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FOR DUSTIN RHODES, FATHER'S DAY IS FAMILY, MEMORIES AND BAD BBQ

Posted by John Powell | Jun 21, 2020



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Being a second-generation wrestler can come with all kinds of pressure, but being the son of the legendary Dusty Rhodes was like carrying the world on his shoulders at times for Dustin Rhodes.

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"I started out in this business trying to fill my father's shoes. I learned later on that was an impossible task. I had to find my own way and I know that he would be happy with both of his sons right now, how we are carrying on his legacy in the business," a grateful Rhodes told SlamWrestling.net in an exclusive interview.

A wrestling icon himself all these years later, the man born Dustin Runnels is now not only an on-screen talent in All Elite Wrestling as Dustin Rhodes, but a coach as well, mentoring the next generation of superstars.

Rhodes, one of four Runnels children, has nothing but praise for his father, who he credits with not only molding him to be a better wrestler but more importantly, a better father, a better husband and a better man.

"I am appreciative of all that he taught me in life. I have my good days and my bad days like anyone else but for the most part, he taught me to be humble, respectful and caring person who wants to pass on what he learned to others," said a thoughtful Rhodes, his voice noticeably changing, becoming more reserved, a little more soft-spoken as he discussed his father. A far cry from the irrepressible elation that was just there seconds before as he spoke about his role in the horror film *Scare Package*.

The excitement and recognizable Rhodes hullabaloo returned to his voice as he detailed a typical Father's Day with his dad, Dusty, who died in 2015.

"We would always go out to eat. We would go to this terrible barbecue restaurant. (Laughs) I mean, it was

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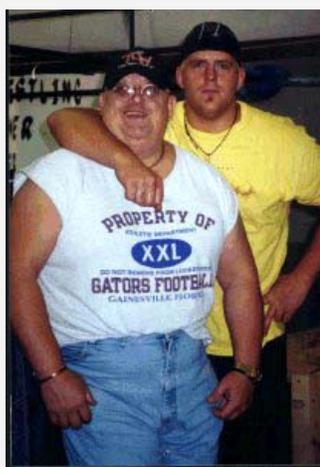
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awful but he was 'The American Dream' Dusty Rhodes and the name of the restaurant was 'Dreamland Barbecue.' I think he just wanted to go there because the name had the word 'dream' in it. They loved him there," said Rhodes laughing some more.



Dusty and Dustin. Photo courtesy TurnBuckle Championship Wrestling

There was only one problem breaking bread with the man who "wined and dined with kings and queens" and "slept in alleys and dined on pork and beans." You had to keep pace with him at the table because when he was done, so was the meal.

"When he was ready to go though, he was ready to go. If you didn't eat all of your food, you were shit out of luck. It was just one of those things. He was just a very fast eater and when he got up, well, that meant we were all getting up," Rhodes chuckled.

A father of three himself, Rhodes admits he isn't treated like wrestling royalty at home nor does he want to be. He is just 'Dad' to his children and 'Dustin' to his wife.

"When I am home with the kids I try to leave work behind me. I try to focus on my family. My wife doesn't think so sometimes but without her, I would be completely lost," he admitted.

Of all the gifts he could get for Father's Day, Rhodes already has what he has always wanted, a healthy and happy family especially in these times.

"As long as they are happy and I know that I and their mother have done good jobs in raising them, that they are respectful, they are happy and they are healthy, that is all that matters to me. I am happy that I am young



Second generation grapplers reflect on their Dads



The pro wrestling world is full of second-generation wrestlers. Young men following in their father's footsteps into battle in the squared circle. Each got into the profession in their own way, but their stories are remarkably similar and have a

common theme: Wrestling's in their blood, they grew up watching and didn't really ever think ... [Continue reading](#)

Booker T: Wrestling's consummate performer



Ask most wrestlers why they get into the business and you'd get a variety of answers. Some do it because of family heritage. Some do it because athletic competition is their forte. Others because it's a route to fame and fortune. For WCW

superstar Booker T, it was matter of survival. A single father ... [Continue reading](#)

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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John Powell is a veteran entertainment journalist, the Editor-in-Chief and one of the founders of SLAM! Wrestling. He is also a reporter for Entertainment Tonight Canada. Check out his [Binge News](#) site for all of your

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Kay on June 22, 2020 at 2:09 pm ([Edit](#))

This is a crazy world. Most of us don't truly know what we want or fully satisfied. Life has many ups and downs. Many of us find it hard to move on after a parent passes on. It's not easy. But, we have to remind ourselves that life is for the living. If they thought for one moment that we're sitting around all teary eyed, they'd give us a big smack and say snap out of it. Hold on to cherished memories, always reflect on words of advice, and never forget the importance of family. Pass on the wisdom of your parents as well as your own many lessons learned. I know Dusty touch many of us with his one of a kind promos and the talents he helped develop along the way. Success isn't about how much you earn, the houses, cars, women, etc.. True success is finding what you want in life and start the journey. You may even discover that as you get older, what you want out of life may also change. Sometimes we put a lot of pressure on ourselves or establish unattainable goals. But, keep God close and happiness will follow. All most parents want is for their kids to find happiness.

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enough that I can still share things with them even though they make fun of me all the time. (Laughs) That is what Father's Day means to me, knowing that my kids are happy," he said.



Dustin Rhodes ✓
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FATHER'S DAY FROM THE VAULTS

Fathers find raising wrestlers a challenge



As a junior in college at West Texas State, Barry Windham appeared to be headed for the NFL. He had the talent and the lineage, as his father Jack Windham had also made the NFL with the New York Jets before becoming a pro wrestler. But it wasn't to be for Barry. He dropped out ... Continue reading

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