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# Campus looks to get Rowdy

■ Mac Court will host an enthusiastic wrestling match tonight featuring Rowdy Roddy Piper

By Beata Mostafavi  
Oregon Daily Emerald

With a nickname like Rowdy Roddy Piper, it's no wonder that Roderick Toombs has a history of being more than a little rowdy.

Known as one of 1980's biggest "bad guys" in the World Wrestling Federation, Piper is no less than an icon of the professional wrestling world. Tonight, the 6-foot-1-inch, 235-pound figure will appear at MacArthur Court — and give Eugene a small taste of why "they call him rowdy."

Titled "Anarchy at Piper's Pit," the 7:30 p.m. wrestling match will feature other popular and infamous names, including Hackshaw Jim Duggan, Maniac Matt Bourne and Curt "Mr. Perfect" Henning.

Piper hasn't revealed whether he will wrestle, but the secret is a part of the show, said Jeff Kafoury, president of RoddyRaw.com. Now retired and 47 years old, Piper is nervous about re-entering the wrestling world.

"I'm afraid to death," he said with a laugh. "I don't want to wrestle ... I'm an old man."

But even away from the ring, Piper still leaves his mark.

Kafoury said the rowdy star's popularity has shone through in the way other pro-wrestlers respect him. Looking back to the first time he went "behind the scenes" with Piper in a San Francisco locker room, Kafoury was astonished at how other icon wrestlers looked up to Roddy.

"I saw the admiration superstars like Hulk Hogan had for him," he said. "He's kind of the Michael Jordan of the sport ... basically a living legend in pro-wrestling ... The guy is brilliant ... Can't think of anybody that worked harder to get where he's at than Roddy."

The road to superstar bliss was indeed a long one for Piper. On the streets at age 13 in Canada, Piper said pro-wrestling was never a "premeditated" career.

"I was living on the street and some guy said 'you could get \$25 if you fight this guy,'" he said. "The first wrestling match I saw, I was in."

His career in the NWA lasted from 1973 until 1987, reaching its notorious peak in the WWF during the 1980s. Wearing a kilt and playing the bagpipe — which he learned at age six, and which also led to his nickname — Piper became a memorable figure. He won 21 different championships before his fighting career ended.

But Piper, who now lives in Portland, said being on campus makes him especially wish he had done things differently.

"I wish so much I could do it again and go back to school," he said. "I always wanted to be a psychologist. I don't know why."

This will not be Piper's first public appearance in Eugene. He baffled the audience at former "Saturday Night Live" star Norm MacDonald's performance a couple of weeks ago.

But those who grew up watching Piper during the peak of his stardom have seen him rile up the crowd before. He hosted the television series "Piper's Pit" to salute the bad guys of professional wrestling, which is when he once smashed Jimmy "Superfly" Snuka over the head with a coconut — one of his most famous feats.

Piper said he did not get his "bad guy" reputation for nothing. "I've lived up to every letter in the name," he said. "Mother Teresa isn't driving me home."

Kafoury said the theme "Anarchy at Piper's Pit" was created because it fit Eugene and because "Roddy has been fighting the establishment his whole life."

Junior Chris Spinelli, who is programming the event at the Cultural Forum, said that just in the last few weeks, he has seen the side of Piper that brought him his wild status. And community members should not miss Friday's event, he added.

"He's a bad ass," he said. "He can wreck shop."



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