PILE-DRIVERS & POWER-BOMBS

A *FLAYINGTIME* Game

By JJ Prince

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WTF! WTF! WTF!

RJ: Welcome to the Wrestling-Time Federation, your number one choice for sports-related violence - if you don't follow soccer.

Tazzz: No doubt RJ. Up the Arsenal!

RJ: Joining me on color commentary is Tazzz, my able broadcast partner.

Tazzz: And it's a pleasure to be here RJ, I can't wait to see these losers rip chunks out of each other.

RJ: It certainly has all the makings of a modern day classic.

Tazzz: These guys hate each other! And I mean Nancy Kerrigan Tonya Harding style hate! It's gonna be a bloodbath!

RJ: I have to agree with you Tazzz, with the currently vacant WTF title up for grabs there's everything to fight for – and everything to lose.

Tazz: No doubt. I've been in the ring with bears man, bears! But these guys are just as mean and just as hungry.

RJ: Bears? OK. Now we join our very own John Busboy who has an exclusive pre-match interview with one of the super-stars…

PILEDRIVERS & POWERBOMBS

Join the savage world of pro-wrestling, create a superstar and battle by fair means or foul to destroy your rivals and attain the ultimate prize – The WTF title!

PILE-DRIVERS & POWER-BOMBS

WHAT'S THIS ROLE-PLAYING LARK ANYWAY?

Odds are you already know this – but for the sake of tradition this section brings enlightenment to the bewildered.

The standard format of role-playing games and this game which dares to be similar, is for a group of 2-7 people to play.

One of these individuals will assume the role of running the game, this person is referred to as the *Games Master (GM),* or referee or general manager or god-monkey or 'that bastard'.

The rest of the group are known as the *players* (think of them as an Elizabethan theatre troupe, this is nothing to do with the game but is funny).

Players each create a character who will be their fantasy alter ego. During the game each player has control over their character and will decide what the character says and does. These player controlled characters are known as *player-characters (PCs)*.

The GM runs everything else in the game. He describes the world that the PCs experience. He comes up with the story and the various scenarios the PCs find themselves in.

The GM also plays the role of all the other characters the PCs meet during the game. These other characters are referred to as *non-player characters (NPCs)*.
The main NPC roles that the GM plays in this game are those of the play-by-play commentator and the WTF commissioner.

Ultimately, the GMs most important role is purveyor of fun. Everyone involved in the game should have fun, that's the point.

VICTORY!

Unlike traditional games, role-playing games generally have no explicit victory conditions. Role-playing games are about immersing oneself into a fantasy world, socialising, working as a group and playing a character. In that way everyone wins and that's beautiful man.

However, in *Piledrivers & Powerbombs (P&P)* there is a common goal, this is to become the WTF champion. Whichever PC achieves this can be declared the victor.

PILE-DRIVERS & POWER-BOMBS

THE PREMISE

Players take on the role of pro-wrestlers a short time before the biggest opportunity of their careers. Each PC is embroiled in a bitter feud with their *nemesis*.
PCs develop as they wrestle matches, ambush opponents and push their gimmicks.
In order to succeed, the PCs need to band together to form a faction.
Only when they have the strength of unity can they defeat their nemeses.
Then the only obstacles to the WTF title belt are each other…

GAME MECHANICS

A single deck of 52 playing cards is needed to play this game.
Outside of combat a single fortune check is used for scene resolution.
Each character involved draws a number of cards equal to their relevant attribute. Whoever gets the highest wins and gains whatever benefit winning entails, usually the narration of the scene.

FLAIR POINTS

PCs gain bonuses for stylin' and profilin' and for working their gimmick.
A PC gains a Flair point when they say or do something suitably cool, funny, (melo)dramatic or gimmicky. The GM has the final say on this.
A PC can burn a flair point at any time to gain a bonus card to a check. Multiple FPs can be spent on a single check.
A PC can never have more *FPs* than *Grudge Points*.
PCs begin each game session with no *FPs*.

PLAY STRUCTURE

P&P has a quite rigid play organization compared to other RPGs.
The game always follows this structure:
1. **Announce match card**
2. **Pre-match sequences**
3. **Play Matches**
4. **Post-match sequences**

CHARACTER CREATION - BIRTH OF A LEGEND

Each player creates their wrestling superstar and writes them up onto a P&P superstar sheet.
There are two major steps to this process:

1. Concept
2. Attributes
3. Nemesis

CONCEPT

You need to conceptualize your wrestler.
Is he a huge hairy brute or a lithe leaping luchador?
Specifically, what's his name? Height? Weight? Home? Entrance Music?

