

Fire Pro Wrestling 2 Ring Management Guide (JIS)

by asplagis

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Final Fire Pro Wrestling Management of the Ring Guide

By Asplagis

(aka Zettaijin aka HORGH, Moon God of Thoth, Nabob of the Nile, and stuff like that!)

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Version 1.0 was completed on March 27th, 2010

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Changelog

Version 1.2:

-MAJOR update of the promotion by promotion guides. Now ALL promotions have their own guide. I also updated the intro of that section to explain the particular status of MMA feds.

-Added some extra notes here and there based on my experiences running a Mexican lucha promotion.

-Fixed up typos and language.

Version 1.1:

-Transferred the Working with the RNG subsection to a new "Game mechanics" chapter which features game values and more useless info like that.

-Fixed up some typos.

-Added a LOT of info about morale and how it changes during the game.

-More info on the function of the three key amenities (locker room, medical room and ring doctor).

-Changed the intro so that it makes a little more sense now.

-Added a note that the WWE has immediate access to Global TV, thus insuring us that only a complete moron can't win with them.

-Found out that a promotion's style determines which other will be unlocked if you finish MOR at #1 and not the promotion itself.

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V E R S I O N H I S T O R Y

Version 1.0:

- First version

I N T R O D U C T I O N

It's come to my attention that of all the regular members of the Fire Pro Club board I seem to be the one with the most luck using FFPW's Management of the Ring (MOR for short) mode. In hopes of perhaps giving back to the community, I posted some of my thoughts and strategies on how to approach this very cool feature. This guide is a modest attempt at gathering my various observations into a coherent format.

Management of the Ring often puzzles players due to its surprising complexity for a hand-held game. In truth, you can break it down into two keys for a successful run: balancing your budget and building an efficient roster.

This guide will start with an overview of the crucial steps to a profitable promotion followed with a quick step-by-step guide for a run through MOR using a custom fed and some promotion specific guidelines.

This is a work in progress and should be updated according to my tests.

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M O R F U N D A M E N T A L S
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| Balancing the budget |

The first aspect is in all likelihood the main stumbling block of most new players, especially those starting with a non-established promotion. Yet, balancing your budget isn't all that hard - one merely needs to set realistic goals and closely monitor the promotion's progress.

Every month you need to pay your wrestlers for their services, ensure the upkeep of your amenities, and make various outlays (new talent, new training amenities, merchandise, publicity for your card, TV deal, and random events). These costs must be at least offset by the money you make (gates, wrestlers borrowed by competitors, merchandise sales, and random events).

If costs are fairly easy to estimate, but hard to downplay, profits can still be maximized through smart booking of cards, investing in merchandise, and not spending 2000MP to negotiate a contract with Goldberg during your first month if the promotion starts with a meagre 5000MP or so.

There are no hard, fast rules for balancing a budget, seeing as different promotions have different needs and all. In fact, a look at the new promotion guide might help you better understand the mechanics of the game in this case.

| Managing your roster |

--Basic needs--

Obviously, cards and performers are the meat and potatoes of your company. But as far as the roster is concerned, your goals should include keeping your staff happy, having at least 11 performers on call, and ensuring that they are able to have good matches with each other on a fairly frequent basis when simmed.

As we'll see later on, having 5 matches on a card is a must and the National TV deal requires you to have at least 11 guys/gals on your roster, which is why you might want to consider having at least that many on hand early on.

Furthermore, a promotion should have at the very least one or two stars in its home region. A couple of B-level popularity wrestlers will make a difference, trust me. Later on, as the promotion expands its operations, looking into booking or even hiring performers who are perhaps less popular in your area but more in another can be a strategic way to get more fans to attend foreign events. When the WWE go to England, Regal goes from midcarder to main event star, and it's a sound strategy for this game as well.

--Popularity--

This is a pretty straightforward value: the higher the ranking, the more

people the performer will attract. Simple as that. And the more matches you win in a given area, the more popular your character will become. Your promotion's popularity is equally important, but then if your performers are becoming more popular, chances are your promotion is also progressing nicely. Other factors can increase popularity like random events, but you'll find out that winning matches is the most accessible way to higher popularity ratings.

Good matches (80%+ ratings) dole out a bigger popularity bonus, while poor ones might actually drop it. 100% rated matches cause less of a popularity drop for the loser apparently, but don't count on it to save a struggling performer.

Also, TV deals increase the number of people who come to your shows and the popularity gains of your performers and promotion. Global TV will give out popularity points to ALL regions at once, the rest are strictly for your home region. So even if you hold a card abroad, all TV deals will increase popularity in your home region to a different degree. Keep that in mind when planning your early excursions to foreign territories.

--Morale--

Morale gives you an idea of how happy the performer is working for you, as well as the likelihood of him leaving for another fed. Mind you, other factors related to personality traits are probably involved in this, but it's always best to keep this value up. So here are a few key points to consider:

-Being mindful of their health condition is perhaps the easiest way to keep morale up early on. Have your guys perform regularly when healthy, but refrain from using them when their status drops to OK. While you regain health at a fair rate, it is advisable to avoid overworking your guys since an Out status will significantly lower your morale if they wrestle.

-When your staff demands a raise, give it to them for a small boost. It's not huge, but it affects everyone and is seemingly better than the vacation but without the added benefit of your guys regaining their health.

-The vacation random event will have a small impact on morale at the cost of a full month's worth of income. You really shouldn't agree to this unless you're really having morale issues or a very tired roster. The idea is that EVERYONE gets to rest up AND sees their morale go up when not wrestling.

-The higher the morale, the harder it is to bring it down by offering a contract to the character. The game only considers the morale of the character when checking for a morale drop following an attempt to sign someone away from the competition. Popularity and other factors might play a part in the success rate though. Even if a character has fairly high morale, it doesn't mean he's immune from being stolen away; even a B-level morale character can be swayed. The RNG also plays a role in this situation.

-Is there a per promotion loyalty factor involved? Say, Fuchi being loyal to his starting promotion of AJPW and actively hostile towards NOAH? I can't say. It's not impossible that the wrestler's personality traits impact the chances of a character being stolen away, but nothing seems to suggest that the game takes the promotion into consideration.

-Morale gains/losses are determined at the start of a card, so matches outcomes have no bearing whatsoever on morale. Booking matches is what really affects morale fluctuations.

-The less popular you are, the more morale you gain from being booked. Big name star expect to be on every card, lesser known guys crave the spotlight and are very happy if given a shot.

-Underdogs (the least popular wrestlers in the match) get a morale boost. In case of a tie, charisma and the other personality traits are considered to determine the underdog.

-The various personality traits don't seem to impact morale gains all that much. But my test results have been slightly inconsistent with default characters gaining morale differently from home brewed ones.

-Title matches increase the morale of the challenger by a fair margin, but multiple titles don't stack - the boost you get will be the same whether you're putting 1, 2 or 10 titles on the line. The defending champ will get only a small, barely noticeable boost out of participating in a title match. But then, it makes sense that a performer would actively WANT to challenge for title belts, but be far less enthusiastic about having to defend them.

-Card placement DOES influence morale: the higher up on the card, the bigger the gains. Obviously big time superstars expect to be on top all the time. The more popular the wrestler is in the region where the card is held, the more likely he is to LOSE morale if booked in the undercard. Each letter rank will have a given morale gain/loss associated to it for each match slot. Popularity outside the region where the card is held doesn't seem to affect anything.

-As you'd expect, primary and secondary styles will be preferred over unfamiliar ones leading to sometimes visible drops in morale if a performer is being booked into matches he's not used to (until which point it becomes his primary style). Don't let that stop you from using Lucha Terry Funk~~~!

-Actually, I think it's impossible to change a wrestler's primary style completely no matter what it says on the screen. All new primary styles seem to get the same bonus as a secondary style (a notch lower than primary).

-Agreeing to book a feud might impact morale positively.

-_-Compatibility-_-

The other issue I addressed was compatibility, which is the way wrestlers perform with each other in various matches. But really this is for simmed matches as those matches played by a human player are likely to be rated better (or worse) depending on how familiar you are with the gameplay.

This brings up the issue of simmed versus player handled matches. Only the most insane players will wish to play every single match themselves, and even then cross-promotional events will force you to let the computer do the wrestling for you. Leaving the computer to its own devices can lead you down the path of disaster soon enough. Face it, the more you sim, the more likely you are to reload to get better outcomes.

Is this cheating? Well, if you feel like succeeding in MOR, you may not have much of a choice in the matter, especially early on.

Remember, match ratings can affect so many other aspects of your game that you'll want to maximize the number of 80%+ rated events, and short of handling most matches yourself, reloading can be a necessary evil.

Of course you could simply build a highly compatible roster, but sooner or later you'll notice that said rosters tend to look alike and might not include some of your favourites.

It the end, it comes down to your playing style and what you want out of the game. The fun thing about MOR is that it gives you a lot of leeway as to what you can do with a given promotion, right down to firing everyone and rebuilding from scratch.

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| Picking a promotion |  
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So you're ready to start a new MOR game. Great! So what should you do first?

First timers starting from scratch should choose either WCW (AWG) or UFO (UNO). WCW will force you to actually learn some of the basics while offering you a fairly well established promotion with a talented, mostly compatible roster that includes some tough as nails top rank superstars. UFO, on the other hand, is a shoot fed. This means you won't be all that concerned with compatibility or getting a huge roster, leaving you plenty of money to unlock guys for a superior WCW run.

