

ALL-STAR WRESTLING (Dusek) 1971: A Year in the Life

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Territory Fact Sheet

(full-page, full-color version at the end of this PDF)

PRO WRESTLING TERRITORY FACT SHEET ALL-STAR WRESTLING (DUSEK)

SAMPLE WEEK						
MON 4/19						
TUE 4/20	EMMETSBURG IA					
WED 4/21	SIOUX CITY					
THU 4/22	NELIGH NE					
FRI 4/23	GRAND ISLAND NE					
SAT 4/24	ОМАНА					
SUN 4/25						

Montana	North Dakota		Lake Superior
CANAL TO SERVICE STREET		Minnesota	
70	South Dakota	o Minneapolis Wis	Lake Huro
Rough Myoming Wyoming	Great Plains	Iowa	Milwaukee Detro
Salt Lake City	Nebraska UNITED	5	
O Denver Utah	S T A T E S	Kansas City	St Louis Cincinnati
LEGEND MOST FREQUENTLY OTHER TOWNS	Oklahoma Oklah	Missouri oma City Arkansas	Kentucky Tennessee Anglaschian
MOST FREQUENTLY OTHER TOWNS REGULARLY		The state of the s	Atlanta

TOP SINGLES	TOP TAG TEAMS
THE CLAW	REGGIE PARKS & STAN PULASKI
THE GREAT KUSATSU	JERRY MILLER & JOHNNY
OX BAKER	VALENTINE JR.
RAMON TORRES	ALBERTO TORRES &
COWBOY BOB ELLIS	COWBOY BOB ELLIS

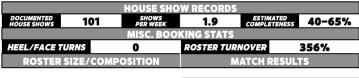
TOP RIVALRIES

COWBOY BOB ELLIS vs OX BAKER

BILLY RED CLOUD VS GREAT KUSATSU

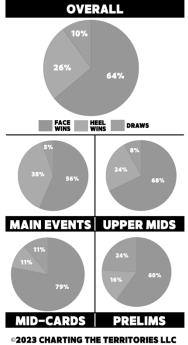
RAMON TORRES VS GREAT KUSATSU

KUSATSU	
TITLE CHAN	GES
MIDWEST HEAVYWEIGHT	3
MIDWEST TAG TEAM	7
·	



AVERAGE # OF WRESTLERS: 7.2





Rankings

This is a list of the "most pushed acts" in the territory during the year.

RANKINGS FOR ALL-STAR WRESTLING (Dusek) - 1971

- 1 REGGIE PARKS & STAN PULASKI
- 2 THE CLAW (TOM ANDREWS)
- 3 THE GREAT KUSATSU
- 4 OX BAKER
- 5 RAMON TORRES
- 6 JERRY MILLER & JOHNNY VALENTINE JR.
- 7 COWBOY BOB ELLIS
- 8 ALBERTO TORRES & COWBOY BOB ELLIS
- 9 BILLY RED CLOUD
- 10 JERRY MILLER

Wrestlers are ranked based on their week-by-week **SPOT Rating** as well as the total number of weeks they were in the territory during the designated time period

based on research as of 5/1/2023 - chartingtheterritories.com

Wrestler Profiles by David Gibb

THE CLAW

(written by David Gibb, author of "How to Ace Your Comeback")

At a glance, Tom Andrews was one of the many masked heels who terrorized wrestling's territories in the '60s and '70s, but if you combine the accomplishments of his various hooded personas, he was truly one of *the* masked wrestlers.

Andrews' first documented matches took place during 1965 in the Phoenix, Arizona area. Within a year, he was at least occasionally performing as a masked heel. From '67 to '69, he made the rounds in various territories under his own name, but his primary base was Los Angeles, where he was The Masked Raider.



The Claw (r) with Beauregarde, 1970

In 1970, the five-year veteran found his mature voice as The Claw in Vancouver and Portland. As his moniker implied, Claw was a master of the claw hold, with his grip strength touted by manager Beauregard. He wore a distinct checkerboard print mask with a tiki-inspired face that stood out, even in a landscape filled with masked heels.

