



# Why Kendo Nagasaki Had To Job The World Title Back To Wayne Bridges

## David Mantell

According to Steve Barker, the reason why Wayne Bridges regained the World title from Kendo Nagasaki in March '88 was because Bridges actually owned the belt and made this a precondition of jobbing the belt to Naggers.

Personally, I think it have been great for Kendo to stay on as defending champion for the long term and take on and turn back some challengers.

## SaxonWolf

Interesting; I would have thought the belt belonged to Joint Promotions or the Crabtrees?

## powerlock

Some of the Crabtrees belts were falling to bits and others looked really cheap. I wonder if Bridges had the belt made so the belt would befit the title. The Crabtrees showed little interest in championships and the belts were treat with the same disdain. I saw one close up in Newcastle the buckle straps had been replaced with elastic material the shields were the ones off the plaques you would have got in a local swimming gala. A pretty sorry excuse for a championship belt. If it turned up at a local show in local working men's club the crowd would have royally took the pee

## Mad Mac

Followers of the US scene will recall Ric Flair turning up on WWF TV with the NWA "Big Gold Belt" in the early 90s. Story was that he still had the belt after his contract ran out, and received a call from WCW CEO Jim Herd that he was sending their Head of Security round to pick up the belt, to which Flair responded "Well, I hope he has a cheque for \$25,000 with him". Flair went on to explain that the champion was required to put down a deposit against loss of, or damage to, the belt. Herd (former Pizza Hut executive) was completely unaware of this long-standing practice and responded along the lines of "Just keep the f\*\*\*\*\* thing". And the rest, as they say, is history.....

## David Mantell

Here's the thread where we were discussing this:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/326208311138057/permalink/450972415328312/>

For some reason Steve Barker took offence to my suggesting it might have been a good idea for Kendo to keep the belt. Silly really

## matey dave

it is worth noting that nagasaki's oppents all had to job for him and make the lad look plausible

### **Anglo Italian**

It seems that if you wanted to invest in a belt and show it off, like Maxine or Ct Bartelli or Geo. Kidd, you could be guaranteed ongoing status for years,

### **David Mantell**

This could explain why Bridges won the title that second time in '81 after Quinn went off to Dixon/Orig, if Bridges actually paid for the red/white/blue belt (still on display in his pub I gather.)

But none of this explains why Dixon didn't just tell Bridges to stuff his short term title loss offer and find another way to make Kendo champion. Perhaps Naggers should have paid for a belt of his own.

### **powerlock**

Good quality title belts weren't /aren't cheap maybe no-one else wanted to put their hand in their pocket for to buy Bridges belt or pay for a new one.

### **David Mantell**

This could explain why there was no belt to be seen in Croydon on the night of the Kendo/ Stax "CWA World Heavyweight title (Luc 'Rambo' Who?)" title match in 1991.

Still, what happened to Quinn's title belt? I know the two versions of the World Heavyweight title were unified on an All Star show 20th May 1985 in Slough for All Star (Bridges' revenge on Quinn five years after the

Still can't understand why Steve Barker is being so hostile. Usually these days wrestlers are quite happy to talk about the logic behind booking decisions with fans. (It's not like he was fanatical about kayfabe all the years he posted to forums as theoriginalpinhead, and anyway, revealing that Bridges owned the belt and controlled its destiny is hardly keeping kayfabe.) I bet Loz or Dixon would be a lot more amenable about discussing why Kendo and Brian agreed to Bridges' terms. Was Kendo maybe not interested in being a longerm champion? Did Dixon think that the dignity of titles required that in the long term they remained around the waists of the most no-nonsense people on the roster? Or were they all just grateful for the little while Bridges let them have the belt and not wanting to look a gift horse in the mouth?

### **SaxonWolf**

The NWA \$25,000 that Ric Flair, and others paid, was (I thought) to prevent them from jumping ship to a rival promotion with the belt/title, in other words, \$25,000 was a lot to lose, unless the rival promoter stumped up the cash.

In this instance, I doubt it cost Wayne Bridges as much money to have a nice belt made, but of course, if someone else wanted it, they would have to buy it from him.

I guess once again, we would need a wrestler from back in those days to explain all!

### **Mad Mac**

The "jumping ship" was indeed another part of the reason for the deposit. Wasn't the belt Quinn won from Bridges back in 1980 a rather elaborate affair with a diamond (or similar) encrusted eagle?

**David Mantell**

There were never deposits in Britain. Deposits were only ever done for the NWA World title in America.

