, or they've seen it so many times before that they're just unimpressed and jaded. They start ironically chanting for someone else (Creative chooses, if it's not obvious from the context), and you lose -1 Heat with the subject of the chant. If there's nobody obvious, the audience starts chanting for themselves, and you lose -1 Audience.

OLD-SCHOOL CROWD

Kayfabe is dead, but don't tell this crowd. Maybe a little older, less plugged-in or just really good at naturally suspending disbelief, this is the kind of crowd that you hear about from the territory days. Working for this crowd is both easy, in that they respond the way you want, and hard, because some of them don't necessarily realize the difference between the wrestler and the character they're playing. Old-school crowds love babyfaces and hate (*hate*) the heels.

An Old-School Crowd is appropriate for a throwback feel, a small town off the beaten path or even as the normal audience for a territory-era Promotion. Alternately, use this Move to represent a crowd that has never actually seen wrestling before and still hasn't realized how the form works in terms of what's real and what's pre-determined.

When working in front of an Old-School Crowd:

- ★ Everyone's +Real counts as 1 lower than their usual rating (minimum -2) for the Episode.
- ★ If a babyface gains more than 1 Audience in the Episode, the crowd goes bananas. They invade the ring in an effort to touch you, they cheer so loud the cops are called, they get so exhilarated they cause damage to the building, or some other show-stopping event happens as they celebrate.
- ★ If a heel gains more than 1 Audience in the Episode, the crowd goes berserk with rage. They throw bottles, rush the ring, stab the wrestler with hatpins, or whatever else they can do to express how angry they are at the injustice they see.
- ★ If a babyface and a heel both gain Audience at the same time or as the result of the sequence, it triggers an Episode-ending riot.
- ★ When a babyface Botches a Move, they've disappointed the crowd, and they lose -1 Audience.
- ★ When a heel Botches a Move, they've confused the crowd, and they lose -1 Audience.

STARSTRUCK CROWD

This crowd is here to see the stars. Whether motivated by nostalgia for the glory days of wrestling, marketing tie-ins or simply because they're casual fans who only tune in for the big shows, this crowd pops for the wrestlers they know while having a hard time engaging with the rest. When this crowd is won over it makes for a great atmosphere; when it isn't, well, you just hope they already know your entrance music.

A Starstruck Crowd is appropriate for a show in a newer or larger venue, the first Episode after the Promotion gains Audience (and the wrestlers have all reset their Audience scores) or for a big event for a long-running Promotion.

When working in front of a Starstruck Crowd:

- ★ When someone in the Top Spot (+4 Audience) makes the **OVER MOVE** at the top of the Episode, count their result as 1 tier higher than they roll (a botch becomes a 7-9, and a 7-9 becomes a 10+). If nobody is at +4, whoever has the most Audience makes the **OVER MOVE**. This wrestler (or these wrestlers, if there's a tie) are the stars in the eyes of the Audience for this Episode.
- ★ When you want to spend Momentum to add to a roll, you can only spend as much at a time as you have Audience.
- ★ The first time a Star (as defined above) appears in front of the Audience, they get their **CHEAP HEAT** automatically.
- ★ Whenever you Botch a Move, the crowd tunes out, damaging both you and your storyline. Lose -1 Heat with your opponent, companion or whoever you're interacting with in the segment (Creative's choice if there are multiple options).

BORED CROWD

Why are these people even here? Maybe it's just habit, a big giveaway from your sponsor or the cancellation of a big star's appearance, but this crowd is just not into the show. It's easy to have a good night in front of a hot crowd, but these people? You'll really need to work at it.

Use a Bored Crowd to represent the fallout from a relevant Botch or addition of a trouble from the last Episode.

When working in front of a Bored Crowd:

- * You earn one less Momentum than you usually would from any Move that you roll dice to resolve. This means that you gain 0 Momentum when you would gain +1, gain +1 when you would gain +2, and so on. Moves that do not require dice (like **CHEAP HEAT** and the Momentum you start with from your Audience rating) operate normally.
- * If you gain +1 Audience in front of this crowd, they finally start getting into you, and you are no longer subject to the Momentum penalty.

PROMOTION DEATH

Promotions are living things all their own, going through birth, growth and, eventually, death. Use tags and troubles to keep track of the health of your Promotion. If you have **more troubles than tags**, the company's future could be in danger:

- * If you start an Episode with no tags and only troubles, *or* more than twice as many troubles as tags, it's the end of the company.

You can frame this Episode as a desperate effort to keep the lights on (and see if the roster can gain a tag), use it as the natural ending point of the Season (maybe with one more Episode to wrap up in a blaze of glory) or maybe the checks just stop coming.

Promotional death isn't hard to avoid, if you don't want to have that struggle be part of your game. It's your choice what to do with troubles and tags when the Promotion gains new viewers, so taking those opportunities to add tags or remove troubles will generally keep the company going. But if you do want the health of the company to be part of your game's story, you can make that happen. Take advantage of Hard Moves to add troubles or strip away tags as direct results of the wrestlers' actions, using your Audience reset choice to push towards troubles. This will place the onus on whoever's in the Top Spot to consider the Promotion's health over their own ambitions.

WARS & INVASIONS

When rival promotions compete over the same audience pool, that's a war. The most famous war happened on TV, but two promotions could do battle over a region, a venue, or the mindshare of hardcore fans on the internet; in your *World Wide Wrestling* game, your wars should be tailored to your table's needs. Wars are primarily fought over viewers, but can have fall-out effects on the careers of the wrestlers involved, as well as the relative strength and longevity of the companies involved. At best, a hot war will raise everyone's profile and creativity; at worse, the battle can grind down the ability of the wrestlers to deliver and burn out the audience, destroying both companies in the process.

There are two ways to run a War as part of your *World Wide Wrestling* game. The first is as a plot device. In this case, you use the War structure (below) to heighten the drama of your game, introduce new complications and add concrete stakes to game decisions. The rival promotion in this case is a purely non-player endeavor.

The second is to set up a feud with another table or ongoing game of *World Wide Wrestling*. In this case, you collaborate with your "rival" Creative to crossover the events of each table. This could be done in real time (for example, simultaneous games at a convention or LongCon event), or by conspiring during downtime for each game to generate cross-promotional events.

Playing out a War requires you to use the Promotion tags and troubles (PAGE 50).

WAR AS PLOT

To run a War as a plot element:

- ★ Create the rival Promotion as its own entity with two tags and two troubles. Pick tags and troubles that contrast with those of your Promotion.
- ★ Create a basic roster for the rival Promotion, including the top performers and any notable non-wrestlers who could impact the course of the war.
- ★ Whenever you put material On Deck between Episodes, include at least one action taken by the rival Promotion; this can be anything from a hot angle to running a show opposite your Promotion.

- ★ Whenever you add a new tag to your Promotion, remove a tag or add a trouble to the rival Promotion; whenever you add a new trouble to your Promotion, add a tag or remove a trouble from the rival Promotion. This applies to your Hard Moves and also whenever a player in the Top Spot modifies tags or troubles through a result of the **OVER MOVE**. These changes are public knowledge, and you should showcase for your players the effects of these changes.
- ★ Use your Hard Moves to showcase things like wrestlers jumping ship, rival storylines which impact your promotion or offers from the rival to try and poach key talent.

Use tags and troubles to texture the gains and losses of the rival Promotion, and use your On Deck elements to bring in specific pieces of the conflict relevant to your game. Remember, the players' wrestlers are still the stars of your game! You can use the rival promotion to present offers and choices, mirror storylines or showcase characters that got sidelined or washed out of your company. Similarly, the rivalry gives the players a wider field of potential goals for their own wrestlers, from trying to take down the competition to the fictional "retirement" state of their wrestler, settling into a guaranteed contract for "the other guys." Any choice that hooks into the notion of rivalry is fair game.

If your Promotion does well enough to strip all of the tags from the rival Promotion, you've driven them out of business! However, if they manage to gain the advantage on your Promotion by having more tags than yours, this means the audience you're fighting for is paying them more attention than you. As described previously (**PAGE 59**), if you start an Episode with no tags, or more than twice as many troubles as tags, this could be your last Episode before you're bought out by the enemy.

LIVE WARS & INVASION ANGLES

If you have the players, time and desire, multiple *World Wide Wrestling* games can run "against" each other. Here are some ways to structure this, depending on the logistical details and the comfort level of the Creatives involved:

- ★ If there are too many players for a single game, Creative can set up two games at different tables and run them semi-simultaneously, usually with the aid of someone at each table who knows the rules well enough to oversee their use when Creative is involved with the other table.

- ★ Two separate, self-contained games at tables. The two Creatives create rival Promotions as described previously, and then collude to create cross-over appearances or Invasions of one by the other during a joint Episode or series of Episodes.
- ★ Two entirely separate games playing their own individual Seasons. The Creatives create rival Promotions and then jointly plan their On Deck elements between Episodes in order to create a sense of competition between companies, perhaps culminating in a cross-over event.

To run an ongoing Invasion or War, keep track of each time one of the Promotions hits its Audience reset. In addition to the effects on that Promotion, the rival one starts the next Episode of their game with a segment showcasing what that means for them – a backstage speech or dire warning, a televised segment taking shots at the rival, a match meant to mock the big stars from the other company or anything else that acknowledges in some way that the other company is doing well and is a threat.

In addition, when one Promotion gains a tag, the other chooses whether to lose a tag or gain a trouble; this should reflect fallout from the competition and how its impact affects the audience, business or talent in the rival company.

The following rules also apply during a live War:

- ★ Add the following to the “Once you’ve picked 3 of these” Advancement options for every Gimmick: *Jump to the rival promotion*. You join their roster with your current Audience. You have Heat +1 with everyone with less or equal Audience than you and Heat +2 with everyone with more Audience than you.
- ★ If a wrestler shows up on a rival show without having taken this Advancement option, they count as having 1 less Audience than their standard score for the duration of their appearance, and start with Heat +1 with the whole roster (regardless of Role). If they happen to already have Heat with someone on the new roster, they keep that Heat.
- ★ Any inter-promotional match booking needs to be agreed upon by both Creatives. Booking can still be swerved as normal. **BREAKING KAYFABE** may be an attractive option in many inter-promotional contests.

BEING MORE CREATIVE

CHAPTER FIVE

MORE
CREATIVE

This section contains advice to Creative on making strong decisions during play to support the action, representing non-player wrestlers dramatically and facilitating wrestling matches. In addition, you'll find some alternate ways to run games with a shared Creative role.

SWERVES

The foundation of *World Wide Wrestling* play is that the players have autonomy to swerve Creative's plans. There's no black-and-white "correct" way to handle swerves; some cases are clear cut (e.g. using the **HEEL MOVE**) while others are contextual and require Creative to make a judgment call (e.g. a player making an impassioned promo calling out a NPW that you considered unimportant up to that point). Ultimately, every table finds its own comfort level for how to integrate player and Creative agendas. That said, here are some strategies for to how to handle swerves in different contexts in your game, especially when multiple swerves come at the same time.

One of your Agendas is to **Make It Look Like You Had It Planned That Way All Along**. This is why you roll with it when a player uses a Move which overrides your booking. You and the players allow yourselves to suspend disbelief in those moments - you all know that this is a change in some way, because of the rules in play. But sometimes the swerve is to what you'd already booked, but hadn't revealed yet (most often when you've booked the heel to win a match, and they use the **HEEL MOVE** to book themselves to win before you've made the reveal). Now *you* know what the original plan was, but you should still focus on the players' actions and use their narration to guide the resolution of the match. It's important to always acknowledge the players agency in using their Moves to swerve the booking, even when it's not really a swerve.

Of course, when they override your booking and it really changes what you had in mind, you have to roll with that as well. Let their actions and intent guide your response - changing match outcomes is a moment to **Celebrate the Wrestler**. Do that, *then* figure out how to **Challenge** them again.

What happens when multiple swerves happen in a row, especially at the climax of a match? Remember that the medium of play is the

conversation between all the players, including you. This conversation triggers the Moves. There will be an order in which the Moves are made, based on which player says what and when. Swerves can override earlier swerves, but they don't *negate* them. Every Move result enters the fictional wrestling universe, even if it only exists for a moment before it is itself changed.

*** CONSIDERING MULTIPLE SWERVES ***

For example, say a heel Golden Boy is in a match with a babyface Anti-Hero. You haven't revealed the booking of the match yet. As the action heats up, the Golden Boy narrates how they untie a turnbuckle pad to keep the ref distracted so they can hit their opponent with a chair behind the ref's back – the player spends 2 Momentum to make the **HEEL MOVE** and books themselves to win the match. The Anti-Hero player nods along, and then says "wait, before you hit me with the chair, I give you a low blow and grab the chair myself", making the **RULES, WHAT RULES?** Move from their Gimmick. The Golden Boy is still booked to win in this moment (because of their **HEEL MOVE**). The Anti-Hero player rolls the dice.

- ★ Say they get a 10+. The Anti-Hero gets away with it and books the finish on the fly; the player narrates how they steal the chair, hit the Golden Boy with it before the ref turns around, and then toss it away and fall into the pin to win the match. This still incorporates and builds on the Golden Boy's narration, but since the Anti-Hero rolled well, they get to change the booking result.
- ★ Say they get a 7-9 and pick the "they get away with it" result. This doesn't involve booking the match, so they get away with the low blow and even the chair shot, but the Golden Boy is still booked to win. The players thus need to narrate how the Golden Boy wins the match despite the rules-breaking maneuvers. Perhaps the Golden Boy takes the hit while the ref is distracted, but rolls out of the ring and uses the 10 count to recover themselves before suckering the Anti-Hero into a pinning predicament. Both Moves are honored, but there's some negotiation to do at the player level to make the fiction in the moment fit the Move result.
- ★ Say they get a 7-9 and pick the "they don't get away with it, and gain +1 Heat" result, which seems a little more natural in this particular situation. The ref sees the babyface with the chair and pulls it out of their hands, distracting them so the Golden Boy can get a quick rollup pin. This preserves both swerves.
- ★ Say they Botch, so they "get DQed and lose the match". This doesn't change the booking (they're already booked to lose), but the DQ changes the specific narration in this case (the ref turns around in time to see the Anti-Hero holding the chair and immediately calls for the disqualification). This doesn't swerve the result, but it does change the context for narrating it.

There is one caveat to this process: the **INTERRUPT MOVE**. Since this is specifically meant to take narrative control it's the most common moment when players keep another Move from being made. This means that

INTERRUPTS should be declared *before* the player being interfered with rolls their dice or decides on their results from a Move. There may be a chaotic moment where the players all declare what they're doing at about the same time; when that happens, it falls to Creative to hash out how to best apply the mechanics. Your job is to parse everyone's *intention* and make a judgment call about the order in which to apply the Moves. Your goal is to preserve everyone's ability to impact the game with their available resources (Moves and Momentum), while respecting the reality that sometimes someone is just in a better fictional or mechanical position to get what they want.

*** CONSIDERING AN INTERRUPTION ***

Continuing the example, say the Golden Boy (who's in control of the match) narrates how they go to untie the turnbuckle pad, even saying, "I'm going for the **HEEL MOVE** here...". The Anti-Hero player replies that they want to **INTERRUPT**, paying their 1 Momentum to do so. This doesn't prevent the Golden Boy from using the **HEEL MOVE**, but the player does need to pause and see what the Anti-Hero is doing in order to respect that player's use of the **INTERRUPT MOVE**. The Anti-Hero then makes their **RULES, WHAT RULES?** roll and decided on the result. The Golden Boy can then decide whether they want to follow through on the **HEEL MOVE** or let the moment pass and follow the Anti-Hero's lead, now that they have narration. Since the order switched, the **HEEL MOVE** now builds on the Anti-Hero's Move, instead of the other way around. One specific reason you wait is that the Anti-Hero could Botch the roll, which would give the Golden Boy the win without having to spend their Momentum on the **HEEL MOVE** at all!