E.g. Dave decides he is going to play Kaos Klown – a homicidal harlequin who stands 6 foot tall and weighs in at 200lbs. He ran away to join the circus as a boy and has never looked back. He enters to Conquer by the Insane Clown Posse.

An essential aspect of any potential ring-warrior is his finishing move or 'finisher'. Players are encouraged to come up with the most ridiculous over-the-top names when coming up with their finishers.

E.g. Dave decides that Kaos Klown's finisher will be a vicious modified choke-slam called 'Who's laughing now?'

GIMMICK

Every successful wrestler has a gimmick.
Gimmicks are what make – or break – a superstar's career.
Often a gimmick will suggest itself from the character concept, but feel free to steal gimmicks from wrestlers past and present.
If a superstar manages to work their gimmick into a pre-match sequence, exchange or post-match sequence, then they gain a flair point.

E.g. Kaos Klown's gimmick is just that, he's an evil clown (are there any good ones?)

ATTRIBUTES

Attributes represent the more 'gamey' aspect of character creation.
Each attribute ranges from 1-7.
A superstar's attributes relay information about his wrestling ability.

There are four attributes in P&P:

1. **Popularity**
2. **Infamy**
3. **Testicular Fortitude**
4. **Mad Skillz**

POPULARITY

This attribute describes how well liked a superstar is. In the wacky world of pro-wrestling *Popularity* is everything – it's always the most popular superstars who triumph in the face of adversity. Popular good-guy superstars are known as 'babyfaces' or faces for short.

INFAMY

If you're not famous you can be the next best thing – infamous. *Infamy* is the dark counterbalance to *popularity*. Infamy represents how reviled a superstar is. Villainous superstars (those with more *Infamy* than *popularity*) are known as heels.

TESTICULAR FORTITUDE

If a superstar needs one thing to enter the hallowed squared circle, it's *testicular fortitude*. This attribute describes the stamina, heart and cajones of a superstar.
Yes, even female superstars have *testicular fortitude*.

MAD SKILLZ

Ya gotta have some *Mad Skillz* to survive in this game!
Mad skillz represents a superstar's ability to deliver impressive moves or 'spots'. The higher a superstar's *mad skillz*, the more potential *sellage* he can inflict in one exchange.

ASSIGNING ATTRIBUTES

Your GM will decide how many attribute points (APs) your superstar starts with.
Usually one of the following amounts:
Jobber (Rookie) 6 APs
Mid-carder (Experienced) 10 APs
Main-eventer (Veteran) 15 APs
Remember, each attribute must be at least 1.

E.g. Dave's GM is intending to run a mid-card campaign, so Kaos Klown has 10 APs to spend. Dave knows the pure evil of the Klown, so puts 4 points into Infamy and 2 points into each of the other attributes.

GRUDGE POINTS

Grudge points represent the intensity of the feud. In order to trigger the final confrontation each PC needs a certain number of grudge points (default is 4).

Grudge points also act as a cap for flair points.

A PC begins with one grudge point.

The key to attaining grudge points is conflict with your nemesis.

THE NEMESIS

At the heart of this game, and of pro-wrestling in general, is the notion of feuding.

Great grudges and bitter feuds make wrestling what it is - they demonstrate a personal stake for the characters involved.

With this feud in mind, each player creates their PC's nemesis.

NEMESIS GENESIS

Nemesis creation is not dissimilar from character creation.

There are 4 aspects that need to be decided upon.

1. Concept
2. Connection
3. Conflict
4. Attributes

CONCEPT

Who is your PC's nemesis?

What do they look like?

What's their gimmick?

Try and develop your nemesis as much as your PC.

CONNECTION

A PC and their nemesis are on a collision course from day one.

In order to keep this focussed, each PC must have some sort of connection to their nemesis. This connection can be practically anything the player comes up with – from something as simple as being related to something as outlandish as both being survivors of an alien abduction! Remember, this is the world of wrestling storylines, be as nonsensical as you like (and your GM can tolerate). One proviso is that the connection must run both ways, PC & nemesis must both feel inexorably connected to the other.
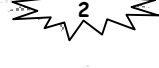
CONFLICT

Now we're getting down to it, each PC must have some sort of ongoing conflict with their nemesis.
Sometimes this conflict springs from the connection thus creating tension.
A classic conflict is the love triangle, there's a ton of mileage with that.

