

= Matt Striker =

Matthew Kaye ( born June 26 , 1974 ) is an American professional wrestler , producer , actor , director and English language professional wrestling commentator working under the ring name Matt Striker . He is currently an English language commentator primarily for Lucha Underground but also frequently provides English commentary for Asistencia Asesoría y Administración ( AAA ) PPV events in Mexico and New Japan Pro Wrestling ( NJPW ) PPV events in Japan . He also wrestles on the United States independent circuit and works as a producer and director for Paragon Pro Wrestling ( PPW ) in Las Vegas . He is best known for his time in World Wrestling Entertainment ( WWE ) as both a wrestler and commentator . He is also a sporadic actor in film and a former high school teacher .

After obtaining a Master 's degree in educational psychology , Kaye began working as a high @-@ school teacher . He also began a career in professional wrestling , and made his debut in 2000 after being trained by Johnny Rodz . In early 2005 , Kaye quit his full @-@ time teaching job at Benjamin N. Cardozo High School , when the school board found out that he had been using sick days as a way to pursue his wrestling career .

Kaye signed a contract with WWE in mid @-@ 2005 , calling himself Matt Striker , and quickly developed a persona of a heel ( villainous ) teacher . He started out on the Raw brand , where he hosted a segment known as Matt Striker 's Classroom , before moving to the ECW brand in 2006 . There he joined the New Breed alliance and was involved in a feud with the ECW Originals . After this , he began managing wrestler Big Daddy V until 2008 . In August 2008 , Striker began working as the color commentator on ECW and , alongside his commentary partner Todd Grisham , won the 2008 Slammy Award for Announce Team of the Year . Striker was then moved to the SmackDown brand where he commentated from October 2009 to January 2011 . He then served as color commentator on Superstars until his departure from the company in 2013 .

= = High school teaching career = =

After obtaining a bachelor 's degree in history and a master 's degree in educational psychology , Kaye began working as a high school teacher . He worked part @-@ time as a substitute , filling in when other teachers were on leave . In mid @-@ 2004 , he was hired full @-@ time as a social studies teacher at Benjamin N. Cardozo High School in Queens , New York , but wrestled part @-@ time during his vacation time and on weekends . He resigned from his position as a teacher , however , when the school found out that he was using sick days as an excuse to keep up with his wrestling commitments . According to the school system 's Special Commissioner of Investigation , Kaye falsely claimed 11 sick days in December 2004 and February 2005 , during which time he was actually wrestling in Japan for Pro Wrestling Zero1 . Kaye later said in an interview that he would have taken personal days instead of sick days , but he " didn 't know there was a difference . " The Special Commissioner of Investigation recommended Kaye 's dismissal and also recommended that he should be considered ineligible for future employment in the public schools . Kaye , who was not tenured , chose to resign in April 2005 upon advice from his lawyer .

= = Professional wrestling career = =

= = = Early career ( 2000 ? 2005 ) = = =

After being trained by Johnny Rodz at Gleason 's Gym in New York City , Kaye made his debut in 2000 . He initially worked for small independent promotions and quickly achieved success , winning 10 different championships during his first year . He also participated in the King of the Ring 2002 commercials .

He wrestled for World of Unpredictable Wrestling ( WUW ) , where he won the WUW Continental Championship , Total Professional Wrestling , where he won the Light Heavyweight Championship

and held the Tag Team Championship with Red Flair , and the East Coast Wrestling Association , where he won the ECWA Tag Team Championship with Ace Darling in February 2003 . The pair held the championship for seven months , until losing it in September . He also worked for Connecticut Championship Wrestling , and won the promotion 's main championship in February 2004 , by winning a tournament . Also in early 2004 , he teamed with Josh Daniels to win the PWF Tag Team Championship , and with Simon Diamond to win the USA Pro Wrestling 's tag team championship . On June 19 , Striker and Diamond lost the USA Pro Wrestling Tag Team Championship at a USA Pro Wrestling Show . A few hours later that same night , he appeared at a Pro @-@ Pain Pro Wrestling ( 3PW ) show as " The Ultimate Striker " , an impersonation of the Ultimate Warrior and teamed with Rob Eckos in a loss to " Slyck " Wager Brown and April Hunter . He also appeared for 3PW impersonating " The Macho Man " Randy Savage , The Sandman , Sabu , Hulk Hogan , and Ric Flair . On August 21 , 2004 , he and Eckos entered a tag team battle royal as The Bushwhackers , The Road Warriors , and the team of The Iron Sheik and Nikolai Volkoff .