If the Golden Boy pays their 2 Momentum, declares the **HEEL MOVE**, describes what happens, and play moves on from there, then the moment has passed. The Anti-Hero can't retroactively **INTERRUPT** just because they don't like the details of what the Golden Boy does after stealing the win, for example.

What happens if multiple players want to **INTERRUPT** each other in sequence? The intent of the **INTERRUPT MOVE** is to give a player who does not have control the ability to *do a thing* when they otherwise would have to be given an opening. In general, once somebody **INTERRUPTS**, they have the chance to do their Move before they can get cut off themselves. As a baseline, players can't use an **INTERRUPT** to cancel out another player's **INTERRUPT MOVE** – they have to give the player a chance to make their Move or do their follow-up narration before **INTERRUPTING** them in turn. That said,

THE HALF-NELSON LEAVES BOTH WRESTLERS STANDING WITH VISIBLE FACES, MAKING IT A VALUABLE DRAMATIC HOLD



THE HALF-NELSON LEAVES BOTH WRESTLERS STANDING WITH VISIBLE FACES, MAKING IT A VALUABLE DRAMATIC HOLD

the choice of what INTERRUPTS what and when it's ultimately a judgment call for Creative, based on the tone and direction of the match.

*** CONSIDERING MULTIPLE INTERRUPTIONS ***

Revisiting the example on the last page, when the Anti-Hero makes their INTERRUPT MOVE, they then narrate their RULES, WHAT RULES? MOVE and pick their result before the Golden Boy can themselves INTERRUPT. If the babyface rolls a 10+ and books themselves to win the match, the opportunity now goes back to the Golden Boy to INTERRUPT, take control of the match, and then make their HEEL MOVE to re-book themselves to win. Again, the second INTERRUPT doesn't cancel out the first one, it builds upon it.

In addition to very clear swerves made by the results of Moves that override Creative's booking, you should take into account softer swerves created by the agendas of the players as they push for what they want their wrestlers to achieve. Making a RUN-IN is a common way for players to demonstrate that they want to be involved with a feud that you hadn't planned for, and you should capitalize on the fact that they're interested in complicating that ongoing storyline. Keep an eye out for other non-Move-based opportunities, as well. If someone takes the mic and cuts a promo on a NPW that you hadn't considered important, take the opportunity to pencil them into a spotlight match later; if a player narrates how they keep standing up to bullies, it could be time to make a clear antagonist for their wrestler in the form of an over-the-top heel NPW who picks on all of the sympathetic NPWs that the players have demonstrated affection for.

Swerves are really the intersection of all three of your Agendas. In **Making It Look Like You Had It Planned That Way All Along**, you have to pay attention to what the players want for their wrestlers; those desires are what make it possible for you to best **Challenge, and Celebrate, The Wrestlers**; and making the judgment calls among the conflicting interests going into the swerve is what pulls together the ongoing narrative that **Entertains The Imaginary Viewing Audience**.

NON-PLAYER WRESTLERS

World Wide Wrestling does not assign Stats or Moves to NPWs because they're not the stars of the show. However, this doesn't mean that they are simple cardboard cutouts without ability to affect storylines or the careers of the players' wrestlers. Rather, NPWs are the costume in which Creative drapes their desires for the direction of a segment, Episode

or entire Season. NPWs don't have specific rules attached to them, not because they can't do anything, but because they *can do anything*.

NPWs are the tools you have to make Creative Moves, following your Principles and in service to your Agendas. They are what you use to present challenges and give or take away opportunities. When you place things On Deck, assign a NPW to be the vessel of that item (whether the bearer of bad news, the challenger who calls someone on their boasting or the new hot thing that overshadows them on the card). When there are consequences to the wrestlers actions, a NPW should be the agent of those consequences.

NPWs have as much import and impact as you give them fictionally, making allowances for how players actions change what you have in mind. If you want a monster heel to be the top of the card, you need to portray them as a true threat – cut to the aftermath of a match that they dominated, frame an off-camera segment where another NPW refuses to wrestle them, have your authority figure warn the players “don't hurt Reaper, we need him to stay healthy.” Book the badasses to win matches over the players wrestlers. Have NPWs run in to interfere on the behalf of their friends.

You represent the strengths and weaknesses of your NPWs as The Imaginary Viewing Audience sees them. Remember the art of the sell; how others *react* to a NPW establishes their character as much as how you describe them. Does the audience jump to their feet as soon as their entrance music hits? Does the ref give them a wide berth when they enter the ring? Does the booker always ask them what they think before signing off on their matches? Show how important they are in the company through your narration of how others react to them. Your players will take those cues and either reinforce them or challenge them, which in turn gives you the foundation for creating the storylines you want those NPWs to be a part of.

You should enjoy playing your NPWs! You don't need to stat them up because you can make them exactly what you want to see on screen. You can have favorites, inspired by your favorite real wrestlers. You can push them to the moon or portray them as scrappy underdogs. You can play a real bastard. The players are the stars and the rules of the game ensure that they will make their mark, no matter how crowd-pleasing your NPWs are. But the NPWs still need to be able to put butts in seats. If you have fun with your NPWs, the other players will too!

MATCH PSYCHOLOGY

Wrestling matches are not simply tests of skill or competitions to pop the audience. The scripted nature of wrestling means that the art of in-ring storytelling always has new territory to explore. *World Wide Wrestling* covers how to think about booking match results and establishing a narrative framework for players; this section goes deeper into what is called “match psychology,” the logic that structures *why* wrestlers do what they do at different times. This is not a set of rules for what players should say during their matches; rather, it's an exploration of the assumptions of the form that you can use to demonstrate how a match *should* play out, especially for new players who may not have watched a lot of wrestling.

This section is derived simply from watching a lot of wrestling, thinking about it critically and listening to how wrestlers talk about what they do in public forums. There is a broad spectrum of how the term “psychology” is interpreted and employed; here I'm aiming to break down what I see as the basics and how they relate to playing the game. This is meant to be inspirational, not restrictive!

THE BASICS

Every match tells a story. The superstructure of this story is set by the constraints of the competition itself – is there a reward beyond simple victory, like a championship or mask? Is the win condition more favorable to one wrestler than the other, like how street fights favor brawlers over technical wrestlers? Are there others involved, like a guest referee with an ongoing feud with one of the competitors? These up-front constraints telegraph the *goal* of the match to the audience, creating an expectation of when and how the match will end. Just as you have to know that a three-count wins the match for a near-fall to be exciting, you have to know that the guest referee has a grudge against one of the wrestlers for their hesitation to count a pin to create tension.

Within the basic conflict of good vs evil and guided by the stakes of the match of the question, the wrestlers engage in patterns of behavior in order to engage the audience's emotions. In one oft-repeated metaphor, a wrestling match is a story written sentence by sentence. Just like words on a page, they need punctuation, spaces and section breaks in order to create rhythm and meaning.

The physical actions the wrestlers use to begin, punctuate and end the story communicate the psychology. Wrestling moves signify emotion and indicate character in addition to demonstrating athleticism. First, there are broad categories of moves that “belong” to each

role, babyface and heel. Babyfaces speed things up, use their bodies as weapons and move in such a way as to get the audience excited. Heels slow things down, bring the action down to the mat and use their limbs as weapons. The babyface builds momentum to bring the crowd in, then the heel cuts to bring the crowd down. This gives the match a pattern, a beat for the crowd to follow.

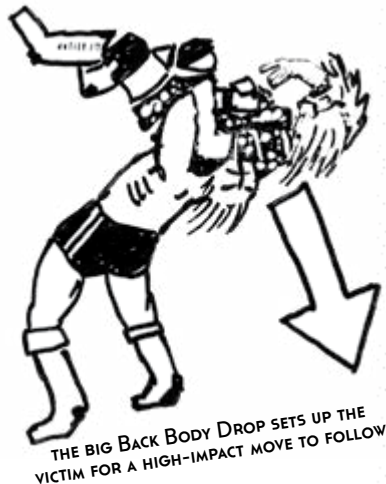
The basic goal of (almost) every match is to get the audience cheering the babyface and booing the heel. Moving slowly and deliberately, using “boring” strikes and headlocks and interfering with the babyface right before they get to their big move are all ways for the heel to antagonize the crowd. The babyface comeback is an important turning point in the match, where the audience finally gets to cheer their hero on. The comeback only matters if there's something to come back *from*. This is often why the heel controls the beginning of a match, grounding their opponent and throwing them around with abandon. This gives the audience time to get on the hero's side as they build up to their comeback.

This process can repeat a number of times within the match, depending on how high-profile it is and how much other story there is to tell. Every time the babyface gets cut off, grounded or interfered with, the audience gets more and more on their side; every time the heel takes a pounding, the audience has more to cheer for.

THE STRATEGY

In the fictional universe of the match, each wrestler wants to win, and has some kind of plan to do so by leveraging what they're good at and capitalizing on their opponents weaknesses and flaws (both physically and character-wise).

One common strategic story is *working a limb*, targeting a knee or an arm over and over, usually because it's key to that wrestler's finishing move. This creates a race against time – can the challenger weaken their opponent's key weapon enough so that it can't be used to gain the victory? Or will the wrestler switch their moves up, riskily abandoning their dependable weapon in order to get the victory? The nuances of this story are



highly context and character dependent. Imagine this (non-exhaustive) array of possibilities:

- ★ The spunky babyface works the arm the top heel uses for their elbow drop finisher. This is a story of *hope*: if they can just weaken that arm enough maybe they can squeak out a win.
- ★ The cowardly heel works the arm the local hero uses for their elbow drop finisher. This is a story of fear-based *cunning*, abandoning every other opportunity to try for a surprise win.
- ★ The arrogant heel works the arm their babyface challenger uses for their elbow drop finisher. This is a story of smarmy *confidence*, taking away the only realistic hope the challenger has.
- ★ The underdog babyface works the arm their ruthless heel opponent uses for their elbow drop finisher. This is a story of *desperation*: they *have* to disable that weapon or else they're sure to lose.

A wrestler's strategy doesn't have to be about working a limb. It could be keeping their opponent on the ground, keeping them outside of the ring, distracting them, getting in their head with outlandish mind games or anything else that fits the character.

The story is not always one of two equally matched opponents. Sometimes, a hero will simply demonstrate their dominance over a craven villain. The cowardly heel begs off from the pounding they know they will receive, only to try for a dirty trick when the babyface turns their back. Or, a dominant heel will crush a peppy but outclassed babyface, *never* allowing them a comeback, laughing at the boos and demonstrating poor sportsmanship even as they physically dominate.

TELLING THE STORY

The wrestler's job is to combine all of these elements into a rhythm. The match has ups and downs, exciting back-and-forths and slow rest holds in the middle of the ring for a breather. It's all of this together – the superstructure, the character roles, the efforts to get the audience cheering and booing, the relationship between the wrestlers or their positions on the card, the strategy each seeks to execute in the ring, and the rhythm they establish with their performances – which creates the story of a match.

Different styles of wrestling, and even different flavors within one style, have their own psychology. Hardcore or garbage matches are about bringing in more and more extreme weapons while upping the

violence until one wrestler physically or mentally can't take it anymore. *Lucha Libre* psychology tends to center on the use of well-understood sequences of choreographed moves and counters to build the energy and give the audience the assurance that these *luchadores* know what they're doing. Strong Style revolves around the fighting spirit of the competitors and the burst of adrenaline that allows them to power through what should leave them lying on the mat. Technical matches sacrifice broad strokes storytelling in order to focus on the physical control and knowledge of the body each wrestler possesses.

Any sufficiently differentiated style of match has its own nuances and narrative priorities. And, of course, all of these basic structures are ripe for subversion, setting up a "typical" match only to wink at the audience as it changes or inverts a standard trope. Every individual match lies on the spectrum between expected and innovative; it's usually the quality of the story told and not how original or unexpected the story itself is that makes it stand out.

PSYCHOLOGY IN THE GAME

The nature of how narrative control passes among players during a wrestling match in *World Wide Wrestling* creates space for the players to create their own match psychology on the fly. When you have control of the match you get to fully express your wrestler's strategy and character, but the use of the **INTERRUPT MOVE** and the potential of handing narration over on Botches and 7-9 results on the **WRESTLING MOVE** create natural turning points where the action changes. In the name of providing a flexible framework, however, the wrestling rules don't *enforce* a certain kind of match psychology, and that's where the game asks the more experienced wrestling fans to fill in the gaps. These players often intuitively apply match psychology as they narrate their wrestlers in the ring.

But what about players who don't watch a lot of real-world wrestling? As Creative, you can use some of this language to help players who aren't as immersed get into the wrestling headspace. First, model the basics for players when they seem to be floundering with what to do next. "Well, you're a heel, so what if you grab them into a headlock?" or "You're a babyface and he just shot you into the corner, what if you do a flip over the top rope to the outside to catch your breath before diving back in?" Ask them about their wrestler's strategy in the match. When someone does make a poor roll or narrate how they take a break outside of the ring, remind them that this is also where the audience gets to take a breather. Start with the simple stuff, and remember that the players

intent will naturally guide the psychology of the match - you should do your best to bring out their intent in plain view, so that everyone else can help them build up to their goal (or serve as entertaining foils).

You'll find that, over time, your group will end up generating its own general match psychology. If you cultivate these patterns and incorporate them into each Episode of play, it can add another level of depth and meaning to your wrestling matches and generate more memorable storylines throughout your Seasons of play.

Enjoy the journey!

CREATIVE COMMITTEES

The basic structure of *World Wide Wrestling* assigns one player as Creative, while the rest play individual wrestlers. However, there are other ways to split up the Creative/wrestler duties and responsibilities. Here are two alternatives that may be helpful for groups where more than one person wishes to have Creative powers, or for small groups that want to make sure everyone has a chance to get in on the action.

ROTATING CREATIVE

You can rotate who plays Creative on an Episode-by-Episode basis. For the first Episode, all players make wrestlers before selecting one person to book the show. They treat their wrestler as an NPW for the Episode (though they should keep track of their wrestlers Heat and Audience if those are impacted by other players' actions.) At the beginning of the next Episode, they hand off the role of Creative to the next player, playing their wrestler as normal. When one Creative places things On Deck, it's up to the next Creative to run with them; alternately, keep the On Deck list public and allow everyone to add their ideas to it for the next Episode.

When you are Creative under this model, you should generally not book your wrestler into matches. The ability to keep the booking secret from *all* competitors until it's revealed is important. This dynamic enables everyone to make character choices which matter in the same way in the moment. That said, if your wrestler gets booked into a match by someone else, you have two choices: push the match off until the next Episode (when someone else will be Creative), or turn over booking of that match to someone not participating in the match.

Instead of rotating on an Episode-by-Episode basis, you can rotate Creative based on other triggers (e.g. each time the Promotion resets Audience; when a character ends a big feud; or when someone's wrestler is inactive for an Episode while they change Gimmick). If you find

that you want to rotate the Creative role more frequently than on a session-to-session basis, you may be interested in using the Creative-ful arrangement.

CREATIVE-FUL GAMES

For a small group (3-4 players), or a group that's already comfortable playing a collaborative style, you can distribute the Creative duties among all of the players so that everyone has a little bit of Creative control during play. Everyone creates a wrestler to play. Have a brief brainstorm at the beginning of the first Episode about the general ideas everyone is excited to bring into the game—this is a good time for coming up with tags and troubles.

Whoever has the idea for the first segment frames it, noting who is present and what the goal of the segment is. They act as Creative for the segment. Once it's concluded, that player hands off Creative duties to the next person. This can simply rotate around the table to each player in turn, or it can be in response to which wrestlers are interacting and who needs to be on-screen for the next segment.

