



Pro-Pain Pro Wrestling

Hardcore Wrestling, Professional Wrestling Promotion,
Extreme Championship Wrestling

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Lambert M. Surhone,
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Lambert M. Surhone, Mariam T. Tennoe,
Susan F. Henssonow (Ed.)

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Wrestling

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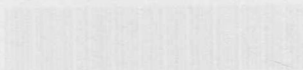
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Pro-Pain Pro Wrestling

Acronym	3PW
Founded	February 15, 2002
Style	American Wrestling
Headquarters	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Founder(s)	The Blue Meanie Jasmin St. Claire
Owner(s)	The Blue Meanie (2002-2005) Jasmin St. Claire (2002-2005)
Website	3PWrestling.com ^[1]

Pro-Pain Pro Wrestling, or **3PW**, was a hardcore professional wrestling promotion based around Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It ran many shows from the former ECW Arena.^[2] Following the close of Extreme Championship Wrestling, many former ECW veterans, such as Raven, The Sandman, Al Snow and Sabu, made frequent appearances in the promotion. Independent wrestlers including Rockin' Rebel, Monsta Mack, Ruckus, Joey Matthews, A.J. Styles and Lo Ki also competed in the promotion.^[3]

History

The promotion was founded by The Blue Meanie and his partner Jasmin St. Claire, and they were later joined by former Extreme Championship Wrestling promoter Tod Gordon.^[4] In the beginning, 3PW brought in wrestling like Dusty Rhodes, Terry Funk, Abdullah The Butcher and Bam Bam Bigelow to add to the roster.^{[5] [6] [7]} The first 3PW shows ran at the ECW Arena, but when XPW Owner Rob Black signed an exclusive lease to the arena,^[8] 3PW moved to The Electric Factory.

In 2004, 3PW had a show to see a Blue World Order reunion with Blue Meanie and Stevie Richards.^[3] The next month, 3PW hosted an NWA Florida X Division Championship match between Roderick Strong and Mikey Batts.^[9]

In December 2004, however, problems began to surface. 3PW booker Tod Gordon resigned, walking out during a 3PW event following an argument with 3PW officials when there was apparently no money to pay wrestlers, security and other staff for the event.^[10] In April, Jasmin St. Claire was officially replaced as CEO by Richard McDonald.^[11] Rockin' Rebel took over as booker, but he and the Blue Meanie soon became involved in a business dispute with Pro Wrestling Unplugged owners Johnny Kashmere and Trent Acid.^[12] When St. Claire stopped receiving her royalty checks, she responded by putting the promotion up for sale in a one-day auction on Ebay.com although, no one responded to the \$180,000 asking price.^[13] Blue Meanie attempted to resurrect the company, but was unable to find an investor. The company's final show was on June 18, 2005.

3PW titles

3PW World Heavyweight Championship

Wrestler	Times	Date	Place	Notes
Gary Wolfe	1	August 24, 2002 ^[14]	Philadelphia, PA	Won an 8-man tournament to become the 1st 3PW Champion.
Sabu	1	October 19, 2002 ^[15]	Philadelphia, PA	
Gary Wolfe	2	December 28, 2002 ^[16]	Philadelphia, PA	
Terry Funk	1	June 21, 2003 ^[17]	Philadelphia, PA	
Justin Credible	1	August 16, 2003 ^[18]	Philadelphia, PA	
Raven	1	November 22, 2003 ^[19]	Philadelphia, PA	
Joey Matthews	1	April 17, 2004 ^[20]	Philadelphia, PA	
Christopher Daniels	1	August 21, 2004 ^[21]	Philadelphia, PA	
Slyk Wagner Brown	1	February 19, 2005 ^[22]	Philadelphia, PA	
Amish Roadkill	1	May 21, 2005 ^[23]	Philadelphia, PA	
Titles became defunct when the promotion closed down.				

