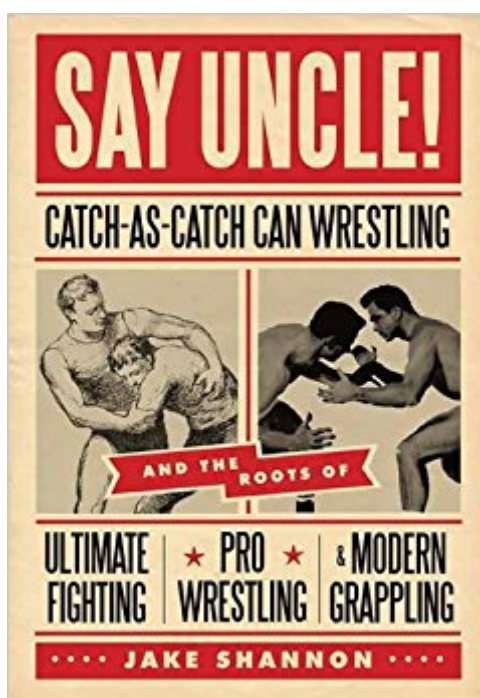


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Say Uncle!: Catch-As-Catch-Can Wrestling And The Roots Of Ultimate Fighting, Pro Wrestling & Modern Grappling



Synopsis

Includes explanations of the methods of catch-as-catch and is accompanied by clear illustrations that show how to use them most effectively, and the background of this unique sport is traced through America, Japan, England, and Ireland.

Book Information

Paperback: 216 pages

Publisher: ECW Press (June 1, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1550229613

ISBN-13: 978-1550229615

Product Dimensions: 6.7 x 0.6 x 9.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 28 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #328,378 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #49 in [Books > Sports & Outdoors > Individual Sports > Mixed Martial Arts](#) #160 in [Books > Sports & Outdoors > Individual Sports > Wrestling](#) #530 in [Books > Sports & Outdoors > Miscellaneous > History of Sports](#)

Customer Reviews

Jake Shannon is the founder of www.ScientificWrestling.com and the inventor of the Macebell. He is the author of "The Authoritative Encyclopedia of Scientific Wrestling

In many ways, catch wrestling embodies the cultural values prevalent at the turn of the 20th century, which may explain why its popularity peaked at that time. The sport expressed the values of independence, reason, hard work, and competitiveness in various ways. **INDEPENDENCE** Catch wrestling is not a team sport. One man stands alone atop the mountain of beaten and broken competitors to be crowned champion. The catch wrestler understands that he alone is responsible for his successes and his failures. **REASON** Catch wrestling is a dangerous game of physical chess. The terms "science" and "scientific" are frequently used in the context of catch wrestling. It's the smart player who's rewarded, not necessarily the strongest. **HARD WORK** Catch wrestlers didn't have cushy mats. During the American Civil War they competed on grassy fields. After the war they'd compete on gravel-covered clearings following a full day in coal mines or steel mills. During the height

of its popularity, with the likes of Tom Jenkins, George Hackenschmidt, and Frank Gotch, catch wrestlers competed on hard floors covered only in canvas. Wrestling is hard. It takes a special person to show up at the gym, day after day, year after year, and push beyond his physical and mental limits. COMPETITIVENESS These men were filled with pride and were motivated to prove their skills. They would bring an equal purse to each match and the winner would take all—meaning they literally put their money where their mouths were, and were always game. The aim of this book is to share the history and strategies of old-time catch wrestlers with today's grapplers and encourage the evolution and development of the modern sport of catch wrestling. I also hope to awaken fans of fighting sports to the fact that catch wrestling is, arguably, the direct ancestor of today's mixed martial arts, pro wrestling, and Olympic freestyle wrestling. In fact, the term "no-holds-barred" was coined to promote early 20th century American catch wrestling matches. If you enjoy the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC), the WWE, Olympic or collegiate freestyle wrestling, or high school folkstyle wrestling, you owe an enormous debt of gratitude to catch wrestling.