Based on the strength of Andrews' breakout run in the Pacific Northwest, promoter Joe Dusek brought The Claw to his territory – which encompassed parts of Nebraska, South Dakota, and Iowa – in November of 1970. In less than 90 days, The Claw was reigning Midwest Heavyweight Champion and half of the Midwest Tag Team Champions with partner Rock Rogowski (better known as Ole Anderson). The Claw was immediately the area's top heel, winning his singles title from Stan Pulaski, a popular star across the Midwest for going on fifteen years, and capturing the tag titles by dethroning the team of Pulaski and regional stalwart Reggie Parks.

The Claw's early luck ended abruptly, however, as Pulaski and Parks recaptured the tag titles a month later, and Tom, still the Midwest Heavyweight Champion, broke his leg shortly after that. The injury could've been a disaster, both for Tom and the promotion, but they pivoted The Claw into a managerial role for his partner Rogowski and Ox Baker.

On the 24th of April, The Claw, healed up enough to defend the title, faced Stan Pulaski in a no disqualification steel cage match, which ended when a frustrated Claw whipped Pulaski into the cage repeatedly until he was "knocked unconscious."

With The Claw having put the squeeze on the area's top star, another hero stepped up for three matches in Omaha: Cowboy Bob Ellis. The series saw Ellis sandwich a non-title win in a Texas tornado match (which was what Texas Death matches were called in this territory) between two frustrating disqualifications engineered by the masked man.

In the smaller towns, Claw faced rotating babyfaces including Jack Pesek, Jerry Miller, Red Bastien, and Dr. "Big" Bill Miller, generally being disqualified or suckering the good guy into a DQ to set up rematches. Around that same time, a young newcomer named Alberto Torres (one of three wrestling brothers alongside Enrique and Ramon) was being pushed up the card, with his logical endpoint being The Claw.

On June 13th in Verdigre, Nebraska, the two men stood across the ring from each other in a tag match. Torres was paired with Cowboy Ellis and The Claw had taken former charge Ox Baker as a partner. Torres had an organ injury (possibly a ruptured pancreas) going into the match and while attempting to tough through the pain, exacerbated internal injuries. After the match, Torres was hospitalized, and he passed away four days later.

Many wrestling fans have heard that story, and they probably also heard that Torres' death was attributed to Ox Baker's heart punch. The truth is that Torres' death was retroactively credited to Baker after the death of Ray Gunkel in 1972. In the Dusek territory, where and when the tragedy happened, it was The Claw who got the credit/blame for killing Alberto Torres.

Since Alberto was part of a wrestling family, the logical way to capitalize on the tragedy was to bring one of his brothers in to seek revenge. The feud between The Claw and Ramon Torres was a massive box office success, with their first match in Omaha on July 24th drawing 5,597 fans, more than double the average house for the city that year. Given the heat of the moment, Ramon could be excused for getting carried away and hitting Claw with a stool, earning a disqualification.

Two weeks later, Ramon would avenge his brother in front of 4,120 people, defeating the Claw, winning the Midwest Heavyweight Championship, and unmasking his brother's "killer" to the delight of the fans.

According to Andrews himself, it was his decision to lose his mask and wrap up for the Duseks. He had always wanted to be a big main event star, but he had never wanted to be a "murderer." To his credit, Tom walked away from the wrong kind of heat in the late summer of 1971 to figure out what was next.

That next run turned out to be in the Gulas territory, replacing Billy Garrett as Jim Starr's partner to become one half of the team known in some places as The Interns and in other places as The Medics. By leaving The Claw behind, Andrews might've thought he was running away from the beyond-personal, beyond-tasteless side of wrestling, but the best/worst was yet to come for the masked man.

Within weeks of Andrews donning his new hood, The Interns and their manager Dr. Ken Ramey would be involved in one of the most controversial moments in wrestling history, painting black babyface Bearcat Brown white on television in Birmingham.

JERRY MILLER

(written by AI Getz)

Like so many journeymen of the 1960s and 1970s, not much is known about the man who wrestled professionally as Jerry Miller. He spent most of his career using that ring name (which appears to have been his legal name), though he also used the name Duke Miller in some places (or simply "The Duke" in Amarillo). His earliest documented matches appear to have been in Milwaukee in 1955, though by the time the decade ended he had migrated to the southeast. Miller became a staple in the region, with stints for Gulas, McGuirk, Florida, Georgia, and many other territories in the southern half of the U.S.