However, unlocking Inoki means you'll have to run UFO as a strong style fed, which may prove a little more challenging due to roster concerns. But then again, you could simply use a code and unlock everyone...

After that, it's all up to you.

The dominant style of the promotion you used to go through MOR will unlock a hidden promotion of the same style (Showman for WWE, Stoic for Pride, Lucha for AAA, Strong style for NJPW and King's Road for NOAH).

Even if the WWE was unlocked, don't rush in blindly as it could overwhelm inexperienced players when they try and out muscle the opposition through sheer monetary dominance, overlooking other crucial aspects of the game.

AJPW is often the natural choice to unlock NOAH as it's a King's Road promotion. Unfortunately, AJPW can be a real pain with its odd mixture of highly ranked yet too often incompatible Strong Style and King's Road wrestlers, so getting NOAH is not for the impatient. This is a damn shame too, since Misawa's upstart promotion would have been awesome for beginners! It's a lot like WCW, only with better, more flexible performers all around and a more inter-compatible roster.

Mind you, you could try to turn WCW into a King's Road promotion and use it to unlock NOAH. Alas that might prove to be a bit of a challenge with guys like Hart or Savage.

Smaller promotions like Toryumon and Michinoku Pro are more challenging, but certainly a lot easier if a number of top performers have been unlocked in previous runs through MOR mode or if you used the code.

Lastly, a custom promotion represents the highest challenge as you start off with little to no popularity in any of the four regions, not to mention that you also need to hire ALL your talent from the free agent pool. And chances are Stan Hansen and Tiger Mask will not readily accept your invitations during the first few months (not that you could afford them, really).

| MOR Goals |

Once you've picked your promotion, you need to set goals for yourself. At the risk of repeating myself, your goals will be more or less the same for every company (with the exception of MMA promotions). It's your time frame that changes. Obviously, you want to achieve a #1 ranking overall no matter who you choose, but you need to establish a basic game plan to make this a reality.

To be #1 you need to score enough points in every category and beat out the others. So, you can be #3 or 4 in one category and STILL get enough points to beat everyone.

In all scenarios, getting a solid cash flow and balancing your budget should always be on your mind whenever you make a decision. All the goals you'll find listed are steps to ensure that these two overarching objectives are met.

--Short term goals--

Regardless of which promotion you chose, your immediate goals should include building a 11-15 man (or woman) roster, purchasing key amenities as quickly as possible, and to secure the best TV deal possible.

--Medium term goals--

Once you've secured all of the above, try buying some inexpensive merchandise to bring in some extra money each month and the rest of the amenities (they'll make your guys stronger and more likely to win in all CPU controlled cross-promotional matches, but it might just be me). Amenities should come first, though.

Bolstering your roster to include better, and more varied performers and planning for future events (the Gracies and "star" battles, along with the Legends challenge) would be a good idea at this time.

You'll need someone who is able to perform in strong style, a shootfighter capable of scoring lightning quick criticals, a hardcore monster who'll choke and gouge his way to the top, and someone who can last through 30-45 minute matches while pulling out some really hard hitting moves for King's Road purposes. King's Road specialists, including most of the NOAH roster, can achieve a surprising amount of success in Showman, same goes for Toryumon-like lucharesu stars. This said NJPW's strong style is not quite as suited as a background for showy wrestling, nor is old school lucha libre (Dos Caras, El Hijo del Santo). Luchadores don't seem to have any special challenges associated with them, therefore they may be overlooked. And in a pinch, remember that you might be able to just bring in someone for a one night only performance.

Having your crew scour the globe and holding events abroad, even in smaller venues than your are used to, is something you should look into as soon as you've achieved the early goals. Try adding performers who happen to have established popularity outside your home region to help draw crowds when far away from home or bring in stars for one night only.

Remember that your local popularity will rise regardless of where you hold your card, so once you've managed to gain a solid foothold in your home region, try working on another one. In the case of the WWE, this isn't much of a challenge, but custom promotions will have a long road ahead of them.

Cross-promotional events help tremendously in that regard, but your guys may have to face off against incompatible opponents or be overwhelmed by superior opposition (damn those Road Warriors...).

-_-Long term goals-_-

Later on, winning belts will become a focal part of your strategy. In the case of the ?er popular WWE, this is actually something you'll be doing within your first few months! This requires talent trades and alliances, or if you're feeling adventurous, some cross-promotional wars. This should translate into a higher belt rating for you and a lower one for your opposition. Remember that MMA promotions never book tag matches, henceforth those belts will not give them more points over time. So don't bother stealing those titles unless you're really bored/obsessive compulsive. And your gain is their loss, so your points go up while theirs go down thus why I urge you to steal belts.

TV deals increase the number of people who come to your shows and the popularity gains of your performers and your promotion. Global TV will give out popularity points to ALL regions at once, the others are strictly for your home region.

Unlocking the Global TV deal is pretty much mandatory in order to reach the top and outshine the WWE, but getting it requires a serious cash flow. I don't have the specifics of how the game calculates these things, but I surmise it checks your current costs against potential revenue from an average show.

You can live without dome shows and it may take a while before your guys are ready to fill a 60,000 seat venue by which time you're already dominating the competition. For what it's worth, dome shows are unlocked once you achieve 240 popularity points in total (which roughly translates to S/A/C/D or S/S/D/D if you don't have access to HEX values).

Eventually, you'll be powerful enough to put your energy into improving your entire roster's popularity, including any jobbers and/or jobbers to the stars. This, along with more actual performers, should contribute to a higher Wrestler rating. Just send some guys to other promotions if they're not contributing.

Following all of this, you should be able to slip into cruise control for the remainder of the game. Remember that you are trying to be #1 OVERALL, even if you slip a bit in one category you shouldn't worry as you can make up for it elsewhere. Belts is probably going to pay off once most of the singles titles are in your hands and ensure your first place.

No matter what promotion you use, you'll have to book cards. While you could let the computer do it for you, its choices tend to be haphazard and weird, not to mention less than optimal at times. Oh sure, it might be fun to let the computer decide when you're firmly in control and none of your competitors can hope to beat you, but for those early months, especially when working with a smaller or custom promotion, a good series of cards can make a sizeable difference down the road.

First things first, the purpose of a well booked card is to maximize two things: attendance and rating. Higher attendance means more money, while a higher rating leads to greater popularity, and therefore selling more tickets for your next card.

Smart booking might also impact morale, but that's a minor concern as morale tends to rise naturally in those situations and you don't need to monitor it.

So our next step would be to determine what influences attendance and match ratings. In the later case, I can't say I have a solid grasp of what the actual calculations are like, although I assume it's close to what one might find in FPZ due to the similarities between the various FP engines. Fortunately, attendance is a little easier to gauge.

What can you do to get more butts in those seats?

-Booking more than 3 matches boosts attendance, with 5 matches being better than 4.

-Charisma and popularity (both for the individual performers and the promotion itself) are used to determine base attendance.

-Events held in your own region have a slight attendance boost modifier added.

-Events held in large-type venues get an attendance boost modifier added.

-Ad campaigns to promote your card will improve attendance considerably.

-Titles matches boost attendance based on the popularity of the promotion in the region where the card is being held. However, we're talking about the title where the belt originated! So if you stole the WWE title, you're likely to get a much bigger attendance boost in the US than with the FMW title. Styles titles have a flat attendance boost value, it seems.

-The game takes into consideration both the individuals AND the matchup, so having the Undertaker battle Kane in the undercard while Austin and the Rock do their thing in the Main Event may get more (or less) people in the seats than Taker/Austin and Rock/Kane. What does the computer look for to determine how popular a given matchup will be? No clue, as my tests have given me rather unpredictable results. I suspect it looks at style points and those with similar style points layouts are "better matches" for one another.

-Special rules work in your favour in some circumstances, but not others, meaning that a hardcore rules match may attract fewer people than a match under normal rules depending on various factors. It's not impossible that this is linked to a promotion's style or those of the participants. Match evaluation styles and referees don't actually have any impact on attendance, they only influence match ratings (style also affects morale, obviously).

-Managers won't improve the actual attendance, but might impact the match rating depending on the style.

So what should a good card look like?

-You booked 5 matches, with all titles being defended and preferably by different champs.

-You played to your strengths and offered matches that fit your promotion's style with the appropriate performers involved.

-You used wrestlers that are in Good condition, and OK condition only if you are short on staff.

-Ensured yourself that your biggest draws are going to wrestle on the card (with the exception of the above).

-Guys with low morale should be placed higher on the card to help turn them around (to be tested) and possibly in title matches.

-Given the above, mix and match performers to see what combination will result in the highest attendance.

-Booked a large-type venue near or over capacity. There's no rule, but I tend to think that you should never dip below the 80% capacity rate. Book a smaller venue if you're in the range of 80% and less.

-Used an appropriate ad type to ensure maximum attendance efficiency (don't be afraid to downgrade if you can't book a larger venue but go way over for a smaller one).

The idea is to get as many 80%+ rated matches as possible while getting as many people in the place without going too much over or too far under the listed capacity.

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P R O M O T I O N G U I D E
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| Established promotion guide |

Established promotions fall into four "basic" types: small, mid-size, big, and MMA. These basic types allow for some shared realities and therefore common strategies can be used to have successful MOR runs with promotions of a similar type. So look at a promotion similar to your own to determine what a sound strategy should be like before you start.

Small promotions are those which start with less than 10 wrestlers; have a home popularity no higher than B-level, no higher than C in one other region; also they tend to lack higher edit point count/higher popularity "stars" generally. Zerol, UFO, M-Pro, FMW, Toryumon and AAA are all considered small

promotions, although UFO can also become an MMA promotion depending on how you decide to play it.