Both the belts had an eagle thing on them. The Arion/Birdges reign #1/Quinn belt had the eagle plate but a very ordinary strap. The one awarded to Bridges at Wembley in 1981 was the red/white/blue one and that was the one which reappeared on TV in '87 and which Bridges would only let Kendo have short term and which is now in Bridges' pub.

**powerlock**

Just because we don't know about it doesn't mean it didn't happen, Certain belts may well have had a bond/deposit to make sure it came back, then you had the belts that were ordered by wrestlers almost certainly because they looked a damn sight better than the original or the original was lost, unusable etc. Why hand them over without some sort of surety? But by the state of the belt I saw I couldn't see anyone wanting to abscond with it never mind paying a bond.

**Anglo Italian**

And we learn from this ... Bridges trusted Nagasaki personally to do the right thing. Nagasaki flitted around the promoters, naughtily at times: in spite of this, the personal trust was strong.

Interesting.

**David Mantell**

And also that Kendo and Dixon were apparently prepared to throw away a whole interesting promotional push in order to keep Bridges happy. Which is very sweet of them, but rather overgenerous.

And that some people in the biz like Mr Barker do not approve of fans querying booking decisions. Which rather leaves all of us on here screwed then - "So then, are you trying to tell us you could have done a better job than Max Crabtree of booking Big Daddy?" Erm ...

**powerlock**

As I have heard from promoters to people who question their booking decisions, if you think you can do any better put your money where your mouth is and you promote shows. The promoters live and die by their decisions, but nobody forces the fan through the door but the fan himself.

**Anglo Italian**

David, I always (almost) enjoy and respect your comments. Oftentimes I disagree, but that's our fun as we try to unravel bygone mysteries.

Why are you so concerned about the comments of a single ex-forum poster? Your knowledge exceeds most's. Our collective ramblings and ideas are the only way forward as we, in fun, work out what was going on.

I have visited with lots of wrestlers these last few years and the over-riding result I have is that we know far more than they did. They had no idea of the national scene and were interested in ££££

A lot of us fans have a better overview. But none of us knows it all, or even much of it all. You keep going, David. This collective hub is the only respected dynamic nerve-centre of reputable 21st century research. Thanks to you and the other faithful few, or more, on here.

### **David Mantell**

I don't doubt that promoting is a tough and complex job. However, when a promoter makes a decision that leaves the punters scratching their heads in bewilderment, he (or she) better defends himself (or herself) by trying to fully explain the logic of what they were trying to do rather than tell said punters to MYOB.

In the case of Big Daddy, we have a dominant promoter who alienated most wrestlers and most serious adult wrestling fans by subordinating his shows in favour of a single household name who had massive child/family appeal. This led to considerable box office success, but ultimately created a gap in the marketplace of which an independent promoter was able to take advantage by mopping up talent and punters to the point where he took over the territory and still holds it to this day. The formerly dominant promoter was eventually reduced to milking every last drop from his ageing household name and when he was finished and the only replacement household name he could get his hands on had inevitably been lured back to America, his promotion folded. The dominant promoter might, in his mitigation, say that his star was a success and it lasted both of them long enough to reach pension age and he didn't really care what happened afterwards, especially since his sons had no interest in carrying on the business. We might then reply that (1) if the business was in better condition perhaps they would have been more interested (2) failing that, if the dominant promoter was still dominant and profitable at the end, he could have sold on his business for a tidy sum. The dominant promoter might then come out with solid reasons we could never possibly have fathomed by ourselves why this never could have been an option.

In the case of Kendo-Bridges, we have a promoter and a star who together cut short a promising title run for the latter by - instead of pursuing other options - acquiescing to the demands of the previous champion that the title swiftly be returned to him because in real life, the title belt was actually his personal property so said title was would be booked the way he wanted, or he would take his ball and go home. One can brainstorm as to possible reasons why the promoter and the star went along with the belt-owner/previous champion's condition of only a short reign. Perhaps they thought there was only short term potential in the star as a champion. Perhaps the star wanted to do other things and would be bored by being an ongoing defending titleholder. Perhaps they bought in to the idea that anyone with as heavy a gimmick as the star had did not befit the dignity of the title and it should be long-term around the waist of someone more serious. Perhaps all the rest of the talent threatened to go on strike if that star was booked as long term champion. Perhaps it actually never occurred to anyone at the time to make the star the new long term defending champion and they just had an idea for a quick storyline involving the title. Perhaps it was something else entirely that we never could have guessed. Whatever the situation, it would help for those in the know to constructively explain to us mere mortals which situation it was, rather than saying that it all being dependent on belt owner's say so is all one needs to know.