

Wrestling Observer Newsletter

July 18, 1994

This should be a defining week in the history of American pro wrestling with the two largest U.S. promotions looking straight into the eyes of either potential disasters or potential major victories, the end results of which will largely tell the tale of the two biggest promotions in the United States and two biggest mat news stories in this country of 1994.

The most powerful promoter and largest wrestling company in the country and in some ways, the world, is on trial and facing a potential lengthy prison term. In addition, World Championship Wrestling, with the Hulk Hogan vs. Ric Flair Bash at the Beach PPV match on 7/17, is facing a trial of its own, a financial one. The negative ramifications aren't in the ballpark as McMahon's, but as of the weekend, it's odds of success at the end appeared smaller.

The trial of Vince McMahon and Titan Sports on charges of possession with intent to distribute and conspiracy to distribute anabolic steroids continued on Thursday and Friday in Uniondale, NY. The main witness both days was Dr. George Zahorian, the steroid doctor who has been in prison for his distribution of steroids and barbiturates to four pro wrestlers and a college strength coach for the past two-and-a-half years following a much-publicized 1991 trial that in many ways changed both the face and indirectly the level of popularity of American pro wrestling.

Because the trial is expected to heat up early in the week with many prominent wrestling names testifying. This issue is being done a few days earlier and I want to thank all our regular correspondents for doing such a great job in helping me get the info in time to put out a complete issue early. I'll be traveling to New York after this issue goes to press early. For subscribers of Pro Wrestling Torch, which has been an invaluable help to our own coverage of this case, if this week's issue arrives late or if a week is skipped, it is because its two leading writers are in New York for the trial but they will be attempting to do an issue from the road if at all possible. All plans of this nature for both this publication and the Torch are subject to change, but next week's issue of the Observer could be several days late if the trial doesn't end by Friday. As of the end of testimony on Friday, several of the attorneys involved were confident the trial would conclude by the end of this week, which would mean no delay in next week's issue. Thus far the trial has gone at a snail's pace. Many of you probably will be able to ascertain the timing of the trial because with the O.J. Simpson hearings over, the New York media and wire service which haven't covered this case after the first day, are expected to pick back up coverage, particularly when Hogan takes the stand. Media coverage of this trial has mainly been limited to New York, and a few national television spots. Many in the New York media, focusing so heavily on the Simpson case, didn't have the time in their newscasts nor did they believe the public would be interested in a trial at the same time as the Simpson hearings. Several of the reporters who had been following this case from its early stages were transferred to covering the Simpson case. My expectation is that national coverage will be en masse the day that Hogan appears, and there will be limited coverage in the New York area of the rest of the proceedings.

The spectators in the courtroom were largely autograph-seeking wrestling fans, giving their support and looking for autographs from McMahon, clad in a neck brace courtesy of his recent operation for a herniated disc and reporters. The crowd oohed and aahed when, for example, Nailz accidentally wandered into the courtroom, or someone like Afa the Samoan showed up to give McMahon well wishes. Most were largely bored by the proceedings, and complained that not enough wrestlers were there.

Key points after the first three days of testimony:

*Up to this point, the two distribution charges, which technically are possession with intent to distribute, of McMahon to Hulk Hogan have barely been addressed so almost all testimony relevant to the case (and much of the questioning and testimony at this point doesn't appear to even be relevant) regards the conspiracy charge.