Mid-size promotions have 11 performers or more; have at least B-level popularity in their home region and at least C outside their home; and boast a handful of mega stars with high edit points count and high popularity. WCW, NJPW, NOAH and AJPW are the mid-size promotions with WCW straddling that line and almost crossing over into large right off the bat.

MMA promotions are... well... you figure it out. They are more challenging than the others as they tend to be slightly shunned by the non-MMA folks and their play style is slightly different despite the fact that RINGS and Pancrase are quite close to smaller promotions in terms of finance, popularity and roster concerns. Pride, on the other hand, should be classified as a line straddling promotion due to having the best popularity rating, generous starting cash, sizeable roster, and shorter year limit. Still, if played as pure MMA then the three (or four if counting U.F.O.) will give you a different kind of challenge.

And there's only one big boy in town: the WWE. It has popularity of A in every region except a B in Japan; big name stars that attract huge crowds; and lots of money to play around with. Its reality is completely different from that of the other promotions and its challenge is not getting to the top, but rather to stay on top for 3 years.

Here are some promotion by promotion guides.

--WWE--

Roster concerns: Well, Vinnie Mac and son are dead weight compared to the rest of the roster. And while I'm not fond of X-PAC myself, he's ok, I guess. As negative as I try to be, the truth is the WWE has a very solid roster filled with big name stars who'll quickly fill large arenas in the States and abroad. Even midcarders like DDP, Booker T and Mike Awesome are capable of kicking a lot of asses and start off with respectable popularity, while your main event contingent is beyond reproach. Rock, Austin, 'Taker and their pals will be doing fine in all sorts of situations, and are all sorts of unbeatable in simmed competition.

The unlock code gives you access to Shawn Micheals and Mick Foley, just in case you REALLY needed help. Add Goldberg if you're really desperate.

MMA is a weakness, and garbage wrestling is Foley-only territory (kind of, as he's on the Sabu/Funk hardcore boat), still, you don't get this level of quality anywhere else. Plus, you start with enough money to buy anyone you want!

What to buy/TV deals: Global TV, duh, and everything else. OK, in terms of amenities, get the main three and a couple of others and stick to that for now. Look into merchandise early (a few months in at the latest) and you shouldn't have any problem with your finances for the rest of the game. Just don't spend it all in one shot, allow a card or two to rebuild your MP stash before your next splurge.

Booking concerns: People have trouble with the WWE due to the fact that their main competitor often ends up being PRIDE whom they can't really run into the ground as per the fact that PRIDE is an MMA promotion. Still, get a good enough early lead and put on stellar events and you should be #1 (or rather

stay #1) with ease. Global TV right off the bat will change the pace of the game drastically.

NJPW may start growing, and NOAH has plenty of potential, so feel free to cut them down to size with well timed and carefully planned 5 on 5 challenges. Guys like Benoit, Jericho and Angle are quite capable of strong style, and King's Road can be handled by the bigger guys. Do it early and do it often!

Stealing belts is just a matter of building relations (which isn't hard considering the popularity of the average WWE star). And with their skills, they might actually win belts through talent exchange alone!

--NJPW--

Roster concerns: NJPW starts with a very large roster, the largest of all the promotions in fact. The unlock all code adds a crap ton of guys of various levels of quality to your promotion, so much so that you may have to do some spring cleaning. Do you really need a midcarder with D popularity in all regions? What if I told you you could recruit far superior wrestlers out of the free agent pool if using the unlock all code?

Super Strong Machine, Tanahashi, Backlund, Dynamite Kid, and Tiger Mask are all far superior performers to the lower ranks of your promotion's roster and (save for Backlund) are all Strong Style performers (but Backlund can do Strong Style just fine usually). Plus they start with some popularity. Heck, Dory Funk Jr. is King's Road but loves NJPW and is great for strong style. Put him in a team Shiro Koshinaka and see them dominate the tag ranks! I'd snatch some of them up ASAP. How many is up to you, but guys like Tiger Mask will make everything easier due to their strength and popularity.

If you can't recruit everyone as quickly as you'd like, then make sure to send the lower rank and file guys to other promotions. Sending 5 guys every month is more than feasible and should allow you to build up your relations quickly. And Strong Style guys tend to be accepted everywhere as they are the sort of vanilla style of the game, even MMA promotions will accept them.

I can't go through all the guys on the roster, but the top talents are almost all big name stars which you should know already if you're interested in playing with NJPW. In case you're completely new, look at their stats. If they have A in either offensive or defensive prowess, then they're big deals.

Be considerate of the various styles of Strong Style. Yeah, I know how that sounds, but Choshyu doesn't wrestle like Liger and neither wrestle like Nagata yet they are all Strong Style. Clashing styles will happen until you figure out who fits into which of the following categories: strong junior, strong classic, strong power, or strong shooter.

Juniors include El Samurai, Jushin Liger, and even Tanahashi as modern strong style guys often perform well with juniors. Strong classic means guys like Saito, Kido, and Choshu - mostly low impact with a few "big" moves. Strong power is for guys like Nakanishi and Sasaki who throw guys around but still have a few submission holds or do more "wrestling" than pure power guys. Strong shooter is the natural evolution of Inoki with more kicks/punches thrown in and a more "realistic" moveset yet they aren't real shoot fighters - think Nagata or Yamazaki (who was, for a time, a real shoot style guy but is toned down here). Again, despite this some guys straddle the classic Strong Style ways more than others. Sasaki is more versatile than Nakanishi, for example.

The computer does a splendid job of handling Strong Style matches so long as you don't have too many clashes in style, better than me at any rate. Plus strong style is boring to play, I find. Showman and Lucha are quicker and more arcade-like while King's Road is more bombastic with big moves and head drops.

Ahem.

Careful of Nakanishi and his backbreaker of doom that end matches way too quickly for strong style. He's the bearhug of doom of NJPW. Also, Nagata is a pain due to his striking skills and how they don't mesh well with other Strong style guys.

By the end of my run, I had about 10 solid guys who got regular matches and booked way more tag matches than usual. Such is the reality of the NJPW super roster.

What to buy/TV deal: Go National TV and don't look back. Merch can wait until you finish buying the amenities. As a big dog, you'll possibly be challenged early on by NOAH or even WCW so you need your guys strong for Misawa and Hogan.

The key amenities should be affordable right off the bat, but you can wait a month to get the locker room if you feel skittish after blowing some cash on hiring Tiger Mask or Dynamite Kid.

Booking concerns: Given the popularity of your guys in Japan, it should be quite easy for you to sell out a 30,000 seat place by the mid year with TV ads. If you get challenged by NOAH, you might not even need TV ads.

You should hit S popularity in Japan early and once you have a solid crew of guys with S level popularity in Japan to go along with that, moving to the States for a spell is going to be necessary. Selling out 15,000 seat venues with ads on your first trip is doable, if you have good relations with WCW then try and see if they could lend you their world or tag champs to make your trip more profitable. This should be your big mid-year goal. From there, the sky is the limit. In my test game I was #5 overall at the start and #2 by the mid year which should show you how quickly you evolve.

--WCW--

Roster concerns: Your starting roster includes popular, highly rated (meaning high edit point count) superstars like Hogan, the Road Warriors, and the Outsiders, along with solid, versatile midcarders like Scott Steiner, Randy Savage and Bret Hart. Sting, Rick Steiner and Bam Bam are iffy, but good in a pinch against most American style guys, just don't expect miracles. Flair will either become available later on or you can unlock him with the unlock all code. The Nature Boy not only adds a great showman/strong style guy to your already stellar roster, but he comes with a belt too. Good times!

The top guys are great at showman/American style and should be able to pull off solid King Road matches if you're careful when simming. Yes, Kevin Nash can do King's Road. Misawa might be rolling in his grave right now.

Savage, and especially Hart can do Strong Style with fair to great results.

Bam Bam works well against the NJPW/AJPW gaijin contingent (Williams, Vader, Gordy, Hansen etc.) and is a fair tag team wrestler.

The Steiners and Road Warriors are naturals at tag teaming. Heck, the Road Warriors happen to be one of the most fearsome duos in the game. Most of my

matches against them end up extremely chaotic as they CONSTANTLY break up pins and get in my way. And they are both tough cookies to boot.

You should try and bolster your roster with a hardcore guy like say Abby or, better yet, Terry Funk if either man is available. Obviously, a Gary Albright would be a good idea for the eventual Legends challenge.

Various gaijin stars should be able to fill in the ranks, with the Miracle Violence Connection (Williams and Gordy) and Hansen being high on this list. Vader is a gamble, as he's worth a surprisingly low amount early on and gains popularity fairly quickly, but doesn't fare all that well compared to others in terms of match quality and overall success rate.

Dynamite Kid can work wonders with Bret Hart, but may have problems with the rest of the roster.

Obviously, Goldberg is possibly the best addition to your roster. With high charisma, popularity and tremendous ability to adapt to various match styles, you'd think the makers of the game saw him as a God-like figure. Seriously, I've seen Goldberg do ok lucha matches, barely acceptable shoot/free style, along with poor garbage, but he's going to be a marvel otherwise. Smarks everywhere weep at the idea of a King's Road Goldberg, but there you go. It's not only real, but it's a damn good idea. Scary stuff people...

What to buy/TV deal: You should be able to afford the basic amenities and a National TV deal in your first month without breaking the bank, so go ahead and go nuts.