ATTRIBUTES

A nemesis begins with the same attributes as the PC, except that popularity and infamy are switched.
The GM keeps track of all the nemeses' attributes and records any changes.

E.g. Dave needs to create KK's nemesis. He hits upon the idea of a cocky acrobatic wrestler and names him Randy Facto. Randy's gimmick is that he's a suave ladies man. The connection between KK and Randy is that they were both from the same circus and the ringmaster asked them to look out for one another. The conflict is that they have different approaches to wrestling. Randy despises KK's clownish antics stating they have no place in a sport about athletic excellence. KK thinks Randy is a stuck up schmuck who needs a good pie-ing. Randy starts play with: popularity 4, infamy 2, testicular fortitude 2 and mad skillz 2.

SUPERSTAR SHEET

NAME: Kaos Klown

HEIGHT: 6ft

WEIGHT: 200lbs

HOME: Chuck's Circus

THEME MUSIC:
Conquer – Insane Clown Posse

FINISHER:
Who's Laughing Now!

GIMMICK:
Evil Clown

POPULARITY: 2

INFAMY: 4

TESTICULAR FORTITUDE: 2

MAD SKILLZ: 2

GRUDGE POINTS: 1

NEMESIS: Randy Facto

CONNECTION: The promise to Chuck

CONFLICT: Randy hates clowns

FACTION INFO

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PLAY SEQUENCE

ANNOUNCE MATCH CARD
PRE-MATCH SEQUENCES
PLAY MATCHES
POST-MATCH SEQUENCES

ANNOUNCE MATCH CARD

At the beginning of each session the GM, in the guise of the play-by-play commentator or the WTF commissioner, outlines the match card. This states who each PC will be fighting that night. PCs may face each other, the nemeses or other NPC wrestlers.

The GM gets pretty much free reign here, with a couple of provisos
- Each PC must wrestle a match.
- A PC cannot be booked in the same match twice in a row.

PRE-MATCH SEQUENCES

After the match-card has been announced, each PC gets to decide upon a pre-match course of action. The GM then runs a sequence with each PC in turn before moving onto the matches. A PC can:
- Attempt to *connect* with another PC.
- Attempt to *ambush* their match opponent.
- Confront their nemesis in an attempt to *inflame* their feud.
- Propose some other pre-match sequence such as cutting a promo.

CONNECTING – TIES THAT BIND

When trying to connect with another PC, the acting PC gets to set the scene. He describes the characters meeting in a back-stage area and role-plays his pitch to the other PC. The acting PC must propose some sort of connection between the two of them which should lead to them teaming up. The acting PC then checks his *popularity*, the passive PC checks his *popularity*.

Whoever wins gets to decide whether or not a connection is established and the nature of that connection. The two players should then role-play out the rest of the sequence.

If connected, the two PCs now count as part of a faction. PCs in the same faction can opt to *scene-share*, in which case they both appear in the same sequence. In order to scene-share the PCs must reference their connection during the sequence set up. If the sequence calls for an attribute check they may both make checks and gain rewards or suffer misfortunes separately.

In order to trigger the final confrontation all PCs must be part of the same faction (which usually means being connected to at least two other PCs).

Whenever PCs connect, their nemeses are assumed to connect too, this enables the creation of opposing factions.

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AMBUSHES

When attempting to ambush an opponent, the PC once again gets to set the scene.
He then makes an *infamy* check opposed by his victim's *infamy*.
The winner gets to narrate a scene in which the loser takes a beating. The loser must wrestle the match carrying a point of *sellage*.

INFLAMING THE FEUD

When attempting to inflame the feud, the PC sets the scene for a confrontation with his nemesis.
The PC then makes a *popularity* or *infamy* check opposed by the number of *grudge points* he currently has.
If the player wins then the conflict is exacerbated, the player gains +1 grudge point and narrates the rest of the sequence to reflect this increase in tension.
If the player loses then the connection with his nemesis proves too strong and the GM narrates the rest of the scene to reflect this.

MISCELLANEOUS SCENES

The player gets full reign over these scenes with one proviso, they can never alter anyone's attributes. However a player can still rack up some flair points in a scene that doesn't fit into one of the other categories.