*In no way has the government presented a strong case of a conspiracy. There was definitely no traditional conspiracy when you think of the word, which was people getting together and plotting to get something accomplished. Titan Sports was not involved in any profit-sharing of the steroid revenue derived from its wrestlers, which may be a key point, although virtually all this was well-known by anyone who has been following the story from the beginning. The argument that it profited from the drug use at the other end, through ticket sales, merchandise sales or whatever, needs to be a strong convincing argument to get a conviction on this point. Even if there is a strong and convincing argument to that point, that still doesn't guarantee a jury will be able to take it in its proper context if that is its proper context with no understandings of the industry or even that it could understand it in its proper context that it would consider conspiracy an applicable term. Up to this point, no argument has been presented to educate the jury toward the machinations of the wrestling industry. One would have thought Zahorian needed to be a key prosecution witness for get a conspiracy conviction but nothing he's said appears to have implicated anyone in anything more than many officials at Titan Sports allegedly knew what was going on and did nothing to stop it. Quite frankly, after three days of testimony, nothing has come out that could be considered as either a major unknown point or surprising on either side other than those in the jury probably believe, based on the testimony and witnesses presented, that wrestlers as a whole are a bunch of druggies, that Zahorian was a hardcore drug dealer and that the wrestling industry was filled with drugs and Titan was aware of it and did nothing to stop it but that nobody from Titan told anybody to do anything, thus the wrestlers and the doctor were largely acting on their own. The ties to McMahon being a puppeteer orchestrating this, which has to be proven beyond a reasonable doubt, haven't even been more than barely touched upon, let alone had any significant points made pointing in that direction. It has been testified by Dr. Zahorian that McMahon and several Titan agents of executives, including Pat Patterson, Jay Strongbow and Arnold Skaaland were well aware of Zahorian selling steroids to wrestlers and that McMahon himself at one point was asked directly by Zahorian if he wanted him to stop and McMahon, according to Zahorian's testimony, told him to continue, although Zahorian plead his case in order to continue by warning McMahon about possible dangers if the wrestlers went the black market route for their steroids. In fact, Zahorian sold steroids not only to McMahon, as McMahon has admitted from the start, but also to Strongbow, for his son Mark, who wrestled briefly in WWF, WCW and Alabama as Mark Young and Vince Young, and to Skaaland for his son George, a WWF jobber in the early 80s. Another key point is that both McMahon and Titan Sports are on trial. With the two charges of distribution from Titan to McMahon dropped on account of McMahon being 100% owner of Titan, it may mean that legally a strong case could be made for a conspiracy if it the jury believed what the agents did constituted conspiracy since they were employees and officers in a supervisory role with the company. What happened during that period, when the laws on steroids differed, could very well be considered a felony under today's laws, but those aren't applicable to the period in question. Today, aiding and abetting use of steroids, which there is a stronger case here for than conspiracy, would be a felony.

*Most courtroom observers who have been in-and-out believe the defense (Titan's side) is killing the prosecution, although none have witnessed all the testimony

*The only person we know of besides those involved in the case that has seen all three days from start-to-finish, Wade Keller, the editor of the Torch, said that his feelings at this point are that Zahorian has come off as a credible witness and that the Titan attorneys, Jerry McDevitt in particular, attempts to impugn his credibility have largely cost them points with the jury. He said it has come across in his testimony that Zahorian has at all times attempted to tell the truth. He believes the jury at this point probably has no idea what's going on and said that the prosecution doesn't appear to be phased by anything that has come out. The burden of proof, of course, is on the prosecution and at this point they've proven nothing. Keller says it appears this is part of a game plan and that their case to this point has been to simply lay groundwork and that who appears to be

winning day-to-day is irrelevant until all the evidence is in and the trial is completed. He believes the defense is not even attempting to argue this case based on logic or facts but is emphasizing points that are actually irrelevant or as he termed it, "intellectually dishonest." However, the defense isn't attempting to win a debate, they're attempting to get a man acquitted by a jury with no background of the situation. He believes though it isn't either relevant or prudent to judge the case at this point, but if pressed, he would have the prosecution slightly ahead when it comes to relevant points made in arguments but not ahead enough to prove anything beyond a reasonable doubt and feels that the jury at this point has no evidence McMahon is guilty of anything.

"Without being there, but being aware of much of the testimony, my feeling is that the key points we expected going in when it comes to guilt or innocence in a courtroom, as opposed to real life, will be the key. The government has not presented much of a compelling case when it comes to the points they need to get across for a conviction. Titan Sports was not involved in a direct economic conspiracy to sell steroids, did not share in any profits, did not order Zahorian to sell steroids to its wrestlers and in the case of every wrestler testifying so far, although Rick Rude may be an exception, did not tell wrestlers directly to get on steroids. The company was aware of it going on and did nothing to deter it, either. Realistically use was encouraged, and even if you aren't willing to accept that, it has to be accepted that in no way was use discouraged nor can a valid argument be made that those in charge didn't know there were a lot of wrestlers using steroids. During that time period, the same can be said for every wrestling promotion in the world, with the only difference being Titan had Zahorian in its dressing room, but he was not assigned by Titan, but by the athletic commission. But the manner of encouragement was subtle enough that from the start I believed it would be extremely difficult to convince anyone except a group of people who follow the business closely understanding both wrestling and steroids and the psychology of each and impact of steroids on the industry and the impact of pushing wrestlers on steroids as to encouragement without saying so to younger wrestlers looking for a break to take the same route. That encouragement to younger wrestlers looking for work is still a part of the business today since both size and a muscular physique are still a strong advantage in getting a job with major offices both in this country and Japan. The prosecution has not even begun to bring up the points it needs to win the case, while the defense has proven beyond any doubt that no traditional conspiracy took place. The distribution has not even been addressed except in a key question when Zahorian was asked if he sent steroids to McMahon on October 24, 1989 (one of the two steroid shipments in question) and Zahorian answered that he was not certain. The prosecution had records of a bank check on 10/28 for \$538 to Zahorian. Even if Emily Feinberg testifies she ordered steroids from Zahorian for McMahon to distribute to Hogan, it may be difficult for Feinberg to say for certain there actually were steroids in the package even though she believes it to be so, and even though a package may have been delivered to Hogan who believed it was steroids, with Zahorian not being certain. It makes the case for that particular charge of distribution weaker. In addition, on the two distribution counts, the key is whether the jury will buy the sharing steroids with a friend defense, or if they'll consider a few hundred dollars worth of drugs to be insignificant and somehow not worthy of putting someone in jail over, which, quite frankly, if that's all there is without proof there is more in the big picture, that's a reasonable conclusion to come to. The government has to be able to prove that the few hundred dollars worth of steroids was indicative of a larger, more major problem. Thus far it has proven there was a major problem with steroids rampant among wrestlers, but hasn't tied the company well enough into being responsible legally for that problem.

