

Rikishi Diary Penguins and Thailand

by Mark Kent

Mark Kent, a 194 kg, 187 cm Warehouse Manager by day, is, by night the UK Champion (2004, 2006) Professional Wrestler as well as the most recent heavyweight representative of his nation at the last Sumo Worlds in Sakai, Osaka.

A man clearly at home in the ring, Mark is not afraid of the pen either and has kindly agreed to let SFM follow him, by way of a diary, through the year as he trains and prepares for and, injuries notwithstanding, competes in amateur sumo events across Europe.

As a former footballer and rugby player, UK born and bred, Mark is married with two kids - a boy and a girl - themselves heavily into sports and, although his ventures into boxing, judo and even American football may now be behind him, he is just getting started on the road to amateur sumo stardom.

As part of that journey, Mark's diary will let SFM, our readers and sumo fans from around the world know just how it feels to be setting out on a relatively lonely road in a nation not exactly known for its male sumotori in years past.

Any and all comments of support for Mark as he works his way through the year can be sent via editor@sumofanmag.com

I'll start this issue with a response to my Ed's comment on the picture in the last issue of SFM: the penguins belong to my wife. She has hundreds of them! There is at least one penguin image, ornament, pot, wind chime, clock or toy in every room of the house. She also has penguin clothing and

jewelry. So, when at home sometimes, it's never mind Mark - look at the PENGUINS.



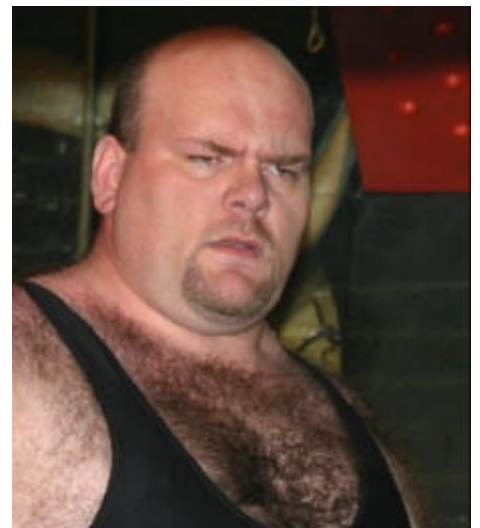
Take my hand

Back onto sumo – and training went well in the first two weeks of September, so, as I just can't help myself, I upped my efforts but as usual I don't know when to stop. Sadly, after 3 days of training at an increased pace my hip started to play up again. AGGGHHHH!!! I took myself off to the osteopath for a spot of treatment; part of which involved him advising me to get myself a new chair as I tend to slouch on my sofa. This I did and I have been sitting straight ever since.

I recently got a call from the British Sumo Federation inviting me to the Sumo World

Championships in Thailand to compete on behalf of Britain but as the call came 2 days after my hip started hurting, and before I had been to the osteopath, it was with heavy heart I had to turn it down. Even if I was fit enough to go, I may have had to turn it down anyway as I would have had to pay some of the fare, which I'm not in a position to do at the moment.

I have been told Big Sharren is going off to Thailand and I think she will come home with a medal this time as she was unlucky last year. She had a Russian opponent and just touched down outside the tawara ahead of her foe – in the bronze medal match.



You looking at me boy?

As for my own Pro-Wrestling career, I only had one match in September. I was a late replacement in a title match after the challenger was injured. I managed to win and in due course became the IWC Super

Heavyweight Champion. I then had to defend my title in early October which I managed to do successfully.

As for my career in amateur sumo, trying to get the wrestlers I've talked about before together and ready to go up to Derby for sumo training has been hard work. The only week we could synchronize

schedules came at the end of last month but unfortunately the BSF head was in Milan that weekend so we remain devoid of his teaching as of yet.

My own plans to visit a freestyle wrestling school as well as a judo gym are other ideas still on the backburner as I want to be a bit fitter than I am now – in case the

guys there try to take the Mickey out of me.

Again, this issue has been a little slow in the way of sumo training, so I'll end it here. I'm beginning to regret turning down the chance to go to the World Championships but it is for the best.