POST-MATCH SEQUENCES

After all matches on the card have concluded, each PC gets to decide upon a post-match course of action. A PC can:

- Attempt to *connect* with another PC (as per pre-match).
- Confront their nemesis in an attempt to *inflame* their feud (as per pre-match).
- Attempt to administer a post-match *beat-down* to their recent opponent.
- *Develop* their character with a training montage.
- Propose some other pre-match sequence such as recruiting a manager.

BEAT-DOWN

When attempting to deliver a post-match *beat-down* to their opponent, the PC once again gets to set the scene. It can be in the ring as soon as the match concludes, or it can be later that night…

He then makes an *infamy* check opposed by his victim's *popularity* or *infamy,* whichever is higher.

The acting player gets a +1 card bonus if he won the match.

- If the acting PC wins then he gains +1 *infamy* and gets to narrate the rest of the scene and administer a beating.
- If a PC deals his nemesis a *beat-down* he gains +1 grudge point.
- If the acting PC loses then the GM narrates the rest of the scene and no attributes change.

DEVELOPMENT

A player who wishes to develop their character narrates a short montage which shows their PC improving in some way. The player then increases any attribute by one.

However, the player must also select a nemesis, doesn't have to be their own, the GM relates a short montage about that nemesis and they too gain a one point improvement to an attribute.

P&P uses a betting mechanic in combat, whereby all involved characters try and gain the advantage.

THE SYSTEM

At the start of an exchange each involved character declares their tactics. The player to the left of the current dealer declares first, play proceeds clockwise. All cards are dealt face down. There are three tactics available:

1.   Clean
2.   Dirty
3.   High-Risk

Characters using *clean* tactics (usually faces) are dealt a number of cards equal to their *popularity*.

Characters employing *dirty* underhanded tactics (usually heels) are dealt a number of cards equal to their *infamy*.

Characters opting for *high-risk* tactics (usually flinging themselves off great heights) are dealt a number of cards equal to their *popularity* minus one OR their *infamy* minus one.

WRASSLIN'

Now, beginning with the player who declared first, each player decides whether they're in or whether to fold. Folding in P&P is called *selling it* and a player who folds, must describe his character taking some sort of hit, nothing too serious but enough to remove him from the current exchange. A character who elects to *sell it* takes a point of damage, which in P&P is called *sellage*.

GAME ON

Assuming at least two opposing characters are still in, the betting starts. The impetus now returns to the first character who declared himself in. He can now *trash talk* to raise the stakes, *bring it on* to rumble or *wimp out* and take a kicking.

YOU WIMP

Wimping out is essentially the same as *selling it*, except there's more to sell now. The wimp describes their character taking a couple of shots that remove them from the current exchange and racks up 2 points of sellage.

TRASH TALKING

A player trash talking role-plays a few choice insults to his opponents then states his raise. He wagers an amount of sellage up to a maximum equal to his *mad skillz*. Play then passes to the next character still in.

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BRING IT ON!

When a character elects to *bring it,* it all kicks off!

All characters still in reveal their cards. Highest card wins. Except that cards of the same value may be added together. If two or more characters are tied for highest card then compare their 2nd highest card, then 3rd highest…etc to determine who wins. If a character runs out of cards to compare –tough– don't play with the big boys in future.

The winner then gets to hand out some pain. He narrates a wrestling sequence in which his opponents get a whupping, remembering to include clean/dirty/high risk moves as appropriate. The winner then assigns sellage to his enemies. The sellage cannot exceed the total it was raised to before *bringin' it,* nor can it exceed the winners *mad skillz.* The only caveat to this is that each losing opponent MUST take at least one point of sellage.

In the unlikely event that two characters tie exactly then they both get to narrate a sequence and assign sellage, but no more than one point to each other.

HIGH RISK

It's a risky business at the best of times but these moves are ridiculous.

A character using high risk tactics takes an additional point of sellage if they get assigned any. However, if a character using high-risk tactics wins an exchange then they inflict two points of bonus sellage, which is not limited by raises or *mad skillz.*

NEXT EXCHANGE

After someone wins or there are no opposing characters left in, the exchange is concluded. The deck passes to a new dealer and the next exchange begins.

FINISH HIM

When a character has racked up more sellage than his *testicular fortitude* he's in big trouble. When declaring tactics, a character may elect to try and use a *finisher* on an opponent carrying sellage in excess of his *testicular fortitude.*

A character using a *finisher* chooses tactics as normal. If he *sells it*, *wimps out* or loses then the *finisher* has no effect. But if he should win the exchange then he gets to deliver a finishing move to the hapless victim.

