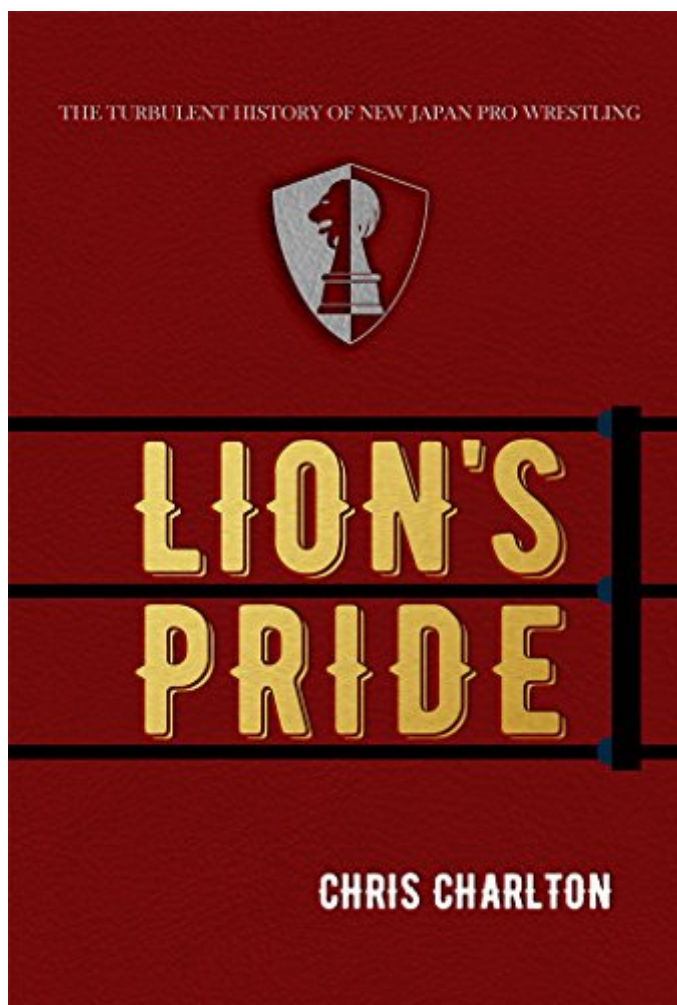


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# Lion's Pride: The Turbulent History Of New Japan Pro Wrestling



## Synopsis

Japan has long been the most respected territory in the field of professional wrestling, and the most appreciated by hardcore fans worldwide. New Japan Pro Wrestling is the country's most recognisable brand. It attracts scores of fans to annual Tokyo Dome shows, has made household names of its most prominent talent, and is increasingly in demand by a rabid international audience. Yet NJPW's 40+ year history has been a rocky one. The company has endured strong competition, scandals and riots, and for a time it seemed like poor decision making would sink what was once a national institution. For the first time in English, *Lion's Pride: The Turbulent History of New Japan Pro Wrestling* explores NJPW's triumphs and tribulations. Starting with the origins of pro wrestling in post war Japan, *Lion's Pride* covers the company's inception in 1972, through its boom in the early 1980s, its influence on the medium at large in the '90s, and its downturn and subsequent revival in the last two decades. Alongside a detailed and informative history are essays detailing the intricacies of Japanese wrestling psychology, how NJPW's key players shaped the company, and much more besides. A crucial reference guide for any wrestling fan, *Lion's Pride* offers an entertaining and insightful glance behind the scenes of the 'King of Sports'.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

*Lion's Pride* is the story of New Japan Pro Wrestling. As with a lot of guys my age who were

wrestling fans during the 1980s and 1990s, Japanese wrestling always held some mystique. I didn't see a single Japanese wrestling match until the dawn of the internet made it much easier to get tapes and such. Lion's Pride lifts the veil and reveals the inner workings of one of Japan's biggest wrestling organizations. As with all talk of Japanese wrestling, the book starts with Rikidozan and the Japanese Wrestling Association. From there, it follows the career of Antonio Inoki and his formation of New Japan. The many exoduses of talent are covered and New Japan's ups and downs are many. Antonio Inoki, like many owner-wrestlers, booked himself over the rest of the talent time and time again. It's a wonder New Japan survived long enough for him to retire. The book talked a lot of the creation of stars like Tatsumi Fujinami and Riki Choshu in the 1980s, Keiji Muto, Masa Chono, and Shinya Hashimoto in the 1990s, and Tanahashi and others for the new millennium. The book concludes in 2015, with the rise of Bullet Club and the launch of New Japan's streaming service. Lion's Pride was really informative, highlighting some backstage stuff I wasn't privy to and expanding on a lot of things I'd only read about on Wikipedia. The writing was pretty good for a book of this type. I did think the organization was a little weird, deviating from the main narrative to talk about completely unrelated things. For the most part, however, the book did what it set out to do.

This is very, very, poorly written. The information provided appears to be accurate and quite detailed. The author clearly knows what he is writing about. However, the formatting for the book is atrocious. On one page alone I found two out of 4 paragraphs with double-spacing after each sentence, and the two others had single spacing after each sentence. I have found numerous grammatical errors, as well as multiple instances of clumsy sentence structure. I have learned quite a lot reading what I could of this book, but I had to put it down due to how unpleasant it was to read. I found myself constantly being distracted or unable to understand what the author was trying to convey. This is an excellent example of why all authors need to proofread their work, and pay for an editor as well.

The author tackles quite an ambitious project for one book- the history of the 2nd largest wrestling organization in the world- and one that hasn't been covered extensively by the American market. After reading the book, I received a fairly good overview of the history of New Japan and the major players. It was interesting to follow the peaks and valleys from afar. As the book covers so much subject matter, the emphasis on details can be a bit light. Just as you want to learn more, the author is on to the next subject. There is an awkward flow to the book, as a chronological chapter on history may be followed by a top ten list, touching upon many areas. It is important that this book is out there and the information is presented as accessible to even "rookies" to the world of NJPW. All

but the most hardcore of NJPW fans will probably learn something- and the hardcore fans will probably enjoy the review. The author obviously loves the subject matter so kudos to him on this literary addition.

I started following NJPW this past January when I became hooked by Okada-Omega at Wrestle Kingdom. As my fandom has grown over the past year, I've found myself searching for old matches on NJPW World and reading Wiki pages for any and all wrestlers. Chris' book, which I discovered after stumbling upon his Twitter account, is an incredible summation of the history of the company. Anything you need to know about every aspect of the company, why and how it's constructed as you see in the present, is answered. If you're a NJPW fan looking to learn more about the company, I could not recommend it highly enough.

A good read that gives you an insight into everything that has happened in the history of NJPW that really show how it has changed in recent years. The format of giving a chronological history broken up by chapters on specific topics kind of leads to some repetition, but for the most part is an interesting diversion from just the history. It does a good job of highlighting in ring parts of the company and the stuff behind the scenes that is driving the changes going on right now.

Charlton nailed it. Japanese wrestling, to non-speakers, can be an almost mythical thing with made-up or assumed narratives due to the language barrier. Charlton gets past that and gives you the real history of New Japan and an assessment of it currently as well for the future. If you have any interest in Japanese wrestling whatsoever, this needs to be in your library.

There was some informative stuff found in this book and quite the value on the kindle. I wish it was a little longer and certain chapters were expanded on a bit but I understand time limitations. Would love to see a similar book written in English JUST about the life and Times of Antonio Inoki. Maybe one day....

While not the best wrestling book out there, Lions Pride certainly provides a great deal of insight into the history and inner workings of NJPW. Great for someone looking for an easy to digest history lesson.

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