



Ringside: A History of Professional Wrestling in America

By Scott Beekman

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Despite its status as one of the oldest and most enduringly popular sports in history, wrestling has been pushed to the background of the current American sports scene. Most people today would have a hard time even considering wrestling (with some of its modern theatrics) in the same terms as track and field or boxing. But until the 1920s, wrestling stood as a legitimate professional sport in this country, and a widely practiced amateur one as well. Its past respectability may not have endured, but the advent of cable television in the 1980s offered the sport a renewed opportunity to play a determining role in American popular culture. This opportunity was not wasted, and wrestlers now assume places in politics and film at the highest levels. *Ringside*, the first work to fully examine the history of professional wrestling in this country, provides an illuminating and colorful account of all of the various athletes, entertainers, businessmen, and national outlooks that have determined wrestling's erratic route through American history.

This chronological work begins with a brief account of wrestling's global history, and then proceeds to investigate the sport's growth as a specifically American institution. Wrestling has continued to survive in the face of technological developments, scandals, public ridicule, and a lack of centralized control, and today this supremely adaptable entertainment form represents, in sum, an international industry capable of attracting enormous television and pay-per-view audiences, along with massive amounts of advertising and merchandizing revenue. *Ringside* focuses on the business of wrestling as well as on the performers and their in-ring antics, and offers readers a fully nuanced examination of the development of professional wrestling in America.

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Editorial Review

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The biggest question about pro wrestling is, Why, when it's one of the oldest and most consistently popular sports in history, does it maintain an unshakable reputation as marginal, disreputable, and sleazy? The book's author--a history professor and not a slavish fan of the sport--begins at the beginning, with a discussion of wrestling's worldwide history and appeal. Then he zeroes in on the U.S., with which pro wrestling has become inextricably linked. It's a story of sportsmanship, ego, celebrity, greed, and rivalry. It's just like any other sports story, in other words, and that's the book's central theme: for all its image problems, pro wrestling is, when you come right down to it, a sport like any other. An eye-opening reappraisal of a much-maligned sport, and (for wrestling fans) perhaps a much-needed vindication. *David Pitt*

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Review

"Beekman has written an excellent account of the history of professional wrestling from its origins in ancient civilizations to its current status as entertainment in the US. His meticulous research is evident in the copious documentation. He includes an insightful discussion of the business practices wrestlers and promoters have engaged in to preserve this pseudo-sport and make it one of the US's leading entertainment industries. Like Elliot Gorn's *The Manly Art: Bare-Knuckle Prize Fighting in America*, Beekman's historical view of the rise of professional wrestling looks at how the sport mirrors blue-collar society. Readers may have difficulty--as this reviewer did--keeping track of the names of individuals, organizations, and cartels that pepper this history. The book includes a notes section and a lengthy bibliography. Recommended. Lower-division undergraduates and above; general readers." - **Choice**

"Beekman sets out to generate some respect for professional wrestling by fully examining the history of the sport in the US. He untangles the myths and legends of professional wrestling without skimping on the entertaining stories and the larger-than-life personalities. He provides a brief account of wrestling's global history before investigating the sport as a specifically American institution, focusing on the business of wrestling as well as the performers and their antics." - **Reference & Research Book News**

"The book's author--a history professor and not a slavish fan of the sport--begins at the beginning, with a discussion of wrestling's worldwide history and appeal. Then he zeroes in on the U.S., with which pro wrestling has become inextricably linked. It's a story of sportsmanship, ego, celebrity, greed, and rivalry. It's just like any other sports story, in other words, and that's the book's central theme: for all its image problems, pro wrestling is, when you come right down to it, a sport like any other. An eye-opening reappraisal of a much-maligned sport, and (for wrestling fans) perhaps a much-needed vindication." - **Booklist**

"Beekman's book is thick with historical detail and archival evidence, which makes it a real resource for research into professional wrestling's enduring allure." - **TDR: The Drama Review**

Review

"This book is a wonderful ride through the bumpy, often murky world of professional wrestling. Scott Beekman has diligently researched the subject in order to take his readers on a tour of this much misunderstood form of sports entertainment. Though I have spent over 30 years studying the history of professional wrestling, I learned a great deal from this book. I highly recommend it to anyone who has any interest at all in the subject." (Mike Chapman, Executive Director, International Wrestling Institute and

Museum, Newton, Iowa)

Users Review

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Rebecca Clark:

The book Ringside: A History of Professional Wrestling in America give you a sense of feeling enjoy for your spare time. You need to use to make your capable far more increase. Book can being your best friend when you getting strain or having big problem along with your subject. If you can make examining a book Ringside: A History of Professional Wrestling in America to be your habit, you can get considerably more advantages, like add your personal capable, increase your knowledge about some or all subjects. You may know everything if you like wide open and read a book Ringside: A History of Professional Wrestling in America. Kinds of book are several. It means that, science book or encyclopedia or other folks. So , how do you think about this e-book?

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Allison Morales:

The book untitled Ringside: A History of Professional Wrestling in America contain a lot of information on it. The writer explains her idea with easy method. The language is very simple to implement all the people, so do not worry, you can easy to read the idea. The book was compiled by famous author. The author will bring you in the new period of time of literary works. You can actually read this book because you can please read on your smart phone, or program, so you can read the book in anywhere and anytime. In a situation you wish to purchase the e-book, you can available their official web-site as well as order it. Have a nice learn.

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