



Black History Month All-Star: Mark Henry



Mark Jerrold Henry is currently known for his pro wrestling and Olympics careers. Known as the “World’s Strongest Man,” Henry has traveled the world winning a plethora of powerlifting and strongman competitions defending that tile and always impressive in his display of pure power.

In fourth grade, he was the big kid standing at 5 feet 5 inches and weighing 225 pounds. When he was ten years old, his mother bought him a set of weights, which started his journey in powerlifting. By the time he was a freshman in high school, he could lift 600 lbs. In 1990 his senior year in high school, he was labeled “The World’s Strongest Teenager” by the *Los Angeles Times*. Things

happened fast that year for Henry. He won the *National High School Powerlifting Championships* by setting the teenage record in the squat completion lifting 832 lbs and 2,033 lbs total. In the *Texas High School Powerlifting Championships*, he was approached by Terry Todd, a professor at the University of Texas at Austin and a former weightlifter. He persuaded him to move to Austin to train for Olympic-style weightlifting. He would compete in the United States Powerlifting Federation the same year, finishing second to six-time *World Powerlifting Champion* Kirk Karwoski.

The following year Henry won the *United States National Junior Championships*, finished fourth in the *Senior National Championships* and sixth in the *Junior World Championships* in Germany. He would win the 1991’s International Junior Champion in Powerlifting. Henry broke three Junior American records 12 times in his first year and became the United States’ top Superheavyweight.

Mark Henry | Strength History Minute

In 1992 Henry qualified for the *Summer Olympics*, where he finished 10th in the Super-Heavyweight class. In 1995 he won three weightlifting medals in the *Pan American Games*, with a gold in the snatch lift. Henry also won gold medals in the 1993-94 *US Olympic Festival*. In 1995 he would win the USAPL National Powerlifting tile again, Henry won the *World Drug-Free Powerlifting Federation Championship*, known for the most rigorous drug control procedures globally. In 1996 he became the *North American, Central American, Caribbean Island Champion*. He earned the right to compete in the 1996 Olympics after winning the US National Weightlifting Champions for the third time.

Jerry the King Lawler interviews Mark Henry. King c...



That year he met Vince McMahon for the first time and was offered a 10-year deal to become a professional wrestler. In 1996 Henry made his World Wrestling Federation debut on Monday Night Raw, slamming Jerry “The King” Lawler after ridiculing him in the ring. He then would them compete in the Olympics that summer.

Henry stood at 6-feet 2-inches 414 lbs and became the largest athlete in Olympic history. Unfortunately, Henry suffered a back injury that summer and couldn’t compete at his usual level. He had to drop out of the clean and jerk and finish in 14th place.

Mark Henry vs. Randy Orton - World Heavyweight C...



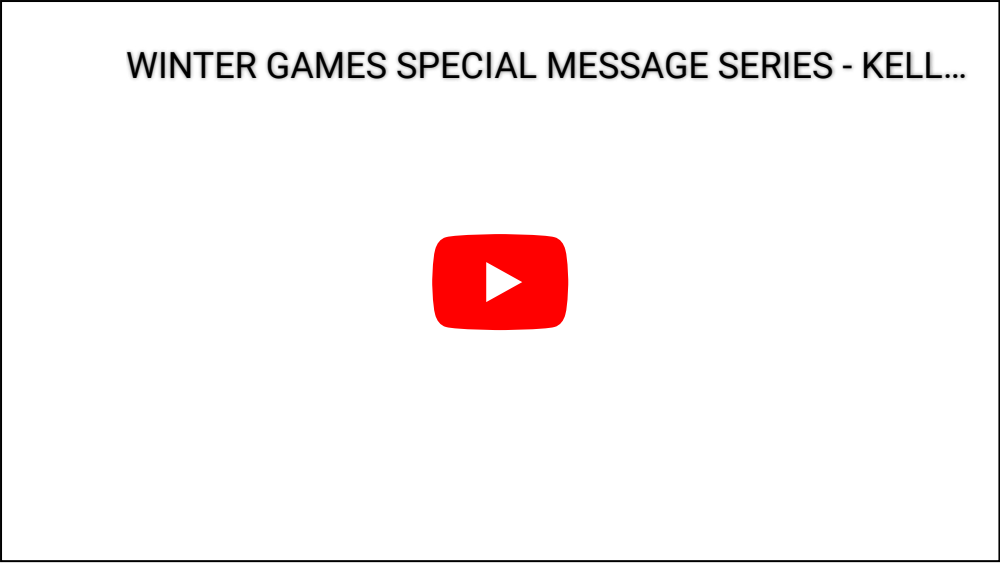
After the Olympics, he would return to the WWF at *SummerSlam*, aiding Jake “The Snake” Roberts, who Lawler was attacking. Henry would make his in-ring debut at *WWF’s In Your House Mind Games*, where he would defeat The King. Years later, Henry would win the then-name WWE World Heavyweight Champion defeating Randy Orton at the 2011 Night of Champions live event, starting his reign of inducting his opponents into “The Hall of Pain.” In 2012 half a year after losing the title, he would even have a live in-ring announcement. With a pink suit teary eye promo, it seemed that Henry was announcing a retirement. WWE Champion John Cena would approach the ring to console him and Henry would give Cena his signature move, “The World’s Strongest Slam,” as he announced that he wanted the title that has alluded him his whole career, the WWE title which Cena held. Cena would defeat Henry at *Money in the Bank* event weeks later. The next night he would congratulate Cena and ask for a rematch but was attacked by the group known as The Shield.