Life in the pro wrestling circuit in the 1960s was tough if you weren't a top star. Some years, Jerry Miller would work for several different territories, coming and going every couple of months. In 1964, for example, he started the year in Oklahoma/Louisiana before heading up north to work for the WWWF in late January. Five months later, he was in Florida for a stint that lasted just over a month. His next stop was East Texas for two and a half months. In early November, he headed to Tennessee/Alabama to work for Gulas. It was nearly impossible for a wrestler who hadn't already "made it" to establish roots and settle down in any one place.

After more than a decade plying his trade, Miller seemed to find a moderate amount of success in LeRoy McGuirk's territory, frequently teaming with Jim Osborne (the future Doctor X) and holding a couple of secondary singles titles. After finishing up that run in May 1971, Jerry headed up north to work for Joe Dusek's All-Star promotion based in Nebraska. Positioned as a babyface, he first found himself in the middle of the cards facing opponents such as Treach Phillips and Ali Ben Khan (Jack Armstrong). By late June, he started to get pushed up the cards, finding himself across the ring from the territory's top heels. He got a shot at Midwest Heavyweight champion The Claw in July but came up short in his quest to unseat the masked titleholder. A subsequent move to the tag team ranks would yield much better results.

Miller tried out a variety of partners in July and August, including Don Muraco, Cowboy Bob Ellis, Mr. Kleen, and Tony Russo. The partner that stuck, however, was a man just beginning his second year as a pro, Johnny Valentine Jr. (better known to fans as Greg Valentine). The youngster had spent much of his first year barnstorming numerous territories with Don Fargo, portrayed as his "younger brother" Johnny. The two spent June in western Canada working for Stu Hart and then went their separate ways, with Don going to Gulf Coast and Johnny/Greg splitting his time between Heart of America (which typically ran a reduced schedule during the summer months) and Dusek's territory.

The promotion's Midwest Tag Team titles had been vacant since mid-June, after Alberto Torres (who held the titles with Cowboy Bob Ellis) passed away. While no details are available as to exactly *how* Jerry Miller & Johnny Valentine Jr. ended up with the titles, they were billed as champions beginning in late August. They successfully defended the titles throughout September and October against a variety of teams, often comprised of various combinations of The Great Kusatsu, Ox Baker, Tor Kamata, and Ali

Ben Khan. They even faced Larry Hennig & Lars Anderson on a couple of occasions in Omaha, taking the AWA imports to a double disqualification one week before losing to them in what seems to have been a non-title rematch.

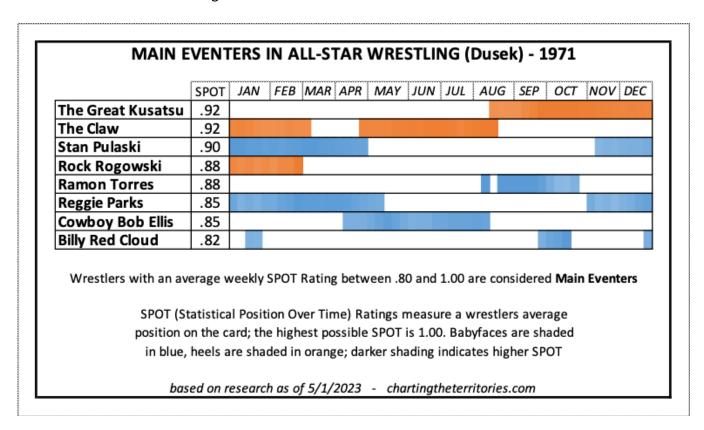
Valentine left the territory in November, going down to Gulf Coast to reunite with Don Fargo. The Midwest Tag Team titles ended up around the waists of Kusatsu & Baker, with the most likely date of the title change being November 11th (with Billy Red Cloud taking the place of the departed Valentine). Miller stayed through the following summer, then returned to McGuirk's territory in the fall of 1972.

While Joe Dusek's territory was on the decline (it would be defunct by late 1972, with Dusek becoming a local promoter for Verne Gagne in Omaha and Sioux Falls), it served a purpose for wrestlers like Jerry Miller. After a decade spent mostly in the mid-cards, he had nonetheless become good enough in the ring to warrant a higher spot. Moving to a territory like Dusek's enabled him to become a slightly bigger fish in a small pond. This would set him up for a more prominent role in some of the larger territories he would go on to work for, even a top spot in smaller territories like Gulf Coast, where he would have a very successful run in the mid-70s. In November 1976, Miller returned to Championship Wrestling from Florida for the first time in a dozen years.

