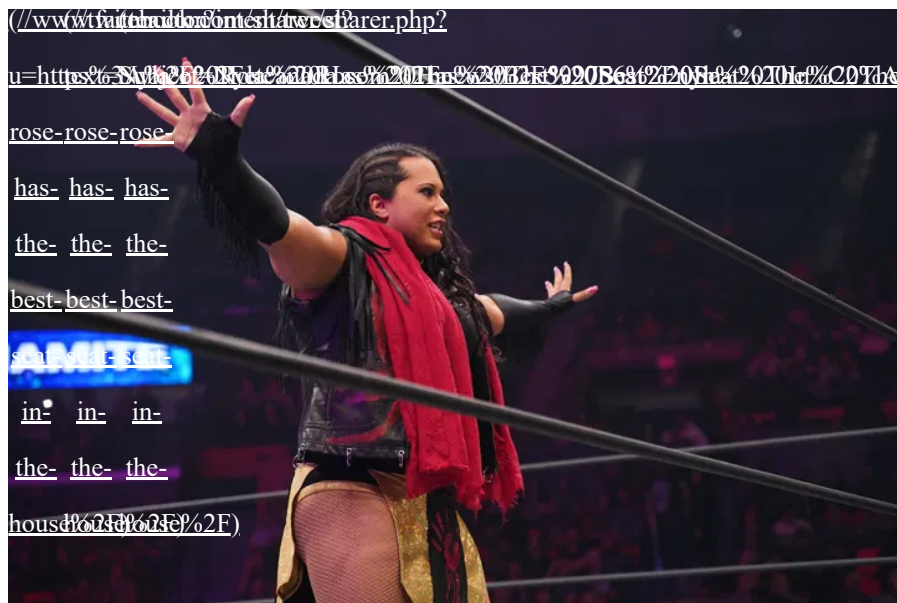


# Nyla Rose Has The Best Seat In The House

By JOHN POWELL. 5 mins ago



Nyla Rose. Photo: AEW.

In promoting “Wigstock: The Movie, RuPaul” once said: “It shouldn’t be THIS hard just to be myself.”

Nyla Rose agrees.

The current All Elite Wrestling Women’s World Champion and first openly transgender wrestler to sign with an American wrestling promotion, faced backlash from some wrestling fans online when she won the title simply because of her identity and nothing more.

“At the end of the day, it is simply about respect. As the saying goes do unto others as you would have them do unto you. That’s the Golden Rule. Treat others how you wish to be treated. Nobody is asking anyone to go out of their way and change their beliefs. It is just about showing another human being some respect,” Rose told ET Canada of the criticism she has endured.

Veteran wrestlers Cody Rhodes, the executive vice president of AEW, and his brother Dustin, quickly came to Rose’s defence with Dustin mentioning that his son is also transgender. Since signing with the company, Rose has been grateful for all of the support she has received from her AEW colleagues and wrestling fans.

“To have people like Dustin and Cody stand up and say, ‘enough is enough’ is huge because not only are they are supporting and backing their talent, they are also putting their money where their mouths are,” Rose stated emphatically. “They are telling the world they can respect an individual so why can’t everyone else? That is what it comes down to.”

“They can say it is just their opinion and they can absolutely have an opinion on a situation or a subject. Should they voice that opinion all the time? Probably not,” she added. “That doesn’t absolve them though from the repercussions of what they say in a public forum. The flip side is you cannot have an opinion on someone’s existence. That is where people are getting mixed up about this. My existence is not up for debate, period.”



Nyla Rose. Photo: AEW.

What gives Rose hope that hearts and minds are changing though is that some of her biggest critics have slowly become some of her biggest fans.

“I have actually had some people say to me... I judged you from afar and I was misinformed. This process that we are going through now is breaking down those stigmas and stereotypes. It is helping some people see us as people,” she said of the trans community.

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Rose is proud to represent the community and that responsibility is always first and foremost in her mind every time she laces up her boots or steps through the ropes.

“I don’t like to use the word pressure because it doesn’t feel uncomfortable,” she said. “It is important for a lot of people. I always have to keep in mind that I am not doing this just for me but countless people because not everyone can speak up.”

Rose defeated Riho earlier this month to become the AEW Women’s World Champion ending Riho’s impressive 133-day title reign. Rose is the second AEW Women’s World Champion to date as the fledging, upstart promotion was founded about a year ago and only started airing weekly shows on TSN in Canada and TNT in the United States last October.

