

= Mike Mondo =

Michael " Mike " S. Brendli ( born March 26 , 1983 ) is an American professional wrestler . He is best known by his ring name Mike Mondo and for his time as Spirit Squad member Mikey in World Wrestling Entertainment ( WWE ) . He worked also in Ring of Honor and Ohio Valley Wrestling .

After training at the Critical Mass Wrestling School , he debuted in June 2002 and began working for several independent promotions as Mike Mondo , Livewyre , or El Livewyre . His earliest success came in the New York Wrestling Connection promotion , where he won the NYWC Heavyweight Championship on two occasions between 2003 and 2005 . In February 2005 , he signed a contract with WWE , and was assigned to the Ohio Valley Wrestling ( OVW ) developmental territory . In OVW , he formed the Spirit Squad faction with four other wrestlers .

The Spirit Squad debuted on the Raw brand in January 2006 , and quickly won the World Tag Team Championship in April . They held the championship for seven months , before losing it in early November . They were taken off television in late 2006 . He returned to OVW in 2007 , before being moved to the Florida Championship Wrestling ( FCW ) territory in September . He competed in FCW until his WWE release in June 2008 . He then returned to the independent circuit , and later returned to OVW , where he won both the OVW Television Championship and the OVW Southern Tag Team Championship in 2009 . He went on to win the OVW Heavyweight Championship for the first time in mid @-@ 2010 and the second time in early 2011 .

= = Professional wrestling career = =

= = = Independent Circuit ( 2002 ? 2005 ) = = =

Brendli began training at the Critical Mass Pro Wrestling wrestling school during his freshman year of college . He debuted in June 2002 , and wrestled on the independent circuit , both in New York and in New Jersey . Brendli first became known as " Livewyre " , occasionally competing under a mask as " El Livewyre " . Brendli also competing in Ohio Valley Wrestling ( OVW ) during this time , making his debut in September 2003 . He appeared in several dark matches prior to the television tapings against wrestlers including Tank Toland , Joey Matthews , and Carly Colón .

= = = New York Wrestling Connection ( 2003 @-@ 2005 ) = = =

Most of his early success was in the New York Wrestling Connection promotion , where he had a nine @-@ month undefeated streak . Competing as " Livewire " Mike Mondo he won the NYWC Heavyweight Championship from " Superstar " Dickie Rodz on June 7 , 2003 , holding it for approximately two months , until he vacated it . On March 26 , 2005 , he defeated Joey Matthews to win the NYWC Heavyweight Championship for the second time , and later successfully retained the championship against Mikey Whipwreck . Mondo lost the championship to Matt Striker on April 30 , after holding it for just over a month .

= = = World Wrestling Entertainment = = =

= = = = Ohio Valley Wrestling ( 2005 ? 2006 ) = = = =

Brendli signed a World Wrestling Entertainment ( WWE ) developmental contract in February 2005 , and was assigned to OVW full @-@ time . First he acted as a manager , then became a full @-@ time wrestler and a member of the Bolin Services faction led by Kenny " The King " Bolin . He competed in a tournament for the OVW Television Championship , but lost in the first round to Alexis Laree . Embarrassed by losing to a female wrestler , Mondo issued an open challenge to any woman backstage , and a result , lost to Victoria .

In late summer 2005 , Mondo feuded with Brent Albright after attacking Albright during a match with Da Beast and injuring his eye . Albright obtained revenge on Mondo , however , defeating him by submission at the television tapings on September 7 . Throughout the end of 2005 , Mondo continued to team with various members of Bolin Services , mainly Johnny Jeter and Da Beast . In December 2005 , Mondo debuted a character , where he pretended to be a luchadore , and competed under a mask as " El Mondo " . He won several dark matches using the El Mondo gimmick , before losing to CM Punk in a televised match .

== = Spirit Squad ( 2005 ? 2006 ) = = =

In late 2005 , Mondo joined the Spirit Squad , a faction of five wrestlers using the in @-@ ring personas of male cheerleaders , as Mikey . Brendli has described being in the Spirit Squad as " the most fun " he 's had in his career . Mikey and Kenny began appearing in dark matches and at live events using the Spirit Squad gimmick , and on January 2 , 2006 , Mikey lost to Chavo Guerrero . On January 23 , 2006 , they had their WWE television debut as a group , appearing on Raw and helping Jonathan Coachman win a Royal Rumble qualifying match against Jerry " The King " Lawler by distracting Lawler and performing cheers for Coachman . They later became a part of the ongoing scripted feud between WWE chairman Vince McMahon and Shawn Michaels . The heel ( villainous ) McMahon brought in the Squad to attack Michaels on numerous occasions , including placing them in multiple handicap matches .

They also wrestled in the tag team division , and on April 3 , on Raw , Mikey and Kenny defeated Kane and The Big Show to win the World Tag Team Championship , with help from the other Spirit Squad members . After winning the championship , all five members of the Spirit Squad were recognized as the champions , allowing any combination of them to defend the championship .