Merchandise should be easily accessible to you within the early months, but go for a full range of amenities first as they'll help you win 5 on 5 challenges which are worth a lot more to you on the long term than T-shirt sales.

Booking concerns: Your goal is to fill a 30,000 seat American venue ASAP. TV ads will be needed, but you have the money for it. Go with a couple of smaller cards to get some cash and raise the popularity of your guys, then start booking 30,000 seat venues exclusively while in the States.

By the end of your first 5-6 months, you should be able to look to Japan for either cross-promotional wars or merely holding events. Then, follow the established pattern, steal belts, and hope you get on the WWE's good side eventually to better ransack them.

-_-AJPW-_-

Roster concerns: With popular superstars like Keiji Mutoh, Hiroshi Hase, Taiyo Kea, Genichirou Tenryu and Toshiaki Kawada, AJPW sounds like a great promotion for beginners. Problem is, Hase and Mutoh are strong style guys, while Kawada, Kea and Tenryu are King's Road. Plus, Kawada is arguably one of the more difficult King's Road guys to handle: his kick-heavy move set would make him a great free style guy, I guess, but that's neither here nor there.

Your upper midcarders of choice are Kendo Ka Shin and Satoshi Kojima. Have I told you how much I loathe Kendo Ka Shin? He makes my head hurt as he's something akin to a strong style performer but with a little too much shoot style added. I suppose he'd do well against a portion of the NJPW roster or maybe even in Zerol, however he's rather useless in AJPW. Kojima seems

built for showman style, yet he can do fair Strong and King's Road matches in a pinch.

Mitsuya Nagai is average at best, while Fuchi is a good tag team expert and can work fine in both Strong and King's Road styles, just don't expect miracles out of the veteran.

Nobutaku Araya is one I've mocked enough as it is. Clearly the jobber to the stars of the venerable AJPW, my "rehabilitate A-chan" campaign was a pain to say the least. How in the Hell are you supposed to survive against higher rank opposition with this guy?

This unusual and somewhat incompatible roster will probably be your main obstacle. While not as random as say Toryumon's or FMW's starting roster, these guys wrestle in very different styles and you'll have a tough time pairing them off properly. You'll be doing mostly King's Road matches with some strong style here and there for Hase, Muta, and Ka Shin.

Expect to handle matches yourself more often than you'd like.

I'm not sure how to unlock Baba, but you can win without his help I'm sure. If you do use the unlock all code, then you get the King's Road belt and a freakin' giant - a very popular one too. Use him to try and sucker other feds into booking him against their champs.

He's extremely popular so the CPU likes to book him when offered. Being a giant, the CPU has no idea how to defeat him short of the odd critical victory following a Western Lariat or similar move and then only big name guys from NOAH and WWE stand a chance. In one test game Baba ended up winning a couple of tag titles and single titles within a year and a half of game time. Baba in AJPW comes early enough in the game to allow for this if using the unlock all code. Andre could sub for him, but when/if you get the Legends event is a bit difficult to predict. Also, while Silva is a giant, he's nowhere near as powerful nor as popular and will probably not be booked in title matches by the CPU.

Various gaijin stars should fill in the ranks nicely, with the Miracle Violence Connection (Williams and Gordy) and Hansen being high on this list obviously. But you need to decide: will this be a Strong Style or King's Road promotion? The above gaijin are great foils for Tenryu and Kea, but might have problems with Hase and Muta.

As with almost all promotions, a hardcore star is missing while Ka Shin might just do the trick for MMA - I think.

What to buy/TV deal: Like WCW and NOAH, you should be able to afford the key amenities and a National TV deal in your first month without going broke.

In fact, you should follow WCW's game plan money-wise as the two promotions are in similar positions.

Booking concerns: Your booking goal is to fill a 30,000 seat Japanese venue within a two to three month time frame. TV ads will be needed, but your finances should allow you to make that outlay. It may not be as easy to fill such a venue with your current roster as with WCW, but you'll probably be adding big name stars anyway.

Otherwise, the standard mid-size promotion strategy applies here.

-_-NOAH-_-

Roster concerns: Are you kidding me? What roster concerns? Their midcarders are as good as some promotions' main eventers! The fab four (Misawa, Taue, Kobashi and Akiyama) are likely to kill any and all opposition with or without all amenities bought. And short of MMA and pure hardcore, their starting roster should be able to have good matches in every other style. If you're using the unlock all code, then you also get Jumbo F'N Tsuruta, seeing as you weren't dominant enough as it is.

Alright, to be fair, guys like Takeshi Rikio and Takeshi Morishima aren't very showy all in all, while Ikeda and Shiga are more strong style than anything else. Still, they all rock in their own special way.

Weak links would include Tsuyoshi Kikuchi and possibly Kanemaru and Iizumida, but keep them in tag matches and they'll do fine. Be careful about Ogawa and his tendency to win by way of flash pins which is very much against the basis of King's Road and likely to bring about poor ratings.

As with WCW and AJPW, hardcore and MMA are your only blind spots.

What to buy/TV deals: National TV should be available to you during your first month, get it right away otherwise you'll have to wait for a number of months until the computer decides you're financially able to support it.

Buying two out of three key amenities is perfectly reasonable during your first month, maybe even all three, but two is fine for now. A month or two more and you should be able to afford the third one and possibly a few more.

Booking concerns: NOAH should be very dominant by the end of the first year, easily placing second or third (perhaps even first with some luck!). Booking 30,000 seat venues by the time month 4 or 5 comes up isn't at all impossible with proper ads and a few extra superstars.

Begin raiding promotions with 5 on 5 challenges ASAP. Once you have all amenities, look to the U.S. (WCW and the WWE), building up your relations with them and eventually sacking them. If 5 on 5 challenges are not being accepted, then borrow their top guys and bury them!

Again, NOAH is like WCW on 'roids or something.

-_-FMW-_-

Roster concerns: Your roster starts off fairly weak, but you're better off than Toryumon in terms of bigger stars. Hiromichi "Kodo" Fuyuki and Hayabusa will be the ones carrying your promotion in the early goings: both are upper midcarders and work really well together in showman style matches and can hold their own against a lot of performers.

The rest of the crew consists of various misfit midcarders like GOEMON (lucha/showman/some garbage), Hikasatsu Ooya (acceptable in strong style), Tesuhiro Kuroda (showman/possibly lucha), Mr.Gannosuke (showman/possibly some garbage), Ricky Fuji (showman) and Kintaro Kanemura (showman/poor garbage).

You'll need more people here and quick! The unlock code should make your life

a lot easier since you'll have Onita leading the promotion. He's not the greatest wrestler out there, but he's better than all the guys on your roster! Still, if you want garbage, then Pogo and Matsunaga are top choices, along with Abby, Sheik, and Tiger Jeet Singh. Come to think of it, of all the promotions, old school FMW is one of the few that you can "recreate" easily through free agents. Getting Mutoh and Hase in NJPW again isn't easy, and raiding NOAH as AJPW would be a major hassle. But old school FMW is quite doable.

Hayabusa works very well with Ricky Fujii, try making matches between the two of them. Fujii by himself is a rather poor performer when simmed, but can be used for highly rated showman style matches, provided he doesn't get squashed too easily.

Kanemura should stick to tag matches as he'll blow up early and easily, while super heel Mr. Gannosuke is a hard one to figure out. Goemon and Kuroda make a serviceable team for showman purposes.

Try to avoid bloating your roster and concentrate on quality matches. Once you hit B-level popularity in Japan, more people will agree to work for you. Bring in flexible gaijin stars and remember that almost everyone can work a proper showman style whether simmed or not. At worst, bring in lower midcarders then release them once you get bigger and your needs change.

What to buy/TV deal: Regional TV is the best you can get in your first month, but it's better than nothing. I suggest buying at least one key amenity right away, but you could save that money for better performers and then furnish your facilities - your call.

National TV shouldn't be too hard to achieve before the year is over and merchandise is not to be considered until you've achieved a certain amount of fame (I stayed away from merch until I could easily book a 10,000 seat venue without ads).

Booking concerns: Your first goal is to be popular enough to fill a 10,000 seat Japanese venue. Basic promotional tactics may be needed, so go slowly at first. A couple of smaller cards (3,500-5,000) to get some cash and raise the popularity of your guys, then start booking 5000 seat venues only and check to see if filling a 10,000 seat venue is possible and what types of ads you'll need. Getting 16,000 seat venues almost filled up with promotional aid at the six months point isn't all that hard with established performers like Abby and Funk.

Speaking of which, Abby and Funk should make the road toward bigger stardom in the States a lot simpler. The second year should be filled with foreign shows as you scramble to gain popularity outside of Japan.

-_-Toryumon_-

Roster concerns: Your roster starts off weak, with CIMA, Tokyo Magnum, and Dragon Kid being your top stars (despite being above average midcarders at best). The unlock code gives you Ultimo Dragon right away instead of waiting for a year, which should help you out a bit since he can actually defeat the better wrestlers from other promotions.

Don Fuji and Masaaki Mochizuki are not without their charm as far as showman style is concerned, but they can't keep up with the above foursome. And for the record, SUWA is a poor garbage wrestler, but makes up for it in showman

style.

You won't be going anywhere with such a small roster, so hire away until you reach at least 11 to 15 workers! Be careful as old school lucha guys don't always work well with Dragon's lucharesu showboaters. If in doubt, stick to Japanese wrestlers like Gran Naniwa, Spel Delfin, or even Orihara if you're really trying to avoid non-DG/Toryumon style performers.