3PW Tag Team Championship

Wrestler	Times	Date	Place	Notes
Slyk Wagner Brown & April Hunter	1	August 21, 2004 ^[21]	Philadelphia, PA	Won a battle royal to become 1st champions.
Pitbulls 2004 (Gary Wolfe & Mike Kruel)	1	October 16, 2004 ^[24]	Philadelphia, PA	
Wolfe was stripped of the title due to a backstage incident.				
Mike Kruel & Simon Diamond	1	February 19, 2005 ^[22]	Philadelphia, PA	Diamond was awarded the title to replace Wolfe
Title vacated on March 29, 2005 when Kruel left 3PW.				
Blackball'd (Rockin' Rebel & Greg Matthews)		May 21, 2005 ^[23]		Won a battle royal to win the vacant titles.
Titles became defunct when the promotion closed down.				

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External links

- 3PW title histories (<http://www.bodyslamming.com/3pw/3pwpickatitle.html>)
- 3PW at Online World of Wrestling (<http://www.onlineworldofwrestling.com/results/3pw.html>)
- CageMatch.de - Pro Pain Pro Wrestling (<http://www.cagematch.de/?id=8&nr=16>) (**German**)

Hardcore wrestling

Hardcore wrestling is a form of professional wrestling that eschews traditional concepts of match rules in favor of matches that take place in unusual environments, using foreign objects that are not normally permitted.^[1] Although hardcore wrestling is a staple of most wrestling promotions, where they are often used at the climaxes of feuds, some promotions (such as Big Japan Pro Wrestling and Combat Zone Wrestling) specialize in hardcore wrestling, with many matches performed in this manner.

Hardcore wrestling became acknowledged as a major wrestling style first in Japan with promotions such as Frontier Martial-Arts Wrestling and W*ING. It then became successful in America with Extreme Championship Wrestling. The World Wrestling Federation / Entertainment capitalized on the success and introduced the WWF Hardcore Championship in the 1990s. The WWF soon began to turn the matches into comedy skits, illustrating the ridiculousness they involved. Hardcore contrasts with traditional mat-based wrestling, where solid technical skills are preferred over stuntwork, blood, and sheer shock value.

A derogatory term for this style, *garbage wrestling*, is attributed to Japanese wrestler Giant Baba who used it originally to describe a style of wrestling which required little wrestling athletic ability and often involved no wrestling at all, which is rather common in much of hardcore wrestling.

History

Early history

As professional wrestling entered the mid 20th century, promoters and performers looked for ways to heighten audience excitement. Blood was used, and the advent of the now-cliché "no holds barred" match marked the beginning of what is now known as hardcore wrestling. Wrestlers such as "Wild Bull" Curry, "Classy" Freddie Blassie, Dory Funk, Sr. and Giant Baba were among those who introduced a bloody brawling style which caught on in Japan and the American South. New match types were devised that resembled street fighting, such as matches which were held in a cage, Texas Deathmatches which incorporated weapons, and Lights Out matches which were 'unsanctioned' and took place after the rest of the scheduled card, once the house lights had briefly been turned off to signify the end of the event. The National Wrestling Alliance had Brass Knuckles championships in the Texas and Florida territories, dating from the 1950s. (The Texas title was taken by World Class Championship Wrestling when it split away.)

Brawling continued to evolve and grow in popularity in America through the 60s, 70s and 80s. The Detroit territory was home to The Sheik, Abdullah the Butcher and Bobo Brazil, and featured long, bloody brawls. The Puerto Rico territory featured Carlos Colón, The Invader and Abdullah, and introduced fire as an element of violence. The Memphis territory featured Jerry Lawler, Terry Funk, Eddie Gilbert and Bill Dundee and introduced the empty arena match and fighting among the crowd into the concession stands, improvising attacks with whatever appliances could be found. More specialties such as ladder matches, scaffold matches and Dog Collar matches were introduced. The NWA eventually instituted a World Brass Knuckles Championship, which was active in the Tennessee territory from 1978 to 1980.



A hardcore wrestling match

1990s

In 1989, Frontier Martial-Arts Wrestling (FMW) was founded in Japan, the first promotion dedicated largely to the wild brawling style. In the early 1990s, the Puerto Rican promoter Victor Quiñones arrived in Japan, being invited to FMW as the special manager. FMW escalated the violence to legitimately dangerous levels, with barbed wire ropes, timed explosives, exploding wire ropes, and 'land mines'. The federation featured many future North American stars, and became very popular worldwide.