Whoever is Creative for a scene has control over bringing in NPWs, setting up the plan for the segment and making Soft and Hard Moves. Since their wrestler is active in the Episode, they'll also be playing their wrestler alongside these other considerations. The current Creative's wrestler should serve as a background character or a foil for whoever is being highlighted with the segment. To put that another way, when you are Creative, *don't* make your wrestler the star of the segment. Your job is to shine the spotlight on the other wrestlers and see how they shine, trusting that they will do the same for you in turn.

When you're Creative, and your wrestler is about to be in a match, turn over Creative control to someone whose wrestler is not involved. If everyone's wrestler is in one match, whoever booked the match should write the booked finish down on a card and place it face-down on the table, to reveal when needed; alternately, use a stipulation like Straight Match (**PAGE 39**), Spotfest (**PAGE 37**) or Catch-As-Catch-Can (**PAGE 29**) to play out the match "for real" and see who can get the victory!

This style of game requires you to advocate both for your wrestler and for the most entertaining story, sometimes putting your own wrestler in a vulnerable position for the benefit of the others. It can take a little practice to get comfortable with, but if you trust the other players to celebrate your wrestler as you celebrate theirs, it can be a very rewarding collaborative play experience.

SEASON TWO

RESOURCES FOR YOUR GAME

Season Two is a collection of wrestlers, finishing moves and ideas for different kinds of wrestling promotions submitted by backers of the Kickstarter campaign for *World Wide Wrestling: International Incident*. Many thanks to the backers of the campaign!

You should feel free to use the wrestling characters presented here as part of your game of *World Wide Wrestling*, or adapt specific parts (a name, an illustration, a description) to what you need for your game.

In addition, the promotions presented here incorporate some of the new rules for running promotions, including suggestions for tags, troubles and Audience Moves. Use them whole cloth, or pick out the specific elements that most appeal to you for your game.

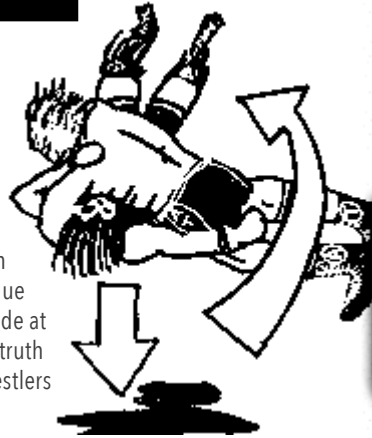
THE SEASON TWO ROSTER

ALEXANDER TIMBERS	<i>JD Grage</i>
BATTLECRUISER XXX	<i>"Game Show Man" Joe Van Ginkel</i>
"BOSS ONI" RYOTARO MITSUhide	<i>NuclearConvoy</i>
BRIGHT WARRIOR PHOENIX	<i>Luke Martinez</i>
CRASH	<i>James Reuben</i>
COLOSSAL BABE	<i>Stoney</i>
DANE MILLER	<i>Gregor Hutton</i>
EL DIABLO MÁSCARA	<i>Jeff Crews</i>
EL MONSTRUO DEL BAJO	<i>Tim Rodriguez</i>
GRIM GALLOWS	<i>Allan Gonzalez</i>
HANNAH FURIO	<i>Ryan H. Smith</i>
HUITZILOPOCHTLI	<i>Fredrik Lyngfalk</i>
JIMMY "THE PRODIGY" STANLON	<i>Michael Dannemiller</i>
JOEY CRAK	<i>Joe Zantek</i>
JOHNNY CRAG	<i>Adam Tanner</i>
MR. SHOWTIME	<i>J.D. Kinkaid</i>
PROFESSOR ATOMO	<i>Jason Cox</i>
THE 2ND CHANCER	<i>Michael Roberts</i>
"THE ARTIST" RENE NOUVEAU	<i>Jason Allan Porter Rivera</i>
THE SUBSTITUTE	<i>Grant Baciocco</i>
"TITAN" ASTERIA	<i>Vincent Geuens</i>
VERMILLION	<i>Adam Day</i>
WILD ZERO	<i>B. Bartkiewicz</i>
ZLATA JASNA	<i>Tony De Francisco</i>

ALEXANDER TIMBERS

Final Verdict (Jackhammer)**Alternate: Time on Target (Jackknife Powerbomb)**

Standing at a rugged 6'10" with dirty blond hair, piercing blue eyes and a chiseled chin, this true defender of justice was at the service of this great nation for 15 years. He has seen the horror of war and when a chance came up for early retirement he took it; but his belief in defending those who need it carries through to his action in the ring. A true fan favorite in part due to his own love of wrestling, he sometimes sits ringside at shows he isn't even booked on. Alex always strives for truth and justice and is known for coming to aid of other wrestlers when they're backed into a corner with no way out.



BATTLECRUISER XXX

Starship Killer (Tombstone Piledriver)**Alternate: Tractor Beam (Rear Naked Choke Submission)**

Battlecruiser XXX is the ultimate expression of "don't judge a book by its cover." At first glance, she seems to have stepped off the cover of a men's magazine. But this futuristic Amazon has strength and agility to spare, employing a combination of power moves, submission holds and high spots to match anyone on the roster. If the company takes advantage of her good mic skills, incredible looks and terrific charisma, Battlecruiser XXX is poised to become the Flagship of the promotion.



"BOSS ONI" RYOTARO MITSUhide

Hellbender Turbulence (Vertical Suplex into Sitout Side Slam)

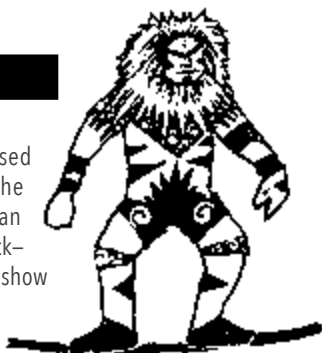
Through his work in several small ultra-violent promotions in his home city of Yokohama, Japan, the "Boss Oni" developed a reputation for putting on stellar performances even while gravely wounded. Just one example is the signature scars on his right side, earned during an exploding barbed-wire-board death match. His signature mane of wild red hair is a tribute to the blood he left smeared all over that ring. Though he boasts an inhuman pain threshold, it's his snug, technically-sound application of Strong Style headbutts, suplexes and even suicide dives that's now attracting attention from more "mainstream" promotions.



BRIGHT WARRIOR PHOENIX

The Phoenix Rises (Top Rope Brainbuster)

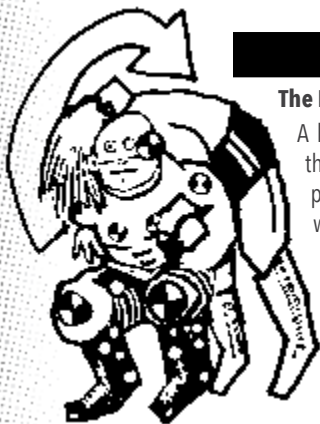
Bright Warrior Phoenix was originally created as a licensed gimmick based on a children's cartoon in Japan. When the wrestler in the outlandish tights and mask turned out to be an incredible junior heavyweight worker, he retained the gimmick—even after the show ended! While the peak popularity of the show has passed, Bright Warrior Phoenix is a reliable institution, consistently popping crowds and breaking incoming wrestlers into the company.



CRASH

The Roll-Over Test (Standing Backflip into Facelock DDT)

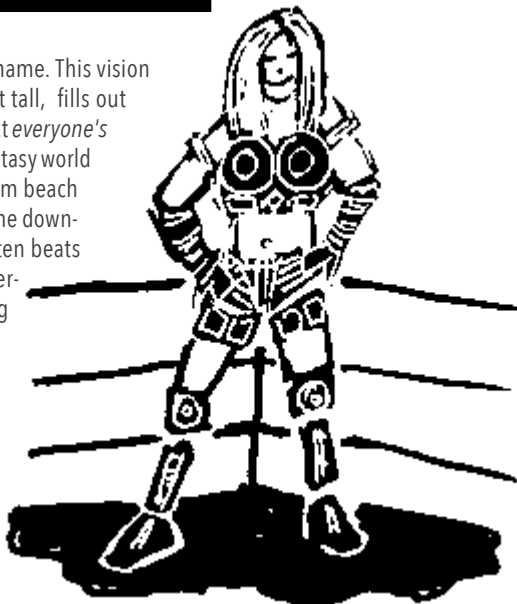
A highly aggressive man who wears a metal crash test dummy themed mask, CRASH is known for his insane willingness to jump off pretty much anything. There have been many stories about why he wears the mask, but most believe he was a hardcore wrestler who lost it after too many shots to the head. He's one of the few wrestlers who still remains under a mask at all times, demonstrating an old-school commitment to the gimmick...or a bizarre sense of paranoia.



COLOSSAL BABE

The Mauler (Airplane Swing)

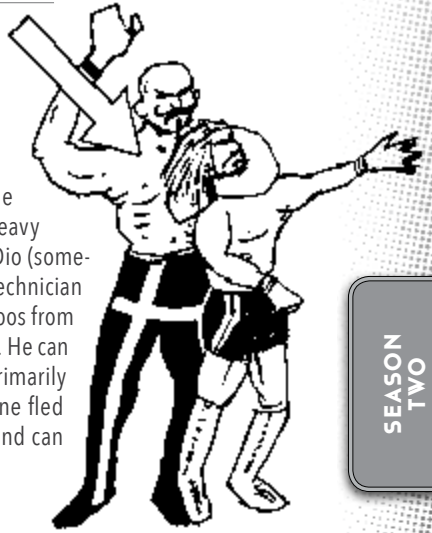
The Colossal Babe truly embodies her name. This vision of a Valkyrie, legit standing over 7 feet tall, fills out her custom-built gear in ways that attract *everyone's* attention. Visually a cross between a fantasy world barbarianne and an outrageously buxom beach bunny, underestimating her has been the downfall of many of her competitors. She often beats her measly opponents by simply overpowering them. But when they're strong enough to take it, she'll hit them with the Mauler—grabbing them by the ankles and using them as a weapon to hit turnbuckles, the mat, and other wrestlers. Seeing how creative she can get with the Mauler is a favorite discussion topic for Colossal Babe's many fans.



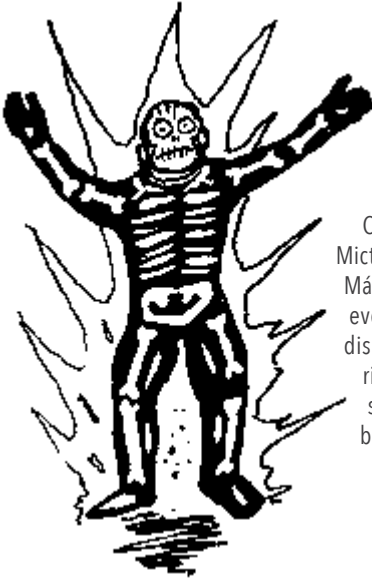
DANE MILLER

The Dark Rainbow (Overhead Chop)**Alternate: Holy Diver (Top Rope Diving Headbutt)**

The Great Dane! The Man From The Silver Mountain! The Neon Knight! Dane Miller is THE premier European Heavy Metal wrestler. Always coming out to strains of classic Dio (sometimes even licensed!), this large but deceptively agile technician backs up his in-ring skills with a unique ability to draw boos from the audience by lecturing them on their poor life choices. He can get a USA chant going for anyone he's facing—and he primarily works in the States. Why? Well, it is said the Great Dane fled Europe after chopping a wrestler in half in Hamburg, and can never return lest the authorities track him down!!



SEASON TWO



EL DIABLO MÁSCARA

Cuernos Del Diablo (Headbutt into a Standing Moonsault)

Clad in skeleton tights and wearing the mask of Mictlantecuhli (an Aztec god of the dead), El Diablo Máscara strikes fear into the hearts of *Luchadores* everywhere with his athletic acrobatic wrestling display. Showy, athletic and a bit of a cad in the ring, he plays up his evil nature as Lucifer, often spitting blood or flames into the crowd or to blind or stun his doomed opponents.

EL MONSTRUO DEL BAJO

Un Beso Acuoso "The Watery Kiss" (A kiss that leaves the opponent spitting up water, drowning on dry land)

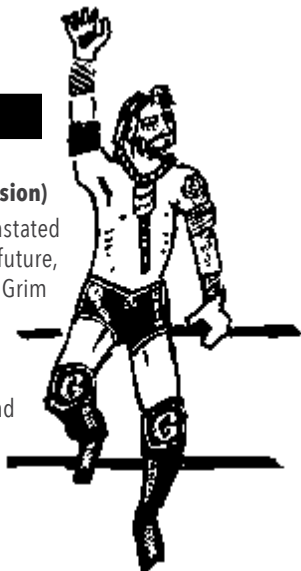
This *exótico* fish-faced nightmare hails from deep in the Amazon rainforest. He's never been known to utter a human sound, instead letting his actions speak for him. He's shocking and unpredictable, more of a force of nature than a man. Some question whether he's actually wearing a mask at all...



GRIM GALLOWS

The Crestfallen Rose (Chokeslam)**Alternate: Four Legs Good, Two Legs Bad (Leglock Submission)**

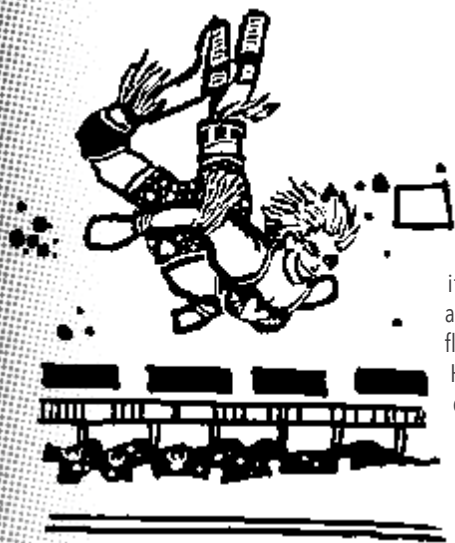
Once the lead singer of an Emo band, Grim Gallows was devastated when the band failed and the other members left. Seeing no future, he attempted to hang himself—but as his vision dimmed the Grim Reaper itself came to him and told him his destiny: to wrestle! Taking up his new mission, he left the rope around his neck as a symbol of his unending sadness. Now he uses his signature Crestfallen Rose to chokeslam his opponents in the ring and share his pain with the world.



HANNAH FURIO

Down In Flames (Springboard Shooting Star Press)

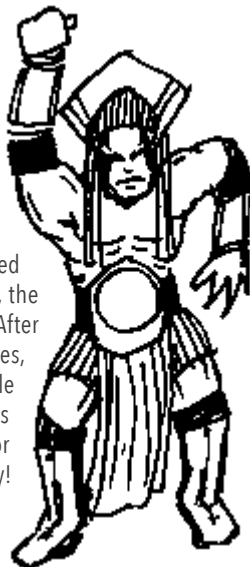
A physical whirlwind in eye-bending colors and patterns, Hannah Furio is a super-high-energy, fan favorite high-flyer. Garbed in bright orange and red tassels and fringe, her signature tank top emblazoned with a flaming heart encircled by a single strand of barbed wire, Hannah is a quintessential role model. She's passionate, endlessly optimistic, and fans of all ages cannot help but adore her!



HUITZILOPOCHTLI

Honoring The Gods (Backbreaker Rack into Inverted Death Valley Driver)

This powerhouse *luchador* has oscillated between being named in honor of and actually claiming to be the Aztec god of war, the sun, and human sacrifice since his glory days in the late 90s. After his major title runs he led a number of factions with Aztec themes, and nowadays generally only wrestles the bigger shows. His style is slow and methodical, even as a *técnico*, and he generally aims to place his opponents in a "sacrificial" position over his knee or in the turnbuckles, in order to "honor the gods" with his victory!