While working full @-@ time as a teacher in 2004 , he continued to wrestle during his vacation time and weekends , and using sick days . On December 16 , 2004 , Striker began a tour of Japan with Pro Wrestling Zero1 , and was later invited back for an extended tour in early 2005 . After resigning from his teaching position , he continued to wrestle around New York , and on April 30 , 2005 , won the New York Wrestling Connection ( NYWC ) ' s Heavyweight Championship by defeating Mike Mondo . A few weeks later , on May 21 , while still the Heavyweight Champion , he defeated Joey Braggiol to win the NYWC Interstate Championship , but only held the championship for two weeks , before losing it back to Braggiol on June 4 . He made a few appearances for Ring of Honor in mid @-@ 2005 , before returning to NYWC to lose the Heavyweight Championship to Jerry Lynn on July 30 , after holding it for four months . He continued to wrestle for independent promotions throughout mid @-@ 2005 , until he signed a contract with WWE .

= = = World Wrestling Entertainment / WWE = = =

= = = = Various feuds ( 2005 ? 2006 ) = = = =

Kaye wrestled Kurt Angle , using the name Matt Martel , in an invitational match on the February 24 , 2005 episode of SmackDown ! in Philadelphia , Pennsylvania . After the revelation that Kaye was a teacher appeared in mainstream news publications , Kaye made a WWE second appearance on the July 11 , 2005 episode of Raw to face Angle for a second time , again using the name Matt Martel . His news coverage was played up by Angle , who told the audience that Martel was really Striker , and Angle defeated him again in under three minutes . The following week , he appeared on Raw again , still claiming to be called Matt Martel , and challenged Angle again . Angle exposed him as Matt Striker again , before defeating him for the third consecutive time . Striker went on to compete on Heat and appear in WWE 's developmental territory , Deep South Wrestling .

Striker developed a heel ( villainous ) teacher gimmick , calling WWE his school and hosting a segment called Matt Striker 's Classroom on Raw , which debuted on December 12 . During the segment he ridiculed the audience , and treated the crowd as intellectual inferiors . During a match against Lance Cade at an untelevised event on December 18 , Striker suffered a shoulder injury . He was out of action until January 23 , 2006 , when he continued his Classroom segments once again , and then appeared mainly on Heat for several weeks .

Striker would reappear on Raw on April 17 for another classroom segment where he claimed that " school is cool " . Carlito , another wrestler , took exception to Striker 's statement , and spat an apple in Striker 's face , in keeping with Carlito 's gimmick . Striker returned to Raw in @-@ ring action on April 24 and participated in a six @-@ man tag team match , in which he , Chris Masters and Shelton Benjamin were defeated by Carlito , Rob Van Dam , and Charlie Haas . During the Backlash pay @-@ per @-@ view , Striker hosted an edition of his classroom segment , with Eugene , who in storyline was mentally impaired , as his guest . Eugene attacked Striker during the segment , which led to Striker attacking Eugene with a dictionary the following night on Raw . The scripted feud

between the two also involved Carlito , who attacked both Eugene and Striker after Eugene inadvertently caused Carlito to lose a match to Striker by Disqualification on the May 8 episode of Raw . The feud between the two ended when Eugene gained a mentor in " Hacksaw " Jim Duggan and defeated Striker , after losing to him only two weeks before . Following his loss to Eugene , Striker attacked him , but was stopped by Duggan , and ran away .

Striker appeared only rarely on Raw throughout June and July , and his final match for the brand was on July 31 , when he was quickly defeated by John Cena .

=== Matt Striker 's classroom and The New Breed ( 2006 ? 2008 ) ===

At the end of August 2006 , Striker left the Raw brand to join ECW , making his debut on August 23 . He continued his Classroom segment on ECW , which provoked a feud with The Sandman as Striker insulted him . During one Classroom segment on September 5 , 2006 , however , Striker made a controversial remark that alluded to the death of Australian wildlife expert Steve Irwin , who had been killed by a stingray 36 hours earlier . Due to the outrage caused by the remark , the incident was edited out of the replayed Australian broadcast and WWE Chairman Vince McMahon released a public apology on WWE 's official website following the incident . Striker made his in @-@ ring debut for the brand on the September 19 , 2006 episode of ECW , teaming up with Mike Knox and Test to face Tommy Dreamer , Sabu , and The Sandman . Striker , Knox , and Test lost the match by disqualification due to Test pushing the referee . Striker continued his feud with The Sandman until the October 17 episode of ECW , when The Sandman defeated Striker in a Singapore Cane on a Pole match . At the December to Dismember pay @-@ per @-@ view , Striker faced Balls Mahoney in a " Striker 's Rules " match , which meant that no eye gouging , hair pulling , top rope attacks , or foul language was allowed . Despite the match being of his own creation , Striker was pinned by Mahoney . Striker and Mahoney continued their rivalry until December 19 , when Striker defeated Mahoney on ECW .

