

TOMORROW'S
CHAMPIONS



10
TO WATCH:

TOMORROW'S
WORLD

CHAMPIONS
TODAY!

Mark our words—in the next few years,
at least one of these young Superstars will emerge
as a show-stealing main-eventer. But who'll
be the first to hit mega-Superstardom?



"I'm a rare combination of charisma, athletic talent and extreme work ethic. That's helped me get a little bit further."

JOHN MORRISON

In five years, what will be different about WWE?

I think that the youth movement, the other Superstars on the cover with me, are going to be main-eventers and the top players in WWE, but only if they can stick to it and remain injury-free.

Tell us about your dream match. How do you see it going down?

I see John Morrison versus Shawn Michaels at the main event of *WrestleMania XXVI*. To spice it up a bit, let's say that the special guest enforcer is Chuck Norris, and K-Fed appears on guest commentary.

What first moment in WWE really stands out for you thus far?

Appearing in a video game for the first time. I was in the video game ad for the Best Buy circular in the Sunday paper. Everyone

I knew had it. My grandma kept calling and saying, "Oh my God, this is John!" It was funny because it was the computer game image of me, not a real picture, but it still looked enough like me so that everyone recognized it.

Yourself excluded, which young Superstar has the best chance of making it to the top?

As big of a jerk as he is, The Miz is up there. In my opinion, the mark of a good Superstar is somebody who is emphatically himself. And he is 100-percent The Miz all of the time. As annoying and obnoxious and loud-mouthed and bad-breathed and close-talking as he is, those are all reasons why people watch television and think, "Man I don't like that guy." It's because he's not acting. He really is *that* annoying—and that's going to take him to the top.



THE MIZ

Who told you that you'd never get this far in your career?

Everybody. But not one person has said he was wrong yet. However, JBL once took me aside and said, "You know what? You're doing an absolutely amazing job, you're doing great, a hell of a lot better than I ever thought you would. But you've still got a lot of work ahead." Then he walked away. What he was really saying was, "Work your ass off kid, step up, become a top guy and take my spot, I dare you."

Tell us about your dream match. How do you see it going down?

It'll probably never happen because my opponent likes to go by the name Dwayne Johnson these days...but my dream is to go up against The Rock. Growing up, he was my favorite, by far, because of the way he talked. I would love to have a *'Mania* moment with him. However, I don't think I'm at that level yet, and I don't know if The Rock is ever going to come back.

What first moment in WWE really stands out for you thus far?

Seeing my action figure was the coolest thing. I love walking into Toys"R"Us and seeing only one left. That's a good day. But I have that fear of going into CVS someday and seeing my figure in the \$2.99 sale bin.

Yourself excluded, which young Superstar has the best chance of making it to the top?

I think the person going all the way is the person I carried to the top as a tag team partner. John Morrison has talent, but he learned a lot from me. He'll always be my No. 2.



TED DiBIASE

How long until you win the big one?

If I had to put a time frame on it, I'd say within a year...if I get my opportunity. This is my dream; this is what I've been working for, and that's the ultimate goal, the next step. I'm doing exactly what I set out to do. So I'm very happy with where I am, but I don't plan on stopping there.

Tell us about your dream match. How do you see it going down?

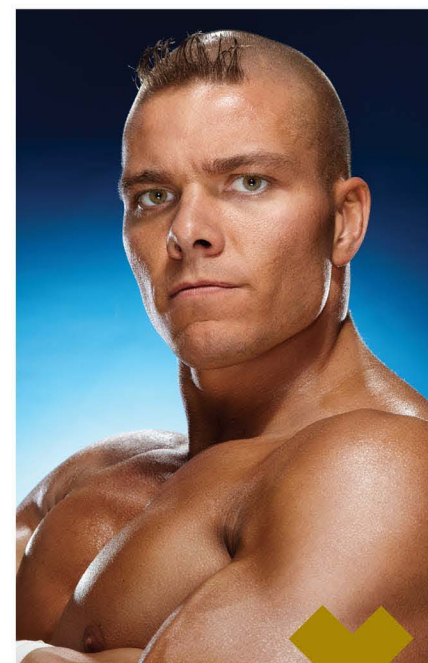
My dream match is definitely a *WrestleMania* main event, and I'll give you my top three opponents. First, I would say Undertaker, because who wouldn't want to wrestle him at The Show of Shows? And John Cena, because of the energy the guy brings to his matches. And lastly, Randy Orton. We are business associates, but he's one guy I'd love to face off against in the ring. Imagine, two third-generation Superstars main-eventing *'Mania*! Truth is, wherever it is on the card, it would be the best match of the night.