By the the time your first year nears its end, you might have no choice but to prepare for the Legends Challenge. You know the drill: get a shootfighter or someone with good chances of scoring a critical against Gotch, a hardcore wrestler (maybe Sabu could do the trick in a pinch, and you could keep him around afterwards), and make sure your big stars (Ultimo, in your case) are healthy!

What to buy/TV deals: More or less follow the FMW/smaller promotion model.

Booking concerns: Much like FMW, Toryumon should start with the 5000 venue and inch slowly towards the 10,000 within your the first six months. Again, CIMA/Dragon Kid/Tokyo Magnum are going to keep you afloat for some time. During the year, try going to Mexico to work with AAA as you already have a reputation over there, and most of your guys have a small measure of popularity in the region to boot.

The U.S. is a large market with lots of money to be made, but Ultimo is your only link to the States early on. It might take some time to secure a good foothold over there.

--AAA--

Roster concerns: You start with a pretty good roster for lucha libre action, with big stars like Rey Mysterio Jr., El Hijo del Santo, Eddy Guerrero, and El Dandy~~~~! With the unlock code, you also get super megastar and legend Mil Mascaras along with his lucha title right at the start.

Again, the unlock code means Dos Caras can be hired, something I strongly suggest you look into as early as possible. His son isn't bad, but you could definitely do better.

You'll be needing help for the Legends, but then again isn't that the case for every promotion save the WWE? So look into a temporary deal with a shooter, and maybe Sabu or something. Lucha Terry Funk is an awesome, awesome concept that needs to be explored more fully.

What to buy/TV deal: As per the smaller promotions (FMW and Toryumon).

Booking concerns: Again, be careful of the old school lucha vs. junior style clash, otherwise you'll be doing great lucha matches for a while until you easily reach top popularity in Mexico. I suggest you look to Japan for some action, possibly a couple of challenges to MPro and Toryumon in the middle part of your first year or so.

While your popularity in Mexico is pretty high at the start, remember that this region suffers from the lowest venue sizes. This is why you should be booking cards in Japan as soon as you have the basic amenities. And with 8000 in the bank to start and a handful of guys to recruit (at a discount price), it shouldn't be that hard.

-_-Michinoku Pro-_-

Roster concerns: Well, Shinzaki, Tiger Mask IV, and The Great Sasuke are your top stars with support from Dick Togo and Gran Hamada. Curry Man is no great shakes, sorry Christopher Daniels fans.

And that's it. TAKA tends to leave the WWE often, snatch him up if he does!

You need more wrestlers, obviously, so look to the Toryumon section for some ideas as the two promotion share a certain number of similarities. MPro simply has a lot less money to throw around for new stars at the start of the game. Also, they have no hidden superstars to help them out like other feds.

What to buy/TV deals: As per FMW/smaller promotions but much slower due to the missing 3000 or so MP. That's one key amenity less!

Booking concerns: As per Toryumon, save for the fact that your guys are more popular overall and your progression closer to that of a new promotion due to financial concerns (many amenities may have to wait).

Take into consideration the fact that you start with OK level relations with the WWE and should aim to get on their good side.

-_-U.F.O.-_-

Roster concerns: Inoki and Ogawa are the big stars here. Makes sense since Ogawa was pushed to the moon as Inoki's successor early on (and then floundered like so many expected him to). The game treats him like a badass though and his mentor as well. Without the unlock all code, you'll need to run U.F.O. as a strong style promotion to unlock him which sucks.

The rest are a mix of Strong Style shooters of generally acceptable quality. I suggest keeping the strong guys with no critical ability like Ishikawa on the tag circuit. Get yourself a good strong style guy and pair him up with him, then get the belts off of Ogawa and Yasuda.

Critical ability is essential to MMA style, so try to bolster your roster with more MMA guys. Careful, Roland Bock and Karelin aren't all that hot when it comes to Criticals and tend to be more Strong Style friendly than MMA friendly.

Sadly, good MMA guys in the Free Agents pools are few and far between. Anjoh could work, I guess, but he's not super. Consider making some edits, otherwise you will be understaffed often.

If you get enough MMA guys, then you can use your non tag champs Strong Style guys to boost relations.

What to buy/TV deals: As per the smaller promotions, U.F.O. starts rather poor and will need time to grow. Regional TV is available from the start, and look to get the key amenities within the first few months then go for the rest. I feel that National TV within the first six months isn't impossible if you ran many good cards and perhaps abused Zerol a few times.

Booking concerns: Choose Strong, MMA or hybrid and work it. Hybrid, as I said, is great for capturing tag belts. Some of your guys have submission heavy movesets and are quite capable of stealing belts when booked against champions

in other promotions. Roland Bock did admirably well at that.

Also, bring Mas Oyama for a one night challenge. Given your promotion's style he has a higher chance of accepting early on than with other types. It's expensive, but he does have remarkable popularity and a title belt, both of which can help your early cards. After, the extra title holder means an extra title match and a small boost to attendance for every card.

The Sheik is likely to refuse you for a time due to style conflicts and will probably not agree until you get more popular. Plus, the match is likely to be a mess unless you handle it yourself.

Challenge Zero-1 early as they are your main partner and terribly weak. You can steal their title early and help send them to their doom (possibly). Also, as the challenger you will fight under Strong Style rules which is far easier to handle than MMA against Zerol's roster.

NJPW and PRIDE are probably the only other allies you can count on given your roster. Other promotions may turn down your MMA guys or be reluctant to do business with you. Send them a tag champ to try to loosen them up.

PRIDE is a partner but also your greatest MMA rival. They have two belts and you might want to steal them. Send in some strong guys once in a while and see if they take the bait. Past the 6 month period you should be able to take away their belts by requesting their champs.

RINGS and Pancrase are going to take some time to warm up to you, so don't hold you breath on doing business with these rivals any time soon (unless you hit upon a ton of relations boosting events).

--Zerol--

Roster concerns: The late Shinya Hashimoto is the top dog here and a tough customer as always. His style is closer to that of the Yuji Nagata than the Choshu school of Strong Style. He's not exactly great at MMA but tends to have styles clashes with most Strong Style guys.

Otani is the second big name star on the roster, and just like that Zerol just got even more scatterbrained.

The rest of the roster is a mixed bag, including Masato Tanaka who is listed as a garbage wrestler despite having a lack of hardcore moves. Tanaka will do fine in Showman and ok in Strong Style, but he's not really a major superstar.

Mark Kerr is straight up shoot, so he's an odd fit.

You really need to hire more people, and there are a ton of Free Agents who can handle Strong Style but try to avoid sticking to one flavour. See NJPW for some ideas on who to hire.

What to buy/TV deals: Not unlike U.F.O., Zerol starts rather poor and will require a little patience. Regional TV is available from the start, and look to get the key amenities within the first few months then go for the rest. I feel that National TV within the first year is quite feasible.

Booking concerns: Choose Strong, MMA or hybrid and work it. While you start off as Strong Style, Hybrid will allow you to challenge U.F.O. and get good results. See, U.F.O. is a hybrid promotion classified as MMA and so the matches

will be run under that scoring method but U.F.O.'s roster tends to be far more varied than that.

This said, you can still run it as a pure Strong Style fed and just base yourself on NJPW.

NJPW is probably the only other early reliable ally given your roster, but try to seduce the other smaller promotions as soon as possible.

--RINGS--

Roster concerns: OK, you can find sociopath Akira Maeda and start with Volk Han so all is not completely lost, just mostly. The others are ok to solid, but your roster is tiny. I strongly suggest making some edits to pad out the thin Free Agent MMA roster and give you some help.

Obviously the unlock all code is a must here as Maeda is probably the biggest star RINGS will get early on if going the strict MMA route (hybrid Strong Style and MMA is always possible and perhaps a good idea even, but some folks are purists).

As with other MMA promotions, if using the unlock code, then inviting Mas Oyama for a one night challenge has some potential but it will be expensive.

There's little to say save for the fact that you are limited in cash and should be careful when recruiting people. Save scumming should be considered as you simply can't waste too much money trying to recruit people during your early months. You are still better off than Pancrase if you have Maeda around.

What to buy/TV deals: Given your small roster, limited popularity, few allies, limited funds, and a steep uphill battle for #1, you're likely to buy things slowly.

A snail paced version of the smaller promotions with one amenity at a time... if budget permits. Kind of like Michinoku Pro really.

Key amenities and most of the others by the end of the year is a reasonable goal. Merch will wait until the second year probably.

Booking concerns: As per U.F.O. unless you don't want anything to do with Strong Style, in which case you can't just abuse Zero1 as much as you would otherwise and must pray that the Gods will be merciful.

Your relations with other promotions is low, so you need to send away tag champs often in hopes of improving things. Sadly, they are MMA guys and none of the MMA promotions like you at all! So other promotions may refuse to book your guys.

Quite the quandary here: do you hire more guys, thus increasing costs so to slowly build up relations with Zero1 or just concentrate on working in isolation?

Seriously, with no potential MMA ally, you're really going to need to look into hybrid Strong Style to help bridge the gap. RINGS is a major challenge if run as a straight MMA promotion but hybrid style helps a lot.

Start slow as with smaller promotions and stick to Japan for a while.

Don't expect much in the way of a breakthrough until the first year has passed,

and then only if you're lucky. Keep chugging along slowly and hope the popularity of your top guys get you through those tough first months and allow you a speedy route to success.

--Pancrase--

Roster concerns: You don't have the star power of U.F.O. and Masakatsu Funaki is the one of the two top stars and will appear if you used the unlock all code.