JIMMY "THE PRODIGY" STANLON**Fall From Grace (Spinning Sitout Spinebuster)**

Jimmy is as talented as they come. At 6'6" with looks that could kill, most men get cocky at a young age...but The Prodigy was raised right by his legendary father, James "Brawler" Stanlon. Though growing up in the business taught him to respect the veterans, he's hungry for fame, and wants to earn that top spot. The locker room respects him for doing things "the right way," and he never stoops to dirty tricks, but Jimmy doesn't take to losing well. When he is shown up, his temper flares and the few who know him well know it's only a matter of time until he loses it in that ring.



SEASON TWO

**JOEY CRAK****The Crakshooter (Sharpshooter Submission)**

This clean-shaven man wrestling in long dark blue tights has managed to overcome many an adversary with the application of his sarcastic wit, technical skills and sheer desire to win. His black leather biker jacket emblazoned with his motto "100% Pure Crak" exudes his confidence more than any vignette or shouting match. After retiring his nemesis Professor Atomo, he quickly scooped up his first world title and has been defending it ever since, often by co-opting his opponents moves against them before locking them in his patented Crakshooter. Turns out that he was right all along: nobody could handle 100% Pure. Crak.

JOHNNY CRAK**Dyno DDT (Shooting Star DDT)**

There's no way to get this kind of body in a gym. Johnny Crak takes his wrestling almost as seriously as the elite mountain climbing that sometimes conflicts with potential bookings. His incredible physique, unique style and long curly hair clearly explains his crowd appeal. He's also not above using textured crack tape gloves and the occasional chalk bucket to give him an advantage over those who turn his inexperience against him on the mat.



THE CRACK TAPES

MR. SHOWTIME**The Showstopper (Double Knee Facebuster)**

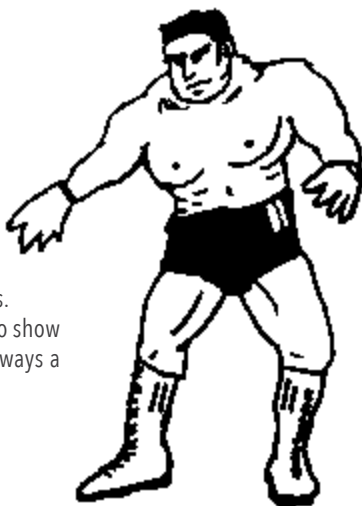
Despite only being 23 years old, Mr. Showtime has made a name for himself as an arrogant and self-centered showboat with a flashy move set and flashier mic skills. A brief stint in Japan added hard hitting strikes to his repertoire, and a tour of Mexico saw him quickly pick up a top rope offensive. His style has developed into an amalgam with one unifying theme: the pop of the crowd. He's destined to be a top draw and knows his true place is at the top of card. After all, "The Show is just getting started..."

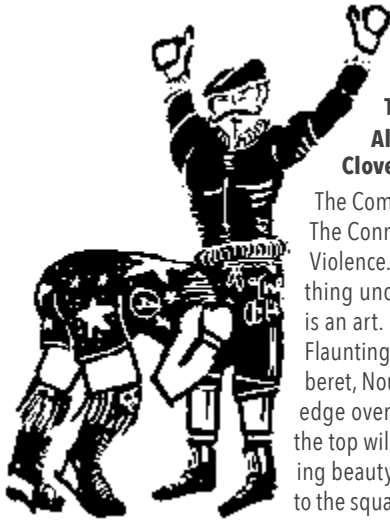
**PROFESSOR ATOMO****Atomo Bomb (Powerbomb)**

The Headmaster of Heavyweights, The Maestro of Musculature, The Atomic Academic! Professor Atomo is a workhorse in the industry, always coming out of (another) retirement to educate new generations on the finer points of "Wrestling Science". Though getting on in years he's in great condition, with squared good looks marred only by a nose that has clearly seen its share of bludgeonings. His signature tweed suit and horn-rimmed glasses are only ever one challenge away from being ripped off to reveal a wrestling singlet emblazoned with his personalized molecule symbol. Professor Atomo is currently retired after an epic match with Joey Crak. However, his fans, the self-described N.E.R.Ds (New Energy Research and Design Society) await his inevitable triumphant return.

**THE 2ND CHANCER****The Crash Landing (Somersault Senton)**

He had a name, lost it, now he's back on a new launching pad. He's taking a back seat, paying his dues, working the ladder like the old wrestlers. Again. Old, tired, broken wrestlers with nothing to show for their toil. Yeah, sure. Well, they say there's always a second chance...

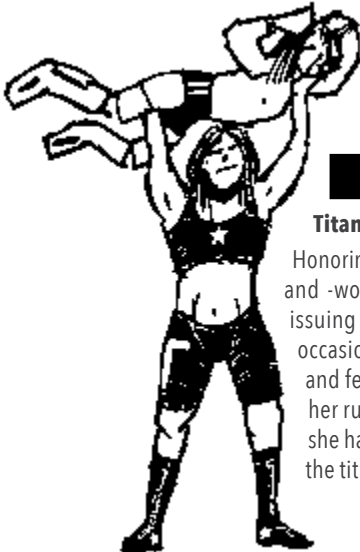
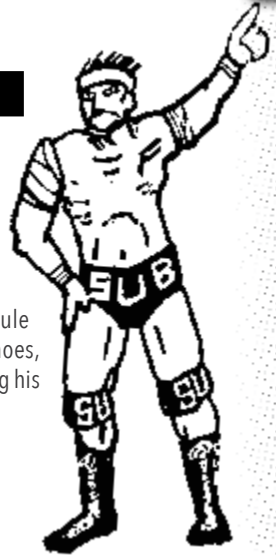


**"THE ARTIST" RENE NOUVEAU****The Masterpiece (Canadian Destroyer)****Alternate: A Work of Art (Elevated Texas Cloverleaf Submission)**

The Commissioner of Commissions. The King of the Canvas. The Connoisseur of Chaos. The Volatile Visionary of Vibrant Violence. Hailing from Paris, France, The Artist believes something uncultured Americans have long forgotten: wrestling is an art. Each match is a canvas; each opponent, a subject. Flaunting a flawless goatee and clad in a black turtleneck and beret, Nouveau employs colorful theatricality to gain a mental edge over his adversaries. The Artist knows his ascension to the top will certainly ignite a "Wrestling Renaissance," restoring beauty, creativity, emotion, passion and expression back to the squared circle.

THE SUBSTITUTE**The Lesson Plan (Renames and performs the finisher of the wrestler he's filling in for)**

Can't wrestle your match? Call The Substitute! Leave him your lesson plan of moves and he'll execute them to the best of his ability—though, never quite as good as the original. He has a working knowledge of all wrestling styles (from technical to high flying to bloody brawling) but is clearly the master of none. If he's filling in for a rule breaker, he'll cheat like the wind. If he's subbing for a goody two-shoes, he'll follow the rules to a T. At the end of the day, it's all about collecting his check for filling in as The Substitute!

**"TITAN" ASTERIA****Titanomachia (Gorilla Press into a Backbreaker)**

Honoring her family history of carnie wrestlers and strongmen and -women, Asteria travels from promotion to promotion, issuing "take on all comers" challenges to wrestlers (and the occasional brave fan) to compete in both wrestling matches and feats of strength. The few who can best her are added to her running list of worthy opponents. Rumor has it that once she has enough contenders, she'll host a final tournament for the title of "World's Strongest" wrestler!

VERMILLION

By The Gods (Top Rope Reverse Frankensteiner)

With long raven hair, a half-face mask and spiky leather getup to match, Vermillion strikes from the shadows, leaps from the rafters, and mysteriously appears in puffs of smoke. Her unorthodox hit-and-run style punctuated with devastating flying maneuvers is built out of a unique combination of mixed martial arts and *lucha libre*. Her agenda is just as mystifying as her identity and methods, but it rarely fails to please the paying audience.



WILD ZERO

Jett Fire Bomb (Double Underhook Over-The-Shoulder Powerbomb)

A puro *joshi* wrestler embodying *kaminari-zoku* (a 50's styles greaser/motorcycle look filtered through Japanese sub-culture), Wild Zero stands out on any roster. Her short black-and-blonde hair, handkerchief tied around her neck, and gold and black leather and denim outfit all signal the audience to pay attention, they're about to see something special. With a deep and varied moveset and the ability to take a beating, Wild Zero can fit any spot on the card she's needed and give the audience something to remember while doing it.

ZLATA JASNA

Horizon (Backstabber into Seated Surfboard Submission)

Zlata Jasna ("Clear Dawn") is one of the longest-tenured members of the roster. Her shimmering blonde hair, starting to give way to gray, matches the color of the spotlight that descends on her as she makes her entrance. Once a talented aerialist, nowadays she relies on striking and submissions to pick up victories. Zlata is most vulnerable to younger wrestlers who have already faced her a handful of times, as they wise up to her tactics and can outpace her. Her main concern now is her legacy. She's carried her company, LPM, on her back for years but how much does that count now? How will she be remembered?



BRUTAL: Pro Wrestling

BY JAMES REUBEN

Barely above a backyard promotion, BRUTAL was created by 19 year-old Mike

Jenkins and his girlfriend Alexis "Lexi" Lynn with a roster made up mostly of whoever answered the Craigslist ad. With no expectations for longevity, the few who attended the first matches enjoyed it enough to keep coming back, and have turned into a dedicated and passionate fan base over the first year of BRUTAL's existence. BRUTAL matches and storylines revolve around sex, violence, over the top characters and weird combinations of the three. The survival of the company, however, seems to rest on the way Lexi captures the fun on video and uses YouTube and other social media to distribute the shows.

Tags: DIY Spirit, Devoted Following
 Troubles: No Money, Green as Grass Roster

PRODUCTION STYLE

BRUTAL runs a monthly show out of a business Mike's uncle owns, a struggling strip club called Technically Legal (also the Promotions only official "sponsor"). Lexi records the shows with good digital video equipment, often recruiting wrestlers who aren't in matches to run the second camera, and uses the video production suite at her community college to do a good-to-great job packaging the shows for YouTube and DVD. The DIY vibe is part of the draw for fans, who buy DVDs at events and through their website.

BRUTAL shows are based around excess: excessively violent, excessively sexual and excessively crude. It's a 90s vision of XTREME filtered through 21st century irony, making it pitch-perfect for the young audience but generally hard to watch for older viewers. "Tasteless" is the word most used by internet commenters who roll their eyes at the lack of technical wrestling skill on display, but it's hard to argue with results. The young rowdy BRUTAL fan base loves every disgusting minute of it and asks for more.

TITLES

BRUTAL has three singles championships: the main event **BRUTAL Ultimate Badass** title, the **Other** title, generally for fan-favorite weirdos, and the **Lack of Success Extreme (L.O.S.E.) Championship**. The "shame belt" is made out of whatever garbage Mike finds at the strip club the day of the show. Originally made as a joke for the first ever BRUTAL show, the jobbers and newbies on the card do compete for it, staging elaborate comedic matches where they offer their opponents more and more opportunities to beat them, "winning" them the L.O.S.E. title.

NOTABLE CHARACTERS

- ★ Captain Asshole, a horrible person and Ultimate Badass Champion. The BRUTAL crowd absolutely loves him for cheating, fighting dirty and saying the weirdest, most offensive things he can think of. Thankfully, backstage he is one of the nicest guys around, using the character as an outlet for his "juvenile urges."
- ★ Toni Parissi, the most legitimate pro wrestler in BRUTAL, as she actually has an existing career as a solid midcarder for a large woman's indie promotion. She came to BRUTAL to "bleed with the boys" in a hardcore environment, and is considered to put on the best matches between the ropes.
- ★ El Loser was in the first-ever BRUTAL match and lost, becoming the iconic (and beloved) jobber of the promotion. A skinny pale white guy in a ski mask, he's held many L.O.S.E titles.
- ★ Joanna Silver, a dancer from Technically Legal with no wrestling training. She decided that she wanted to wrestle as a "sexy pirate" and the crowd is into it so far.
- ★ Mike Jenkins wrestles simply as "Crazy Mike." He cares more about having fun than winning matches, and it's his enthusiasm wrestling that keeps the other wrestlers coming back. Everyone kind of knows that it's Lexi Lynn who keeps him focused and does the hard work, and while she generally doesn't appear on camera the locker room treats her with respect.

CUSTOM MOVES

RUN THE ASYLUM: When you go to the next level to disgust or offend the crowd, roll +Look if it's just part of the show, or +Real if it's something you really think. On a 10+ pick 2, on a 7-9 pick 1:

- ★ Gain +1 Heat with someone
- ★ Someone comes out to answer you
- ★ Gain +2 Momentum
- ★ You get highlighted on the video for this show. You start the next Episode with 3 Momentum (instead of whatever you would normally have for your Audience rating).

On a Botch, it's too far or they don't understand what you're trying to say (or both). You lose -1 Audience and Creative sends someone out to interrupt you and get the show back on track.

DEVELOPMENTAL TERRITORIES

BY FREDRIK LYNKFALK

How do you become a world renowned wrestling superstar? The technical parts of performing a wrestling move, taking a bump or just working with someone to tell a story require training, but then what? Big promotions don't throw out untested talent in front of a large TV audience and just hope it works. Often, young and unseasoned wrestlers will work non-televised dark matches to warm up the audience and give the booker a look at them. However, if the promotion has the resources and will, it can build or take over smaller entities to create and *develop* new wrestlers skills and character before moving up to the main show.

Here are some different kinds of developmental systems to include in your game of *World Wide Wrestling*, from informal to fully-owned subsidiary brands. You could set your entire game in a wrestling school, split your characters between the main roster and the rookies, or use the two rosters to stage an Invasion angle (**PAGE 60**) to debut the young upstarts onto the main show.

THE WRESTLING SCHOOL

For a small regional territory, the developmental program could simply be an associated wrestling school. Your contracted wrestlers serve as teachers or assistant instructors (whether as part of their contract or as an additional paycheck), and your talent are the (paying) students. A few times a month the school puts out folding chairs and gives the students a chance to perform in front of a crowd, learn how to get a reaction from an audience, and maybe make a share of the gate.

THE LOCAL ARMORY

If the main brand is a regional territory with a touring show or regular arena dates, or an affiliation of smaller federations, it makes sense to incubate talent in one central location with its own identity. The parent promotions can then recruit the hottest prospects from those best able to get themselves over. By producing shows at a local gymnasium, armory or YMCA, you provide a platform for inexperienced workers to hone their craft (and make a little money) while shaping their development into what you need for the territory. Wrestlers from your system may end up going elsewhere on their journey, but you have the inside line into offering deals to the right people at the right time.

THE DEVELOPMENTAL BRAND

If your promotion is a big, well-known company with national or international reach, you can afford to run a separate brand as its own entity filled entirely with developmental talent. The developmental brand could put on their own televised shows and test marketability outside the local arena. By putting wrestlers into longer term storylines and developing their characters as well as their skills, the booking and timing of how and when to move talent from developmental to the parent brand (and how the audience for each show will react) becomes a factor alongside the basic question of whether the wrestler has what it takes to succeed.

DEVELOPING TALENT

The wrestlers in a developmental system can be quite a varied bunch. In general, the wrestling school will feature the absolutely greenest novices, but past that there are no consistent types. Wrestlers might be stuck in the developmental stage because they can't figure out how to sell themselves, because they still don't have the fundamentals down, or simply due to injuries. A lot of people wash out along the way. In smaller promotions, you can expect developmental wrestlers to be pretty green – even those born into the business are still untested. Alongside younger talent living their dream of being a wrestling star there might be one or two professional athletes from other sports transitioning into wrestling. In a full developmental brand, home-grown

*** WAIT, AREN'T YOU TALKING ABOUT THE INDIES? ***

Some indie shows or promotions may act as de facto developmental for larger companies, but this is often an informal arrangement. The landscape of professional wrestling is constantly changing, but one way to mark the difference is by thinking about contracts. In the independent scene, most wrestlers don't have a steady paycheck, their contract with a given promotion is only to ensure that the wrestler will be available for storylines, and it might prohibit the wrestler from appearing on televised shows in other promotions or other stipulations. In return the promotion will sell merchandise relating to the wrestler and the cut depends on the contract.