"It appears the defense is building its case for defending the point that so many key personnel at Titan (and quite frankly, everyone close to the wrestling industry) were aware that Zahorian was supplying steroids to WWF wrestlers and was considered "the" supplier (although many individuals had their own connections because Zahorian's prices were routinely much higher than black market with the excuse being with Zahorian, you were guaranteed you were getting what was being advertised which is never the case on the black market) by the fact that Zahorian, an award-winning doctor, told Vince that by keeping the guys away from the black market since they were going to use steroids anyway, that he was protecting their health because there are more dangers from injecting unknown quantities into ones systems than from steroids and since McMahon, a layperson, heard this from a doctor, he unknowingly

believed it to be so. Of course this is flawed logic because any cocaine dealer could argue that by selling uncontaminated cocaine, he was keeping his customers, who are going to get high whether he's there or not, from buying more dangerous drugs like impure cocaine, heroin or crack which are more addictive and could be worse for their health. In addition, the idea that the potential dangers of steroids were unknown to the average intelligent user of steroids (which is not a complete oxymoron) by the mid-80s has been used as a defense in the media, but in reality it is pure b.s. as any experienced lifter who spent anytime in a gym or power sports environment could give countless examples of people who have had side effects from steroids and the fact the medical community has warned against their use is has been known and ignored in gyms going back to the late 60s.

Zahorian was the only witness on Thursday. On Friday, Zahorian once again took up almost the entire day except for a far-too-long segment with a federal express employee who stated the obvious, that packages are rounded up to the next pound (in other words, a package weighing 2.1 pounds would have shown up in the documentation as a three pound package), that any employee of the company could use its Fed-ex number (thus packages to Titan Sports weren't necessarily for McMahon even if they used his fed-ex number to pay for them) and that even though it can be proven Zahorian made numerous shipments to Titan and even to McMahon, signed for by Feinberg, etc., that just from the fed-ex receipts and nothing else, nothing can be proven that there necessarily were steroids in the packages although I suspect all concerned will admit to the point that Zahorian did send steroids to McMahon, and that at some point at least some of those steroids wound up in the bloodstream of Terry Bollea.

"The schedule was that on Monday, 7/11, Jim "Ultimate Warrior" Hellwig, Patterson, Doug Sages (Titan Sports Chief Financial Officer), Rood and Kevin "Nailz" Wacholz were scheduled to testify. Of the names mentioned last week as witnesses, John "Studd" Minton and Roy Wayne "Honkytonk Man" Farris are questionable as whether or not they'll appear, but Farris is another who sent Titan a request for employment recently, as it appeared did other government witnesses in the trial. Funny world we live in, but so as to not avoid any confusion, in all cases that I'm aware of, it was the wrestler initiating the contact so this isn't implying any funny business from Titan's side. There was a lot of talk that Hogan's testimony would come on Tuesday and no word on when Feinberg, considered the key to the government's case, would testify.

In Zahorian's testimony, a great deal of time was spent by the defense attempting to show that Zahorian received improved treatment in prison in exchange for giving the government the information they wanted to receive. Zahorian testified that no promises were made, and in fact his requests to transfer to a work stockyard have been continually denied as have been his attempts to be released early. Apparently since Zahorian is considered a high-profile prisoner because of all the publicity stemming from his original case, the government doesn't want to release him early because it would come out publicly and make them appear to be weak on crime. Titan's attorneys, Jerry McDevitt and Laura Brevetti did show that Zahorian did get somewhat improved conditions in jail after testifying before the Grand Jury twice in April. They also made attempt after attempt to get Zahorian to slip up and say he had been led what to say or that prosecutors broke standard procedure, which ultimately went nowhere since they couldn't get him to crack. They also tried to imply that an \$80,000 profit on the sale of his office/condo complex that the government seized in the 1991 trial, of which half the profits went to his wife since she owned half the property, constituted a payoff for giving them the info they wanted, which was a ludicrous argument since the wife owned half the complex and she committed no crime nor, according to testimony, was even aware of her husband's "side business" as he tried to keep it from her.