Who told you that you'd never get this far in your career?

Some of my closest friends actually told me that I'd never make it here. They didn't take me seriously. They went off and got jobs and did well right out of college. I was in Eldon, Missouri, stocking produce and training my butt off to reach goals that I had set. And now, here I am main-eventing with DX. Enough said.

Yourself excluded, which young Superstar has the best chance of making it to the top?

I am a little biased toward Cody, as he's my Legacy partner. But I would also have to say Kofi. He is loved by all of the WWE Universe and is making a huge impression.



TYSON KIDD

Are you where you want to be in terms of your WWE goals?

At the moment, no. Young guys always want things now, now, now. I think that it's fair to say almost nobody is at his goal at this moment. I certainly haven't accomplished it yet. I would think everyone on this list is going to say no.

What first moment in WWE really stands out for you thus far?

I was only here for three or four weeks, and while coming down the ramp, I spotted a Tyson Kidd sign. I thought, "Wow, someone actually cares."

Tell us about your dream match. How do you see it going down?

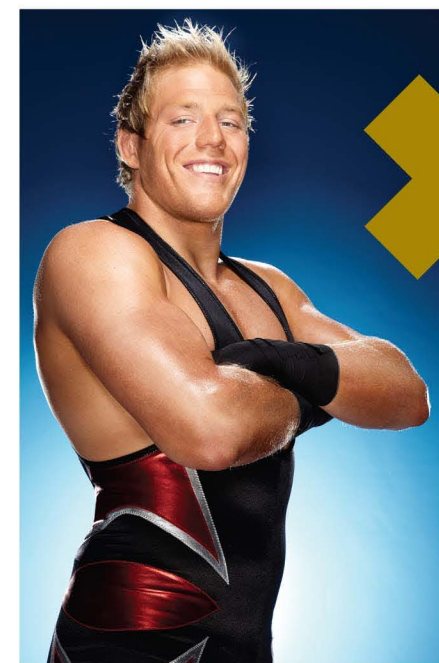
It would be against Shawn Michaels, a singles match in which something big is on the line. I'm not saying I want to be in Shawn's last match, but a match that would take me to the next level.

Who told you that you'd never get this far in your career?

Many people. My mom thought it was a waste of time at first. She'd ask, "Why are you doing this?" My reply was always, "I don't know. I can't really explain why I'm doing this, but I'm telling you that I'm going to do this."

Yourself excluded, which young Superstar has the best chance of making it to the top?

If I had to pick someone besides myself and David Hart Smith, then I'd have to say Dolph Ziggler. I've wrestled him before. He has many different styles that fans haven't seen yet. He's got a little bit of everything, which makes him the complete package.



JACK SWAGGER

How long until you win the big one?

Well, let me ask you, how long is it until *WrestleMania XXVI*?

In five years, what will be different about WWE?

The Superstars here will evolve. Guys will be bigger, lift more, run faster. If you look back five years ago, you can see the difference between then and now. And in five years, I'll still be here smiling.

Tell us about your dream match. How do you see it going down?

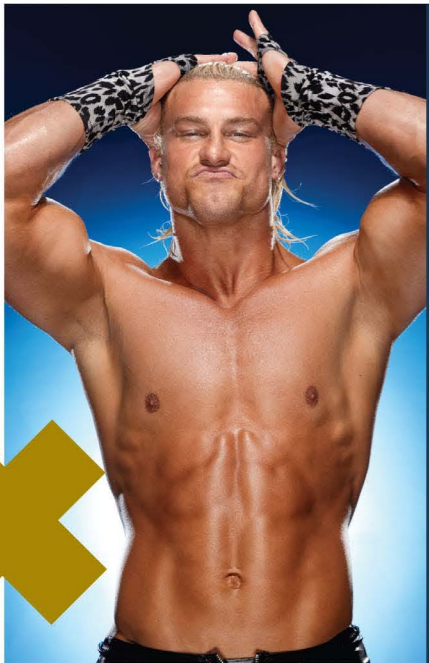
There are many of them. How about me versus Kurt Angle versus The Iron Sheik in a Triple Threat Match at *WrestleMania 30*? Well, Sheik doesn't have to be in the match, he just has to be a presence there. Maybe he can be the guest referee.