In this era, hitting the road was a fact of life for wrestlers, and sometimes not everybody made it to the next town. As reported in the Tallahassee Democrat on November 22, 1976: "Jerry F. Miller, 48, of Tampa, died when his car was involved in a two-car crash Saturday four miles south of Riverview on State Road 64."

Roster

All the wrestlers who completed regularly in the territory are listed below, grouped into categories based on their average position on the cards using a metric called Statistical Position Over Time (SPOT for short). After each category, you will find links to articles/biographies/obituaries for many of the wrestlers from SLAM Wrestling.



The Great Kusatsu https://slamwrestling.net/index.php/2008/06/21/japans-great-kusatsu-dead-at-66/
The Claw (Tom Andrews) https://slamwrestling.net/index.php/2020/09/02/tom-andrews-better-known-under-a-mask-dies/
Stan Pulaski https://slamwrestling.net/index.php/2012/10/04/multi-named-eric-pomeroy-vachon-pulaski-kalmikoff-dead-at-79/
Rock Rogowski (Ole Anderson) https://slamwrestling.net/index.php/2021/10/08/reggie-parks-talented-wrestler-star-beltmaker-dies/

Ox Baker	.79	JAN	 	7 //	MAY	,,,,,,,	, , , ,	7.50	SEP	,	DEC
ohnny Valentine Jr.	.77										
Benny Ramirez	.75										
Alberto Torres	.70										
erry Miller	.66										
Blackjack Daniels	.66										

Ox Baker https://slamwrestling.net/index.php/2014/10/20/everyones-got-an-ox-baker-story/

Johnny Valentine Jr. (Greg Valentine) https://slamwrestling.net/index.php/2011/07/07/before-he-was-the-hammer-valentine-was-johnny-fargo/

in blue, heels are shaded in orange; darker shading indicates higher SPOT

based on research as of 5/1/2023 - chartingtheterritories.com

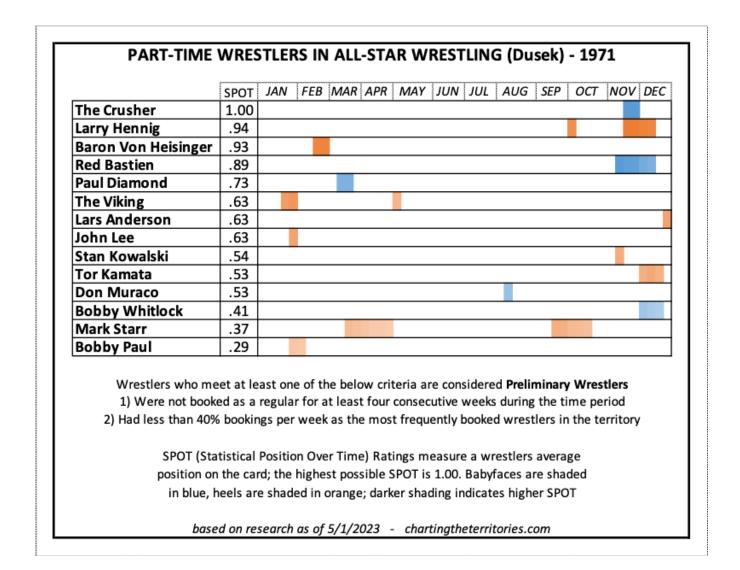
Blackjack Daniels https://slamwrestling.net/index.php/2012/07/29/black-jack-daniels-83-was-an-awa-mainstay/

MID	MID-CARDERS IN ALL-STAR WRESTLING (Dusek) - 1971												
	SPOT	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	ОСТ	NOV	DEC
Jack Pesek	.56												
Ali Ben Khan	.50												
Treach Phillips	.49												
Mr Kleen	.49												
Tony Russo	.41												

Wrestlers with an average weekly SPOT Rating between .40 and .60 are considered Mid-Carders

SPOT (Statistical Position Over Time) Ratings measure a wrestlers average position on the card; the highest possible SPOT is 1.00. Babyfaces are shaded in blue, heels are shaded in orange; darker shading indicates higher SPOT

based on research as of 5/1/2023 - chartingtheterritories.com



The Crusher https://slamwrestling.net/index.php/2005/10/23/the-crusher-dead-at-79/