Zahorian admitted to being a fan of pro wrestling as a teenager and in the days when WWF taped every third week at the Allentown Agricultural Hall in the early 80s, he was the ringside physician. Zahorian said he distributed steroids, valium, Tylenol III & IV and Halcions to wrestlers at shows starting in 1981 or 1982 through 1989 although numerous wrestlers insist it dated back farther than that. At first, the only steroid he distributed was decadurabolin, but he expanded to other steroids. He said his steroid business picked up from 1985-87 because more wrestlers started taking steroids at that time. He said his business decreased and dropped largely in 1989

when the word got out that he was being investigated. Zahorian testified that 98 to 99 percent of his steroid business was distribution to wrestlers and officers of the WWF. In cross-examination by McDevitt, it was brought up Zahorian distributed to many wrestlers who had worked for the WWF after they had left, such as David Shults, Eddie Gilbert, Steve Muslin (Steve Travis) and Brian Blair, by which McDevitt, who had established a relevant point about the percentage, then tried to overstate it by using it to paint Zahorian as a liar and with a credibility problem with the 98 to 99 percent figure when it was clearly an understandable mistake, another overdramatization that appeared in some eyes to backfire. Zahorian then lowered it to 80 to 90 percent not including the former WWF wrestlers, with the other eight to 18 or percent being the wrestlers who had left the WWF that he had originally considered as WWF wrestlers and the remaining one or two percent were to Bill Dunn, the college strength coach who testified at his trial, Kevin Sheehan, allegedly a police officer friend of Shults' and Brian Sochia, an NFL football player with the Dolphins and Oilers who had a connection with Dunn.

Zahorian said he would set up shop in Allentown in an artificial locker room and wrestlers would come in, and he'd give them steroids in brown paper bags. He'd give the wrestlers whatever drugs they wanted. Commission officials were often there as he was distributing steroids but WWF officials were not in the room as he was doing so. The situation was similar in Hershey. When asked if he was acting properly as a physician by doing this, Zahorian responded, "No I was not." Zahorian only followed up on the health of the wrestlers after using the drugs if the same wrestler appeared on the next show and brought it up. When asked if it was medically proper to give steroids to wrestlers for bodybuilding purposes, Zahorian responded, "It is against my ethical standards and I was wrong." When asked if it was proper for the patients to decide what drug they received, he said that it wasn't.

Zahorian remembered distributing steroids to Skaaland around 1983-84 for his son George, then a jobber. Later McDevitt tried to make the point that George, as a jobber, wasn't a ticket seller, implying the government's case that Titan conspired to get the wrestlers on steroids to sell tickets somehow weakened because a wrestler who wasn't a ticket seller was being sold steroids. He'd give steroids to Arnold for George if George wasn't present. He also said he gave steroids to Strongbow on multiple occasions after 1985 for his son. He said that in 1985, when Patterson was an agent, before he became McMahon's Vice President in charge of talent, that Patterson asked him if he was giving cocaine or heroin to the wrestlers and he said he was only giving them steroids and Tylenol III & IV. He said in Hershey, PA in early 1988 (McDevitt attempted to make a big deal out of a contradiction because in Grand Jury testimony his dates were contradictory, but Zahorian said after thinking about it he believed it was early 1988), he was summoned by Patterson who said that Vince wanted to see him. McMahon allegedly asked him if he was giving wrestlers steroids and Zahorian said yes, that he was giving them steroids and other drugs. Zahorian said he told McMahon that if they weren't buying the steroids from him that they would be buying them on the black market from people they didn't know and the drugs could be tainted. Zahorian told McMahon they could get sick from them but with him they knew they were getting the real thing. Zahorian said he told McMahon at that point that if he wanted him to stop, he would. Vince at that point allegedly told him not to stop. The defense has already tried to make the point that Zahorian, a doctor, told McMahon, without a medical background, that the situation the way it was was better for the health of his wrestlers.