What first moment in WWE really stands out for you thus far?

My first action figure was a big deal because everyone around me thought it was cool. I ordered a bunch of them online. My dad's side of the family actually ordered 200 of them. He's got three brothers and four sisters and they all have nieces and nephews. I also put a string around one to make it into a necklace for my girlfriend. That way, when I'm not home and she wants to go out, she can always have me near.

Yourself excluded, which young Superstar has the best chance of making it to the top?

I'm a big fan of Kofi Kingston, but don't tell him I said that. I've had a few matches with him and I could feel his intensity out there. We fed off each other's athletic ability. The stuff that he can do is a lot of fun.



DOLPH ZIGGLER

How long do you think it will be until you hoist a World Championship above your head?

Well, my first goal is winning the Intercontinental Championship. I've given myself six months to do it, and right now I'm nearing the five-month mark. After that, I plan to establish myself as the greatest Intercontinental Champion ever. A year and a half after that, I will become a World Champion.

If you had to compare yourself to another Superstar, who would it be?
I'm a less humble version of Chris Jericho. With better hair.

A Superstar is only as good as his competition. Who's pushed you hardest?
Rey Mysterio. He has a leg up on me because he is a much better highflier. I'm more of a wrestler that can do a little bit of everything. He's been around a lot longer too.

How do you see your WWE career playing out?
I see myself becoming such an entertaining figurehead for WWE that outside sources are begging me to join different projects. I'd probably get cast in some girly movie like *The Notebook*, which would be a perfect venue for me to show off my acting chops. And it would cause a lot of teenage girls to stop watching *The Hills* and switch over to any of WWE's shows.

Yourself excluded, which young Superstar has the best chance of making it to the top?
John Morrison isn't too bad. He's a generic version of me. Problem is, he doesn't have the confidence to go to the next level like I do. And yet the people cheer for him and boo me.



DAVID HART SMITH

What sets you apart from every other Superstar on the roster?
There are several second- and third-generation Superstars in WWE, but what makes me different is that I've got size, I've got a lot of strength, and I've got a lot of agility and quickness. No disrespect to Tyson Kidd, but I think I may be the best technical wrestler in all of WWE.

Are you where you want to be in terms of your WWE goals?
A couple of years ago I never would have thought that we would be forming The Hart Dynasty. I always hoped and hoped we would. But with a little bit of hard work, we kept pushing it and it happened. I'm certainly very happy about that. But as far as my current game plan with WWE, I'm not necessarily satisfied because I don't have any titles around my waist.

A Superstar is only as good as his competition. Who's pushed you hardest?
I will say that Finlay was very tough. He was my debut match on *ECW*. I beat him as a matter of a fact.

Tell us about your dream match. How do you see it going down?
I would like to see Tyson Kidd and I face off against D-Generation X, with us winning, of course. Canada would probably be the place to do it. Maybe even in Calgary.

Yourself excluded, which young Superstar has the best chance of making it to the top?
Tyson Kidd, of course. And John Morrison. He's an impressive athlete, and he's got it all: good striking- and high-flying ability, a great look. And he's got cool sunglasses.