In contrast, developmental talent is often signed to a particular company in order to eventually work for their main brand. Contracts aren't everything of course; at the most basic levels, students pay in order to train at a wrestling school, and most people can't afford the time or money to go to more than one wrestling school at a time.

For the purposes of your game, your developmental system should be directly linked to the main promotion, whether by contract, ownership or simply historical precedent.

talent who have never competed anywhere else share the roster with stars and ring veterans from other standout promotions. Even the most skilled may need some time to acclimate to the parent brands methodology and connect with their new audience.

As a developing talent you work on improving your in-ring maneuvers, learn how to work safely, and develop the ability to call a match on the fly. At least as important as skills in the ring is learning how to work the mic, cut a promo and do an interview. A lot of that has to do with developing your character and finding one that the audience buys into. Of course, your trainers and bookers are more experienced than you, and they may have insight into what you should do that you would never of thought of on your own. Since you can always be repackaged later, you may have to suffer through some bad ideas before finding the one that sings. The best, most successful teachers will help talent develop their own gimmick, rather than saddle them with something that the performer does not believe in.

WHO IS WATCHING?

One of the problems facing developmental talent is the crowd. The audience of a developmental show is often more “in the know” for better and for worse—they know who the wrestlers are, they know where they’ve wrestled before, and may be invested in older iterations of the talent. A large portion may be friends and family or other novice wrestlers. The upside is that when they like you, they love you and when they hate you they really love to hate you. But if you can’t sell your gimmick to them, they can be really critical, to the point of mockery.

AUDIENCE MOVE: DEVELOPMENTAL CROWD

This crowd is fickle. They have low expectations, but once they get invested in a wrestler they stay invested. You have to work to figure out what’s going to stick in their heads, but you also have a lot of leeway to experiment without tanking your long-term prospects.

When working in front of a Developmental Crowd:

- ★ Whenever you would gain +1 Audience, pay 2 Momentum to make it a permanent addition. If you can’t or are unwilling to do so, you only count as having the +1 Audience for the rest of the segment, and then you return to your current Audience score.
- ★ Whenever you would lose -1 Audience, you can pay 1 Momentum to reset to your “start and reset to” Audience score instead.

RUNNING A DEVELOPMENTAL GAME

A Season set entirely in developmental works like any other game with the following changes:

- ★ Ignore the standard Audience reset rule. Instead, whenever a wrestler gets to +4 Audience, they make the **EVALUATION MOVE** (below) to represent the parent company taking a look at them to see if they're ready to move up to the next level.
- ★ Always use the **AUDIENCE MOVE: DEVELOPMENTAL CROWD (PAGE 87)**.

If a wrestler moves to the main roster, the player can make a new wrestler to take their place, or continue playing that wrestler in a game that shifts focus to that roster. You can also use the occasion of one wrestler getting called up to start a new Season set in the parent promotion.

EVALUATION: When you get popular enough in developmental, it's time for the powers that be to decide whether it time to move you to the main roster. If you end an Episode with +4 Audience, roll 2d6 (no Stat, but you can spend Momentum if you have any remaining).

- ★ On a 10+, you're ready. You can pick a new Gimmick to debut on the main roster, or stick with your current Gimmick. You debut with +1 to your "Audience starts and resets to" number (max +3).
- ★ On a 7-9, you're doing well but it's not a sure thing. Pick whether you'd rather stay in developmental or go to the main roster. If you stay, you keep your Gimmick and make the **OVER MOVE** at the top of the next Episode. If you go, you pick a new Gimmick, as the bookers have a specific spot to slot you into.
- ★ On a Botch, it's not time yet. Even though you're popular here, they want to try something new with you before moving you up. Creative picks a new Gimmick for you to return with at the top of the next Episode in developmental.

EXAMPLE PROMOTION: BOSTON REVOLUTION WRESTLING

BRW (or "Brew" as pronounced by fans) started as a simple wrestling school owned by "The Boston Beerhouse Bruiser". The Beer-

house was bought out by a larger promotion when it became clear that the school was turning out solid workers with a respectable local following. The Bruiser stayed on at first as head coach with a steady paycheck, eventually settling into semi-retirement as the mentor to a generation

Tags: Home Arena, Well Connected
 Troubles: Strong Competition, No Merch

of stars. His standout pupil Carl "Crusher" Cranston retired due to injury and decided to give back, taking over booking duties. Thanks to a personal friendship with a local cable provider, Crusher put together a plan to televise house shows. Once that happened, the parent promotion gave the go-ahead to develop more complex and longer storylines to train the talent in telling stories under the new, more marketable brand Boston Revolution Wrestling.

Since then, BRW has grown to where some purists believe they put on better shows than the main roster (others disagree, pointing out the cheap production values and clear rawness of some of the talent). BRW has gone to monthly televised shows and attracted more raw talent than ever before. The future of the parent promotion seems to be in good hands, if Carl can keep up with the demand for quality workers.

BRW training and events happen in a small but well-equipped gymnasium that they own. They run "open seating" shows every week without announcing cards beforehand, to give the wrestlers ring time in front of all kinds of audiences, and to give local audiences lots of opportunities to get into the product. The monthly televised show feature the long-term storylines.

WRESTLERS AND STAFF OF BRW

- ★ Carl "Crusher" Cranston, the former three-time world heavy-weight champion turned-GM-personality. He clashes with heels and babyfaces alike in order to "keep BRW strong." Behind the scenes he is the man in charge and so far he seems to be doing a good job of changing with the times.
- ★ Nikolai "Nick" Kirillov, the current BRW Champion. This young, Russian-American wrestler quickly connected with the audience and earned his title. Able to wrestle as both honorable babyface and sneering heel, he has begun to claim that there are no new challengers left, fueling speculation that he is being pulled up to the main roster soon.
- ★ Alana Jameson, the prime example of the new generation of female wrestlers. This African-American former Olympic Judoka is billed as "The Supreme Athlete" reflecting her legit accolades. BRW fans think she deserves to be the first female BRW champion.

You can plug this developmental school into your existing promotion, or run a game entirely within this fed, in which case you should name the parent company as well.

THE FORCES OF FREEDOM

CONCEPT BY JOSEPH GRAGE, DEVELOPMENT BY NATHAN D. PAOLETTA

This stable of proud men and women represent the forces of freedom and democracy wherever they are needed. Traveling the

Tags: Strongly Kayfabe, Touring Act
 Troubles: No Stability, Niche Fan Base

globe, the Forces of Freedom have a unique contract that allows them to join any roster on an as-needed basis. Whether truly standing for the ideals they espouse or turning into arrogant examples of the excesses of blind militarism, the crowd always knows they're going to see something unforgettable when the Forces of Freedom arrive.

PRODUCTION STYLE

The Forces of Freedom travel and work together, even if only one of them is technically booked for a show. They have their own video and entrance music, but are willing to modify their style and appearance to fit the promotion if necessary. They've made appearances in everything from 100% authentic military dress uniform to jeans and iron-on letter tee-shirts. They usually work one or maybe two storylines in a company before heading off to the next booking; in a throwback to the territory days, they've proven that they can drive more ticket sales as an occasional attraction rather than running roughshod over the roster.

THE FACTION

- ★ Colonel Richard Hawk represents the Air Force, and is the undisputed leader of the Forces of Freedom. Always at the head of the group, on the front of the poster and (usually) at the top of the card, Col. Hawk's ever-present cigar, aviator sunglasses and impeccably tailored clothing make him a memorable figure. He backs up his authority in the ring with a style that combines aerial maneuvers with smash-mouth brawling. He would never describe himself as a "high flyer," but he always knows exactly when to go to that top rope for the maximum impact.
- ★ Major Michael Leatherneck represents the Marines, and is the largest and most intimidating member of the Forces of Freedom. Looming in the background and letting the others do his talking for him, he's the force to be unleashed on those who show disrespect. He actually has the fewest matches of the group,

generally serving as a spoiler outside the ring and as backup for his comrades-on-arms. When he does get in the squared circle, however, his size belies a speed uncommon in such a big man. His victories are quick, efficient, and brutal.

- ★ Captain Arnold Bulwark represents the Army, and is generally considered the technician of the group. With a square jaw, stout barrel of a body and tendency towards camouflage fatigues, it would easy to write him off as the utility player. But when he gets the mic he's able to get under anyone's skin in seconds with a razor wit and keen eye for the weaknesses of his opponents. The smallest of the group, he's often the one put into danger in order to incite the Forces of Freedom to action. That said, while Col. Hawk gets the glory, Maj. Leatherneck gets the respect and Lt. Shipside gets the titles, Cap. Bulwark quietly racks up victory after victory in the squared circle.
- ★ Lieutenant Terrence Shipside represents the Navy, and is the most well-rounded wrestler of the group. He can step in the ring with anybody from veterans to green novices, high flyers to backyard thrill jockeys. When the squad needs to put a tag team in the ring it's always anchored by Lt. Shipside (usually with Cap. Bulwark, though sometimes with Col. Hawk). With a legit Navy background, Lt. Shipside proudly sports a naval tattoo of the ship he served on before becoming a wrestler, and thus tends to be the favorite of those who have some military background themselves. When you add up all of the titles he's held as part of the Forces of Freedom, he's the most decorated (though of course Col. Hawk has held the most important championships).
- ★ Ensign Victoria Whitecap is the escort, valet and business manager of the Forces of Freedom. Sporting U.S. Coast Guard regalia, she's the one to hold forth on the mic, telling the foes of freedom what they have coming to them. At ringside she's equal part strategic command and shit-talking distraction, and many an opponent have been thrown off their game by the surprising amount of profanity that can come out of her mouth (only when the Forces of Freedom are working heel, of course). Behind the scenes she also manages the schedule and bookings for the group, making her key to the success of the whole faction.

CUSTOM MOVES

UNITED WE STAND: The Forces of Freedom are always booked together on shows. They can be used as NPWs or be taken on by players as wrestling characters. Any number of the members can be played by different players, with the unplayed members counting as NPWs generally under the control of their faction-mates. Create a Forces of Freedom member as you would any other wrestling character, with the following changes:

- ★ All Forces of Freedom members must have the same Role (Baby-face or Heel)
- ★ All Forces of Freedom members start with +2 Heat with each other. Forces of Freedom members do not gain Audience from working matches with each other (against each other, or as tag teams) if they have +4 Heat with each other.
- ★ Forces of Freedom members share a single Audience score, which starts the game at +2. Whenever any member would gain or lose Audience, it adds or subtracts from the shared score.
- ★ Whenever there's a disagreement between members, it's settled in rank order (Colonel, then Major, then Captain, then Lieutenant) if on-camera, or it's settled by Victoria Whitecap if it's a backstage matter. Anyone bucking this chain of command means they have to make the **BREAK KAYFABE** Move.
- ★ Any Forces of Freedom tag team counts as being a Dedicated Tag Team (see **PAGE 69** of *World Wide Wrestling* for the Dedicated Tag Team rules).
- ★ The Forces of Freedom move on after their current storyline or feud comes to a conclusion. Anyone playing a Forces of Freedom member must make a new wrestler to play, or take over an NPW to play, as if they spent an Advance on that Advancement option.

HUSMAN EXTREME WRESTLING PRESENTED BY CALBEE GLOBAL

BY JUSTIN HUNT

Snack manufacturers from around the world took notice when

Tags: Motivated Roster, International Reach

Troubles: Hostile Silent Partner, Campy Commercials

Harry J. Husman IV, heir to the Husman Potato Chip fortune, was displaced as chairman of the board of Husman's Potato Chips. Having blown the company coffers booking Arrowhead Stadium for the *Lucha de Mayo* extravaganza (as well as the legal battles that ensued following the eXtreme BBQ Battle Royal), Husman Potato Chip shareholders revolted and sold a controlling interest in Husmans to Yasuo Matsumoto, CEO of rival snack manufacturer Calbee Global Confectionery Solutions. The former chairman agreed to step aside with the caveat that he could maintain Husman Extreme Wrestling as a promotional vehicle. Matsumoto agreed, but appointed his loyal daughter Yamashita as CFO with a tight grip on the HEW purse strings.

Harry is committed to getting his company back, and convinced he can use HEW to do it. He has two things going for him. First, the Calbee Global parent company has actually extended the reach of the fed, increasing the audience for "*High-Flyin Wrasslin*". Second, with the chance to be featured in snack commercials on three continents, Harry can attract talent from around the world hoping to make a break in television. The roster now combines long time Husman loyalists and new talent brought in by Calbee, all motivated and striving to prove to HJH (or Matsumoto) that they are the best in the world.

These changes have had fallout effects on the talent. With a new owner who seems to have little interest in the business, wrestlers are confused about who exactly they need to be impressing. Some go out of their way to please the new boss writing the checks, while others are firm HJH supporters who will do anything to help return the old man to prominence. Also, because HEW is supposed to be a promotional vehicle for a larger corporation, actual wrestling is sometimes bumped in favor of campy commercials that demand wrestlers refer to Calbee's line of products in unnatural and sometimes kayfabe-breaking situations.

It's all on the line for titular owner, Harry J. Husman IV and the superstars of Husman Extreme Wrestling. Can they elevate the HEW brand to global greatness and go on to return Husman's Potato Chips to Mrs. Husman's baby boy?

PRODUCTION STYLE

With the new production money coming in from Calbees, HEW now streams its shows via the Calbees Global website. These productions are treated more like television specials than straight performances, with obvious breaks for commercials (sometimes spliced in by the production crew, and sometimes performed live by the wrestlers).

The new influx of global talent has brought a diverse set of wrestling styles to the HEW ring. The announcers and HJH himself still call it *High-Flyin' Wrasslin'* and call the shows with a more pro sports style of commentary. This often contrasts with the campy nature of corporate co-branding for snacks like Calbees Corn Delights.

TITLES

Matsumoto hasn't taken enough of an interest to modify the company at this level of detail (yet). HEW has maintained the belts the fans respect: the **Extreme BBQ Championship**, the **Double Dip Tag Team Championships**, and the annually awarded **American Classic Champion**.

NOTABLE CHARACTERS

- ★ The Prep, a legit collegiate athlete recruited by Husman to be his first true star. A longtime HJH supporter, The Prep has been with HEW through all the high and lows.
- ★ Prince Prawn, a former shift manager at the Husmans plant. First debuting as a crowd-pleasing comedic wrestler, Prince Prawn has since turned into a Calbee corporate stooge.
- ★ Johnny Social, a new media sensation seeking to use HEW as a stage to bring him commercial success. So far, this talented talker with Hollywood ties is the only wrestler Matsumoto has shown any interest in promoting.
- ★ Noreen St George, a reliable hand throughout HEW's existence. She always seems to fall back to her natural role as a locker room instigator of both on- and off-screen trouble.
- ★ Outlaw Jodie Wells, the resident rebel. The Outlaw stands alone as she looks to exploit the best offers, regardless of who's making them—or why.

CUSTOM MOVES

DECLARE ALLEGIANCE: There's two bosses of HEW, Harry J. Husman IV and Yamashita Matsumoto. Harry appears on-screen and generally makes booking decisions, but Yamashita has the final say whenever money is involved and likes to insert co-branded content that supports the larger Calbee brand.

When you take direct action for one boss in opposition to the other, state what you're trying to achieve and for who, and roll +Real.

- ★ On a 10+: The boss you've picked has your back. Pick 2 from the 7-9 list.
- ★ On a 7-9: You run afoul of the politics in the back. You pick 1 and Creative picks 1:
 - Give yourself an opportunity. You make the **OVER MOVE** at the top of the next Episode (regardless of your Audience score).
 - Set up or get out of a segment of your choice for this Episode.
 - Add a branding tie-in to your next match.
 - You're booked to lose your next match.
 - You're taken off camera for the rest of the Episode.
 - (If you're using Stroke rules) You count as having 1 more Stroke for the rest of the Episode
- ★ On a Botch: Creative picks 2. If you're using the Stroke rules, you count as having 1 less Stroke for the rest of the Episode. See **PAGE 46** for the Stroke rules.