Zahorian said he had another conversation with McMahon three to five months later and had four or five conversations with Feinberg who told him to send steroids to the office. He said he had no doctor/patient relationship with McMahon. He said the first amount he sent to McMahon was for one cycle (in other words, not enough for distribution), consisting of 12 vials of decadurabolin, two or three bottles of testosterone and a few bottles of HCG (not a steroid but a drug used coming off steroid cycles to kick ones testicles, which often slow down production of male hormone while on steroids, back into gear). In other conversations, Feinberg would call him and ask for a certain amount of steroids and mention that it was either for Mr. McMahon or Mr. Bollea. At one point he sent a package with seven or eight cycles to the Titan office (which would be enough theoretically for distribution--generally a cycle lasts six to 12 weeks so if one doesn't cycle off, it could also be at the least a nearly one year supply for one hardcore steroid freak). In early 1989, the Pennsylvania state

government disbanded commission regulation of wrestling so the commission no longer appointed Zahorian to shows. At that point he claimed Patterson called him and said he could still see the wrestlers and would like to see him at the events. He also got a call from Skaaland who wanted him there, with the point being made that these conversations took place after the November 1988 steroid law changed making a doctor distributing steroids for something other than the treatment of disease in humans a felony. Several months later he got another call from Patterson, which he said he returned, and was asked by Patterson to call him back from a pay phone. Patterson then told him when he called that an investigation is going on that concerned Titan Sports. Because of the investigation he said that Patterson said that Vince told him it was necessary to destroy all documentation on the wrestlers. He said the investigation was probably minor but to please be careful and said that after the investigation was completed they could meet again and continue their relationship. At that point Zahorian removed his records regarding Titan wrestlers using steroids from his office, but instead of destroying them, moved them to a storage area and later moved them to his attorneys office at the time the government made the raid on his office which is why when the raid came there were no medical records of the wrestlers. At the time the raid was made, Zahorian was in the process of mailing out packages to Roddy Piper (who at the time was between stints in the WWF and working in Hollywood) and Mike Rotunda (who was with WCW at the time). The package to Piper contained steroids and possibly anti-inflammatory drugs which why Piper was required to testify in the first trial.

McDevitt then started questioning Zahorian and asked if he had knowingly perjured himself in his testimony at his own trial and Zahorian replied, "To a certain extent, yes." When asked if he perjured himself in front of the Grand Jury (Zahorian was called to the grand jury investigation of Titan and McMahon on 4/8 and 4/15), he said that at the first Grand Jury hearing since he had been in prison, he wasn't clear about everything and didn't know why he was there, but after a week of thinking about it, the events became clearer in his head, which explained the haziness the first session as compared with the second. The defense attempted to make a point his treatment in prison was better during that week in between hearings, and then brought up the \$40,000 his wife made as her share of the government auction sale of his office/condo complex. McDevitt brought up that on March 4, 1993, Zahorian was granted immunity from being prosecuted on charges that he perjured himself at the first trial in exchange for his testimony. McDevitt brought up that Zahorian wrote a letter to O'Shea last month in a request for them to assist him in getting into a Philadelphia halfway house and be furloughed on weekends while in a prison work program during the week. O'Shea wrote a letter saying they believed Zahorian was truthful and cooperative but before this line of questioning got any farther, the Judge interrupted McDevitt and scolded him saying that all this information was immaterial and inappropriate. Zahorian said his total contact with Tony Valenti (the justice department investigator who was largely responsible for this case) was one 30 minute conversation eight to ten months ago and two or three phone calls since. Much of what McDevitt was doing appeared to be an attempt to get Zahorian to slip up, even trying to push Zahorian to somehow indicate he was told by Valenti what answers to give but Zahorian never slipped up, which seemed to frustrate McDevitt who seemed unprepared for courtroom battle and would almost freeze when answers didn't go the way he expected. Apparently where Zahorian perjured himself in the first trial was when he testified that he never started anyone out on steroids, that everyone he sold to had previously used them when he knowingly knew that wasn't the case. They tried to make a point that in the Grand Jury, Zahorian didn't know anything when the name Emily Feinberg was brought up, but did remember sending steroids requested by Bollea, said to be for Tiny Lister (Zeus), mailed to McMahon in Atlanta at the time "No Holds Barred" was being filmed. Zahorian recalled a call from Bollea saying that "Zeus" needed three or four bottles of testosterone and Bollea told him to send it to Vince in Atlanta. The defense seemed to be trying to make the point that in this case it was Bollea distributing to McMahon, but this point wasn't clear. Zahorian said that in his few other conversations with McMahon besides the one in Hershey, that they were brief and they never talked about steroids, and that he never met Feinberg but had talked to her on the phone. McDevitt continued to try to push the point that Zahorian was in horrible conditions in prison and claimed he was later given preferential treatment.