In many ways, your roster situation isn't that far from that of RINGS. You have similar levels of talent, but theirs are more popular in general while you get to buy better talent more quickly.

Like RINGS you are limited in cash and should be careful when recruiting people (although you have a few thousand more to throw around). Save scumming should still be taken into consideration.

The MMA roster of Free Agents is small, so there is only so much you can do without some edits. Use the unlock code to snatch Mas Oyama's Free Style belt early in the game.

What to buy/TV deals: Given your small roster, limited popularity, few allies, limited funds, and a steep uphill battle for #1, you're likely to buy things slowly. Sound familiar?

Yeah, you are better off than RINGS, but don't get cocky. Follow the path of the smaller promotions. Regional TV, then amenities as cash permits.

Booking concerns: Well, you have better relations with Pride and Zerol than RINGS which is of some help. RINGS and U.F.O. are your rivals at the start, unfortunately.

You're not going to be able to abuse Pride as their guys are likely better than yours and they'll get better amenities faster while Zerol will have Strong Style matchups. Abusing the joint card technique is likely to be less than profitable unless you go for a hybrid fed setup.

Start slow, booking sub-10,000 seat venues and following a smaller promotion's progression whenever possible. Your guys have some popularity in Japan but start to falter outside of their home country so getting butts in seat is going to require a lot of good matches and cards in order to raise popularity.

A pure MMA Pancrase is not impossible but it will take time and by then Pride might be too big for you to take on and the non-MMA promotions are also going to pose a threat as your relations may not have improved much and you can't easily snatch their belts away as with other promotions.

Boosting relations with Pride and Zerol to snatch their belts and use their higher popularity guys to raise attendance is the best you can do in this situation, eventually stealing their belts. Good luck! MMA promotions are not easy!

--Pride--

Roster concerns: By far the easiest of the MMA promotions, Pride starts with a nearly full roster including some great guys if using the unlock all code.

Sakuraba is cool and one of your top guys. Takeda got a lot of flack over his actual skill level over the years, but his in game representation is a solid main event level guy. Nog and Silva are still household names today for a reason, while hidden guy Shamrock is much better than in real life and comes with the MMA title.

Pride is more similar to WCW than any other promotion with a good starting roster that needs only a little bit of help and padding. Edits are good, but you could probably do fine without them.

You're not as rich as WCW but then MMA promotions don't need as many guys.

Don't forget Mas Oyama if using the unlock all code!

What to buy/TV deals: Given your nice roster, incredible popularity, allies, suitable funds, and an easy battle for the top, you're likely to buy things quickly.

National TV off the bat and invest in key amenities a bit more slowly than with WCW. You may have to spread those expenses across the first few months.

Booking concerns: RINGS hate your guts and Zero1 too, but U.F.O don't mind you too much and neither do NJPW and Pancrase.

Pancrase is ripe for the picking! Beat them up, steal their belts and run them into the ground to get some extra steam.

Inoki will prove more challenging, no doubt, but he isn't a real MMA guy and just as vulnerable as anyone else to quick criticals. Getting his Strong Style belt early might boost your cards.

NJPW is going to be a really bad match, so don't go in expecting miracles if you challenge them (they are Strong Style after all). While you are beating the tar out of Pancrase, send some guys over to NJPW and U.F.O. to boost relations early and steal their titles (maybe).

A pure MMA Pride is possible but achieving number 1 might be a bit difficult without some U.F.O. style hybrid Strong Style abuse. WCW and WWE are the main issue as they run the risk of getting too big too fast and not allowing a chance to show them up. Non MMA promotions are not likely to welcome MMA guys and it may take some luck to get them to open up.

Start big with some 30,000-40,000 seat venues (ads might be necessary) in either one of the "big two" (USA/Japan) and keep at it. Dome shows should be unlocked within the first six months very easily but should prove hard to book until your guys gain more popularity. With some luck, a dome show might be possible within your first year.

You have only 3 years, so Pride may still be a challenge (albeit a small one).

| New promotion guide |

So you decided to start a new promotion to go through MOR mode.

Good for you!

Here are a few questions you need to answer before you start:

-How much challenge do you want?

Little money and little time will make you sweat bullets as you micro-manage every last aspect of your game. Expect reloading to avoid having too many unlucky random events and having too many people refuse your initial offers.

More money and more time will make things a lot smoother for your first run with an edit fed.

Also, choosing Mexico or Europe can add a bit of challenge to your game as there are fewer free agents that are popular in those areas, and those that are might not be compatible with each other or your chosen style (few Oudou style performers start with good popularity in Mexico, while there are no European luchadores).

Keep in mind that Mexico has the smallest venue sizes in the game, so you'll be going abroad to hold bigger cards very early. As for Europe, it has a weird scaling for its venues, going from puny to too big with little room in the middle earlier in the game.

-How long before you get bored?

Too much money, too much time, and too good a roster and you'll be hitting cruise control sooner than you might like. Are you going to survive 3 gruelling years of cruise control to finish off your 5 year run?

Trust me, don't choose 5 unless you're starting with as little money as possible and plan on using a less than optimal roster.

-How many free agents are available, and how good are they?

If you haven't unlocked anyone yet, you might find the starting choices to be a little limited. Edit characters might be good, but their low starting popularity might be a bit of a hindrance at first.

This is especially true of those trying to recreate a real life promotion using a new promotion instead of just gutting an existing one and recruiting free agents.

Once you've figured out what you want, we can proceed with the actual game.

Month 1

As I said before, you need at the very least 10 performers for your first few months, but 15 is better. Sadly, even lowly nobodies can refuse to work for you, leading to some quick save/reloading. Depending on your starting MP, luck and feeling towards reloading, you may end up with anywhere between 6 and 11 characters for your first card.

If you're going for an all-edit characters promotion, then make sure some of them have at least a C-rating in popularity in your home region. If you're open to non-edit characters, then try and find someone with B-level popularity to make things easier.

Again in the case of an all-edit promotion, it may be difficult to recruit all of your creations in one month. To this end, I suggest hiring then on a one night only basis so you can get 5 matches on your first card. Even non-all edit promotions may have problems hiring 11+ wrestlers in the first month of existence, so they may also benefit from hiring special guest stars. Plus, in both cases it allows you to test various matchups and see what might work in the future. Think of it as a "try before you buy" deal.

Also, avoid going nuts with the stars. While they might be popular and bring in good crowds, your promotion is starting from the bottom and thus lessen the impact of the stars. And stars cost money, a lot of it. Just meeting with Satoru Sayama will cost you 750MP, plus the contract might set you back around 1050 a month! Add Dynamite, Hansen, or any other big name star and you'll go broke - especially in smaller markets like Mexico.

A star or two is cool, especially if they fit well with your style. I made a lucha fed based in Mexico and hired Tiger Mask early on. Great move as he paid for himself quickly and helped my little promotion a lot. But during my first attempt I hired a couple more big names along with buying too much junk early. Guess what happened?

I know you might be afraid of the CPU snatching the better free agents, but you usually have at least a few months before the CPU starts plundering the ranks of the free agents.

Once you have your roster, look into TV deals. Most promotions should be able to afford a local or regional TV deal. Even if the TV deal turns red in the following months, don't worry, it'll still be active! Just be careful not to downgrade it by accident. If Local TV is out of your range at this time, you can always negotiate a deal during your second month.

That should be it for your first month. If you have plenty of money left over from your roster building and TV deal, you can either buy towels/t-shirts or invest in some of the key amenities. I strongly suggest the later. I tried buying T-shirts early and it took months for them to just pay for the initial investment and longer still to generate an acceptable profit. Getting more health back and reducing injuries and/or recovery time is always useful from the very beginning to the very end.

Try and keep at least a couple hundred MP in your bank at the end of your first month, just before running your first card.

You're now ready to book your first card. Refer to the card building primer to get the most out of your first event.

As a new fed, you'll need to create titles and crown champions. The computer will ask you whether you want a given match to be for a title or not, so choose your franchise player(s) - the guys around whom you want to build your promotion - and go for broke!

Month 2

Hopefully your first card was a success.

Next up, you either need to build up a larger roster (if you're still below the 11-15 performers mark) or get some key amenities. Remember, the key amenities are the Ring Doctor, Locker Room and Medical Room, the others are useful, but they can wait for a bit. The locker room should come first,

with the ring doctor and medical room in that order if possible.

Examine your budget to decide what might be realistic at this juncture.

If you started with the smallest amount of cash, then go for the ring doctor first and add a different amenity each month (if MP allows it). If you chose to start with more money, then you might try for the locker room ASAP then the ring doctor. Take into consideration that these amenities have monthly upkeep costs, so be careful!

If any promotion sends someone your way, book them! You'll want to work on building good relations with various promotions as early as possible, and agreeing to book their performers on your cards is a great way to do so.

You'll mostly receive lower rank guys, but WCW seems particularly eager to do business in Japan, sending in better midcarders like the Steiner Brothers or Bam Bam Bigelow. The WWE seems fond of sending DDP, Booker T and TAKA Michinoku (who may all leave at some point anyway). My Mexico-based lucha fed got little attention from the big boys until I started getting popular in Japan. Even with good relations I never got offers from them until my first year was done, but then Vinnie Mac himself asked to be a part of the show! He was jobbed out in quick order but the match was great so the WWE's reputation points went up.

This said, it should be time to book your second card.