Soon after, in the United States, two independent promotions had brief but significant runs, serving as prototypes for ECW. The Philadelphia-based Tri-State Wrestling Alliance held occasional supercards that featured big name stars among their own local talent, and showcased wild bloody main event brawls with Abdullah the Butcher, The Sheik, Jesse James Sr. and others. The National Wrestling Federation (formerly known as Continental Wrestling Alliance) was based in New York state. Both TWA and NWF featured Larry Winters and DC Drake, who engaged in a long blood feud.



A fire deathmatch

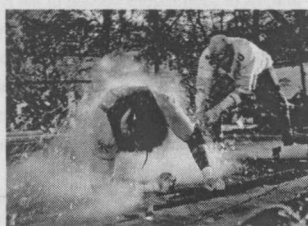
The two promotions ended about the same time, and NWA Eastern Championship Wrestling took their place, with many of the same wrestlers and venues. Eddie Gilbert was the initial booker, and was replaced a few months later by Paul Heyman. After splitting off from the NWA, the company changed its name to Extreme Championship Wrestling, and became the leading independent federation in North America. ECW coined the term 'hardcore wrestling', but its usage there was slightly different than it is used today. In ECW, 'hardcore' referred to a strong work ethic, high levels of effort, dedication to the fans, and lack of fluff or filler. Their level of violence rarely equaled that of the

Japanese promotions.

A new gimmick, breaking wooden tables, was introduced to ECW through Sabu, nephew of The Sheik. Sabu had developed a gimmick of throwing himself through a propped-up table in Japan in order to entertain the crowd and get his character over as a wild and possibly insane man. He then started to put opponents through tables, a relatively safe spot which looked and sounded devastating. He brought it with him to ECW, where it became the focus of a feud involving multiple teams. The table spot became a staple of ECW events, and has become so commonplace that it is now incorporated into otherwise non-hardcore matches in almost every promotion.

In Japan, hardcore promotions sprang up around the country, including Wrestling International New Generations W*ING, the International Wrestling Association of Japan and Big Japan Pro Wrestling. New elements included fluorescent light tubes, scattered thumb tacks, flaming ropes and live piranhas.

In the mid-1990s, FMW eventually held female hardcore matches at the suggestion of Megumi Kudo. The first one was held between Megumi Kudo and Combat Toyoda as a deathmatch where the ring ropes were replaced with electrified barbed-wire with explosives.^[2] After the match, many female wrestlers had various brutal deathmatches in FMW with barbed-wire ropes, barbed-wire barricades, exploding barbed-wire barricades, electrified/exploding barbed-wire ropes, broken glass, or mixes of these stuffs.^[3]
^[4] ^[5] These matches often included various dangerous weapons such as barbed-wire wrapped chains, flaming barbed-wire baseball bats, and sickles. Most of the wrestlers who competed in these deathmatches, including some non-FMW rosters such as Shinobu Kandori, Lioness Asuka, and Mayumi Ozaki,^[3] ^[5] were sent to the hospital after these matches.



A wrestler strikes another wrestler with a bundle of light tubes

ECW's popularity led to the major American promotions of the 90s, World Championship Wrestling and World Wrestling Federation, creating divisions devoted exclusively to 'hardcore' wrestling (which mostly amounted to no-disqualification weapons matches). The divisions were at first largely centered around ECW alumni such as Mick Foley, Terry Funk, Raven and Sandman. In the WWF, ladder matches, which had become more common, were now combined with tables and weapons matches to create Tables, Ladders, and Chairs matches.

2000s

ECW also had imitators starting in its later years, Xtreme Pro Wrestling and Combat Zone Wrestling, which carried on ECW's violent style after it went defunct, and have pushed the limits even farther. As the fad grew, it gained detractors who pointed out that weapons and shock value were being used to mask poor wrestling skills.

Hardcore wrestling has fallen out of favor in the major American promotions; the last major hardcore title was the WWE Hardcore title, which merged into the Intercontinental Title in 2002. In 2006, the MTV-affiliated promotion/show Wrestling Society X featured hardcore wrestling, but the show was cancelled after one season.

