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SLAM'D



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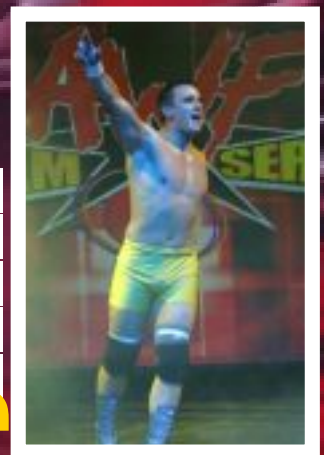


**“ TRIBUTE:
Hannes Van Zyl
aka THE STUNNER
”**

Nearly Departed

Born 21-06-1980
Passed 24-02-2008

**“ We at the AWA/AWF are very
sad to announce the passing of
Hannes “THE STUNNER” van Zyl
a true South African
Wrestling Super Star
”**



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RIP Hannes Van Zyl

On Saturday the 23rd of February 2008 South African Wrestling lost one of its greatest sons and those of the AWA locker-room lost a dear friend. The sudden and tragic passing of Hannes Van Zyl brought a sad end to a life that had been so successful in bringing joy to so many across sub-Saharan Africa. It would do an injustice to the man believing I could paint a fair picture of him in such a short article, especially seeing as I only had the privilege of knowing him for such a short time. That said, it is necessary to try and convey to his fans the person behind the superstar they have come to love, this is a tribute to 'the Stunner'.

'THE STUNNER'

Without a doubt one of the best, if not the best, matt wrestler in South Africa's recent history, his unquestioned technical ability was enhanced by a phenomenal arsenal of high risk moves that separated him from the average heavyweight competitor. Never saying much, 'The Stunner' won over the hearts of many a crowd over the years, one must attribute this success to his amazing ability in the ring, drawing on all aspects on the sport of professional wrestling, From his muscular physique to his seemingly endless 'in ring' stamina, Hannes was an out and out athlete. Able to excel in just about any sport, it was wrestling he chose to focus on and few can deny his place at the top of his game. A permanent fixture in main events across the country many wrestling fans in the



know dubbed 'The Stunner' to be the future of South African Wrestling and possibly the next AWA Heavyweight Champion. Although he never held AWA gold he never needed the push as fans always knew he was the real deal. All who were fortunate enough to witness Hannes in action will know what I mean when I say he put his body on the line for a great show, from top rope Moonassault's to suicide dives and innovative manoeuvres risking all for the crowd. In his very last show he landed badly in the first few minutes of the bout badly hurting his shoulder but still managed to pull out all the stops and push himself to give the crowd exactly what they wanted to see.

“ he put his body on the line for a great show ”



THE MENTOR

Hannes seldom missed a training session, coming straight from gym to the Wrestling academy he would be the first in and the last out of the AWA ring. Even when he was the only heavyweight at training he would spend time with each and every trainee transferring his vast knowledge to those new to the sport. 'The Stunner' was passionate about the future of South African Professional Wrestling, inspiring and criticizing the next wave, making sure all wrestlers were on a sufficient level to put on the best possible show. His loss at such a young age may lend people to believe that he was not yet able to truly give back to the sport, however it is a indication of the man that each and every wrestler on the AWA roster can attribute something about their style, move set, technique or ring physiology to the efforts of 'The Stunner'.

THE MAN

Whether he knew it or not Hannes Van Zyl was a positive influence on the lives of all that knew him, as a wrestler and a friend. He was a stand up person offering help where he could and always commanding the respect of his peers. He lived life to the full and was often the heart and soul of the party, but when it came time to be serious he was the consummate professional. Saturday the 23rd of February was not just a sad day for South African Wrestling, but a sad day for everyone who had ever met or seen Hannes perform and perhaps more importantly for everyone yet to be influenced by this good natured giant of a man. Rest in peace Hannes Van Zyl, you will be missed.



“each AWA wrestler can attribute something about their style to the efforts of ‘The Stunner’”