Under President and CEO Tony Khan’s guidance, AEW has quickly grown to become the main rival, the alternative to WWE programming in North America and around the world.

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Rose is proud of what she and AEW have accomplished in such a short period of time.

"I honestly don't know if I can even do how I feel justice with just words," she said. "From a career standpoint being a world champion is the top accolade. It is what everyone in the industry is striving for. If you don't want to be the best then why are you doing this? On a personal level, being not only able to achieve but exceed your wildest dreams is for me, unfathomable. It is something I am having a hard time putting into words."

Rose's wrestling career is a family affair as well. Rose's wife has been working as a successful and accomplished seamstress for over 20 years. She currently designs and creates all of Rose's ring gear.

"I love her designs and hopefully we can turn this into a full-time career for her," said a proud Rose.

Before stepping into the squared circle Rose stepped onto the small screen starring in the 2016 Canadian television series "The Switch". The comedy series aired on OutTV with Rose starring as Sü, a tech professional who moves to Canada so that she can come out as a trans woman. The series was produced by Amy Fox, a transgender television producer from Vancouver, Canada. Rose recalls her time on the show and in Canada as some of the best memories she has.

"I met some amazing and wonderful people in Canada," Rose remembered. "It was my first time in Canada to not only visit but to live and work there. It was amazing."

Rose is looking forward to returning to Canada in the near future, confirming rumours that AEW is working on bringing the promotion to Canada with some live shows sometime soon.

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"I don't know how much of this I am allowed to say but AEW is working on some things," Rose revealed. "Hopefully we will be visiting Canada a lot sooner, rather than later."

At this Saturday's "AEW Revolution" pay-per-view, Rose defends her title against powerhouse Kris Statlander, a former stuntwoman who has moved on to a career in pro wrestling.

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Heading into their match, Rose isn't taking Statlander lightly.

"I am motivated and focused like never before. My eyes are on the prize. That isn't to take anything away from Kris Statlander. She is a phenomenal athlete. To say her talent is out of this world would be cliché. She is not to be underestimated. I've got to keep my head on a swivel with her," said Rose detailing her "Revolution" battle plan.

Looking past Statlander, Rose has her sights set on the rest of the AEW women's locker room.

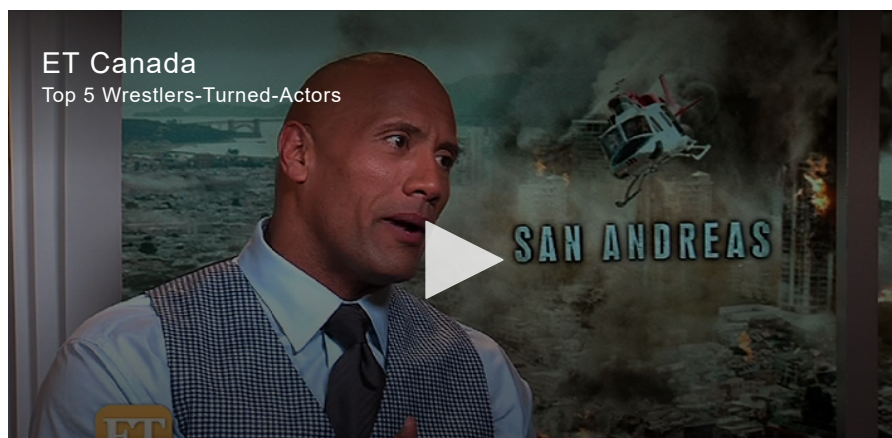
"There are tons of people. Big Swole decided to stick her nose in where it doesn't belong and come lurking out of the shadows. She is on my hit list," Rose asserted. "[Hikaru] Shida, most definitely. We had a tussle in Japan but never had a one-on-one. I would love to knock her off a peg or two. Big Mel likes to go out there and cause a bit of havoc. I would like to knock her down a peg or two as well."

A wrestling fan herself, Rose is still blown away by the fact that she is working alongside, being mentored by some of the best in the business, people who she used to watch on television and were her idols, superstars such as Chris Jericho, Diamond Dallas Page and Dustin Rhodes.

"The short and sweet of it is I have always been a fan," Rose explained. "A lot of my co-workers kind of laugh at me because something will happen and I am like a 4-year-old kid again in total awe of what I am watching and what is happening in the ring."

"I have been a fan of the wrestling industry my entire life," she concluded.

"Getting to actually do it for a living is insane. I have the best seat in the house for the thing that I love the most."





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