



## Professional Wrestling Hall of Fame 2018 Induction Weekend

Wichita Falls, TX (November 30, 2017) –

### Announcing the Professional Wrestling Hall of Fame's 2018 Induction Class

It's been an awesome year around Wichita Falls, TX with the revitalization of downtown, many new businesses have opened around the PWHF Museum, the community has become more involved with added events in the downtown area and the merchants are becoming excited about the tourists and locals that visit the museum in Big Blue! Even more exciting news are the two new categories added to the Hall of Fame, a Referee category and Executive Division which includes bookers, promoters, executives, and historians was added. With the PWHF being the only Hall of Fame where each inductee is voted in by a committee of their peers, this is an exciting time with addition of these categories to honor the men and women of the business of Professional Wrestling. The 2018 (17<sup>th</sup> Annual) Induction events are always the 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend of May, this year May 17, 18 & 19, 2018! Save the dates and be ready for one of the biggest weekends in wrestling history. Below, is the complete list of the 2018 Inductees; families and inductees who will be attending will be listed as they confirm so watch the website, [www.pwhf.org](http://www.pwhf.org).

#### **Pioneer Division (1865-1946)** – *two men are selected each year for this category*

**Fred Beell**, who was a German born, American wrestler who debuted in the late 1890s, retiring in 1919 to become a police officer.

**Ralph “Ruffy” Silverstein**, a champion wrestler both on the amateur mat and professionally. After retiring from the squared circle, he became a teacher and coach, where he passed away shortly before retirement 1977.

#### **Television Division (1947-1984)** - *two men are selected each year for this category*

**Eddie Graham**, started in 1947 at the age of 17 in Texas. He was also a promoter, booker and the NWA President 1976-1978. He remained involved in the business until his death in 1985.

**Ernie “The Cat” Ladd**, collegiate and professional football player who played for three pro-football teams, turned professional wrestler in 1961. He retired in 1986 due to knee problems.

#### **Modern Day Era (1985-Present)** - *two men are selected each year for this category*

**“Hacksaw” Jim Duggan**, recruited by Ohio State University to play football but choosing to play for Southern Methodist University (SMU) in Dallas where he met Fritz Von Erich. He debuted in 1979 vs. Gino Hernandez in Dallas. Now known around the world as the man who carries a 2x4 to the chants of USA and the “Hoooo” battle cry. You can still find him on the circuit today.

**Sting**, regarded as one of the greatest professional wrestlers of all time, with a legacy career spanning 3 decades in which he held 15 world championships.

#### **Territory, Colleague Division** (*originally the Colleague Division, adjusted to allow for inclusion of people within the wrestling business*)

**Hiro Matsuda**, a Japanese/American wrestler who debuted in 1957. He's also known as one of the best trainers of many of the great/legends we know today.

#### **International Division**

**Pampero Firpo**, who debuted in 1953 wrestling all over the world. An Argentine wrestler of Armenian descent who retired in 1986 to work for the United States Post Office.

### **Ladies Division**

**Toni Rose**, at the age of 7 she had decided she was going to be a professional wrestler. She went on to train with the Fabulous Moolah, debuting in 1965. During a match in Australia in 1969, she was injured and left partially blind in one eye. In the 70s, Rose held the NWA Women's World Tag Team Championship twice with The Fabulous Moolah.

### **Referee Division (NEW)**

**Joe Higuchi**, who started as a wrestler but quickly became a referee for the top companies in Japan. He quickly became known as one of the best refs in the business. He was also the exclusive caretaker to all the gaijin wrestlers who worked for All Japan Pro-Wrestling.

### **Tag Team Division**

**Red Bastien & Billy Red Lyons**, known as The Flying Redheads, they teamed throughout the late 60s and 70s. They held the NWA Texas Tag Team Championships. Years later Bastien would say they "were perfect for each other" as tag team partners.

### **Executive Division (NEW)** *(added to include Bookers, Promoters, Executives, Historians, Photographers, etc.)*

**Red Bastien**, debuting in 1956, Red broke into the business in the Midwest carnivals, fighting local tough guys and learning wrestling the hard way. He was an important piece in every part of wrestling, becoming a very successful booker and promoter.

### **About the Professional Wrestling Hall of Fame and Museum:**

The PWHF is a 501c3 nonprofit organization, founded in 1999 in upstate NY by Mr. Tony Vellano with its first Induction in 2002. The PWHF mission is to continue the preservation of the complete history of professional wrestling as we honor the men and women that put their lives on the line countless times for the entertainment of others. Through the organization's efforts and resources, the PWHF supports and promotes the education of professional wrestling and the sport by being involved in community activities and working to build relationships around the globe to continue the education of the wrestlers, fans and visitors on the complete history of Professional Wrestling.

For information on the Professional Wrestling Hall of Fame and Museum (PWHF), to purchase tickets and/or media access regarding the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Induction events, please contact the Professional Wrestling Hall of Fame and Museum or PWHF Board of Directors President Cowboy Johnny Mantell. Sponsorships, tradeshow booths and program ads are available now. This is a great way to support the true legends, Hall of Famers and the history of this sport!

Phone: (844) 307-7943, (940) 264-8123

E-mail: [info@pwhf.org](mailto:info@pwhf.org) Website: [www.pwhf.org](http://www.pwhf.org)

Mailing Address: 712 8<sup>th</sup> St, Ste 100, Wichita Falls, TX 76301