Rules

The main rule behind hardcore can have various connotations. Thus, hardcore wrestling is often separated into distinct "levels" based on the graphic nature of the match:

- A **24/7 Title Match** describes a situation where a hardcore wrestler must defend the title at all times. The match (and the title) can be won by pinfall at any time and in any place in the presence of a referee. The match has no fixed location, timeframe or even opponent. This is one of the most severe forms of hardcore match given its unpredictability. This was initially a self-imposed stipulation of Crash Holly's WWE Hardcore Championship but afterward became a general rule of the title. During the time Holly defended his title, he did so in such locations as his hotel room, at the airport and even in the supermarket.
- A **No Disqualification match** tends to be less severe, with action taking place mostly inside the ring. Usage of foreign objects is typically minimal, with run-ins (another form of disqualification) being frequently used. The match is often contested between valets (where they may lack wrestling skills), or between a wrestler and a valet (in which a wrestler is expected to run-in and defend their valets). Because of the low-key nature, few consider a no-disqualification match as hardcore, although there is no semantic difference.
- A **Street Fight** uses the various elements of "No Holds Barred" and "No Disqualification" but does not allow pinfalls or submissions outside of the ring.
- A **Deathmatch** tends to be the most severe, with a heavy emphasis on the usage of foreign objects to induce bleeding. The types of foreign objects and the nature of the foreign objects are used so as to be extremely graphic and violent in nature. In more recent years, some state athletic commissions in the US have cracked down on the types and frequency of weapons used in these matches.
- A **Hardcore match**, sometimes referred to as a **Raven's Rules** match, tends to be somewhere in between, with emphasis on the brutality of the attacks and the extreme physical toll on the wrestlers involved. WWE dubs the Hardcore match as an "*Extreme Rules*" match (Instead of a name of Hardcore match), and "*Belfast Brawl*" when the match features the Smackdown superstar, Finlay. While less graphic, in kayfabe terms the "rules" are the same in a hardcore match as in a deathmatch; that is, there are no rules beyond a 3-count pin for victory.
- Combat Zone Wrestling's **Cage of Death**, which is held yearly, implements the use of multiple weapons attached to the cage walls. The usual weapons are there, as are unusual ones, such as weedwhackers.
- A **staple gun match** can and have taken many forms. Just about any singles or melee match type can be adapted to staple gun matches but the common thread in each one is that wrestlers try and staple something to their opponent. The occurrence of this event is more common on the independent wrestling circuits like the IWA Mid-South King of the Deathmatch or Hardcore wrestling circuits staple matches are commonplace. Rules vary for each tournament or wrestlers association but the underlining concept is stapling something to the body of the

other wrestler. In Outcast Xtreme Wrestling (OXW) events the first person to staple seven dollar bills to the their opponent wins.^[6] In the Combat Zone Wrestling league the number of bills is 13,^[7] they call their staple gun matches the, "Unlucky 13 Staple Gun".^[8] International Wrestling Association (IWA) has their own version called the "Unlucky Seven Staple Gun Match".^[9] The popular midget wrestling league run by Puppet the Psycho Dwarf and his merry band of Half-Pint Brawlers' main event is called the, "\$21 Staple Gun Match".^[10] In this version each little person is armed with a stapler and as the match goes on audience members throw bills into the ring. The first person to staple 11 bills to the other wrestler body wins.^[10] When asked about the event Puppet said "Getting a dollar bill stapled to your tongue leaves a bad taste in your mouth."^[10]

Common weapons

Hardcore matches tend to emphasize the use of certain weapons or the physical toll on the wrestlers, and thus many euphemisms for these matches are employed. The almost kayfabe-breaking accessibility of some of these weapons -- often under the ring -- to wrestlers has led to the noun "plunder" in reference to them. For example, Street Fights and Bunkhouse Brawls are hardcore-style matches which emphasize that wrestlers need not be in typical wrestling gear when they are battling, while the No Holds Barred match emphasizes the no-disqualification rule. In World Wrestling Entertainment, Extreme rules matches are hardcore-style matches that emphasize the spirit of its former competitor, Extreme Championship Wrestling. Other euphemisms, such as the Good Housekeeping match and Full Metal Mayhem, emphasize the use of certain foreign objects as being legal (the former with kitchen implements and the latter with metallic objects). In a Fans Bring the Weapons match, wrestlers fight with "weapons" that members of the audience bring to the venue; this was popularized in the United States by ECW and is now a specialty in Combat Zone Wrestling (CZW).

