

the SCARS of the SUPERSTARS

The battle-hardened men and women of the WWE locker room wear their wounds as badges of honor. And while very few of these marks came as a result of in-ring combat with their fellow grapplers, the scars all have important stories to tell about these Superstars and Divas — stories that you, and they, are most likely never to forget.

AS TOLD TO JOHN MIHALY & MAX BAKKE PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARIUS BUGGE

“As you know, my reputation as a bare-knuckle fighter often precedes me—it’s how I made my way in the world before being signed to WWE. That being said, due to the ‘less-than-legal’ nature of that particular sport, I’m not so inclined to give too many details about how this 12-inch scar came into my possession. These are the types of things that tend to happen when you’re fighting in an ex-communist country. As you might imagine, the scar didn’t come from the actual fight—which I won soundly—but from the getaway afterward. Let’s just say the local authorities weren’t too thrilled with the outcome, or the fact that I was leaving with ‘their’ money. All told, I somehow managed to keep my winnings, though I have a constant reminder of why I’ll never visit that country ever again.”



Wade Barrett

William Regal

“Scars add character. I think scars on your face can make you register more with the public. It never hurts to have a few. The scar on my ear is my most recent. I received it this past June in a match against Dean Ambrose down in FCW. He removed the cover to the turnbuckle, a move that any proper villain would employ, and smashed the side of my head against the exposed metal. The trainers put some glue on it to seal it shut, but it didn’t take, so then I had to get stitches. I refused to go to the hospital, though. The one on my lip

came from The Boogeyman, of all people. That one punch required stitches inside and outside my mouth. It still feels numb to this day. But at least I never had to suffer the indignity of being fed any of his worms. Odd, that I, of all people, missed out on that particular honor. And, as for the one on my eyelid...well, I received it courtesy of Finlay in our Parking Lot Brawl Match on Nitro all the way back in 1996. He never mentions it, but it does tend to act up a bit whenever the weather starts to get cold.”



Sin Cara

“I was wrestling a match in Guadalajara, Mexico, and went to hit a dive onto my opponent. But at the last second, he moved out of the way, and I crashed and burned and broke my clavicle. It took me three months to recover. I was supposed to be out for eight months, but with my desire to get back into the ring and the right therapy and training, I was able to get cleared in three. I have a steel plate and screws there now. Today, when I see this scar, it reminds me of how I sacrifice my body for the WWE Universe. And it makes me proud to know that’s what I’m willing to do each and every time I get into the ring.”

Kofi KINGSTON

“I used to race BMX bikes with my friends back in fifth or sixth grade. One day I went off a curb; now, it was the best curb in the neighborhood, and I decided to attack it. I got so much air, and by the time the bike came down, and I almost fell off the bike, so I didn’t know what happened, only that the bike had hit my leg. I was just relieved that I didn’t fall, but when I looked at my friends, their eyes were wide open. I looked down at my leg, and there was a huge chunk, the size of a fist, gone from my leg. The pedal had taken a chunk out of my leg. It was disgusting. It was something straight out of a movie. It didn’t hurt until I saw it. Then I had to go and get it stitched up, but it was definitely devastating. It put me on crutches for a while, and ruined my summer.”





Jimmy Uso

“It happened four or five years ago. I was out with a friend of mine and this individual was harassing a girl all night at a lounge we were chillin’ at. Throughout the night, I asked the guy to be cool about it and he said ‘alright.’ Of course, he was intoxicated. Later in the night, it was still going on, so I walked up to him and told him, ‘This is getting ridiculous.’ I was trying to be the bigger man and not start something out of nothing. Out of nowhere, someone swings a bottle. I didn’t see it coming. The bottle hits me, and it

broke right across my neck. That’s how this scar came about. I didn’t know it was that serious until I woke up in the hospital already all stitched up. Then it made me realize—how stupid! It was the wrong place at the wrong time. The doctor told me he could literally put his whole index finger into my neck. It had me straight for seven or eight months. I never went out because the doctor said my life was an inch away from being taken away. That shook me for a while. I didn’t do anything and stayed at home, and I kind of grew up then.”



Jey Uso

“I was playing middle linebacker in college. It was a regular day at a regular football practice. I went head-on with this running back. He was 255 pounds and he ran a 4.5 in the 40—just a big dude. And it was just me and him. I went low to hit him in the hip. As I went down, his knee was coming up. It was Knee vs. Shoulder, and my shoulder sort of gave out, and I flipped his ass. But I didn’t feel it. I got up, and it was just a tweak. I came out and went right back in. This was the beginning of spring practice. Then I played with it all through the season. I came out twice during games because I had to pop it back in. I had surgery on my right shoulder the day after the last game of the season. The surgery was tough to overcome. The recovery process took a year and a half because I had torn all my tendons, my rotator cuff and the back of my bicep. It wasn’t just from one particular impact, it was the whole season.”

Johnny CURTIS

“Mine comes from an FCW match about two years ago. It was Derrick Bateman and I versus Hunico and Epico in a Ladder Match. We did two nights in a row and the second night, the ladder spreader became bent during the match and it was very sharp. I think I took a hip toss into the ladder in the middle of the bout, and that metal bracing stuck into my arm and cut into it pretty deep. That’s one of the reasons I wear an armband as part of my gear. I remind myself how lucky I am when I get in the ring because you never know when you can get seriously hurt.”