In May , McMahon signed another handicap match , with the Spirit Squad facing Michaels . The Spirit Squad instead attacked Michaels before the match had started , and Triple H came out to help them . As a result of feeling disrespected by the Squad , however , Triple H helped Michaels instead . This led to Triple H and Michaels reforming D @-@ Generation X ( DX ) and they began a feud with the Spirit Squad . DX played various sophomoric jokes on the Squad and the McMahons , as well as defeating the Spirit Squad in handicap tag team matches at Vengeance and a clean sweep in an elimination handicap match at Saturday Night 's Main Event .

At the same time as their feud with DX and their alignment with McMahon , the Squad also wrestled other teams in Raw 's tag division over their World Tag Team Championship , successfully defending the championship against the teams of Jim Duggan and Eugene , Charlie Haas and Viscera , and Snitsky and Val Venis . They then entered a lengthy feud with The Highlanders , whom they eventually defeated to retain the championship at the Unforgiven pay @-@ per @-@ view in September . The Squad as a whole later began a losing streak with Johnny , Mikey , and Mitch losing singles matches to Ric Flair on consecutive episodes of Raw . After two consecutive losses to the debuting Cryme Tyme tag team , Kenny attacked Mikey on the October 23 episode of Raw and announced that he was going to defeat Flair . With the help of the other Spirit Squad members , Kenny was successful , despite Flair being accompanied to the ring by his own reinforcements ( Dusty Rhodes , Sgt. Slaughter , and Roddy Piper ) . It was then announced that Flair and a legend , selected by interactive voting , would wrestle the team for the World Tag Team Championship at the Cyber Sunday pay @-@ per @-@ view in early November . The fans chose Piper , and he and Flair defeated Kenny and Mikey to win the championship .

The group disbanded on the November 27 episode of Raw , when they were defeated in a five @-@ on @-@ three handicap match by DX and Flair . In a backstage segment later that episode , DX placed all members into a crate stamped " OVW , Louisville , Kentucky " , a reference to the developmental territory from which all the Squad members had come .

== = Return to developmental territories ( 2007 ? 2008 ) = = =

Brendli , under the name Mikey Mondo , appeared at the January 17 OVW taping along with Nick

Nemeth and teamed with Mike Krueh in a match against Seth Skyfire , Shawn Spears , and Cody Runnels . The pair teamed up for a while as The Frat Boys , and later The Frat Pack , but they had disbanded by late March 2007 . Mondo moved into singles competition , and picked up wins over Steve Lewington , Boris Alexiev , and Colt Cabana , among others . In June 2007 , he started a feud with Shawn Spears over the OVW Television Championship , but failed to capture it on several occasions . A one @-@ night reunion with Nemeth followed , before he began dubbing himself " The Professional " Mike Mondo and began feuding with Atlas DaBone .

In September 2007 , Mondo was moved to the Florida Championship Wrestling ( FCW ) developmental territory and defeated Chris Gray in his debut there . He once again reformed his tag team with Nemeth , and they wrestled against teams including Hade Vansen and Chris Gray , and the New Generation Hart Foundation of Teddy Hart and TJ Wilson . At the start of 2008 , however , they split and began feuding , competing against each other both in singles and tag team matches . Having dubbed himself " Mighty Mikey " , he went to wrestle Ted DiBiase , Jr . , Sinn Bowdee , Heath Miller , and Jack Gabriel throughout the early part of 2008 . On June 13 , 2008 , WWE announced that Brendli had been released from his contract .

= = = Independent circuit ( 2008 ) = = =

After his WWE release , Brendli returned to competing on the independent circuit , and , in an interview in December 2008 , said he plans to wrestle in Mexico and Japan . He competed for several independent promotions , including Division I Pro Wrestling and Ward Family Entertainments , where he reprised his feud with Rory McAllister of the former WWE tag team , The Highlanders . He also returned to the New York Wrestling Connection on September 20 , 2008 , at Draw The Line , where he teamed with Mikey Whipwreck in a losing effort to Rob Eckos and Frederick of Hollywood . Brendli made it to the semi final of the 17th annual ECWA Super 8 Tournament before losing to eventual winner Damian Dragon

= = = Return to OVW ( 2009 ? 2012 ) = = =

In early 2009 , he returned to Ohio Valley Wrestling ( OVW ) both to wrestle and to be an assistant trainer . On February 7 , 2009 , he defeated Idol Stevens and Johnny Punch in a triple threat match to become the new OVW Television Champion . On March 21 , Brendli failed a drugs test at an OVW event , and was suspended by the Kentucky Boxing and Wrestling Authority . He lost the OVW Television Championship to Jamin Olivencia on May 9 . After postponing two hearings , he was suspended for six months and fined US \$ 100 on June 29 . On November 21 , 2009 , Mondo teamed with Turcan Celik to defeat Moose and Tilo for the OVW Southern Tag Team Championship . They held the championship for a week , before losing it to The Network on November 28 . On May 29 , 2010 , at All or Nothing , Mondo won the OVW Heavyweight Championship by defeating Beef Wellington . He later lost the championship to James Thomas on June 16 . On March 5 , 2011 , Mondo regained the OVW Heavyweight Championship by winning a three @-@ way ladder match , also involving Cliff Compton and " Low Rider " Matt Barela . Mondo was stripped of the championship on May 4 , after attacking OVW president Danny Davis . On November 2 , at OVW 's episode 637 , Christian Mascagni prevented Mondo from winning an eight @-@ man melee , costing him a match for the OVW Heavyweight Championship .