LUPTA PROFESIONALĂ MOLDOVA

BY TONY DE FRANCISCO

Lupta Profesională Moldova (Moldova Pro Wrestling) was lucky to get

Tags: Collective-Owned, Home Arena
 Troubles: Niche Fan Base, Pointlessly Bureaucratic

off the ground in the early 80s. The only professional wrestling federation in the then- Soviet Republic, it struggled to fill even small gymnasiums, and faced criticism as an extension of American culture. This pressure forced them to innovate their product rapidly. LPM combated the "western" image by presenting itself instead as proper theater with integrated athletics and a collectivist twist. In kayfabe, each wrestler owned a percentage of the promotion. Winning matches would increase a wrestler's share; losing matches would shrink it. The strategy worked, dramatizing the benefits (and critiquing the drawbacks) of collective ownership alongside the great morality plays of the standard wrestling storylines.

While LPM didn't become world-famous, it did prosper in its own corner of the globe, as the 80s turned into the 90s. Once the Soviet Union crumbled, however, the immediate post-Soviet era was difficult for the promotion. Moldova's sharp economic downturn devastated attendance. The original owners sought to cut their losses and move into more profitable ventures. The LPM roster faced the end of their livelihood, so they took a gamble to preserve the promotion: in 1992, the wrestlers banded together, took out some debt, and purchased LPM outright.

Once it was theirs, the roster voted to bring a modified version of the kayfabe system of ownership to life. Each wrestler received an equal share of both LPM's revenue and booking decisions. They carried this over to their on-stage storylines as well, doubling down on the "collective" concept and eschewing the need for an authority figure. Instead, one of the key tensions in the fed is the fact (sometimes explicit, sometimes implied) that when a wrestler goes on a winning or losing streak, their stake in LPM starts to grow or diminish accordingly. Every match directly impacts both the wrestler's wallet and their creative control over their future.

This innovative decision eventually bore fruit. Collective ownership made it possible to keep the doors open (sometimes just because many of the wrestlers would rather wrestle for free than go find another job). The ability of dedicated and creative performers to literally dictate their own fate ended up attracting some of the most committed wrestlers on the continent. The remaining fans found themselves audience to a greatly improved product, and by the late 90s LPM was home to some of the most creative wrestling in Eastern Europe.

Despite these achievements, LPM continues to struggle. It has proven difficult to grow larger than the dedicated (but small) local audience, even with the advent of social media and the accessibility of video sharing. English-speaking promotions take up the attention of most of the international audience, and the casual Moldovan crowd is starting to age and look elsewhere for entertainment. Also, despite its benefits, the "wrestler-owned" system creates unique difficulties. Larger egos put themselves over at the expense of the rest of the roster, major decisions come to deadlock, and sometimes shows are delayed or even canceled due to the inability of the top names to come to agreements.

That said, the future is cautiously optimistic for LPM. A combination of a unique federation structure and solid, modern in-ring action has proven to be stable and profitable in current times. If someone

who has an eye for international promotion manages to gain enough voting share, there is certainly an audience out there for the finding. It all depends on who can make themselves the main event.

PRODUCTION STYLE

LPM owns a home “arena” (a large gymnasium). Blanketed with old posters and memorabilia of stars and events past, the space has an iconic Soviet Constructivist look. They produce videos of their events to sell to regulars (first as VHS tapes and more recently as DVDs), but they have yet to break into wider distribution—things like merch production and sales are entirely dependent on the commitment and skills of whoever on the current roster wants to take those tasks on.

LPM doesn’t tour very much, instead committing to some co-produced shows in other Eastern European countries. This enables them to send a portion of the roster en masse without having to coordinate renting spaces or doing local promotional work.

STORYLINE IDEAS

Due to the blended kayfabe/legit power structure, there’s a number of unique situations that can arise in a game run in LPM.

- ★ Do factions necessarily vote together? What if a faction of wrestlers amasses a full majority of voting power? Would the other wrestlers band together in opposition, or try to break up the stable in some other way?
- ★ What happens when a wrestler retires? Do they bring in a new, rookie wrestler, designated as an “heir” for their share of the company? Is an elaborate gimmick match held for the vacant share? Or does that share simply evaporate?
- ★ How do new wrestlers join the roster? Are there “non-share” spots for enhancement talent? Do they need to prove themselves in a shoot match? Or is the agreement made behind the scenes and they’re simply introduced as a new wrestler?

These are all questions for you to answer in play, and opportunities for developing Custom Moves that suit your game in order for your group to address them.

NOTABLE CHARACTERS

- ★ Zlata Jasna, longtime LPM regular, and *de facto* tiebreaker vote. Now in the twilight of her career, she finds herself facing rookies and up-and-comers. Will she be able to climb her way back into the main event before her inevitable retirement?

- ★ Maxim Ciobanu, LPM main eventer and power broker. A mainstay of the roster, Maxim has racked up title reigns for several years now. He commands a small stable called the *Ciobani* (Shepherds), who act as tweeners, attempting to prevent any huge power swings (especially those that would impact his position).
- ★ Andrei Melnic, LPM rookie. With only a handful of matches in his career, Andrei finds himself quite overwhelmed with how things work in LPM, both behind the scenes and in front of the cameras.

CUSTOM MOVES

COLLECTIVE OWNERSHIP: Every full member of the LPM roster has shares of the company. These represent both legit shares that the performer owns, and the kayfabe influence that the wrestling character has over other wrestlers.

All LPM wrestlers start with 1 Share (when they're first created, or first join the roster). Whenever you gain an Advance, you also gain a Share. When you spend Advances, you do not lose Shares.

You can spend one Share at any time to:

- ★ Book a match of your choice, or add a stipulation to a match.
- ★ Win a match, regardless of booking.
- ★ Strip someone else of their share (on a one-for-one basis). You do not gain a Share, they just lose a Share. They also gain +1 Heat with you (regardless of how many Shares you strip at a time).
- ★ Take over a segment (and gain +1 Heat with whoever you're taking it from).
- ★ Once you spend a Share (or Shares, if you're stripping someone of multiple Shares), you can't spend more Shares on the same segment.

Spending Shares is an on-screen act of using your position in the company—calling a meeting or a vote, threatening, cajoling, or calling on the "Collective Ownership Agreement," the ultimate authority when deciding disputes. Once gained, Shares can also be traded, bought or sold between players, representing the off-screen deals cut between the wrestlers.

If you are also using Stroke (**PAGE 46**) in your game, a wrestler has as much Stroke as they have Shares, instead of as much Stroke as they have Audience.

THE GIMMICKS

This section contains the full descriptions of the six new Gimmicks presented in *International Incident*. They follow the same architecture and rules as the standard Gimmicks from *World Wide Wrestling*. Visit ndpdesign.com/wwwrpg to download printable full-page Gimmick sheets.

While the *International Incident* Gimmicks are associated with the specific wrestling styles that inspired them, there are no mechanical restrictions or guidelines for including them in your game. That is, feel free to play a Luchador in a game set in a Scottish promotion, or bring your Indie Darling to Arena Mexico; the intention of the new Gimmicks is to add more options to every game, not restrict choices based on the style or setting.

SUMMARY OF THE INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT GIMMICKS

THE ACE: You are the top star of your division, consistently either holding the title or in contention for it. You're considered to carry the company both in and out of the ring. You also have the biggest target on your back. A babyface Ace is the face that runs the place, the wrestler who's most publicly and popularly identified with the promotion. A heel Ace is smug, arrogant and probably duplicitous, possibly with management in their pocket as they do everything in their power to stay at the top.

- ★ Play the Ace if you want to be the star, have the spotlight constantly on you and have the power to keep it that way—as long as you can keep doing what you do best and putting butts in seats.
- ★ The Ace is best at showing off and tilting the odds to their favor, and uses that to overshadow a possible lack of ring sophistication.

THE CULTURAL CHAMPION: You started in the ring, but are now legitimately more famous for your appearances in other media than your wrestling career. You're a little older and slower now, but you have real emotional and financial investment behind you. Is it possible to keep your broad appeal or have you hit market saturation? A *técnico* Cultural Champion is famous for what they've done outside of ring and have to live up to that "brand," whatever it is. A *rudo* Cultural Champion draws

boos *because* they've left the world of wrestling behind, and use that to their advantage to get what they want out of their time back in the squared circle.

- ★ Play the Cultural Champion if you like the idea of cross-promoting and being inspired by other media and entertainment for the character.
- ★ The Cultural Champion is best at telling their own story and putting on a great show for the fans, but they lean on the full-time wrestlers to carry them through matches most of the time.

THE INDIE DARLING: You've made a living on the road, wrestling for anyone who'll take you. You've got a cult following, a set of unique skills and a lot of experience. Finally, you have an opportunity to make your name at the next level. Will you take it? A babyface Indie Darling is a "smart fan" favorite who leverages their experience and passionate fans to cement their spot on the roster. A heel Indie Darling turns on those who have invested in them so far, "going corporate" and embracing the opportunities now presented on the larger stage.

- ★ Play the Indie Darling if you want to have great matches as you fight for respect in the company.
- ★ The Indie Darling has honed their ring skills through years and years on the road, but may have to abandon their character or otherwise give in to the demands of the new company.

THE LUCHADOR: You are an iconic *Lucha Libre* competitor. Whether you were born into the business or you took up the mask out of love for the sport, you represent the unique culture of Mexican professional wrestling. What will you do with your skills and your heritage? A *técnico* Luchador embodies technical skill and respect for tradition. A *rudo* Luchador only cares about themselves.

- ★ Play the Luchador if you want to embody the culture of *Lucha Libre* and have exciting matches, especially if you want to be a tag team star.
- ★ The Luchador is best at thrilling the crowd, but isn't as strong as the real monsters in the company or as good on the mic as the high-profile talkers.

THE SHOOT FIGHTER: Whether you have a legitimate fighting background or you're just a natural-born hardass, you know how to hurt people for real. How long will what you want from this company align with what it wants from you? A babyface Shoot Fighter demands respect for their skills, and respects the abilities of others. A heel Shoot Fighter takes unfair advantage of their legit superior fighting ability to get ahead.

- ★ Play the Shoot Fighter if you want to have the ability to demonstrate superior skills and keep your opponents guessing as to how "legit" you're going to make a fight.
- ★ The Shoot Fighter is best at blurring the line between what their character does and what the performer can actually do, and isn't as good at the overall entertainment aspect of the business.

THE YOUNG ONE: You are a new trainee. You've toiled in the dojo and gone through strenuous physical conditioning. Finally, it's time to see how well you do in front of a live audience. Do you have what it takes to become the best? The Young One always takes the opposite Role of their opponent in matches—your job is to learn, not show off.

- ★ Play the Young One if you're interested in working your way up from the very bottom of the ladder. You have the unique ability to build your in-ring character as you play, but you are strictly defined by your junior status until you learn enough to graduate to a "real" Gimmick.
- ★ The Young One doesn't have any particular strengths or weaknesses. They will be discovered as you play.
- ★ See **PAGE 114** for additional rules exceptions and modifications for playing a Young One.

THE ACE

You are the top star of your division, consistently either holding the title or in contention for it. You're considered to carry the company both in and out of the ring. You also have the biggest target on your back.

THE BASICS

STATS

Look +1, Power -1, Real +1, Work -1; then add 1 to one Stat and subtract 1 from one Stat.

HAILING FROM

- ★ Tokyo, Japan
- ★ Kagoshima Prefecture, Japan
- ★ The Kingdom of Tonga
- ★ Elsewhere

ENTRANCE

- ★ Licensed Tie-In
- ★ High Tempo & Exciting
- ★ High-Concept & Production-Filled
- ★ Something Else

HEAT QUESTIONS

- ★ Who trained with me in the dojo?
- ★ Who thinks they deserve my spot?
- ★ Who do I have amazing chemistry with in the ring?
- ★ Who's just biding their time until my inevitable fall?

ACE MOVES

FINISHING MOVE: When you're booked to win a match, roll 2d6. On a 10+, you hit your Finisher clean. Choose whether you or your opponent gains +1 Audience. On a 7-9, you need to hit your Finisher *twice*. Choose whether you gain +1 Heat with each other, or they gain +1 Audience. On



a Botch, choose whether you rush through the botched move, get the win and lose -1 Audience, or you let them counter it into something that looks better, and take the loss (this overrides Creative's booking).

FIGHTING SPIRIT: When taken to the limit you dig deep and find the passion and fire to press on. Once per match, when your opponent clearly has the upper hand and presses the attack, narrate how you ignore the pain and take control of the match. This works as the **INTERRUPT MOVE**, but take 1 Momentum from your opponent instead of spending 1. (and pick 1)

CARRY THE COMPANY: You are anointed to carry the title scene of your division. When a match that involves the title is announced, roll +Real. On a 10+, pick 2, on a 7-9, pick 1: book yourself into or out of the match (the title must remain on the line); you book the finish of the match; you book a rematch of your choice after the match; add an additional stipulation to that match. On a Botch, management doubts your judgment this time and your opponent picks one from the list to their own advantage.

AMAZING ENTRANCE: The production behind your entrance overshadows everyone else's. Roll +Audience when you make your first full entrance in an Episode. On a 10+ gain +1 Heat with your opponent plus the 7-9 result: on a 7-9, gain the Momentum you start each Episode with (+2 if you have +4 Audience). On a Botch, lose -1 Audience due to an embarrassing technical problem.

STRONG STYLE: When you work stiff *without* intent to injure, roll +Real for the **WRESTLING MOVE**. If you hit on a 10+ without spending Momentum, gain an extra +1 Momentum. If you Botch, you injure them anyway.

THE REST

INJURY ☐ ☐ ☐

When you get injured, check an Injury box. If anyone takes advantage of your injury in a match, they gain +2 Momentum but lose -1 Heat with you. If you have any checks, if your title is on the line you can choose not to defend it without facing any repercussions.

If you have 3 checks you can no longer compete.

AUDIENCE

The Ace starts and resets to Audience +2.

ADVANCEMENT

Any Gimmick that can change to the Veteran can change to the Ace. The Ace cannot change Gimmick, but can take an Advanced Role.

THE CULTURAL CHAMPION

You started in the ring, but are now legitimately more famous for your appearances in other media than your wrestling career. You're a little older and slower now, but you have real emotional and financial investment behind you. Is it possible to keep your broad appeal or have you hit market saturation?

THE BASICS

The Cultural Champion uses the *Lucha Libre* Roles of Técnico and Rudo instead of Babyface and Heel.

STATS

Look +1, Power -1, Real +1, Work -2; then add 1 to either Look or Real.

HAILING FROM

- * Mexico City, Mexico
- * Venice Beach, California
- * Parts Unknown
- * Elsewhere

ENTRANCE

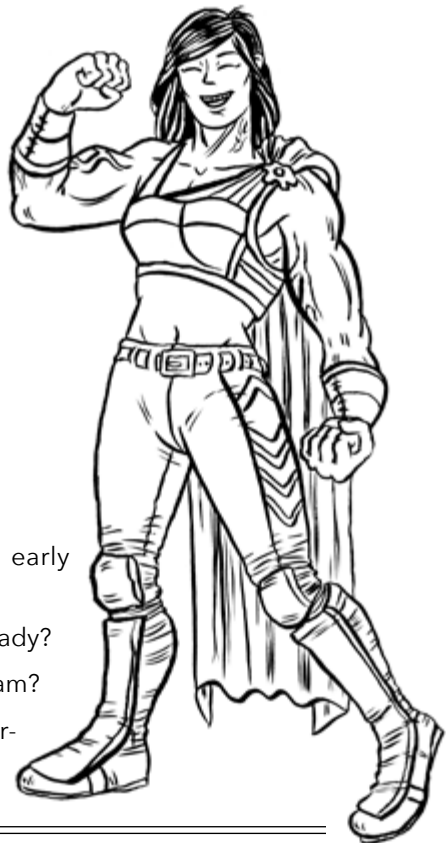
- * Custom Composition
- * Pop Music Tie-In
- * Pulse-Pounding & Frenetic
- * Something Else

HEAT QUESTIONS

- * Who was instrumental to my early success?
- * Who wants me to just retire already?
- * Who is honored to be on my team?
- * Who wants to unmask me (literally or figuratively)?