Larry Hennig https://slamwrestling.net/index.php/2018/12/06/larry-the-axe-hennig-dead-at-82/

Red Bastien https://slamwrestling.net/index.php/2012/08/11/red-bastien-dead-at-81/

Paul Diamond https://slamwrestling.net/index.php/1999/10/24/slam-wrestling-canadian-hall-of-fame-paul-diamond/

Stan Kowalski https://slamwrestling.net/index.php/2017/10/21/stan-kowalski-wrestler-veteran-patriot-fundraiser-friend-to-many/

Tor Kamata https://slamwrestling.net/index.php/2007/07/26/tor-kamata-dead-at-70/

Don Muraco https://slamwrestling.net/index.php/2014/05/15/don-muraco-surfs-a-wave-into-pro-wrestling-hall-of-fame/

Event Center

A look at a week's worth of house shows in the territory.

Video available on the Charting the Territories channel on YouTube https://youtu.be/ohMluLGOC10

3/67			
BR	MON 4/19		
SVE	TUE 4/20	EMMETSBURG IA	The Royal
WY CO.	WED 4/21	SIOUX CITY	STEVE
VICTO	THU 4/22	NELIGH NE	SID COOP
THAN	FRI 4/23	GRAND ISLAND NE	The second second
	SAT 4/24	ОМАНА	
	SUN 4/25		

Feuds

Here is a chart listing the biggest feuds in the territory using a metric called Feud Length in Weeks (FLW for short).

	FLW	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	ост	NOV	DEC
Cowboy Bob Ellis vs Ox Baker	1.99												
Billy Red Cloud vs The Great Kusatsu	1.50												
The Great Kusatsu vs Ramon Torres	1.33												
Feuds with an FLW S	core be		. 2.00								proxim	ate	

The progression of feuds often differed from city to city. This led to each market having its own narrative. If a main event drew well the first time out in some cities, they could build to a rematch the following week. In other cities where it didn't draw well, they may choose to have that first match end in a clean finish and present a different main event the following week.

Below are examples of how some of the bigger feuds played out in select cities.

Cowboy Bob Ellis vs Ox Baker in Lincoln

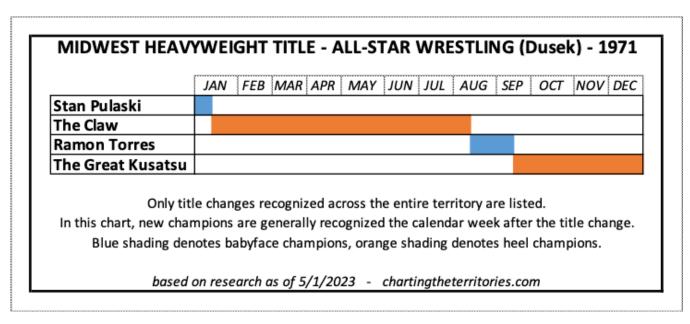
- 7/3 Texas tornado match (Texas death match): According to the newspaper report, Ellis "took five falls to Ox Baker's one". Given the rules for the match (where falls don't count), this makes it unclear as to the actual result of the match.
- 7/17 Ellis won by reverse decision. Baker initially won the match but referee Tom Novak "reversed his decision because Baker had hidden a foreign object (allegedly brass knuckles) in his gym trunks.

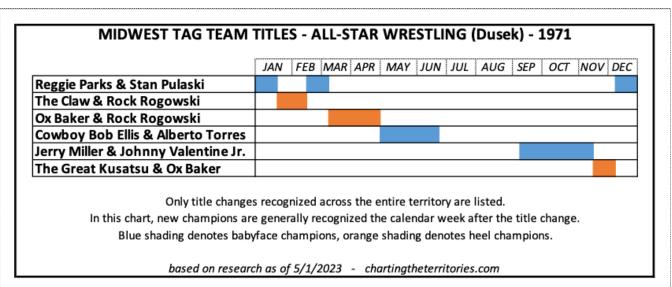
The Great Kusatsu vs Ramon Torres in Omaha

- 9/11 Midwest title: Kusatsu defeated Torres to win the title; in the third fall, Kusatsu "unleashed some karate chops to the throat of Torres" but the referee "failed to see the illegal blows."
- 9/18 Midwest title: Torres won by disqualification when Kusatsu tossed him over the top rope in the third fall.
- 9/25 Midwest title, steel cage match, no disqualification: Kusatsu won.
- 10/30 Midwest title: Torres won after taking the third fall by disqualification when Kusatsu refused to break a choke hold.

