

Out of Darkness

The Story of Catch

Ruslan Pashayev

Part 5: The Snipe Inn Rules

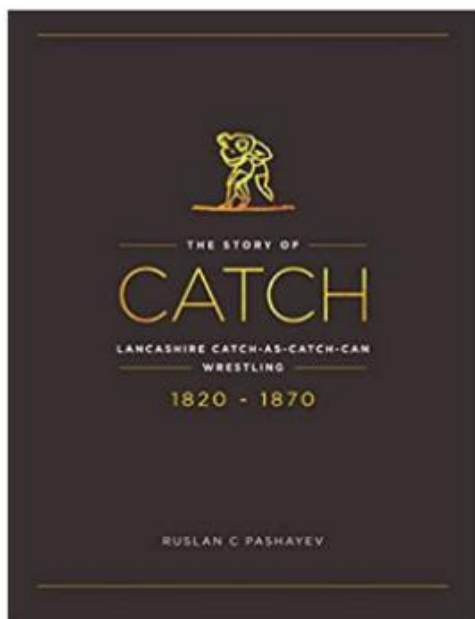
The brutality of Lancashire wrestling made change inevitable. The time for change was 1856. The Snipe Inn Grounds at Audenshaw, Lancashire, was truly among the most important sport venues in the early history of Lancashire catch-as-catch-can wrestling. It was here where the 1856 first written rules of Catch-as-catch-can were brought into existence under the guidance of Mr. Nelson Warren, proprietor of the public house and owner of the grounds. They were to become known as the "Snipe Inn Rules," a milestone in the history of wrestling.

According to these rules, wrestlers had to wear nothing but drawers and pumps. This was later changed to no shoes, only stockings, wrestling on the green turf. No spikes or nails of any description were allowed in the shoes (before that, spikes were allowed but must not exceed a quarter of an inch).

Neither party could use resin or be rubbed with pernicious drugs or grease of any description. All foul acts or willful brutality, any unmanly techniques and tactics of the past, namely hanging (putting on the hang), throttling, kicking (as well as biting and gouging) were strictly prohibited. Two out of three fair back falls. A fair back fall required two shoulders pressed to the ground to decide the match. Rolling falls were permitted and one of the most popular ways to give a fall was "to roll opponent over."

Ten minutes rest was allowed between the throws, and if the contest was not concluded it was to be renewed on the day-by-day principle at the same time and place until decided.

Catch-as-catch-can challenge matches and tournaments under the above conditions were held at the Snipe Inn quite regularly, but it was only in the 1860's that the local sports arena became the heart of Lancashire wrestling and hosted one of the most prestigious titles of the Golden Era of Lancashire Wrestling.



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The Story of Catch: The Story of Lancashire Catch-as-catch-can Wrestling.

FIRST FIFTY YEARS 1820-1870. by Ruslan C Pashayev

The Birth and Evolution of Catch-as-Catch-Can Pro-Wrestling in East Lancashire, England. "The Story of Catch" covers the most forgotten stages of Lancashire's Catch Wrestling history, including its origin, its fast growth and evolution during first fifty years of Catch, introduction of professionalism and its Golden Era, as well as introduction and popularization of it in the United States. This story has many heroes who affected Catch in its early stages and remained in history as true symbols of Lancashire Wrestling. But the whole story is dedicated to the memory of Adam Ridings of Bury, Lancs (1819-1894), who was also known under the nickname of "Dockum of Bury" a pioneer of Catch Wrestling, and the most prominent and popular wrestler of Lancashire in the 1840's-1850's. For anyone with a serious interest in history of professional wrestling "The Story of Catch" is a must.

Research mainly at British Newspaper Archive.

Please comment in the Talk Wrestling Forum

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