CULTURAL CHAMPION MOVES

FINISHING MOVE: When you're booked to win a match, roll 2d6. On a 10+, you hit your Finisher clean, gain +1 Audience. On a 7-9, it's



close enough, gain +1 Momentum. On a Botch, you still win, but they're disappointed at your lack of effort, lose -1 Audience.

ESTRELLA: You're a multimedia star. Whenever you would lose Audience, choose: lose the Audience and Creative books you to win your next match to get them back on your side; or lose all your Momentum instead of losing the Audience. If you have no Momentum you must choose the first option.

(and pick 1)

MERCADERÍA: Your face is on *everything*. Gain +1 Momentum each time you enter the ring during an Episode.

LAS EXPECTATIVAS: You represent something extraordinarily meaningful to your fans. When you change Role (including taking an Advanced Role), roll +Real. On a 10+, it makes perfect sense to them, gain +1 Audience next time you make a public appearance. On a 7-9, they see the logic, but it shakes them up. Your highest Heat opponent gains +1 Audience from your fans switching allegiance. On a Botch, they refuse to accept it. You must stay in your current Role instead of switching, and lose -1 Audience.

EL RIVAL: If you're in the Top Spot (+4 Audience), your agent demands a match that ties in the antagonist from your latest movie (or TV show, or comic book) to your storyline in the promotion. Work with Creative to come up with the nature of El Rival (including whether they are a separate performer or played by an existing member of the roster) and you must be booked against them as the main event of the next Episode. You start with +2 Heat with El Rival.

THE REST

INJURY ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

When you get injured, check two Injury boxes. The referee stops the match for "excessive punishment" and DQs your opponent (this overrides Creative's booking). If you wrestle while injured, your opponent can only take control of the match from you if they **BREAK KAYFABE**.

If you have 4 checks you can no longer compete.

AUDIENCE

The Cultural Champion starts and resets to Audience +2.

ADVANCEMENT

Any Gimmick that can change to the Veteran can change to the Cultural Champion. The Cultural Champion can only change Gimmick to Manager, Veteran or Wasted.

THE INDIE DARLING

You've made a living on the road, wrestling for anyone who'll take you. You've got a cult following, a set of unique skills and a lot of experience. Finally, you have an opportunity to make your name at the next level. Will you take it?

THE BASICS

STATS

Look 0, Power -1, Real -1, Work 0; then subtract 1 from one Stat and add 2 to one Stat.

HAILING FROM

- * Seattle, Washington
- * Grand Rapids, Michigan
- * Dubuque, Iowa
- * Elsewhere

ENTRANCE

- * Reused From a Retired Wrestler
- * Custom Song From a Local Band
- * Fresh & Intriguing
- * Something Else

HEAT QUESTIONS

- * Who's excited that I'm finally on this roster?
- * Who thinks I'm completely overrated?
- * Who do I have backstory with from encounters in other companies?
- * Who feels most threatened by what I bring to the roster?

INDIE DARLING MOVES

FINISHING MOVE: When you're booked to win a match, roll 2d6. On a 10+, you hit your Finisher clean. Gain +1 Audience. On a 7-9, they



sandbag you. You still win, but choose: you gain +1 Heat with each other, or you punish them with an injury. On a Botch, choose whether you win the match but have Creative change your finisher after (you keep this Move, just change what it looks like), or let them counter it and lose the match (this overrides Creative's booking).

(and pick 2)

HUNGRY: You want this so bad you can taste it. When you're booked to lose a match and you take action to prevent it, roll +Work. On a 10+ you win the match instead, and pick one from the 7-9 list. On a 7-9 you win, but your opponent picks: you take an injury, lose -1 Heat with your opponent, get pulled out of this feud by Creative. On a Botch, you lose the match anyway, and lose -1 Audience for looking like a chump. This Move overrides Creative's booking.

10-YEAR VETERAN: You've been wrestling longer than most of the "top talent" in this company. You start and reset to Audience +2 instead of Audience +1.

I REMEMBER THIS ONE TIME...: When you pitch an idea that you've seen or done before, just not for this company, roll +Real. On a 10+ pick two, on a 7-9 pick one: Gain +2 Momentum, they go for it, you get to book it yourself. On a Botch, they steal or ruin your idea (or both).

REPUTATION: When you appear on camera for the first time in an Episode, roll +Real. On a 10+, they've all heard of you, gain Momentum equal to what you started the Episode with. On a 7-9 there's a vocal minority. You gain +1 Momentum when you mug to your fans in a segment until you Botch a roll or the end of the Episode, whichever comes first. On a Botch, they've heard of you...and think you suck. Lose -1 Audience.

THE REST

INJURY ☐ ☐ ☐

While you're injured, you can still compete but Creative will not book you to win. If you win a match anyway, gain +1 Heat with your opponent.

If you have 3 checks you can no longer compete.

AUDIENCE

The Indie Darling starts and resets to Audience +1 (or +2).

ADVANCEMENT

Any Gimmick that can change to the Technician can change to the Indie Darling. The Indie Darling can change to any Gimmick.

THE LUCHADOR

You are an iconic *Lucha Libre* competitor. Whether you were born into the business or you took up the mask out of love for the sport, you represent the unique culture of Mexican professional wrestling. What will you do with your skills and your heritage?

THE BASICS

STATS

Look -1, Power -2, Real 0,
Work +1; then add 1 to one Stat.

The Luchador uses the *Lucha Libre* Roles of Técnico and Rudo instead of Babyface and Heel.

HAILING FROM

- * Mexico City, Mexico
- * Gómez Palacio,
Durango, Mexico
- * Boyle Heights, CA
- * Elsewhere

ENTRANCE

- * American Nü Metal
- * Popular Dance Hit
- * Pulse-Pounding &
Frenetic
- * Something Else

HEAT QUESTIONS

- * Who allied with me on my first team?
- * Who just doesn't understand *Lucha Libre*?
- * Who thinks I don't deserve my mask (or overall look)?
- * Who is trying to convince me to change my style, my mask, or both?



LUCHADOR MOVES

FINISHING MOVE: When you're booked to win a match, roll 2d6. On a 10+, you hit your Finisher clean, gain +1 Audience. On a 7-9, the timing is off but you make it work; you win but your opponent chooses which of you loses 2 Momentum, and the other gains +1. On a Botch, you still win but it's ugly. Your opponent chooses whether the botch is your fault (and you lose -1 Audience) or their fault (and they take an Injury).

(and pick 2)

EXÓTICO: You have a provocative act that challenges gender norms, making you stand out. Take +1 Look (max +3).

TRADICIONAL: You refuse to be seen without your mask. Whenever your mask is at risk of being removed, roll +Work if it's your choice, or roll +Real if it's someone else's. Gain +1 Heat with your foe, and on a 10+ pick 2, on a 7-9 pick 1: you book the next step of the feud, you cover your face in time, you take *theirs* as part of the scuffle. On a Botch, lose -1 Audience, as your mystique is lost.

CAPITÁN DEL PAREJAS: Tag team wrestling is *Lucha Libre*. Spend 2 Momentum to add anyone you have Heat with to your side at the top of a match (making a solo match a tag team, a tag match a trio, etc). Creative chooses who comes out for the other team. In addition, you can spend your Momentum on any of your teammates rolls.

EL HIJO DE...: You've inherited your mask from another popular Luchador. Describe the relationship. You start and reset to Audience +2 (instead of +1).

THE REST

INJURY

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

When you get injured, check two Injury boxes. When you roll +Work while injured, you cannot spend Momentum on the result. When you win a match while injured, gain +2 Momentum.

If you have 4 checks you can no longer compete.

AUDIENCE

The Luchador starts and resets to Audience +1 (or +2).

ADVANCEMENT

Any Gimmick that can change to the High Flyer can change to the Luchador. The Luchador cannot change Gimmick to Manager or Golden Boy.

THE SHOOT FIGHTER

Whether you have a legitimate fighting background or you're just a natural-born hardass, you know how to hurt people for real. How long will what you want from this company align with what it wants from you?

THE BASICS

STATS

Look -2, Power +1, Real -1, Work 0; then add 1 to one Stat.

HAILING FROM

- * Kuwana, Japan
- * Wigan, United Kingdom
- * Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- * Elsewhere

ENTRANCE

- * Heavy & Threatening
- * Explosive & Impulsive
- * Simple & Direct
- * Something Else

HEAT QUESTIONS

- * Who has earned my respect with their fighting skills?
- * Who wants to add more entertainment to my repertoire?
- * Who have I beat in a shoot fight?
- * Who will I never admit beat me?



GIMMICK MOVES

FINISHING MOVE: When you're booked to win a match, roll 2d6. On a 10+, you hit your Finisher clean. Gain +1 Audience. On a 7-9, it doesn't look real enough. Choose whether you injure your opponent to clinch the win, or let it ride—you lose any Momentum you have left, but keep the win.

On a Botch, it's too real! You get DQed (this overrides Creatives booking), lose -1 Audience and injure your opponent.

SHOOT FIGHTER: As long as you have a higher +Work than your opponent, they have to spend 2 Momentum to use the **INTERRUPT MOVE** instead of 1. You can choose to compare +Real if you have **MARTIAL ARTS TRAINING** or +Power if you have **YOU KNOW IT'S FAKE, RIGHT?** instead of +Work, on a match-by-match basis.

(and pick 1)

STARE DOWN: You are known for your intensity. Whenever you stare someone down, roll +Heat with them. On a 10+ pick two, on a 7-9 pick one: book the rest of the segment; gain +1 Heat with them; they gain +1 Heat with you; gain +1 Momentum. On a Botch, they no-sell it and take control of the situation.

STRETCHER: Your job is to break in fresh meat. Whenever you give someone an injury, roll +Real. On a 10+ pick 2, on a 7-9 pick 1: You face no repercussions backstage, you gain their respect, you gain +1 Heat with each other. On a Botch, that was *not* the plan and you're in real trouble.

CHALLENGE: Whenever you are able to book or add a stipulation to a match, you can make it a **CATCH-AS-CATCH-CAN MATCH**. Competitors can roll +Real for the Wrestling Move, and only gain Momentum when they roll on +Heat, +Real or +Work (see **PAGE 117** for details).

MARTIAL ARTS TRAINING: You use your real skills, when you want to. Take +1 Real (max +3).

YOU KNOW IT'S FAKE, RIGHT?: Take +1 Power (max +3). Whenever you make a Move that involves physically dominating your opponent to get what you want, you can roll +Power instead of the usual stat.

THE REST _____

INJURY ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

When you get injured, check an Injury Box. When injured, your opponent counts as having +1 to their stat you're comparing for the purposes of your **SHOOT FIGHTER** Move (+Work, +Real or +Power).

If you have 4 checks you can no longer compete.

AUDIENCE

The Shoot Fighter starts and resets to Audience +1.

ADVANCEMENT

Any Gimmick that can change to the Hardcore or Monster can change to the Shoot Fighter. The Shoot Fighter cannot change Gimmick to Jobber, High Flyer or Manager.

WRESTLING
MOVES

THE YOUNG ONE

You are a new trainee. You've toiled in the dojo and gone through strenuous physical conditioning. Finally, it's time to see how well you do in front of a live audience. Do you have what it takes to become the best?

THE BASICS

STATS

Look -1, Power -1, Real -1, Work -1; then add 1 to two Stats, or add 2 to one Stat.

HAILING FROM

- * Auckland, New Zealand
- * Kurihara, Japan
- * The Dojo
- * Elsewhere

ENTRANCE

- * Generic Rock
- * Generic Electronic
- * Generic Pop
- * Nothing

HEAT QUESTIONS

- * Who trains me in the dojo?
- * Who is too famous to associate with me?
- * Who sees my potential for stardom?
- * Who wants to make me quit?

The Young One always takes the opposite role of their opponent in a match, and can use that **ROLE MOVE**. If facing an Advanced Role they can choose their Basic Role, Babyface or Heel.



YOUNG ONE MOVES

GAIN EXPERIENCE: At the finish of the match, regardless of result, roll 2d6. On a 10+, you learned something valuable, Describe what you learned, and gain +1 Heat with your opponent. On a 7-9, it's not quite clicking yet. Next time you **GAIN EXPERIENCE**, add +1 (this bonus stacks, if you continue rolling 7-9). On a Botch, you learn the wrong lesson. Lose -1 Heat with your opponent.

YOUR WHOLE CAREER AHEAD OF YOU: You're here to hone your skills, not to sell tickets. You do not gain Advances from Audience (though you still have an Audience rating). Instead, **gain an Advance when you work a match with any opponent you have +4 Heat with**, and reset to +1 Heat immediately following.

(and pick 2)

NEW CHAPTER: You've wrestled elsewhere, but this is a bottom-up reinvention for you. Take +1 Work (max +3).

HELP AT RINGSIDE: Your job at ringside is to observe, help wrestlers hit their spots and physically aid them after hard matches. You may declare that you are ringside for any match. *If someone is injured in the match*, roll +Heat with them. On a 10+, your on-the-spot help is vital; they untick an Injury box and you gain +1 Heat with each other. On a 7-9, you did your job well, gain +1 Heat with them. On a Botch, you messed it up. Choose whether you reset your Heat with them to 0, or they take another Injury. *If no-one is hurt in the match*, add +1 to your **GAIN EXPERIENCE** bonus based on your observation of the match.

FAMILY NAME: You are the newest member of your family to enter the wrestling business, and expectations are high. Take +1 Look (max +3).

SHOW RESPECT: You believe wholeheartedly that your career will be built on showing deference to your elders. The first time in an Episode you lace up someones boots, volunteer for an unpleasant task or otherwise demonstrate your respect for a veteran, gain +1 Heat with them.

MECHANIC: You can be counted on to deliver a passable match. Spend 2 Momentum to book yourself into any non-title match (as an additional competitor, or to replace a wrestler who has already been pulled out of the match).

THE REST

INJURY ☐ ☐

When you get injured, check an Injury box. Add +1 to your **GAIN EXPERIENCE** bonus. If your opponent uses your injury against you in a match, they win the match immediately, regardless of booking.

When you have 2 checks you can no longer compete.

AUDIENCE

The Young One starts at 0 Audience and does not reset. Your Audience does not count towards Promotion advancement. You are not fired if you end an Episode at 0 Audience.

ADVANCEMENT

When you gain +4 Audience, or you've spent 3 Advances, you can change Gimmick. You can change to any Gimmick. No other Gimmick can change to the Young One.

ADDITIONAL NOTES ON THE YOUNG ONE

This Gimmick reflects a route to fame that rests on the premise that the performer is a legit beginner, very young or otherwise new to the world of professional wrestling. As such, the Young One is excepted from a number of the standard rules that apply to all other wrestlers. These are included in the Young One Moves and on the playsheet, but for additional clarity, here they are:

- ★ The Young One does not gain Audience when they end a match with +4 Heat with another wrestler; instead, they gain an Advance.
- ★ The Young One does not reset their Audience score when the Promotion resets. They are also not fired for having 0 Audience.
- ★ The Young One's Audience score does not count towards the average Audience for triggering the promotion reset.
- ★ The Young One does not pick a Role. They are always the opposite Role of their opponent during a match. If they are facing an Advanced Role, they can pick their Basic Role. Outside of the ring, they cannot use Role Moves.
- ★ The Young One does not get automatic Heat for their Role when they're introduced into play (because they don't have one); instead, when they start a match, they take +1 Heat with their opponent at that time.
- ★ When the Young One gains +4 Audience, or spends 3 Advances, they "graduate" to a full Gimmick. They can choose any other Gimmick to take on as they start their "real" career. They also pick their Basic Role at this time. They do not have to take an Episode off before returning in their new Gimmick.