On February 6 , Striker aligned himself with Mr. McMahon 's New Breed stable ( faction ) , along with Elijah Burke , Kevin Thorn , and Marcus Cor Von . The New Breed immediately engaged themselves in a feud with the ECW Originals ( Rob Van Dam , Tommy Dreamer , Sabu and The Sandman ) . Different members of the New Breeds wrestled members of the ECW originals over several weeks , leading up to WrestleMania 23 . At WrestleMania , the New Breed was defeated by the ECW Originals in an 8 @-@ man tag team match , but won a rematch on the following episode of ECW . In the midst of the feud with the ECW Originals , tension began to appear between the leader Elijah Burke and Striker , after Striker and Cor Von were defeated by the debuting Major Brothers . As a result , Striker began trying to avenge the loss to the Major Brothers , and defeated Brett Major on the May 22 episode of ECW . The feud with the Originals lost momentum , however , as Sabu was released from his WWE contract in mid @-@ May , and at the One Night Stand pay @-@ per @-@ view , the feud ended when Striker , Cor Von , and Burke lost to Dreamer , Sandman , and CM Punk in a tables match .

On June 12 , Striker was defeated by The Boogeyman in a singles match , and two weeks later , The Boogeyman attacked him during an edition of Piper 's Pit , both times dropping worms from his mouth into Striker 's . On July 10 , Striker invited Boogeyman to the ring to educate him on worms , only to bring out the debuting Big Daddy V to attack Boogeyman . Striker then formed an alliance with Big Daddy V that lasted until March 2008 , and acted as Big Daddy V 's manager , regularly accompanying him to the ring . In November , Striker and Big Daddy V started a feud with Kane , after Kane attacked Striker . The feud saw Striker and Big Daddy V take on Kane in a handicap match , and also saw the pair align briefly with Mark Henry . Henry helped Big Daddy V win a match against Kane on the November 27 episode of ECW , and in return , Striker refereed a match between Henry and The Undertaker , and refused to count a pinfall against Henry .

During this time , Striker hosted a weekly segment on WWE 's official website called " Best WWEEK Worst WWEEK " .

=== Commentator ( 2008 ? 2013 ) ===

As part of the 2008 WWE Supplemental Draft in June 2008 , Striker was drafted back to the Raw brand . Once the SmackDown color commentator , Mick Foley , was storyline injured by Edge , however , Tazz moved to SmackDown to fill in for Foley , who had actually left the WWE in real life , and Striker returned to ECW to take over Tazz 's duties as color commentator , thus turning Striker face and ending his in ring career at the same time . He made his commentary debut on the August 5 episode of ECW . Striker and his commentary partner , Todd Grisham , won the 2008 Slammy Award for the Announce Team of the Year . On the April 7 , 2009 episode of ECW , Grisham and Striker 's commentary partnership came to an end when Josh Mathews debuted as the new play @-@ by @-@ play commentator , to replace Grisham who was moved to the SmackDown brand . In addition to commentating on ECW on SyFy and ECW pay @-@ per @-@ view matches , Striker and Mathews represented the ECW brand on WWE Superstars every week , which started with the inaugural episode on April 16 , 2009 .

On October 27 , 2009 it was announced that Striker would move from commentary on ECW to SmackDown , reuniting with Grisham . The move was made to help accommodate Jim Ross , who had been taking time off to deal with his recent Bell 's palsy attack . In November , Striker replaced Jerry Lawler on commentary for Raw for one night , after Lawler was attacked by Sheamus , and in storyline , was unable to continue . Matt also became the commentator representing the SmackDown brand from Survivor Series . This ran until Royal Rumble ( 2011 ) when he was replaced by Booker T at the following Elimination Chamber event . On June 7 , 2010 , Striker appeared on Raw for the " viewers choice " episode , announcing the results of the votes . At the end of the show , Striker was attacked by the season one NXT rookies , along with the commentators and Justin Roberts , the ring announcer . In October , Striker and Grisham were joined by Michael Cole on SmackDown , forming a three @-@ man announce team . Striker remained a SmackDown commentator until he was replaced in early February 2011 by Booker T .

= = = = Host of NXT and departure ( 2010 ? 2013 ) = = = =

On the inaugural episode of NXT on February 23 , 2010 , Striker was announced as the host of the show and he conducted an interview with wrestler Daniel Bryan . In March 2011 , Striker gained a co @-@ host for the fifth season of NXT in the form of Maryse . On the June 2 , 2011 episode of Superstars , Striker appeared as the new agent of Tyson Kidd and managed Kidd for that single episode of Superstars .