Zahorian admitted that Titan Sports never paid him anything extra for selling steroids nor did he split profits with Titan on his steroid sales, nor was an offer ever made offering to split profits for letting him sell steroids to the wrestlers. When asked if there was a legitimate medical need for some of the drugs (not necessarily steroids) he dispensed, Zahorian responded, "Sometimes." McDevitt established that when Zahorian gave guys drugs in the brown paper bags and that sometimes there weren't any steroids in the bags but other drugs. When the guys came out of where he set up shop carrying around the bags, nobody could tell from the bags whether there were steroids or other drugs or a combination of both in their bags. McDevitt also brought up that nobody from the state athletic commission or the staff at the arenas he was dealing in ever reported or even questioned him about what he was doing, nor did any physician ever report his activities publicly as being wrong. Zahorian was asked that in 1977, when he first became affiliated with the WWWF, was anyone on steroids, and he said yes, and then when McDevitt brought up the names Ken Patera, Billy Graham and Ivan Putski, Zahorian said they were all on steroids. When McDevitt asked if dianabol was used predominately in those days (this line of questioning obviously coming from reading the Billy Graham interview in the Observer in January, 1992), Zahorian said No. McDevitt then brought up the labeling that the government put in every steroid package, which has largely been laughed at by athletes for years and even used as an illogical defense for using them by athletes because the illogic goes that since the government lied in labeling so therefore the claimed dangers and side effects must also be a lie. The actual label in every steroid bottle during that period stated "steroids do not enhance athletic performance." Zahorian said he wasn't aware of that labeling. When McDevitt showed him the labeling, Zahorian said, "The effect on wrestlers was inconsistent with the statement I'm reading."

McDevitt said the government alleged the conspiracy began in 1985 and Zahorian said that date was being used because it was the earliest evidence used in his trial. Zahorian said that McMahon, Lanza, Skaaland and the other agents were never in the room when he was giving the wrestlers steroids and that Phil Zacko, Vince McMahon Sr. and Gorilla Monsoon (the three co-owners of Capital Sports aka WWF before McMahon Jr. took over, the predecessor to Titan Sports) never encouraged him to sell steroids to the wrestlers. When McDevitt asked if a specific federal express package was brought up to him, could he remember what was in it and Zahorian said, "It would be very difficult," which could be a strong point in favor of the defense when the distribution charges start being argued. When McDevitt said that no agents had ever called and asked him to bring steroids he said that Skaaland once called and asked him if he was coming to a show and bringing his medication with him. Zahorian said that nobody from Titan ever encouraged him to make the wrestlers bigger or larger than life and nobody ever told him to sell steroids to wrestlers to enhance ticket sales. When McDevitt brought up that during the trial he reported that the wrestlers were his patients, Zahorian responded that after two years of incarceration, he realizes the wrestlers were not his patients. Zahorian, when asked if he gave wrestlers directions on how to use steroids, said, "Sometimes yes and sometimes no." McDevitt brought up George Skaaland, making the point that he was a jobber and thus didn't sell any tickets, but was using steroids, and brought up Strongbow's son as well. Then he brought up Kevin Sheehan, the police officer friend of Shults' who he sold steroids to along with Dunn and Sochia and ex-WWF wrestlers like Shults and Blair trying to say Zahorian's 98 to 99 percent figure was a lie, when Zahorian basically said that if you take away the ex-WWF wrestlers the figure was 80 percent, tried to make a major production as if it proved Zahorian was lying, but it seemed nobody was buying it. At one point while McDevitt was carrying on about a minor wording inconsistency and using the word perjury, Judge Mishler sternly told the jury that perjury only exists when someone knowingly lies, which reflected poorly on McDevitt. At another point McDevitt tried to berate Zahorian when he brought up the name Randy Poffo and Zahorian said he remembered him and described The Genius gimmick, which was of course Lanny Poffo, which apparently was used for a brief moment as an attempt to impugn Zahorian's brain when it also was an understandable mistake for someone who mainly knew the guys by their working names. McDevitt then asked if McMahon had anything to do with his selling steroids to Sheehan, Patera or Shults, which he obviously didn't. Zahorian testified that he never told his wife about his steroid sales and that he kept the money for himself.

Zahorian testified he talked with Skaaland, Patterson and Feinberg after Pennsylvania deregulated wrestling about continuing to work at the shows. When asked about Anita Scales, who worked with Titan in relations with commissions and who is expected to testify to warning Titan early in the game about Zahorian, and her decision to drop Zahorian being overruled by Patterson and Linda McMahon siding with Patterson on the issue, Zahorian said he didn't recall who she was. After a few more questions, he did recall talking to a woman. The defense tried to make the point that Zahorian didn't go to McMahon about continuing to work at the shows which if there had been a conspiracy between the two, he would have gone right to the top and it would have been a done deal. Zahorian said that he wasn't aware of the steroid law changing on November 18, 1988 making a doctors distributing for non-medical purposes illegal, thus when asked if he told anyone in Titan Sports about the law change, obviously he couldn't have if he didn't know it himself.

