

FEBRUARY 2017

DEPARTMENTS

3 FROM THE DESK OF...
— *Stu Saks*

6 BEFORE THE BELL
— *by Mike Bessler*

10 RINGSIDE
— *with Harry Burkett*

14 QUICK COUNT
— *by Al Castle*

16 THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER
— *by Dan Murphy*

18 WIN, LOSE, OR DRAW
— *by Harry Burkett*

62 THE BUSINESS PAGE
— *by Harry Burkett*

66 INDEPENDENT ROUNDUP
— *by Mike Bessler*

68 INTERNATIONAL REPORT
— *by Dan Murphy*

70 ARENA REPORTS

78 BETWEEN FALLS

80 OFFICIAL WRESTLING RATINGS

82 DRAWING BLOOD *by Jason Conlan*

FEATURES

20 HOTSEAT: KENNY OMEGA
Kenny Omega was so down on the business 10 years back that he gave strong consideration to a career switch. Then he got in the ring with another young wrestler named AJ Styles and his passion was instantly revived. Now thriving in Japan and North America, Omega senses that he is on WWE's radar, but he's not waiting by the phone. He still has unfulfilled goals that he's rapidly checking off his list

28 RESHAPED, RESIZED, REVIVED: THE BIZARRE NEW WORLD OF WWE
Who could have imagined that WWE's roster could include the names Kevin Owens, Shinsuke Nakamura, and AJ Styles—let alone that they would be some of the company's top champions? This is not your father-in-law's WWE!

34 OSPREY'S FLIGHT TO NUMBER 16: WHERE THERE'S A WILL, THERE'S A WAY
If you saw the name Will Ospreay that high in last issue's "PWI 500" and said, "Who?" we urge you to check out his matches on YouTube even before you read the story. This young man is special

39 THE NINTH ANNUAL PWI "FEMALE 50"
This one wasn't even close. Charlotte held the WWE's top women's title for 93 percent of our evaluation period. Sorry, Sasha supporters, maybe next year

57 THE PWI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD 2016 BALLOT
Vote in 11 categories, and get us your "Official Unofficial" awards. You only have till December 15!

STAY CONNECTED!

REACHING YOU ...

Pro Wrestling Illustrated: April 2017 (Year-End Issue).
Digital edition on sale January 12, 2017; print edition on sale February 7, 2017

Website: pwi-online.com

The PWI Podcast: pwi.podbean.com; iTunes Store

Back Issues: Every *PWI* cover since 1979 can be viewed at our website. Back issue availability is noted

REACHING US ...

General e-mail: pwi@kappapublishing.com

Letters to the editor: prorestlingillustrated@yahoo.com

Editorial mail: P.O. Box 96, Fort Washington, PA 19034

Arena Reports e-mail: pwireports@yahoo.com

Independent news e-mail: officialpwi@gmail.com

Subscription Inquiries: Kappa Publishing Group Inc., P.O. Box 433120, Palm Coast, FL 32143-3120

Subscription phone: 386-246-0114

Subscription e-mail: custsrvc@kappapublishing.com

REACH EACH OTHER ...

Blog: prorestlingillustrated.blogspot.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/pages/

PWI/127711697289232?fbref=ts

Twitter: twitter.com/officialpwi



COVER PHOTO:

AJ Styles-John Cena,
Shinsuke Nakamura-Samoa
Joe, Kevin Owens: ©2106
WWE, Inc. All rights reserved
Sasha Banks-Becky Lynch by
John Smolek

COVER DESIGN:

Julia Tran