Striker wrestled his first match in three years on the August 2 , 2011 episode of NXT , teaming with Titus O 'Neil in a winning effort against Derrick Bateman and Darren Young in a tag team match , turning face for the first time since his debut . He fought Young in the next two weeks , but Young emerged victorious both times . Striker later teamed up with William Regal to face Young and JTG , but Striker and Regal were unsuccessful in winning the match . On the October 18 , 2011 episode of SmackDown Striker participated in the biggest battle royal in WWE history .

Striker was reunited with his former broadcast partner Josh Mathews on the November 10 , 2011 episode of Superstars , commentating on both the Raw and SmackDown portions of the show . The Mathews / Striker tandem are the only announce team to call Superstars for all brands Raw , Smackdown and the former ECW brand since the show 's inception in April 2009 .

Meanwhile , as NXT host , Striker was frequently bullied and even assaulted by troublemakers Curt Hawkins and Tyler Reks , eventually forcing him to hand over match booking responsibilities to William Regal on the February 29 , 2012 NXT Redemption , although Striker would remain as NXT host . On the March 21 episode of NXT Redemption , after Maxine and Johnny Curtis knocked out Striker with chloroform , Striker was kidnapped ( kayfabe ) by unknown persons , later revealed to be Hawkins and Reks , who intended to blackmail Maxine into using her charms to get Regal to leave them alone . Despite apparently being kidnapped , Striker continued to commentate on Superstars , with the explanation given being that to keep his kidnapping a secret , WWE hired a body double to assume Striker 's duties . Striker was rescued by Derrick Bateman and Kaitlyn on the April 11 episode NXT Redemption . Striker ceased his role as NXT host with the conclusion of the

NXT Redemption as NXT became the show of WWE 's rebranded developmental territory .

After hosting NXT , Striker began interviewing WWE employees on Raw and SmackDown . During the summer of 2012 , Striker became the host of WWE Afterburn for international broadcasts . On the October 12 SmackDown , Striker tried to interview Team Hell No ( Kane and Daniel Bryan ) , but they both attacked him . On the October 15 episode of Raw , Striker demanded that he receive an apology and was instead forced to face Kane in his final WWE match , which Striker lost . On June 20 , 2013 , Striker departed from WWE after the company opted to not renew his contract .

= = = Independent circuit ( 2013 ? present ) = = =

On June 21 , Striker made his first post @-@ WWE appearance , by appearing on Family Wrestling Entertainment iPPV , FWE Rumble in Queens , New York as a color commentator . On September 14 , Right Coast Pro announced that Striker would face Billy Bax at the promotion 's October 12 event . On October 21 , 2013 , Striker was defeated by Justin Credible in NYWC 's House of madness . After the match , Striker nailed Credible and legitimately busted him open hardway . Backstage , Striker tried to apologize but Credible cursed him out in the locker room and stormed off . On July 2013 , Championship Wrestling from Hollywood announced Striker as the new announcer of the promotion on MAVTV . On November 2 , 2013 , Striker made his in ring debut for Championship Wrestling from Hollywood , against Scorpio Sky for the CWFH Heritage Heavyweight Championship but was unsuccessful as Sky retained the title .

On March 14 , 2014 , Striker took part in German promotion Westside Xtreme Wrestling 's 16 Carat Gold weekend . During the second day on March 15 , he and Trent ? defeated Hot & Spicy ( Axel Dieter Jr. and Da Mack ) to win the wXw World Tag Team Championship . They re @-@ lost the title to Hot & Spicy the next day .

From July 18 to August 2 , 2014 , Striker took part in Pro Wrestling Noah 's 2014 NTV G + Cup Junior Heavyweight Tag League , where he and Super Crazy finished with a record of two wins and two losses , failing to advance to the finals .

= = = Commentator in various promotions = = =

In 2015 , Striker took over as a producer and director for Paragon Pro Wrestling . He has made several appearances during televised events of the program , announcing D 'Lo Brown vs. Caleb Konley , and announcing the American Championship tournament at the February 12 , 2016 PPW TV taping . Striker , along with Vampiro , served as one half of the English language commentators for Asistencia Asesoría y Administración 's Lucha Libre World Cup internet pay @-@ per @-@ view on May 24 , 2015 .

On August 9 , 2015 , Striker returned to AAA English language commentary alongside Hugo Savinovich for AAA 's Triplemanía XXIII pay @-@ per @-@ view , which was heavily criticized due to many audio issues on the English language feed throughout the show , as well as the pay @-@ per @-@ view suddenly going off air in the final ten minutes during a major storyline angle involving Konnan , Myzteziz and Los Perros del Mal .