McDevitt then read off a bunch of names, trying to get Zahorian to say they didn't use steroids trying to make the point that you didn't need steroids to be a star in the WWF. When asked if he had sold steroids to the following, Zahorian's responded--Nikolai Volkoff--"I believe so"; Raymond Rougeau--"I'm not certain"; Butch Miller--"Possibly"; King Kong Bundy--"I don't believe so. He was extremely large and had diabetes." Sgt. Slaughter--"No;" George Steele--"No;" Bob Backlund--"No;" A few more names were mentioned with McDevitt pointing to Slaughter as being a popular wrestler who didn't use steroids to the jury, although that was something of a bogus point to the case since Slaughter was a superstar in the business with major name recognition before the steroid craze hit the business. He was also fired by the WWF (having nothing to do with his physique) prior to the beginning of the indictment in 1985 and didn't return until well after Zahorian had been told to stay away from the arenas. He did return and was headliner and champion during the early 1991 period while the steroid craze was still at its heights. Bundy had unusually freakish size, Steele was in his 50s and had a gimmick that didn't require a physique and the same name recognition and star status before the craze and Backlund was a champion for six years before the craze and also was long gone from the company during the period in question so whether he was a steroid guy or not isn't applicable to the trial. The other names mentioned in reality were just guys on the card as opposed to being big money draws. The prosecution never pointed this out so McDevitt may have swayed the jury with what was a point with little or no merit. Zahorian said he had never talked to the WWF agents about FDA regulations regarding steroids (which preceded the 1988 law and made dispensing without a prescription illegal) and said they did not work together to defraud the FDA. Zahorian admitted that even after his late 1989 phone conversation with Patterson that he continued to sell steroids to people like Dunn, Blair, Sheehan and Eddie Gilbert among others. When asked if the phone call from Patterson deterred him from selling steroids, he said, "Not to a large degree. I was concerned but continued to sell steroids." He also mentioned that Randy Savage purchased steroids from him.

While officials from WCW were celebrating after the live WCW Saturday Night show on 7/9, it ended a week filled with finger pointing and the celebration ignored all available numbers indicating how the Hogan signing has worked.

The group was put into a panic when just two weeks before the most important and most expensive show in its history, Bash at the Beach, the Saturday show on 7/2 did a 1.8 rating and the Sunday show did a horrible 1.4. In addition, an attempt to track PPV buys as of nine days before the show indicated the number of advance buys was virtually identical to its previous shows, despite the hoped-for match of the century bonanza on top, Hogan's presence and the major celebrity involvement. Since most PPV buys are done in the last three days, that isn't necessarily an indication of a disaster, as one week out the first Wrestlemania looked to be one of wrestling's biggest disasters but turned into its biggest success in history up to that point, but by no means can any of this be taken as good news. WCW officials were still hoping for and predicting a 1.0, which would be a definite success and believing there is a probability of a full house (the 16,000-seat Orlando Arena is being heavily papered but our reports are as of one week ahead of time there are only about 6,000 seats left) which would be the company's largest live gate since the Ric Flair-Terry Funk match at the 1989 Baltimore Bash. However, no matter what the live gate, if the show does a .55 or .60, given the expenses and Hogan's price tag, that would be a total disaster since it would mean the company is on the road to a six month period

where it will spend an additional \$2 million and derive little return on that investment, because if Hogan doesn't draw well the first time out, it isn't going to get better as time goes on. Even a .9 on the first show would still mean Hogan and Flair would have to retain the entire audience for two more PPV shows, probably without as much celebrity help since Hogan called in all his markers for this show, for the Hogan deal to be successful over the short-run. If it does well, Hogan is expected to have more power in bringing people in. Considering the weak TV numbers going in (which are not always but usually are a strong barometer of a PPV buy rate), there is more chance of the beginnings of the much-predicted multi-million dollar disaster than of success at this point.

Before the Saturday show, the week was filled with blame for one person or another for the bad numbers. While they've done a great job of creating the illusion that Hogan's popularity has never been stronger, thus far it only appears to be an illusion. Illusions spread long enough and well enough often turn into reality in this business. While this is not a valid reason for if the match draws or not, they have diluted the Flair-Hogan issue badly with too much emphasis on Jimmy Hart and Sherri Martel. Many have also blamed the snafu on Main Event giving away the Clash results a few weeks back for ruining interest (a view that I don't buy for a second).