THE MOVES

These are the new Moves presented in *International Incident*. Those most likely to be referenced are reproduced in full, and the rest are listed with page references to their full description. To download a set of standard printable reference sheets, visit ndpdesign.com/wwwrpg.

MYTHIC MOMENTS

When you have a Mythic Moment, use the Move results below *instead* of the standard result for that Move. See **PAGE 43** for full details.

WRESTLING: This maneuver goes into your highlight reel. Keep control of the match, and pick 1:

- ★ You are now booked to win the match.
- ★ You steal the show. Gain +1 Audience.
- ★ You do your job. Your opponent gains +1 Audience.
- ★ You upstage someone. Say who comes out to interfere with the match, and you both gain +1 Heat with each other.

BREAK KAYFABE: Your action becomes the symbol of *when things changed*. Pick 1:

- ★ You have complete creative control over your wrestler's storyline and booking until the next Audience reset. Your "Audience starts and resets to" number permanently goes up by 1 (Max 3).
- ★ You expose backstage politics. This must be acknowledged on screen in some way, and you tell Creative what you want to change in the promotion as a result of your revelation. Creative must honor this demand over the rest of the Episodes booking. Gain +1 Audience.

CUT A PROMO: Your promo becomes part of professional wrestling lore. Pick 1:

- ★ Simply referencing this promo counts for the **CHEAP HEAT MOVE**, for everyone on the roster, forever.
- ★ Your promo goes viral; everybody knows it even if they don't know you. Your "Audience starts and resets to" number permanently goes up by 1 (Max 3).
- ★ This takes you to the next level. Take an Advanced Role immediately (without spending an Advance or taking an Episode off).

FEAT OF STRENGTH: You've exceeded human capacity, and with style. Pick 1:

- ★ The fans go bananas, and your feat becomes imitated world-wide. Gain +1 Audience, and your "Audience starts and resets to" number permanently goes up by 1 (Max 3).
- ★ You become immortalized in the highlight reels of the company. Describe exactly how that looks. Gain +1 Momentum when you make your first appearance in every Episode from now on.

RUN-IN: You've perfectly captured the turning point in the storyline. Book the result of your run-in on the fly (this overrides Creative's booking). Both you and your target gain +1 Heat with each other and you pick 1:

- ★ It's turned to a blood feud. You can only be booked against each other until this thing is resolved.
- ★ You've gained the upper hand. You can pick any stipulations you want for your opponents matches until the next Audience reset (whether you're booked in them or not).
- ★ This is going to get settled right now. Creative books a match with your opponent as the new main event of the Episode. You and your opponent both gain +1 Audience.

WORK THE AUDIENCE: They'll never forget being in *this* crowd. Pick 1:

- ★ You turn them against your opponent – they can no longer Work the Audience or get Cheap Heat for the rest of this Episode.
- ★ You whip them into a real frenzy. Gain +1 Audience as they storm the ring!

LUCHA LIBRE ROLE MOVES

TÉCNICO: When you demonstrate your technical prowess in the ring or make a show of respect, spend 2 Momentum and pick 1:

- ★ gain +1 Heat with your opponent
- ★ an ally comes to your aid
- ★ win the match (regardless of booking)

RUDO: When you do something to save yourself at the expense of another in the ring or show disrespect for an authority figure or teammate, spend 2 Momentum and pick 1:

- ★ gain +1 Heat with your opponent
- ★ cause a legit injury
- ★ win the match (regardless of booking)

MATCH STIPULATIONS

CATCH-AS-CATCH-CAN: (PAGE 29) Under this stipulation, wrestlers can roll +Real for the **WRESTLING MOVE** when they use their legitimate grappling skills. Wrestlers only gain Momentum from the **WRESTLING MOVE** for rolling on +Work, +Real or +Heat (ignore any Momentum that would be gained from rolling +Power or +Look).

DEATH MATCH: (PAGE 20) When a Death Match starts, each competitor gains +1 Momentum. The match proceeds using the standard rules, with the following additions:

- * The element of danger (barbed wire, glass, etc) is called the **Bad Shit**. When someone is throw into the **Bad Shit** they can spend 1 Momentum to avoid it. This counts as the **INTERRUPT MOVE** if the wrestler going into the Bad Shit wants to take control of the match as a result.
- * Once each wrestler has paid 1 Momentum to avoid the **Bad Shit**, the cost goes to 2. Once each wrestler has paid 2, it goes to 3, and so on.
- * Once someone goes into the **Bad Shit**, they immediately take an Injury, gain (1+ Current Injuries) Momentum and take control of the match. If this is their last Injury box, the match ends in a no contest.

Whoever is booked to win a Death Match adds their +Real or +Audience to their **FINISHING MOVE**, whichever is higher.

After a Death Match, all participants roll +Real:

- * On a 10+, the wounds were mostly superficial or you're just tough enough that you can deal. Erase down to 1 Injury check if you have more than 1. Choose 1:
 - o you and your opponent both gain +1 Heat with each other
 - o appear in the next segment of the Episode and gain +1 Audience.
- * On a 7-9, you survived. Erase 1 Injury check if you have more than 1 (if you have only 1, you keep that Injury). Gain +1 Heat with your opponent.
- * On a Botch, you need serious medical care. You are evacuated to a local medical facility immediately and you must miss the next Episode as you recover (play a NPW if appropriate). When you return, you make the Over Move even if you're not in the Top Spot, and erase 1 Injury check.

EXHIBITION MATCH: (PAGE 40) In an Exhibition Match, the wrestlers display a spectrum of strategies to gain an advantage. Replace the standard **WRESTLING MOVE** result list with this one:

- ★ When you roll on a stat (+Work, +Power, +Look or +Heat), make a checkmark next to it.
 - o If you have a Move that allows you to roll +Real for the **WRESTLING MOVE**, check off one of the other Stats instead
- ★ On a 10+, you hit it great, retain control and choose whether you gain +1 Heat with your opponent or **cash in your checks for Momentum** (see below)
- ★ On a 7-9, you hit it pretty well, give your opponent control and gain +1 Momentum.
- ★ On a Botch, you get countered. Erase a check and your opponent gains control of the match.

The 10+ result introduces a new rule, **cashing in checks**.

- ★ When you cash in your checks for Momentum, gain Momentum equal to the stats you currently have checked, and erase all checks. You only check off each Stat the first time you roll on it during the match.
- ★ When someone makes their **FINISHING MOVE**, they roll +Stats Currently Checked.
- ★ After the match concludes, both wrestlers gain Momentum equal to the Stats they had checked at the end of the match (and erase all checks).

MOUNTEVAN'S RULES: (PAGE 29) Use the standard Wrestling Move, but replace the results list with this one:

- ★ On a 10+ you hit it great; retain control and pick one:
 - o gain +2 Momentum
 - o gain +1 Heat with your opponent
 - o you trick your opponent into taking a Public Warning
- ★ On a 7-9 you hit it pretty well; pick one:
 - o retain control and transition into the next sequence
 - o give your opponent control and gain +1 Momentum
- ★ On a Botch, give your opponent 1 Momentum and pick one:
 - o take a Public Warning and retain control of the match
 - o your opponent counters you and takes control of the match

In addition, when you make the **INTERRUPT MOVE**, you can choose to take a **Public Warning** *instead* of spending 1 Momentum.

- ★ When you take your third **Public Warning**, your opponent is awarded a fall.
- ★ If someone takes **3 Public Warnings**, it overrides Creative's booking for the match and their opponent gets the victory (and makes their **FINISHING MOVE** if this is the deciding fall of the match).

Mountevan's Rules matches are often also Two Out Of Three Falls matches, but can also be wrestled to one fall.

SPOTFEST: (PAGE 37) A Spotfest ignores two of the standard rules for wrestling matches:

- ★ At the beginning of the match, Creative does not book the finish. Rather, the wrestlers attempt to use their **FINISHING MOVES** to win the match, but can **INTERRUPT** or otherwise swerve, making unsuccessful attempts **false finishes** (see below).
- ★ At the end of the match, ignore the +4 Heat Audience gain rule (even if you have +4 Heat with your opponent, you *do not* gain an Audience).

This match proceeds using the standard **WRESTLING MOVE**. In addition, anyone in control can go for their **FINISHING MOVE** instead of making the standard **WRESTLING MOVE**. Any of their opponents in the match can **INTERRUPT** *after* a **FINISHING MOVE** is rolled and continue the match (the results of the **FINISHING MOVE** are still applied), making it a **false finish**. If a **FINISHING MOVE** is Botched, the **INTERRUPT** happens automatically without any Momentum spent, after the Botch effect is chosen or applied, and the match continues.

A successful **FINISHING MOVE** (any 7-9 or 10+ result) means that that wrestler wins the match *in addition* to its specific effects, unless **INTERRUPTED** or otherwise swerved immediately following the roll. Using other Moves to change the booking (like the **HEEL MOVE**) can give that wrestler control and the opportunity to hit their **FINISHING MOVE**.

The match ends once someone hits a **FINISHING MOVE** without it being **INTERRUPTED** or otherwise swerved, thus winning the match.

STRAIGHT MATCH: (PAGE 39) The winner of this match is not booked beforehand by Creative. Add this rule to determine the outcome:

- ★ When someone rolls a 10+ for the **WRESTLING MOVE**, this is the result list:
 - gain +2 Momentum
 - gain +1 Heat with your opponent
 - **go for the victory**

Going for a victory entails anything which would win the match per its stipulations. When you **go for a victory**, your opponent can use **INTERRUPT** or another appropriate Move to kick out or otherwise break the pin; if they cannot do so (or choose not to), then you roll for your **FINISHING MOVE** and abide by that result (remember that some **FINISHING MOVES** may end up with the other person winning the watch!)

If someone uses a Move that overrides Creative's booking before a pin attempt is made (such as the **HEEL** Move or making a **RUN-IN**), then that becomes the booking for the match, and can thus be overridden in turn by other Moves. Whoever's booked to win still needs to **go for the victory** to end the match and roll their **FINISHING MOVE**.

Creative still has the general oversight to swerve the match as it progresses through their use of Soft and Hard Moves.

TWO OUT OF THREE FALLS: (PAGE 13) This match proceeds per the standard rules, except Creative reveals the booking for each fall individually during the match. The wrestler who wins two falls first wins the match. Each fall can be swerved or overridden by Moves as normal. Once a fall is counted, the losing wrestler takes control of the match. A wrestler who's booked to win a multiple falls match only makes their **FINISHING MOVE** on the fall that wins them the match.

AUDIENCE MOVES

Creative announces which Audience Move is in effect for the Episode, if any. Use these summaries to decide on an Audience Move. See the referenced page for the full rules that apply when the Move is in effect.

BORED CROWD—PAGE 59

Why are these people even here? Use a Bored Crowd to represent the fallout from a relevant Botch or addition of a Promotion trouble from the last Episode.

DEVELOPMENTAL CROWD—PAGE 87

This crowd knows they're watching trainees, but they're fickle. They have low expectations, but once they get invested in a wrestler they stay invested.

HOSTILE CROWD—PAGE 55

This crowd is generally unhappy with what's been going on. A Hostile Crowd is appropriate for an Episode that takes place after some a big problem, such as a high-profile firing or a return to a town where the promotion bombed. Or, if there's been a run of success, use a Hostile Crowd to remind the wrestlers that they still have to put in the work.

INDIE CROWD—PAGE 56

This crowd is made up of die-hard fans who follow not just your promotion, but most of the important companies on the indie scene. An Indie Crowd is appropriate for a big homecoming show for a rising star, or to represent an audience in a smaller town or terrible venue. This is also an appropriate Audience Move for an Episode that features Guest Stars or other one-off or drop-in wrestlers.

OLD-SCHOOL CROWD—PAGE 57

This crowd is appropriate for a throwback feel, a small town off the beaten path or even as the normal audience for a territory-era promotion. Alternately, use the Old-School Crowd to represent a crowd that has never actually seen wrestling before.

STARSTRUCK CROWD—PAGE 58

This crowd is here to see the stars. A Starstruck Crowd is appropriate for a show in a newer or larger venue, the first Episode after the promotion gains overall Audience (and the wrestlers have all reset their Audience scores) or for a big event for a long-running promotion.

STAT BOOSTING MOVES

When using the Hunt Protocol (**PAGE 42**), wrestlers take Stat substitution Moves from other Gimmicks in order to raise their Stats, instead of simply spending an Advance. Here is a list of those Moves and the Gimmicks they come from, as of publication of this text. You should use the fictional description of the Move to guide your choice of which one best fits your wrestler. See ndpdesign.com/wwwrpg for downloads of all the current Gimmicks.

To GAIN +1 LOOK

"ALWAYS HAS A PLAN" (The Manager)

DYNASTY SCION (The Golden Boy)

EXÓTICO: You have a provocative act that challenges gender norms, making you stand out. (The Luchador)

FAMILY NAME: You are the newest member of your family to enter the wrestling business, and expectations are high. (The Young One)

FUNNY IS MONEY: (In addition to +1 Look, you can still **WORK THE AUDIENCE** even if you've Botched that Move earlier in this Episode) (The Clown)

STILEY: That sick style? You got it. (The Wasted)

WHAT A WEIRDO (The Hardcore)

To GAIN +1 POWER

"NATURALLY GIFTED" (The Athlete, can take this Move only once for either +Power or +Real)

STRONG LIKE BULL OX: You have the legendary strength of your people. (The Foreigner)

"WILL YOU LOOK AT THAT SIZE" (The Monster)

YOU KNOW IT'S FAKE, RIGHT? (In addition to +1 Power, whenever you make a Move that involves physically dominating your opponent, you can roll +Power instead of the usual stat) (The Shoot Fighter)

To Gain +1 Work

APEX PREDATOR: You were born to do this, and everyone knows it. (The Iconoclast)

"A REAL SHOOTER" (In addition to +1 Work, you roll +Work instead of +Real when you **WORK REAL STIFF**) (The Gatekeeper)

"LOOK AT THAT AMAZING ATHLETICISM" (The High Flyer)

NEW CHAPTER: You've wrestled elsewhere, but this is a bottom-up reinvention for you. (The Young One)

TECHNICAL EXPERT (The Technician)

To Gain +1 Real

BRAIN FOR THE BUSINESS (The Manager)

"FORMER AMATEUR CHAMPION" (The Technician)

HAM-N-EGGER (The Jobber)

HIGH PAIN TOLERANCE (The Hardcore)

MARTIAL ARTS TRAINING: You use your real skills, when you want to. (The Shoot Fighter)

"NATURALLY GIFTED" (The Athlete, can take this Move only once for either +Power or +Real)

RAISED IN THE BUSINESS: You come from a well-known wrestling family (The Boss)

WORLD CITIZEN: You are legitimately from your characters homeland and bring real details to your portrayal. (You cannot take this if you have the Foreigner Move **THIS ISN'T ME**) (The Foreigner)



ALL FEAR THE ATOMIC DROP

COLOPHON

This publication was created with Adobe CC on a MacBook Pro. The Avenir Next typeface was chosen for body text for its readability and humanistic proportions. Titles are set in Cassanet, a contemporary display typeface inspired by French Art Nouveau poster type. It was chosen for its resonance with special events arts graphics from the 1970s and '80s. Incidentals are from Zapf Dingbats and Phosphate.

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PREPARE TO TRAVEL WORLDWIDE AND EXPERIENCE:

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INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT

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