= = = Ring of Honor ( 2010 ? 2013 ) = = =

Mondo appeared at Ring of Honor ( ROH ) ' s Bluegrass Brawl event on July 22 , where he lost to Delirious . He returned to ROH at the Ring of Honor Wrestling television tapings on December 9 and 10 , defeating Grizzly Redwood the first night , before losing to Colt Cabana on December 10 .

In late 2011 , Brendli returned to Ring of Honor as a full @-@ time member , under his ' Mike Mondo ' personality . After a string of losses to begin his full @-@ time ROH career , he eventually defeated Matt Taven . He then feuded with T.J. Perkins , whom he defeated in their first match

together , but lost the second . Making his ROH pay @-@ per @-@ view debut at Border Wars , he teamed with the Young Bucks to lose to Perkins and The All Night Express of Kenny King and Rhett Titus . Following a draw with Davey Richards in May and a win over Mike Bennett at Best in the World 2012 : Hostage Crisis , he had his first title opportunity when he unsuccessfully challenged Kevin Steen for the ROH World Heavyweight Championship . Mondo won a ROH World Television Championship number one contendership six @-@ man mayhem match , and faced Adam Cole for the championship at Death Before Dishonor X : State of Emergency in a losing effort . Following the loss , Mondo defeated Kyle O 'Reilly in a qualifying match for the 2012 Survival of the Fittest tournament , but lost in the final to Jay Lethal . At Glory By Honor XI : The Unbreakable Hope , Mondo lost to Mike Bennett , suffering a leg injury in the process which sidelined him for several months .

Mondo returned in March 2013 , forming a tag team partnership with Grizzly Redwood and starting a feud with S.C.U.M .. At Supercard of Honor VII , Mondo , B.J. Whitmer , Caprice Coleman , Cedric Alexander , and Mark Briscoe lost to five members of S.C.U.M.

= = = Chikara ( 2014 ) = = =

. Brendli participated in Chikara 's 2014 King of Trios tournament under his Spirit Squad character , and teamed with Johnny and Kenny . After a win over Sinn Bodhi and the Odditorium ( Qefka the Quiet and Sir Oliver Grimsly ) on September 19 , the Spirit Squad was eliminated from the tournament in the second round on September 20 by the Golden Trio ( Dasher Hatfield , Icarus , and Mark Angelosetti ) .

= = = Independent circuit ( 2015 ) = = =

on January 17 , 2015 . The Spirit Squad ( Mikey and Kenny ) defeated The Heart Throbs ( Antonio and Romeo ) . on February 28 , 2015 Mondo defeated Rex Lawless to win the NYWC Fusion title. on March 6 , 2015 at a Boston Wrestling Marathon event , Mikey and Kenny competed in a tag team gauntlet match which was won by Christopher Daniels and Frankie Kazarian . On March 7 , 2015 at a Boston Wrestling Marathon event , Mondo faced Biff Busick in a losing effort .

= = Personal life = =

Brendli played football in middle and high school . Brendli is good friends with his former Spirit Squad teammate Nick Nemeth ( better known as Dolph Ziggler ) , and the two lived together in Florida until 2008 . On June 1 , 2008 , Brendli was arrested for driving under the influence in Florida . He was released the next day after posting US \$ 500 bail .

= = In wrestling = =

Finishing moves

Facebuster

Running sitout crucifix powerbomb

Senton bomb

Managers

Kenny Bolin

Da Beast

Spirit Squad

Wrestlers managed

Spirit Squad

Nicknames

" The Giant Killer "

= = Championships and accomplishments = =

New York Wrestling Connection

NYWC Fusion Championship ( 1 time )

NYWC Heavyweight Championship ( 3 times )

NYWC Hall of Fame ( Class of 2016 )

Ohio Valley Wrestling

OVW Heavyweight Championship ( 2 times )

OVW Southern Tag Team Championship ( 1 time ) ? with Turcan Celik

OVW Television Championship ( 1 time )

Sixth OVW Triple Crown Champion

Pro Wrestling Illustrated

PWI ranked him # 135 of the best 500 singles wrestlers of the year in the PWI 500 in 2013

World Wrestling Entertainment

World Tag Team Championship ( 1 time ) ? with The Spirit Squad