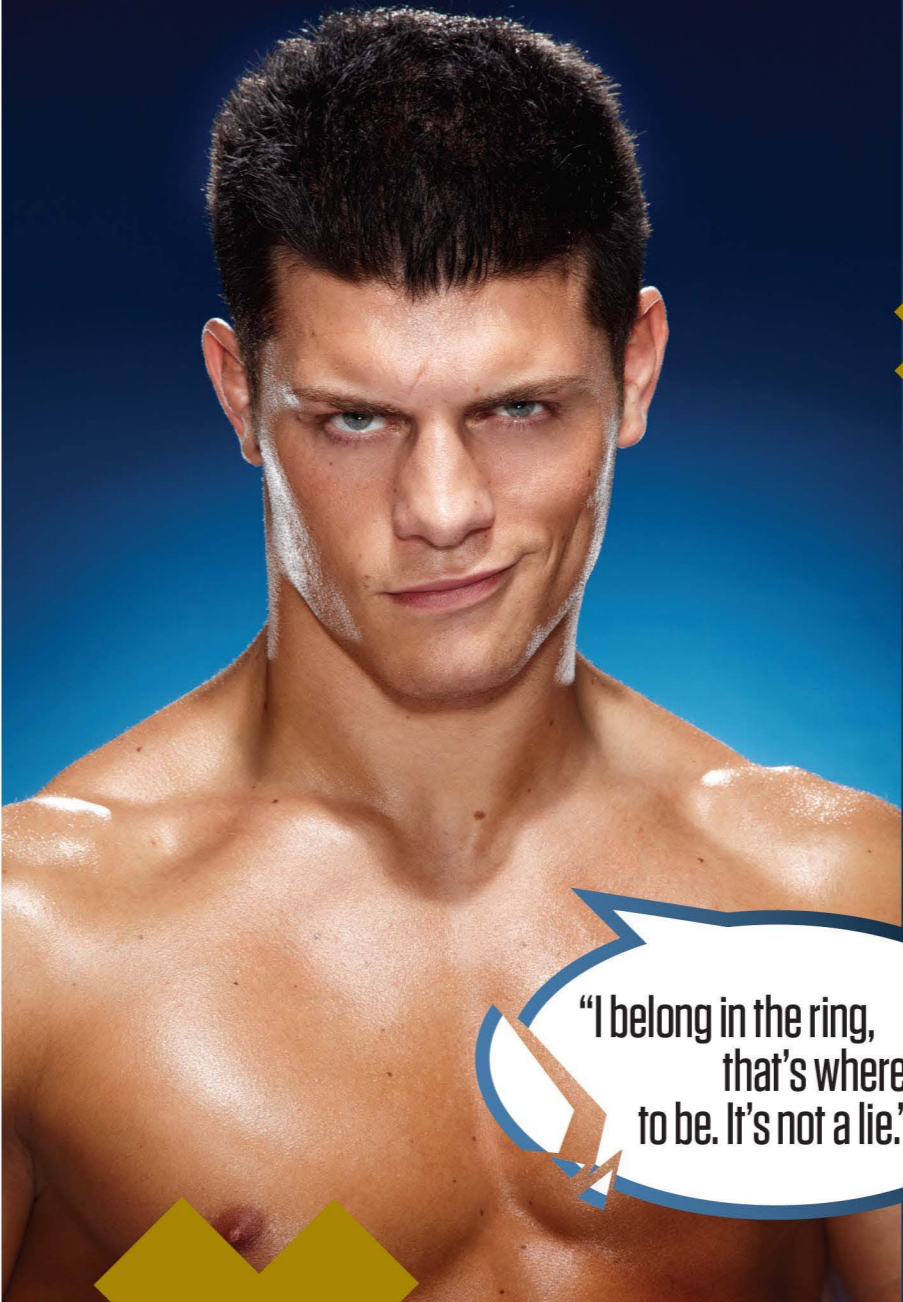
KOFI KINGSTON

Are you where you want to be in terms of your WWE goals?
Definitely. One of my goals is to hold every single championship in WWE. Every one. Just to look back and say that I did it. Who knows? If the European Championship comes out of retirement, I'll try to compete for it just for the sake of having another notch on my belt.

What sets you apart from every other Superstar on the roster?
I don't try to be different; I do things that appeal to me. I'm big into kung-fu movies and Japanimation. The idea for my logo was inspired by *Dragon Ball Z*, actually. But in the ring, I try to implement some Capoeira with a few moves that I've picked up from video games. Watch for my *Street Fighter 2* Shoryuken and uppercut.