Striker and Jim Ross served as the English language commentators for New Japan Pro Wrestling 's Wrestle Kingdom 9 in Tokyo Dome pay @-@ per @-@ view on January 4 , 2015 . On October 12 , Striker returned to NJPW to provide English commentary on King of Pro @-@ Wrestling , this time working alongside long @-@ time Ring of Honor commentator Kevin Kelly .

Striker returned to NJPW English commentary at Wrestle Kingdom 10 in Tokyo Dome on January 4 , 2016 , again working alongside Kevin Kelly as well as NJPW wrestler Yoshitatsu .

= = = Lucha Underground ( 2014 ? present ) = = =

On September 5 , 2014 , it was reported that Striker had signed with Lucha Underground as the lead English language announcer , alongside Vampiro . Striker and Vampiro provided English language commentary for the entire first season of the show , with the season finale airing on

August 5 , 2015 . On September 21 , 2015 , Lucha Underground confirmed via Twitter that the show would return for a second season , with Striker and Vampiro returning for English commentary .

= = Personal life = =

He played hockey and football . In college , Kaye earned a Bachelor 's degree in History and went on to obtain a Master 's degree in educational psychology . Striker is a Christian that often read the Bible before matches in the WWE .

= = Other media = =

Kaye was a child actor , and had roles in the films Wise Guys and Child Savers . In 2011 , Kaye appeared in the films Big Fat Gypsy Gangster and Tezz in uncredited roles . He started to appear on a channel called " WrestlingFiguresCom " in June 2013 . On February 25 , 2014 episode of WWE Countdown Striker appeared to talk about past and current superstars .

= = In wrestling = =

Finishing moves

Golden Rule ( Inverted overdrive ) ? 2006 ? 2008 , 2013 ? present

Happy Monkey Submission ( Rear naked choke )

Overdrive ? 2005 ? 2006 , 2011 ? 2012

Signature moves

Big boot

Double knee backbreaker

Fujiwara armbar

Gory bomb

Neck snap

Rope hung swinging neckbreaker

Schoolboy

Single leg Boston crab

Skayde Lock ( Standing STF )

Sunset flip

Wrestlers managed

Big Daddy V

Mark Henry

Tyson Kidd

Nicknames

" The Modern Marvel "

" Hot Stuff "

" Macho Man "

" Your Teacher "

" The King of Royals "

Entrance themes

\* " Teacher " by Jim Johnston ( WWE ; May 1 , 2006 ? June 20 , 2013 )

" Hail to the King " by Avenged Sevenfold ( Independent circuit ; July 4 , 2013 ? present )

= = Championships and accomplishments = =

Assault Championship Wrestling

ACW Tag Team Championship ( 1 time ) ? with Scotty Charisma

Connecticut Championship Wrestling

CCW Heavyweight Championship ( 1 time )

DDT Pro @-@ Wrestling  
Ironman Heavyweight Championship ( 1 time )  
East Coast Wrestling Association  
ECWA Tag Team Championship ( 1 time ) ? with Ace Darling  
High Impact Wrestling Canada  
HIW Wildside Provincial Championship ( 1 time )  
LDN Wrestling  
LDN Wrestling Capital Championship ( 1 time )  
New York Wrestling Connection  
NYWC Heavyweight Championship ( 1 time )  
NYWC Tag Team Championship ( 1 time ) ? with Rob Eckos  
NYWC Interstate Championship ( 1 time )  
Premier Wrestling Federation  
PWF Tag Team Championship ( 8 time ) ? with Josh Daniels  
Pro Wrestling Illustrated  
PWI ranked him No. 166 of the top 500 singles wrestlers in the PWI 500 in 2006  
Pro Wrestling Noah  
NTV G + Cup Junior Heavyweight Tag League Technique Award ( 2014 ) ? with Super Crazy  
Total Professional Wrestling  
TPW Light Heavyweight Championship ( 1 time )  
TPW Tag Team Championship ( 1 time ) ? with Red Flair  
USA Pro Wrestling  
USA Pro New York State Championship ( 1 time )  
USA Pro Tag Team Championship ( 2 times ) ? with Simon Diamond  
Westside Xtreme Wrestling  
wXw World Tag Team Championship ( 1 time ) ? with Trent ?  
World of Unpredictable Wrestling  
WUW Continental Championship ( 1 time )  
World Wrestling Entertainment  
Slammy Award for Announce Team of the Year ( 2008 ) ? with Todd Grisham  
Wrestling Observer Newsletter  
Best Television Announcer ( 2008 )