

Raj Giri of WrestlingINC.com recently interviewed legendary Superstar Jake "The Snake" Roberts, where he discussed his first WWF run. During the interview, Roberts discussed signing with the WWF, the "Snake" gimmick, hating snakes, working his first *WrestleMania*, his favorite opponents during that era, working with Andre the Giant and Hulk Hogan, Ultimate Warrior being fired before their feud and much more. Here are some highlights:

First signing with the WWF Well, it was quite the experience. I had been working in Mid-South and not really being given a fair shake there. I was told I was number five on the babyface list, yet I was going on last every night. So, that kind of tells you something. Bill Watts hired a guy to be his administrator. It was Terry Taylor of all people, you know, the Red Rooster.

I remember going to talk to Terry and I said, 'Look, I'm number five on the babyface list, yet I'm going on last every night. This is just not going to work.' He said, 'Well, what can I tell you?' And I said, 'Well, I can tell you something. Here's two weeks notice and I'll see you.' So, that's what I did. I was young, dumb and stupid, not thinking. I didn't have a job set up. So, I went home that night saying, 'I really screwed up. I just quit my job and I don't have a place to go to get some work done.'

The next morning, I called Vince [McMahon] and I was told that he was going to be out of town for two weeks and that he would get back with me then. I thought, Oh, my god. Now, I've really screwed up. About 30 minutes later, the phone rang and it was Vince. He wanted me to fly up and meet with him, so I flew up and met with him. Basically, we sat down and he said, 'We have an idea of you wearing lime green pants or purple pants -- tights -- and having knee high lace up boots and carrying a snake.' I said, 'Dude, that's just not me. I wear karate pants and I wear slip on boots. Because the last thing I want to do when I do is know that I wasted 5 years of my life lacing up boots.'

I actually did do the math of that and if you spent 20 minutes a day lacing up your boots, it adds up over 15-20 years, man. So, it was going to be about four months of my life lacing up boots if I did that. So, that's the reason I went to pull ones. You know, it's funny how you think of stupid shit, but I'm good at that. So, he just kind of looked at me and said, 'Well, that's a shame because there's somebody who's going to be wearing purple and lime green with knee high snake skin boots and they're going to make about a million a year.'

So, I looked at him and I said, 'You know what? I would look very good in spandex. With purple and green and knee high boots. I think I'd look just wonderful.' And that was how I went to work.

If he owned snakes before signing with the WWF: No. I hated the sons of bitches. I'm terrified of them... I came up with the idea. In Mid-South, I wanted to use a snake and Bill Watts was quick to tell me that this isn't a damn circus. 'We're not going to have any circus clowns or circus geeks carrying snakes.' Gee, he was so right. What a stupid idea...

They [WWF] had come back with it. They said, 'Have you thought about this before?' I said, 'Well, Jake 'The Snake'? Kind of fits.' [Laughs.] They said, 'Well, good. You're going to carry a snake.' I said, 'No problem.' Not thinking that I was terrified of them and hated the sons of bitches. Next thing you know, I've got a damn snake... They supplied them. There was a guy in Stamford, Connecticut named Albert that supplied all the snakes...

What a miserable damn job that was, carrying a 100 pound snake in a box and carrying my wrestling gear and clothes. Back then, we'd go on the road for a month to six weeks at a time. Carrying all that shit was just really, really brutal, man. It really tore my ass up. You wake up in a hotel room at 5 AM -- there's no bellmen at the Red Roof. You've got to do it yourself. Then you get your rental car and you've got to turn that back in. So, you've got to take all that shit back out and put it on the bus to the airport. Then, when you get there, you've got to carry it all the way over to the skycaps. If they are available because a lot of airports didn't have skycaps. So, what does that mean? That means I'm carrying that stupid shit.

So, here I am carrying 150 pounds of gear, walking around with that stuff. That's not healthy to do, really. It wore my ass out.

Being a big star despite not having a bodybuilder physique: I wasn't all jacked up and juiced up. The one time I did go up, it was after my neck surgery. I went up to about 275 pounds. I had gotten up juiced and jacked because I was trying to get myself over the neck surgery. I went in after the neck surgery to see Vince and he goes, 'That's not what we want.' I said, 'What are you talking about? This is not what you want?' Because I had really put on a lot of beef on my upper body.' He said, 'You know, if we wanted Hogan to carry a snake, we'd have Hogan carry a snake. We don't want you looking like that. You want you to be very sensuous, very sexual, smooth. Be different.

Well, ain't that a bitch. So, he told me that he didn't want to hear about me being in the gym. [Laughs.] So, I went home and sat by the pool for a month, snorted cocaine and drank. So, there you go. ... Well, I shouldn't have done what I did. That's for damn sure.

His feud with Hulk Hogan being cut short: The angle was stopped because the people were chanting DDT and Vince did not want that. That's when they really took me from being a heel to being a babyface and my job then became getting all the other heels ready to wrestle Hogan. So, I guess they thought, 'If we can't use him as a heel, we'll just beat him as a babyface.' But, it didn't matter. If you're good enough and you go out there and you do your job, people don't remember if you won or lost. They really don't. They just want to be entertained.

Ultimate Warrior being suspended right as their program started I was looking forward to making the son of a bitch miserable. You've got to learn how to do it. You know? You take a juice monkey, you lean on him. You make him toss you around the ring but every time he picks you up, you get a little bit heavier. Pretty soon, they're blowing and going and they don't have any air left and you can pretty much do anything you want to them. They're like a little baby. You can roll them around the ring, pick your nose and put boogers on the back of their head. They don't give a shit because they're so blown up. You've just got to know how to do that and I know how to do that. I am a snake.

Roberts also discussed working with Randy Savage and how Elizabeth's family cut the feud short, a gross story from a match he had with Andre the Giant, helping The Undertaker out early in his career and much more. You can check out the full interview at WrestlingINC.com [by clicking here](#)