Hardcore championships

In promotions where Hardcore wrestling is present, a Hardcore title may come into existence. This form of title is defended under hardcore rules, and title changes are frequent. Some hardcore titles may have their own unique rules. For example, the WWE Hardcore Championship was defended under 24/7 rules, meaning it could be defended and won at anytime, provided a referee was present to make the pinfall. The OVW Hardcore Championship had a trashcan passed from wrestler to wrestler rather than a belt. The GHC Openweight Hardcore Championship has a unique stipulation in that if a challenger who is outweighed by the champion survives 15 minutes, he wins the match and the title.

See also

- Backyard wrestling

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Professional wrestling promotion

A **professional wrestling promotion** (also **federation** or **fed**) is a company or business that performs regular shows involving professional wrestling. '**Promotion**' also describes a role which entails management, advertising and logistics of running a wrestling event (*see promoter*).

Currently, the major wrestling organizations in North America are World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE), Total Nonstop Action Wrestling (TNA), Ring of Honor (ROH), and the National Wrestling Alliance (NWA), (all based in the United States), and the Mexican lucha libre promotions Consejo Mundial de Lucha Libre and Asistencia Asesoría y Administración. There are federations throughout Europe and in Japan, South America, Puerto Rico, Australia, New Zealand and the rest of the Caribbean.

There are also a number of small independent wrestling organizations that are upstarts or the creations of former wrestlers from the bigger promotions. Some of the smaller organizations include Jersey All Pro Wrestling, Border City Wrestling, Combat Zone Wrestling, CHIKARA, AZW Hawaii and Ohio Valley Wrestling.

Structure


Most promotions are self-contained, organized around one or more championships and do not acknowledge or recognize the legitimacy of other promotions' titles. Others, such as the NWA, act as an umbrella organization which governs titles that are shared among multiple promotions.

Major promotions have a permanent roster of talent under exclusive contract to them. Independent promotions may have contracted workers but are just as likely to utilize free agents who are not under exclusive contract with any promotion. Some wrestlers may work in several independent promotions at the same time

See also

- Independent promotion
- List of professional wrestling promotions

The Arena (Philadelphia)

	
Former names	Viking Hall (1986-1993) ECW Arena (1993-2001) XPW Arena (2002-2003) Alhambra Arena (2004-2009) The Arena (2009-2010)
Location	7 West Ritner Street Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 19148
Opened	May 14, 1993
Owner	Stein & Silverstein (1986-present)
Capacity	1,400 ^[1]
Tenants	
South Philadelphia Viking Club (1986-1993) Extreme Championship Wrestling (1993-2001) Xtreme Pro Wrestling (2002-2003)	

Asylum Arena is a former warehouse and current multi-purpose venue used primarily for professional wrestling, boxing, and mixed martial arts events. It is located in South Philadelphia on the corner of South Swanson Street and West Ritner Street.^[2]

History

Freight warehouse (1970s-1986)

The facility was originally a warehouse in the 1970s.^[3] Rail tracks next to the building allowed trains to drop off freight for storage and then continue on to their destinations. The tracks were eventually paved over to become an extension of West Ritner Street, allowing West Ritner Street to intersect with South Swanson Street.

Viking Hall (1986-1993)

Elias Stein and Leon Silverman of the law firm Stein & Silverman purchased the warehouse in 1986.^[4] The facility was given the name **Viking Hall** when the South Philadelphia Viking Club, a local chapter of mummers, began utilizing it.^[5] They used the building for storage and to rehearse for the annual Mummers Parade. Through the mid-1990s, the Viking Club would also stage midnight bingo games at the venue to raise funds for their organization.

ECW Arena (1993-2001)

The building gained worldwide recognition when it served as **ECW Arena**, home of professional wrestling promotion Extreme Championship Wrestling (ECW) from 1993 until the promotion's demise in 2001.

The weekly ECW television series *Hardcore TV* prominently showcased both the venue and South Philadelphia fans during the promotion's early years. The venue and its patrons were crucial in elevating ECW from a local promotion to a national promotion.

ECW broadcast *Barely Legal*, their first live pay-per-view event from the venue in 1997. Immediately following this broadcast, a blown transistor caused the building to lose power.^[6] To this day, *Barely Legal* remains the only wrestling event to be broadcast live on television from the venue.