Mark Henry surprises John Cena with a World's Str...



While wrestling in the WWE, Henry would still compete in strong man competitions, winning the 2002 Arnold Strongman Classic and he was the first man to one-hand clean and pushed the “unliftable” Thomas Inch dumbbell. Flex Magazine recognized him as the *Second Strongest Man That Ever Lived* and he was inducted into the *International Sports Hall of Fame* in 2012. Speaking of hall of fame, he was inducted into the *WWE Hall of Fame* in 2018.

Henry works with the *Special Olympics of Texas*. *This privately funded non-profit organization* changes lives through the power of sports by encouraging and empowering people with intellectual disabilities, promoting acceptance for all. The SOTX has created opportunities for over 58,000 children and adults with intellectual disabilities throughout the Lone Star State. To realize their potential, develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage and experience joy and friendship.



They will be holding their 2022 Winter Games this week from Feb 18-19th in Bee Cave and Lakeway. The events they're having are powerlifting, volleyball, cycling, gold and all-new floorball. There will also be Fundamental sports (formerly MATP) offered.

For any information on the 2022 Winter Games event by the SOTX, [click here](#).

Henry now works for *All Elite Wrestling* as part of the commentary team for *AEW Rampage*. He is associated with the *Concussion Legacy Foundation*, which researches CTE using expert insights and other resources by vowing to donate his brain to research. Henry is known in the Austin area for giving his time and contributing to several area charities, for example, bringing trucks full of school supplies and supplying free haircuts for neighborhood kids. He provided free haircuts for the homeless in the city as well.

[Click here](#) to listen to the complete All-Star list.

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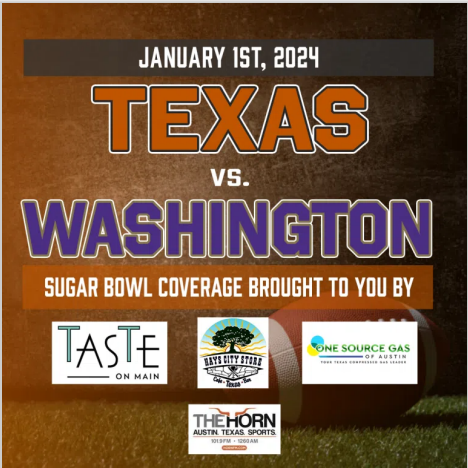
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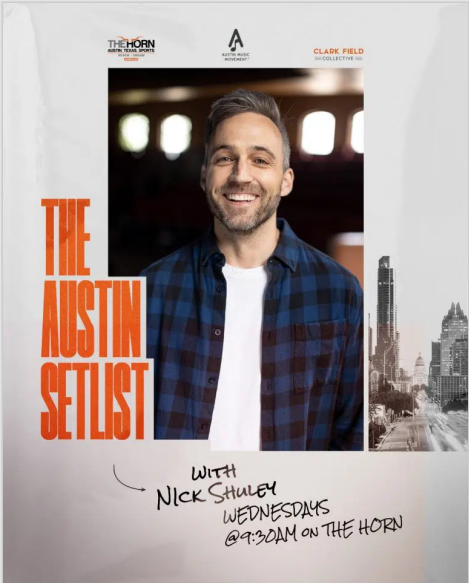
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