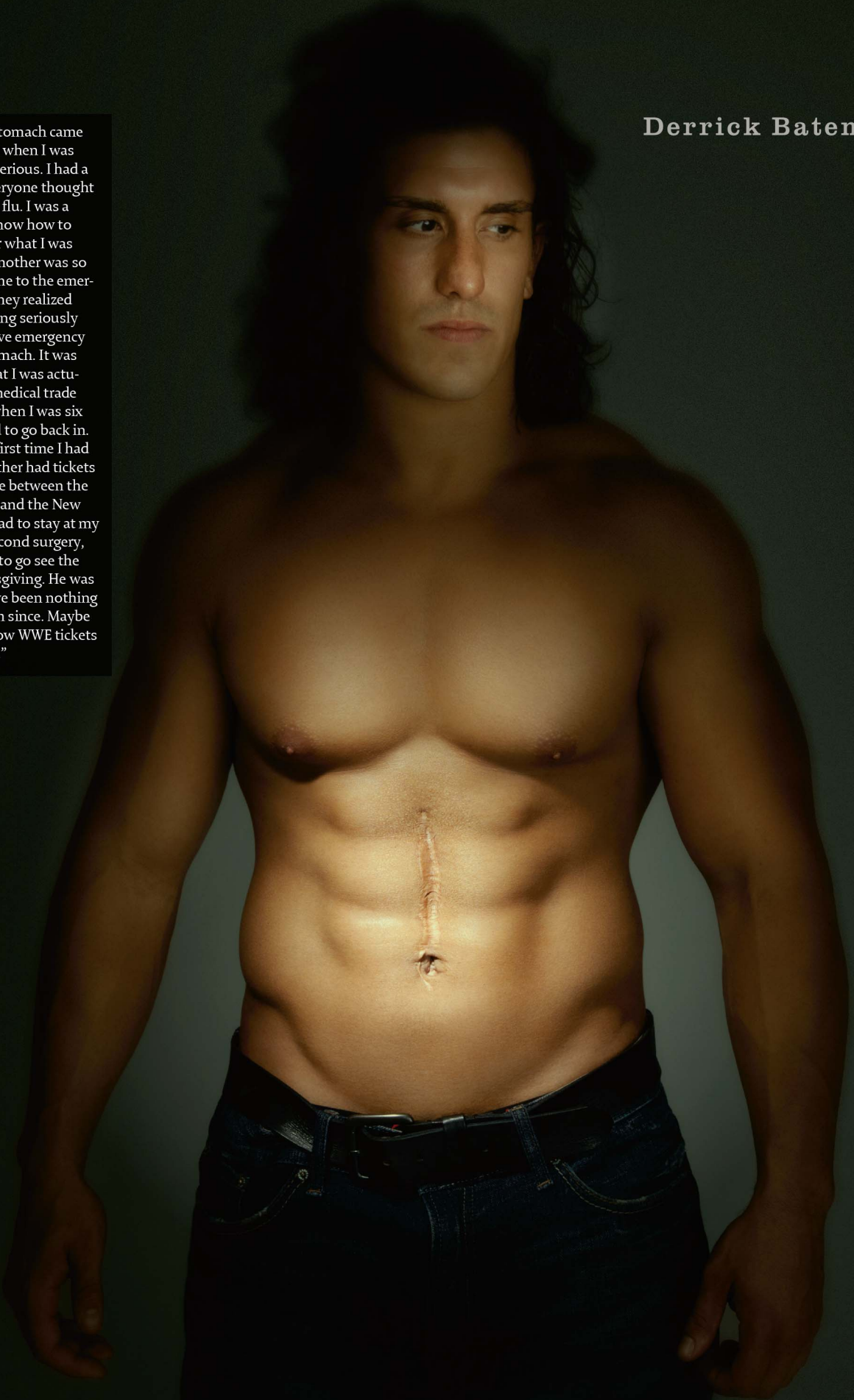
Beth Phoenix

“Two times in my career I have been taken out of action to have surgery. The first time was when I broke my jaw shortly after my debut. The second time was when I blew out my ACL in my knee and, because of that injury, I ended up losing my Women’s Championship in my hometown of Buffalo. The knee injury was pretty devastating, because it was a long road to winning it, and I only held the championship for three weeks. Both times were very disheartening because they happened during the biggest highs in my professional career. I just achieved my dream of making it to WWE, and it was all taken away from me. I had to start from scratch. It was the biggest heartbreak ever. I worked so hard to earn that, and I thought I was on such a roll, but my dreams were completely shattered in my hometown. I had to start from absolute scratch because it was a really tough surgery.”



Curt Hawkins

“I’ve basically been obsessed with wrestling since the age of five, but at a certain point, I realized that I couldn’t become a Superstar until I was old enough. So I applied myself to other things, and I wound up playing football. I made varsity my sophomore year, which in my high school, never really happened. I played middle linebacker. I wound up making a big tackle, taking a runner out of bounds right where the chains were. I slid across the chains and came up looking like a mess. I didn’t even realize it. I’ve seen photos of the game, and my forearm looks gross. It was just like wrestling: your adrenaline is going full tilt. I wish I had more scars, though—they’re souvenirs that you never lose.”



Derrick Bateman

“This scar on my stomach came from surgery I had when I was three. It was very serious. I had a bleeding ulcer. Everyone thought I was sick with the flu. I was a child, so I didn’t know how to express my pain or what I was feeling. My grandmother was so worried she took me to the emergency room, and they realized there was something seriously wrong. I had to have emergency surgery on my stomach. It was such a rare find that I was actually featured in a medical trade magazine. Then, when I was six years old, they had to go back in. Funny story—the first time I had the surgery, my father had tickets to the playoff game between the Cleveland Browns and the New York Jets. But he had to stay at my bedside. On my second surgery, he gave up tickets to go see the Browns on Thanksgiving. He was a good dad, and I’ve been nothing but trouble for him since. Maybe a couple of front-row WWE tickets will make up for it.”