Months 3 and 4

If your promotion put on a good showing, then others might want to borrow your wrestlers. Of course, the computer does tend to throw you a bone when you have little money and low popularity. Unless they're asking for your singles champ, you'd be advised to say yes to every offer. Many of your guys have low popularity at this point and even if they lose, at least they gave you a little money and maybe a better reputation if they had good matches.

My champs and high popularity guys were the main target. Free agent superstars will also get many demands and while the instant money might be nice, you are sacrificing their drawing power. At this point it's best to keep any recruited stars for your cards and send away the midcarders only. Once your other guys get more popular, losing the star for a month won't be a big deal.

Unfortunately, your performers might be a little worse for wear and you'll need to consider giving some of them a day off. This is where a 15 man roster can become essential. Then again, my lucha fed rarely had more than one guy at OK health each month because I invested in the key amenities quickly and lucha matches tend to be slightly less gruelling than say King's Road or MMA.

Other than that, you shouldn't be able to make enough of a profit each month to afford anything too fancy just yet.

If Toryumon or M-Pro challenge you, you might want to accept, especially if your performers are likely to have good matches against these outsiders. Sadly, a promotion challenging you is a rare occurrence. While you could do so yourself, I usually wait until the 5th or 6th month before trying.

Months 5 and 6

From here on out, your actions depend on various circumstances. If you were challenged by another promotion, you might have some serious MP in your coffers and should look into buying some extra key amenities. Otherwise, you might not be all that better off than a few months back and progress might seem slow.

Well, if they're not coming to you, then you should go to them! Your popularity should be high enough at this point to impress smaller promotions.

Toryumon, FMW, AAA, Zero1 and M-Pro are the five promotions most likely to accept your challenge. Remember that you must fight matches that suit your opponent's style if you're the one issuing the challenge, not the other way around. So choose carefully before you make that challenge!

Oh yeah, UFO might also be interested in meeting your challenge, however, it's MMA-style rich roster might not be suitable for non-MMA promotions.

Send as many of your healthy guys to other promotions if you're going for a 5 on 5 cross-promotional card. Might as well make these guys useful!

Take advantage of foreign promotions having better popularity than you in their home region and go abroad for the challenges. Establishing your promotion on foreign soil requires touring, unless you have Global TV, which isn't going to be the case until much later and requires good popularity standings in at least two territories anyway.

When you capture their title belt (which you should unless the champ is out, injured, or somehow too low on the totem pole), try to keep it on a secondary champ. That way if ever your main title holder is injured or drops to OK/Out status you still have a title match to book. Also, title matches improve morale for the challenger rather nicely which helps with grumpy superstars. Oh and you might get a small bump in your attendance for having multiple title matches.

Months 7 to 10

Depending on various factors, you might have access to a better TV deal at some point near the half year mark. If not, then keep your eyes peeled as it should happen sooner or later before the year is over.

All three key amenities should either have been bought or be bought in the very near future. In fact, if you've successfully won a 5 on 5 card, you should be more than able to afford the locker room and/or medical facilities. If you've bought them, then look into adding the other less essential ones.

Depending on your cash flow and expenses, buying cheaper merchandise might be an interesting option at this point.

Also, keep an eye out for trade opportunities with slightly bigger promotions such as WCW and AJPW. FMW and Toryumon are easy pickings for a 5 on 5 encounter, but if you try your luck against the mid-size promotions, you'll quickly find out that you have some serious muscle to contend with. You'll have to deal with the likes of Hogan, Flair, Mutoh and Kawada - all very powerful wrestlers who can dispose of most "realistic" edits in short order (unless your guys spam the BEARHUG OF DOOM).

That doesn't mean you can't try and get these guys to come over and leave their title belts in your hands! This is where building up good relations

comes into play. Around the end of the year, your promotion should be setting itself up to compete with mid-size promotions. Stealing their belts is a time honoured tradition in MOR - a profitable and useful one at that - but it won't happen unless you've established yourself as a faithful partner.

Borrowing wrestlers, lending wrestlers, and more importantly having good matches with the partner promotions are the simplest ways to gain reputation. Once you've achieved a "good" reputation, the promotion may agree to a partnership. Be careful as sending people to the promotion can result in bad matches and the computer will frown on that.

WCW are pretty easy, readily accepting most offers from reasonably successful smaller promotions. AJPW are equally quick to put out, while NOAH can often grow a little too big, a little too quickly to be open to such friendships. I suspect your promotion's style may affect the chances of an alliance being accepted as my Mexican lucha promotion had a more difficult time seducing WCW into an alliance than my Japanese Showman style Tecmo World Wrestling fed even if I was well ahead of them in rankings. Or maybe popularity in their home region is the issue.

Alliances will not only make it easier to borrow performers, but you'll get easier access to their champs. And title belts do add a bit more to your total attendance along with increasing your belt score, which considering the fact that alliances cost nothing, makes this a serious boon for any promotion.

If you feel your roster is strong enough to compete with that of WCW or AJPW, then by all means challenge them - multiple times even! 5 on 5 challenges will do wonders for your cash flow and your popularity, but only if you get good matches out of your opponents. My Mexican lucha fed was not able to secure 5 on 5 joint cards with WCW like my Tecmo World Wrestling promotion, even after brokering an alliance well into the second year.

Months 11 and 12

All the key amenities should have been bought by now, if not, then your promotion is probably having some major issues. Perhaps you bloated your roster with highly paid superstars? Perhaps you aren't getting 80%+ ratings?

Assuming that you did buy the three key amenities, start looking into purchasing the other, less vital ones, if you haven't already done so.

Your roster shouldn't have changed too much, but take a moment to look at the kind of performers you have. Do you have what it takes to tackle the Legends? If the answer is no, then this is a good time to start looking for what's missing as you're progressing quickly and you don't want to be caught off guard!

Overall, things should be getting rather simple. You've already set up a rather successful routine that allowed you to survive up to this point. Your cash flow should be increasing and your popularity soaring. It's just a matter of time and patience as you continue stealing belts, holding cards abroad to boost your popularity around the world, and buying amenities while progressively investing in merchandise.

By the start of your second year, your promotion should be close to the top 5 and dealing with the WWE isn't entirely out of the question. You should know how to handle most situations and your path is a fairly straightforward one from this point on.

GAME MECHANICS

| Working with the Random Number Generator |

As you've probably noticed by now, I've talked a good game about saving and reloading, and how the RNG (random number generator) comes into play. So what will affect the RNG? When should you save and what can you do to change the outcomes (manipulating luck)?

Once you've booked your card, match outcomes and ratings are pre-determined (hey, it's pro wrestling!) for each CPU level and skip type. The only way to change these is to change something on your card. Anything from changing the host region to changing the order of the performers in a given match will do the job. OK, that last one might seem a little odd, but it works. Kane vs. Austin will generate a set of results, but go back and make that Austin vs. Kane (choosing Austin first, then Kane as the opponent) and the results will be changed as the game assumes you're making a new match.

Thing is, the outcome of a match will change those of other matches on the card, so just because Austin vs. Kane with Kane as the winner by pinfall got 100% on CPU level 5 for skip type Half doesn't mean it will always get 100% nor will Kane always be the winner, and a pinfall victory might change to a submission win if the match before it has a different outcome than the one it had when you got that 100% rating.

Look at this fictional WWE card lineup:

RVD vs. Shane - RVD Frog Splash 83%
TAKA vs. X-PAC - TAKA submission 73%
Vince vs. The Undertaker - Taker KO 67%
Austin vs. Kane - Kane pinfall 100%
The Rock vs. Mike Awesome - Rock pinfall 89%

Skip type is set to half and CPU level is at 5 for all matches.

Once you start simming, the game will generate a set of results for each of these, the ones you see above. But you decide to change the skip type of RVD/Shane to Full. The CPU will then alter the results of all the upcoming matches for all scenarios.

RVD vs. Shane - RVD pinfall 75%
TAKA vs. X-PAC - TAKA submission 79%
Vince vs. The Undertaker - Taker pinfall 87%
Austin vs. Kane - Kane submission 74%
The Rock vs. Mike Awesome - Rock pinfall 95%

This is what the card will look like if you change the results for the first match. All other matches will keep the results listed unless you change something in the second match.

RVD vs. Shane - RVD pinfall 75%
TAKA vs. X-PAC - X-PAC pinfall 86%
Vince vs. The Undertaker - Taker pinfall 81%

Austin vs. Kane - Austin pinfall 98%

The Rock vs. Mike Awesome - Awesome top rope powerbomb 87%

You changed the CPU level for the second match to ensure an X-PAC victory, so the game automatically gives you new results for all the other matches.

See the pattern?

Now no matter what, as soon as the outcome for the first match is decided, all outcomes for the second one are pre-determined according to the various scenarios, which are finite in nature. Meaning you have 10 computer levels, two skip types with outcomes based on CPU level and Full has one set result. That gives you 21 different outcomes for the following match and no matter how many times you let the computer do the match, the outcome for a given skip type and CPU level will remain the same unless you change the outcome of the previous match.

So there's no guarantee that you'll get that Austin win at 98% since its an outcome based on three other outcomes. So, sometimes you might need to redo an entire card just to get a single outcome!

So be careful when booking complete mismatches thinking you can just reload until you get what you want! Some guys will squash you 99% of the time (I'm looking at YOU, Andre the Giant).

Now what about the RNG outside the simming of matches?

For special events, the RNG will decide once its done with the results of everyone's cards, so you can save before your card is over and reload the last match, doing it over and over with the same outcome until you get the events you want (or avoid those you don't want).

