John McMahon (wrestler) =

John McMahon (1841 ? 1912) was an American professional wrestler who specialized in collar @-@ and @-@ elbow wrestling . He competed from 1861 to 1891 , traveling throughout the United States and Canada to face the top wrestlers of the day . He competed in several styles of wrestling , and his biggest rivalry was with Colonel J.H. McLaughlin . Toward the end of his career , he performed in wrestling matches for traveling circuses .

= Career = =

Born in Vermont in 1841 , McMahon began his professional wrestling career in Port Henry , New York in June 1861 . He won the match , which began an undefeated streak that lasted until 1878 . Although he favored the collar @-@ and @-@ elbow wrestling practiced in Ireland , the country of his ancestry , he also competed in matches that involved catch wrestling and Greco @-@ Roman wrestling . McMahon served in the Union army during the American Civil War , during which he gained notoriety as a wrestler .

On July 22 , 1873 , McMahon defeated Thomas Copeland to become recognized as the champion of the United States and Canada . The following month , he also defeated Albert Ellis , who was billed as the champion of England . Because McMahon outweighed his opponent by 60 pounds , the match was contested under Cornwall and Devon rules , which required both men to wear short jackets . His rivalry with Ellis continued , and the pair faced each other twice more . One bout was declared a draw because of a disputed call by the referee . McMahon won the third and final match between the two . McMahon also traveled to the Western United States in search of competitors . In 1877 , he defeated Harry Thurston in a match held in a lumberyard in California . He was also sent to Virginia City , Nevada to help a gambler who had lost a large sum of money to " Dakota Bill " Tompkins . Without revealing his identity , McMahon arranged a match with Tompkins , a local championship wrestler . McMahon 's friends bet money on McMahon , who defeated Tompkins in a best @-@ of @-@ five match .

McMahon wrestled James Farwell in January 1878 ; Falwell won a controversial victory to retain his status as champion of the Pacific Coast . After McMahon 's main rival , Colonel J.H. McLaughlin , retired , McMahon ceased to compete as well . The two had never faced each other , but there was a dispute as to who would win if such a match took place . McMahon returned to Virginia City to open a saloon . In October of that year , McLaughlin offered a bet that nobody would be able to defeat Robert Wright , one of his trainees . McMahon accepted the bet , defeated Wright , and arranged a match against McLaughlin . He defeated McLaughlin in a best @-@ of @-@ three match on November 23 , 1878 . A rematch took place , which McLaughlin won . The third and final contest between the two took place in March 1879 and ended in a draw . On May 12 of that year , McMahon defeated Australian " Professor " William Miller in a best @-@ of @-@ three match before a crowd of over 2000 spectators in Gilmore 's Garden in New York .

In August 1879 , McMahon faced his second cousin once removed , James Owens , in the St. James Opera House on Broadway in New York City . McMahon lost the first fall but won the next two to claim victory in the match . They faced each other again on July 16 , 1880 for the collar @-@ and @-@ elbow world championship . After a match lasting over three hours , McMahon emerged victorious to win the title .

In the mid @-@ 1880s , McMahon traveled internationally to compete and won titles in Australia and Argentina . In 1884 , he defeated John Tedford in England to win the world collar @-@ and @-@ elbow wrestling championship .

In his later career , McMahon faced such wrestlers as Sorakichi Matsuda , Captain James C. Daly and Gus Lambert . He also faced William Muldoon , now a member of the Professional Wrestling Hall of Fame . One match between the two , which took place on March 22 , 1881 , featured a best @-@ of @-@ three @-@ falls rule , in which the wrestlers competed in Muldoon 's favored Greco @-@ Roman style , followed by the collar @-@ and @-@ elbow style preferred by McMahon . Each competitor won the fall in his preferred style , which led to a catch @-@ as @-@ catch @-@ can

match to determine the winner . The match did not take place , however , as the men were unable to agree to the outfits that would be worn during the match ; as a result , the contest was declared a draw . One of McMahon 's final series of matches was against Henry Moses Dufur . Their first match was declared a draw after neither competitor was able to throw the other within six hours . Although the wrestlers were willing to continue , the lease on the hall had expired and the match was ended at 2 : 45 in the morning . McMahon lost the second contest , but he defeated Dufur for the world collar @-@ and @-@ elbow championship in their final encounter .

 McMahon also wrestled in traveling circuses . He was part of Adam Forepaugh 's Circus , and he competed for P. T. Barnum 's circus for over two years . With the latter group , he wrestled over 300 pre @-@ arranged matches against Ed Decker . He also continued in regular competition outside the circus ; in his final match , he defeated Jim Cowley on March 2 , 1891 . McMahon died in 1912 .

= = Championships and accomplishments = =

 Collar @-@ and @-@ Elbow Championship (2 times)