What first moment in WWE really stands out for you thus far?
I remember the first time that I walked out and heard the people cheer for me. When you first appear, it's nerve-wracking because if you come out without any kind of introduction, you'll just hear crickets when they announce your name. I had these vignettes before I debuted, but I didn't really know how people were going to receive me. All of a sudden, my music hit and the crowd actually started cheering.

Yourself excluded, which young Superstar has the best chance of making it to the top?
This is really hard because everyone is unique in his own way. I'll say Ted, because he grew up in the business. So has Cody, but he keeps avoiding me on Xbox LIVE. That brings him down a notch in my book.



"I belong in the ring, that's where I want to be. It's not a lie."

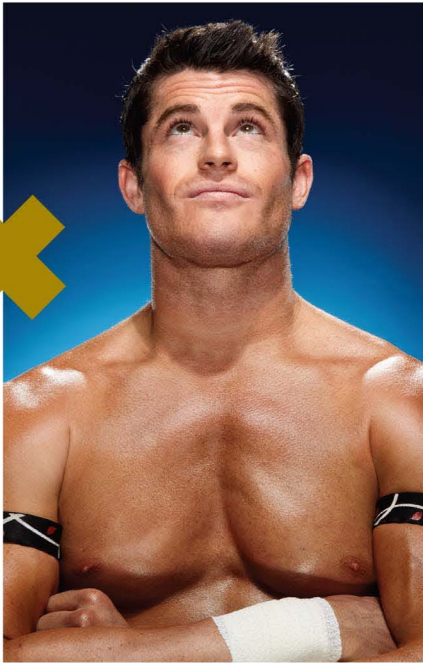
CODY RHODES

A Superstar is only as good as his competition. Who's pushed you hardest?
On Monday nights, *The Legacy* has ruled for a year, and I've been in the ring against some of the best. But if I had to pick someone, I'd say Dolph Ziggler. Just watching him on *SmackDown* is quite motivating because you can see somebody who is keeping pace.

Who told you that you'd never get this far in your career?
Mr. McMahon himself. He even told me that I was bringing Ted DiBiase down. But a few weeks ago, The Chairman told me that he believed I could kick his ass, so we've come full circle. I have no grudge, no anger toward him over it. It's motivating when your boss tells you something like that. You want to prove him wrong. I want to be his star player, and that's still the goal.

How do you see your legacy in WWE?
I want to be the guy who didn't leave. I want to be the guy who continued to entertain. Of course, when it's all over I want to say I was the greatest of all time. Whether fans boo or cheer me, I'd like to be the guy they always thought was worth watching.

Yourself excluded, which young Superstar has the best chance of making it to the top?
You're expecting me to say Ted DiBiase, but I'm going to say Tyson Kidd. I dig Tyson. We have a lot in common. A long time ago somebody asked me about how to perform the Figure Four Leglock. I didn't know it as well as I should have. So Tyson took me aside and laid me out on the concrete, then slapped on the Figure Four Leglock. I've remembered it ever since. He saved my ass.



EVAN BOURNE

How has the WWE spotlight changed your life outside of the ring?
A while back, I was on a date at Busch Gardens in Tampa. We were looking at sea otters. This family of four came up to me and asked, "Are you Evan Bourne?" I said yes. They went up to my date, and asked her if she wouldn't mind taking a picture. So she takes a picture of the kids and they say, "No, not with the sea otters, with Evan Bourne." But nothing else has changed. I still drive the same car.

Tell us about your dream match. How do you see it going down?
I'm facing off against Rey Mysterio in a Falls Count Anywhere Match, and I perform a moonsault from the top rope into the crowd. We really let loose. I bend some rules, take many more risks and get higher rewards. Maybe I even use a few tables.

Who told you that you'd never get this far in your career?
Honestly, when I started wrestling, my goals weren't that high. I wanted to be the masked jobber who never really won a match. I thought if I could do that, I'd be the happiest man alive. In high school I never thought I'd make it in WWE. I just took things one day at a time. As for the detractors, I avoided them—I didn't like being around negativity.

Yourself excluded, which young Superstar has the best chance of making it to the top?
Tyson Kidd, because he started out on *ECW* just like me. He'll make it all the way to the top based on his work ethic and his own merits, and his drive and determination. 🐾