Shane Douglas throwing down the NWA World Heavyweight Championship and declaring himself ECW World Heavyweight Champion in August 1994.

XPW Arena (2002-2003)

Following the demise of Extreme Championship Wrestling in 2001, many wrestling promotions ran shows at the venue. Controversy arose when Xtreme Pro Wrestling (XPW) signed an exclusive lease with the venue in late 2002, renaming the building **XPW Arena** and preventing other promotions from utilizing it.^[7] XPW went out of business in 2003, and the lease was voided.

Alhambra Arena (2004-2009)

The building's name was officially changed to **New Alhambra Sports & Entertainment Center** in 2004, and was later shortened to **New Alhambra Arena** in 2006 and **Alhambra Arena** in 2008. The name was suggested by J. Russell Peltz, who began co-promoting professional boxing cards at the venue with Joe Hand Promotions in 2004. It paid homage to the original Alhambra Movie Theater in South Philadelphia that hosted boxing in the 1950s and 1960s.^[8]

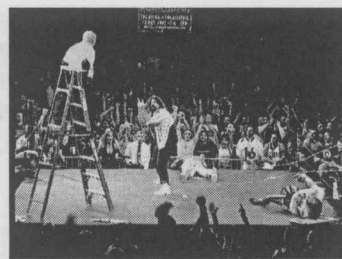
In March 2005 the venue became home to *Wrestle Factory*, the wrestling school for Chikara.^[9]

In June 2005, an unofficial ECW reunion show called *Hardcore Homecoming* drew a sell-out crowd and set a record gate for the venue with \$135,000 in ticket sales.^[10]

The ECW brand of World Wrestling Entertainment ran a house show at the venue in June 2006, with tickets for the event selling out in under four minutes.^[3]

Footage shot at the venue in February 2008 during a *Combat Zone Wrestling* show was used in the film *The Wrestler*.^[11]

The band *New York Dolls* played a concert at the venue on Valentine's Day in February 2008.^[12]



Mick Foley making a surprise appearance at *Hardcore Homecoming* in June 2005.

The Arena (2009-2010)

Joe Hand Promotions announced in January 2009 that after a five year partnership, it would stop promoting boxing cards at the venue.^[13] The venue was then renamed to **The Arena** by general manager Roger Artigiani.^[14]

In February 2009, the venue began hosting regular television tapings for the Ring of Honor series *Ring of Honor Wrestling*.^[15]

Dragon Gate USA filmed their first pay-per-view event, Enter The Dragon at the venue in July 2009.^[16] Enter The Dragon was later awarded Best Major Show of 2009 by *Wrestling Observer Newsletter*.

In September 2009, independent wrestler Matthew Lowry died following a Combat Zone Wrestling training session at the venue where he collapsed from a brain hemorrhage.^[17]

Matrix Fights drew a sell-out crowd with the venue's first major mixed martial arts card in February 2010, featuring Cole Konrad in the main event.^[18]

Asylum Arena (2010-present)

Roger Artigiani announced in October 2010 that mixed martial arts group Asylum Fight League had purchased the naming rights to the venue and renamed it **Asylum Arena**.^[19]

Promotional history

Boxing

These boxing promotions have held shows at Asylum Arena.^{[20] [21]}

Promotion	First show	Last show	Total shows	Status
Dee Lee Promotions	August 24, 2007	August 24, 2007	1	Active
Don Chargin Productions	July 20, 2007	March 7, 2008	2	Active
Golden Boy Promotions	March 3, 2006	May 7, 2010	3	Active
Joe Hand Promotions	July 20, 2007	May 7, 2010	3	Active
KEA Boxing	February 26, 2010	April 30, 2010	2	Active
Peltz Boxing Promotions	May 14, 2004	November 14, 2008	21	Active
Power Productions	September 23, 2005	April 9, 2010	5	Active
Prime Time Entertainment	August 24, 2007	August 24, 2007	1	Defunct
Shalyte Entertainment	July 10, 2009	July 10, 2009	1	Active
Top Rank	January 11, 2007	November 14, 2008	2	Active
Xtreme Productions Inc.	January 16, 2009	March 13, 2009	2	Active

Wrestling

These professional wrestling promotions have held shows at Asylum Arena.