The game books the opposition's matches before yours, so there's nothing you can do about the computer's booking short of rebooking your own card... or hacking the game so as to mess with the computer's matches. But the results can change, so if that champion you sent to WCW lost his belt(s), you can reload to get a different outcome if using save states.

It seems as if asking someone for something and being refused or accepted will set off the RNG or add/subtract points to some invisible counters which are then used to determine the outcomes of recruiting attempts. So trying unsuccessfully to recruit Stan Hansen might make WCW accept to lend you Hulk Hogan, but if you managed to recruit Abdullah the Butcher after being rebuffed by Hansen, Hogan might not be yours for the month.

But if they agree to lend you Hogan, they'll be friendlier to you from now on and allow you to pick the tag champs Hawk and Animal. But maybe they won't accept for Animal if you try him first, but will if Hawk is picked first because the game takes titles, popularity, edit points, and reputation into account when checking to see if it should lend you someone or not. If Hawk's score is lower than Animal's, then he's obviously a bit easier to get. But due to the RNG, it may all be a moot point.

Confused yet?

Well, the simplest thing to say is that the RNG adds a level of randomness to various decisions made by the CPU, but that it isn't ALL random, and some outcomes are much more probable than others based on a number of factors.

And now I just read that Jason Blackheart went into the RNG for FFPW, and started taking it apart as only he knows how to do. But for the average MOR fanatic, the info above should suffice. If you want more, go to Fireprozomg or something.

|Number crunching|

For most of us, this following section isn't THAT useful as there are only so many ways by which you can control the numbers and optimize them. So I'm offering these for the sake of better understanding just how much (or how little) an event/action will boost or lower a given value.

--Relationship with other promotions--

The Party special event raises the trust/reputation level with the host by 15 points out of 100, which is considerable.

If you're hosting the event, then you get a 5 points bonus with everyone.

The sick children event also adds 5 points to your reputation with everyone.

Asking to borrow someone from another promotion successfully will give you a 3 point boost to your reputation, lending someone does the same. But if a promotion asks you for a given performer, then you don't gain reputation with them (but you do gain money from it).

A 80%+ rated match involving one of your performers and one from another promotion will raise your trust/reputation by 3 to 5 points. A bad one will drive it down by 2-3 points, perhaps even more. This includes matches held on the competitor's card. The winner/loser does not change anything to reputation, so you can job out any and all visiting performers if you like.

Reputation levels values are as follow:

Rival: 00 to 14
Neutral: 15 to 28
OK: 29 to 46
Good: 47 to 64

A Good level relationship of 47 will allow you to ally yourself with the promotion almost all of the time, although I recall the WWE being a little more difficult at times. Joint events are a another matter.

--Popularity--

The magazine event gives 3 popularity points to the region featured in the event.

Talk shows do the same but for a given performer.

A successful event gives your promotion up to 10 popularity points in the region where the card is held, 4 in all others with Global TV.

You need 240 popularity points to unlock Dome shows.

Losing titles in a 100% rated match will net you a 13 point drop in all regions but your home, where you'll lose 40 point. 14 for 83%, and so on. Charisma will affect the drop as will card placement, I think.

Winning works pretty much the same way but in reverse, adding points.

--Health/spirit regeneration--

You'll gain 22193 HP/SP out of 65535 HP/SP.

39240-36662 for non-booked.

You regain an extra 3276 health and spirit points when you add the medical room amenity.

--Morale--

The locker room amenity will boost the morale of each wrestler on a card by 2 points or so. It doesn't seem to affect wrestlers sitting on the sidelines, but I'm not sure.

The vacation event will up morale by 3 to 5 points per performer. However, I've yet to test it out without the locker room, so I'm not yet sure if this includes the locker room bonus or not (possibly not since they're not being booked).

Morale raised from booking a wrestler may vary according to various factors:

Wrestler is fighting in his primary style: +1
Title match (challenging): +5
Title Match (defending): ??
Tag match: -1

Oudou (primary style)

1st: 53 (-1)
2nd: 54 (0)
3rd: 55 (+1)
4th: 56 (+2)
5th: 57 (+3)

Strong (secondary style)

1st: 52 (-2)
2nd: 53 (-1)
3rd: 54 (0)
4th: 55 (+1)
5th: 56 (+2)

HC

1st: 50 (-4)
2nd: 51 (-3)
3rd: 51 (-3)
4th: 52 (-2)

5th: 52 (-2)

OK, found out a bit more about morale and booking matches...

I used Misawa (multiple champ) and Akiyama (perpetual challenger) as my test subjects.

The following data takes into consideration the fact that Misawa is an Oudou/Showman and Akiyama an Oudou/Strong style performer. Also, the rankings below style show card placement with no titles on the line and with "Good" overall health status (to make sure, I gave them max health/spirit), but further tests show that an OK health status affects morale growth in the same way as Good, only the Out status changes anything significantly.

They started at 54 morale points each.

If titles are on the line, then add 5 morale points to the challenger, no matter how many of how few titles are on the line. Be it 10 titles or 2, morale will not change based on the number of titles.

The defender will get +1 morale point if the match is in his primary style only, and then only if he's not currently Out, otherwise he gains no additional bonus from defending his titles.

All values on the left are with the locker room amenity. To the right, you'll find values without the locker room.

Akiyama

Oudou (primary style)

1st: 53 (-1)

2nd: 54 (0)

3rd: 55 (+1)

4th: 56 (+2)

5th: 57 (+3)

Strong (secondary style)

1st: 52 (-2)

2nd: 53 (-1)

3rd: 54 (0)

4th: 55 (+1)

5th: 56 (+2)

Any other

1st: 50 (-4)

2nd: 51 (-3)

3rd: 51 (-3)

4th: 52 (-2)

5th: 52 (-2)

With about 1/3 health/spirit

Akiyama

Oudou (primary style)

1st: 50 (-4)

2nd: 51 (-3)

3rd: 51 (-3)

4th: 52 (-2)
5th: 52 (-2)

Strong (secondary style)

1st: 50 (-4)
2nd: 51 (-3)
3rd: 51 (-3)
4th: 52 (-2)
5th: 52 (-2)

Any other

1st: 4E (-6)
2nd: 4F (-5)
3rd: 4F (-5)
4th: 50 (-4)
5th: 50 (-4)

The champ may not appreciate having to defend his belts...

Misawa

Oudou (primary style)

1st: 50 (-4)
2nd: 51 (-3)
3rd: 51 (-3)
4th: 52 (-2)
5th: 52 (-2)

Showman (secondary style)

1st: 50 (-4)
2nd: 51 (-3)
3rd: 51 (-3)
4th: 52 (-2)
5th: 52 (-2)

Any other

1st: 4E (-6)
2nd: 4F (-5)
3rd: 4F (-5)
4th: 50 (-4)
5th: 50 (-4)

With about 1/3 health/spirit

Misawa

Oudou (primary style)

1st: 4E (-6)
2nd: 4F (-5)
3rd: 4F (-5)
4th: 50 (-4)
5th: 50 (-4)

Showman (secondary style)

1st: 4D (-7)
2nd: 4E (-6)
3rd: 4E (-6)
4th: 4F (-5)

5th: 4F (-5)

Any other

1st: 4B (-9)

2nd: 4C (-8)

3rd: 4C (-8)

4th: 4D (-7)

5th: 4D (-7)

--Others--

0 costs codes are bogus - the game takes into account its own calculations no matter what the number on the screen says.

If trying to hack amenities, you need to be on the amenities screen, or else you won't get points for them (initial points = cost).

A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S
&
C O P Y R I G H T S

First off, a big thank you to Jason Blackheart, the all knowing, all seeing, God of Fire Pro engines. Without his constant efforts to rip open Fire Pro games to reveal their complex, albeit flawed inner workings, none of us would be here. Fire Pro is also probably still real to him!

Furthermore, I wouldn't even have bothered with this game were it not for Fire Pro Club's Tiger Mask and his translation patch. He picked up where others left off to give us the most complete translation of the game available today! All Final Fire Pro fans owe him a huge debt of gratitude!

Megaxero's codes allowed me to verify various theories, invalidate rumours, and make astounding discoveries. Clearly lacking the proper knowledge to hack or rip apart games, I relied on his information to find various addresses that went into the making of this guide.

Cactusj00's encouragement, questions, and curiosity fueled my early attempts at a guide. He's been my most loyal supporter from day one and I owe him for that.

I'd like to extend thanks to everyone at Fire Pro Club and Fire Pro ZOMG for their help and contributions, be they great or small, and especially for bringing that photo of The Destroyer with a snowman in Tokyo. Damn if that wasn't the greatest wrestling related picture of all times!

As always, heads up to the former cast and crew of the Heroes of the Lance GameFAQs message board, as well as to Sturm and his moustache of pure AWESOMENESS~~~~ Their tales of heroic glory have been a major inspiration in my life. Remember to never let those damn nude midgets kick you in the shins.

While we're at it, thanks go out to Hokuto no Ken's Kenshirou, who would like you to know that you are all already dead! Aaatatatatatatatatatata!!!

Oh and how could I forget HORGH, skinsman for Immortal and my namesake. Remember, if a man has grown tired of Horgh's nipples, he has grown tired of life itself!

And last but not least, LUCHA Terry Funk~~~, the swankiest luchadore around.

Copyrights issues:

Of course, I, Asplagis aka Zettaijin aka HORGH, made this guide. I don't mind seeing this thing on anyone's personal page, so long as you tell me beforehand and give me proper credit for my work. If you don't, then Kenshirou will explode your head! Aaaa-tatatatatatatata!!!!

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