The winner narrates a finishing sequence, which culminates in his victim being eliminated from the match. When delivering a *finisher*, a character cannot assign sellage to anyone other than their target.

A character targeted by a finisher cannot opt to *sell it* or to *wimp out*, as that would result in their elimination.

Unless it is a multiple elimination event, the match will be over after an elimination.

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KEEP IT INCLUSIVE

Sometimes not all the PCs will be involved in a match, in this case those players without characters present may assume the role of the crowd, NPCs including nemeses (but not their own!) or have their PC on color commentary. The GM has the final say on this, and the GM is always on play-by-play commentary.

MERCY OF THE CROWD

The crowd influence the match by chanting. There are two main chants that the crowd use.

1. Bor-ing, bor-ing
2. Ho-ly shit, Ho-ly shit

Boring
This chant is delivered when a character is being, well, boring. Protracted procrastination or repetitive moves are classic boring acts. For every boring chant a character receives they are dealt one less card next exchange, to a minimum of one.

Holy Shit
This chant is delivered when a character pulls off a frickin' amazing move, usually a high-risk move. A character receiving a holy shit chant is dealt one extra card next exchange. Also they replenish a flair point.

MATCH OUTCOMES

Depending on how it went down in the ring, a PC's or nemesis' attributes may improve.

- Winning a match: +1 *popularity*.
- Bonus for winning with a high-risk finisher: +1 *mad skillz*.

- Getting hit with a finisher: +1 *testicular fortitude*.

- Losing to your nemesis: +1 *grudge point*.

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THE FINAL CONFRONTATION

The game follows the sequence of play until the final confrontation is triggered.
The final confrontation is triggered when all PCs have formed a faction and when the grudge threshold has been reached. The default grudge threshold is a minimum of 4 GP each.

When the final confrontation has been triggered, no more matches take place.
Instead, each player gets to frame and jointly narrate a climactic scene with his nemesis, in which their connection is irrevocably shattered. This leaves the PCs and nemeses with a date with destiny!

The WTF commissioner schedules a special pay-per-view event where the two factions duke it out for the title.

The players and GM compose this PPV jointly. This is the climax of the game so make sure it's cool and try to give everyone what they want.
Each player gets to decide what kind of match he will face his nemesis in.

Pre-match events can occur at the PPV, or you can get straight to the action.

Then the battle of the factions begins!

THERE CAN BE ONLY ONE!

The PCs stand triumphant, their nemeses defeated.
But hold on, there's still the matter of the WTF championship!
You guessed it, it's an elimination match between the players to see who is crowned WTF champ.

Ooops
The PCs just got whupped by their nemeses.
Ah well – shit happens.
The players get to play their nemeses (or each others) as they battle it out for the WTF title.

FINALE

The GM narrates the final scene of the champ gaining his title. Go wild.

PILE-DRIVERS & POWER-BOMBS
SUPERSTAR SHEET

NAME:

POPULARITY

HEIGHT:

WEIGHT:

HOME:

INFAMY

THEME MUSIC:

TESTICULAR FORTITUDE

FINISHER:

MAD SKILLZ

GIMMICK:

GRUDGE POINTS

NEMESIS:

CONNECTION:

CONFLICT:
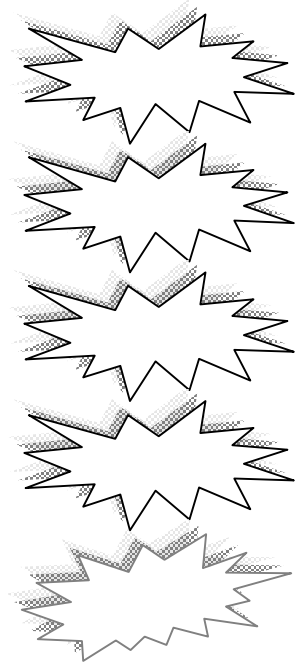
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Piledrivers & Powerbombs was devised by JJ Prince
If you liked it please visit www.flayingtime.com – coming spring 2005 or email shadowof-pod@hotmail.com for details of other games and crap like that.

Thanks to:
All those games I stole bits from - especially
My Life with Master www.halfmeme.com you need this game.
The forge www.indie-rpgs.com
And of course www.24hourrpg.com
All the men and women in the wrestling business who suffer for our entertainment.