This book contains a number of interviews with venerable catch wrestlers, some of whom have since passed away, combined with an extensive series of photographs and descriptions of catch wrestling maneuvers. With the exception of the Gene LaBell interview, they are of limited interest, although capturing the authentic voices of the interviewees has an innate historical value that I ought not to dismiss. I went into the book wanting to find a lot of details about the lives of wrestlers of that era, and found relatively little in here to meet that need. I am not qualified to assess the usefulness of the visuals, but I tend to suppose that learning combat through diagrams is ineffective, so that only someone already possessing combat skills could benefit by adding some fighting technology to a pre-existing arsenal. Thus an active grappler would get more use from the book than a research-oriented coach potato like me.

I enjoyed the book. I would say it is a book of interviews of former and present catch wrestlers. I enjoyed the perspectives they held of catch. Competition is largely mental so I really enjoyed the knowledge shared by these men. Thank you Shannon for caring enough to follow the facts instead of spread legend. There are a few basic pictures of wrestling at the end but the book is really not for that. I am not sure what you call this style of book, maybe an epistolary or biographical. Either way it is great.

The book can be defensive about the world's oldest form of hand to hand combat, and defensive doesn't serve the title well. Good for true enthusiasts; well-made. Dull at points.

Good

This book gives a unique perspective into wrestling, Pro-Wrestling and the history of grappling. As a guy who wrestled as a youth and a judoka and jiu-jitsu player, I never accepted the history that is taught in jiu-jitsu. Basically they start the history of submissions at the point where kano created the Kodokan style of ju-jutsu. The reality is submissions have been around since recorded history started. The truth is that jiu-jitsu can trace its roots back to Catch wrestling. A fact that jj guys don't easily accept because they are force fed this lie that jiu-jitsu is superior to wrestling. The fact of the matter is that Catch has been around forever and the main philosophy is "use what works". That means that any technique that is effective should be utilized. A philosophy that the legendary Bruce Lee espoused. Unfortunately there are few Catch wrestlers from the old guard and it is hard to find a wrestling club to train with. The book won't teach you the techniques but will give you an interesting perspective into the sport. I would recommend it to any grappler who wants to expand their game outside the limitations of individual martial arts.

Jake Shannon has written a book that will appeal to both MMA and Pro Wrestling fans alike, as well as an important tool for serious grapplers. The opening section provides an overview of catch wrestling that will fill in the "back story" for casual fans of the various forms of modern mat sports. From the roots in England through the golden age of Farmer Burns, Frank Gotch, and their peers through the era of the carnny at shows, and worked pro wrestling. Shannon does this with respect for all. He recognizes the high level of skill that even pro wrestling requires, and the skills professionals like Lou Thesz, and Karl Gotch had in their arsenals. The second section of the book consists of interviews with Gotch (known as "the god of wrestling," in Japan), and AT show great Dick Cardinal, Gene LeBell, a true legend, as well as still one of the toughest men alive, at over 70 years old! He refereed the Ali-Inoki bout, and when he says he could have "whipped both their asses," I believe him. The stories in this section feature the bawdy, and sometimes brutal sense of humor of these gentlemen. The stories, as well as the insights into their training methods, including Karl Gotch's famous "deck of cards" workout, are a treasure all by themselves! The final section on "techniques," will be an invaluable guide for competitors in all of the mat sports world--from folk style through pro

wrestling, and MMA. How do you reach your potential as a grappler? The same way a musician gets to Carnegie Hall--practice. The author, and all of the greats he interviews, stress the importance of practice, and drills, run over and over. Repetition builds muscle memory. A lesson to be applied to any art. In a recent interview, the great French Chef, Jacques Pepin, stressed this very point, "cooking is about mastering technique, repeating them until they are second nature!" Shannon's book leaves the reader with the same lesson for mastery.

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