Title Holders and Histories

The following charts show the chronological progression of title holders in the territory. Looking at them this way gives you a better feel for the length of title reigns, and how they may have differed between babyface champs and heel champs.





Charting the (AWA) World Champ

In 1971, AWA World Heavyweight champion Verne Gagne made 2 known appearances in the territory. Both matches were title defenses.

- 10/9 Omaha: Verne vs The Great Kusatsu. Kusatsu defeated Gagne. He won the second fall by disqualification; thus Verne retained the title.
- 12/18 Omaha: Verne vs The Great Kusatsu. Gagne won the first fall with a dropkick in 9:30. Kusatsu won the second fall in 18:45. Gagne pinned Kusatsu in the third fall to win the match at the 29:05 mark.

Taking Attendance

In this section, we look at any attendance (and/or gate) figures we have. Unless otherwise noted, these numbers come from newspaper reports. They should be taken with several grains of salt.

We have attendance figures for a total of 21 cards in 1971 including 20 from Omaha and 1 from a spot show.

They ran house shows in Omaha 27 times during the year (plus two one-match shows at a shopping mall). The average attendance for the 20 shows we have attendance figures from in the city was 2,390.

Omaha (main events listed for the 7 cards that drew over 2,500 fans)

1/22 drew 1,843

2/6 drew 3,316 (Stan Pulaski vs The Claw, Midwest title, lumberjack match)

2/13 drew 1,914

3/3 drew 1,250

4/10 drew 1,832

4/24 drew 2,626 (Stan Pulaski vs The Claw, Midwest title, steel cage match, no disqualification)

5/8 drew 1,785

5/21 drew 1,816

7/10 drew 2,441

7/24 drew 5,597 (Ramon Torres vs The Claw, Midwest title)

8/7 drew 4,120 (Ramon Torres vs The Claw, no disqualification, no time limit)

8/21 drew 2,650 (Ramon Torres vs Ox Baker, Midwest title)

9/11 drew 1,805

9/18 drew 1,925

10/16 drew 2,120

10/30 drew 1,585

11/13 drew 2,572 (Crusher & Red Bastien vs Larry Hennig & Lars Anderson, AWA World Tag titles)

11/27 drew 2,780 (Crusher & Red Bastien vs Larry Hennig & Lars Anderson, AWA World Tag titles)

12/4 drew 1,620

12/18 drew 2,220

David City, NE drew "about 1,000" fans on 8/12

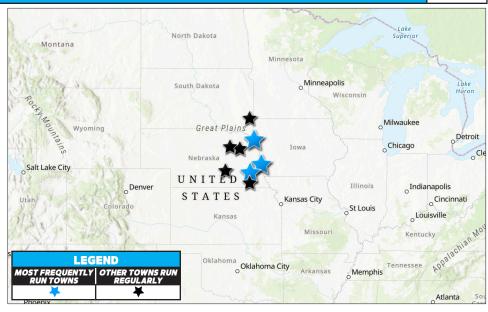
House Show Lineups and Results

We have shared our newspaper clippings for 101 known house shows in the territory during the year with wrestlingdata.com to aid them in providing comprehensive information.

To see the cards and all available results, visit

ALL-STAR WRESTLING (DUSEK)

SAMPLE WEEK							
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SAT 4/24	ОМАНА						
SUN 4/25							



TOP SINGLES	TOP TAG TEAMS
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THE GREAT	STAN PULASKI
KUSATSU	JERRY MILLER
OX BAKER	& JOHNNY VALENTINE JR.
RAMON TORRES	ALBERTO TORRES &
COWBOY BOB	COMBON BOB
ELLIS	ELLIS

TOP RIVALRIES

COWBOY BOB ELLIS vs OX BAKER

BILLY RED CLOUD vs GREAT KUSATSU

RAMON TORRES VS GREAT KUSATSU

TITLE CHANGES						
MIDWEST HEAVYWEIGHT	3					
MIDWEST TAG TEAM	7					



AVERAGE # OF WRESTLERS: 7.2



ORIGINAL DESIGN: NICK BOND @THEN1CKSTER