WCW did a high-energy live show on 7/9, but the show was rushed and the needed killer live angle with Flair and Hogan didn't appear to be killer enough. They spent the entire show pushing the 900 line telling people to call and vote for two wrestlers that would appear in the main event. Reportedly there were about 6,000 calls grossing \$12,000 (about half of which goes to the phone company), which the company was thrilled out of its mind with although I'd consider those numbers disappointing with the constant hard-sell throughout the show since Jim Ross used to gross that much revenue when he did the hotline on an average Saturday. Latest word is that the company wants to do this gimmick regularly on television now where fans pick participants. If 45 minutes of television promotion time is only worth a few thousand dollars, somebody needs an economics lesson. Everyone knew in advance they were running Flair-Sting on top of course, and the show largely led the audience to pick Flair and Sting so in reality it was a scam, but supposedly the numbers represented on the screen picking Flair and Sting were legit. The free live show for Hogan's first appearance at Center Stage not only drew a full house of 785 but turned away about 2,000. Our reports are that it was seeing Hogan for free and not the fact the show was airing live that was largely responsible for the crowd. Of those in the building, as many as half were a combination of families of employees, plants and paid models to make sure the audience "looked good" and "reacted right," since the building was said to be half-full before fans were allowed in. This may explain part of the strong face reaction for Hogan and particularly the surprising reaction to Mr. T. Those who arrived even two hours early were turned away because the lines were so long and so few seats were available to fans. They taped two more Saturday shows after the live taping ended, although at press time we don't have news on those shows. They only left about 7:00 of air time for the Flair-Sting match, post-match angle and interviews with Flair & Sherri and Hogan & Mr. T to close the show. While Flair took one bump after another for the brief time he gave himself in the ring, the thing was way too rushed and Sting once again came out of the show as the odd man out. Sting put the scorpion on at 4:20 when Sherri Martel, dressed up like Charlie Chaplin in a suit, ran in and manhandled a male ref throwing him out of the ring and face-raked and incapacitated Sting. Earlier in the show, Sherri, barred from the arena, tried to "sneak in" dressed as Fifi in a funny and creative skit (which didn't air live, and in actuality took five re-takes to get it right) though only a blind-man couldn't see the "man" interfering was Sherri. Hogan ran in and atomic dropped Sherri, which she barely sold (a Hogan atomic drop should have at least knocked a woman down for a lengthy period of time) and the whole idea of this is questionable at this point in time anyway. He then pulled off her wig revealing who she was. Flair clipped Hogan's knee and got a few seconds of advantage before Mr. T (who got a surprisingly big pop) and Jimmy Hart made the save. Although I'm sure Mr. T is a tough guy and has that great scowling face to people believe it, it does nothing for your product when your world champion and top heel one week before the match of the century runs away from a 160-pound manager and a has-been actor. I guess T must have threatened him by forcing him to watch old "A Team" episodes and that would scare anyone. Earlier in the live show, Dustin Rhodes & Arn Anderson beat Steve "George Washington" Keim & Bobby Eaton in 3:22 when Rhodes pinned Eaton with a bulldog in a typical squash with good

action but too short to mean anything, Rick Steamboat pinned Tex Slazenger in 1:46 and a match with Marcus Bagwell & The Patriot vs. Paul Roma & Paul Orndorff went a scant 1:59 before the Sullivan Brothers came out, distracting Roma who was pinned from behind by Bagwell. This appears to be setting up Bagwell & Patriot as title contenders if/when Roma & Orndorff take the straps. The show also featured a Hogan interview, bringing up the celebs (Shaquille O'Neal, George Foreman, Mr. T and Hank Aaron; so the attempts for Mike Tyson, Sly Stallone and Wesley Snipes fell by the wayside but it is still by far the most impressive celeb list at a wrestling show in several years) that will be in Orlando. Hogan live more than made up for his poor interview the week before when he focused more on Jimmy Hart and Sherri than on a so-called match of the century being two weeks away. On television Hogan appeared to be loudly cheered, although from live reports there were noticeable boos and "We Want Flair" chants during his first interview. Probably 80% of the phone calls here after the show were negative, while our reports from the company were that they were thrilled. That may do more to explain the status of the company than anything else. Hogan has appearances this week of Regis & Kathy Lee on 7/11 and Jay Leno on 7/12, and the trial, in a busy week leading to the match. WCW's more than double the usual ad budget was reflected in buying spots in syndication for Bash at the Beach on many WWF Superstars shows, which must have thrilled those in Titan.

This is the first of the 12-page Observers. In future issues we should have a lot more news content but it's just as well as we haven't had the needed space for letters and want ads so this issue will start to catch things up. After a long talk with post office officials this past week about delivery problems in certain parts of the United States, I've been told that the problem is that on the back page we had copy going too far down the page with the label and the sorting machines were reading the return address or numbers on that half of the back page and misdirecting issues. The idea has always been to get as much material into each weekly issue as possible, so we've crammed as much copy onto the back page as possible each week but I guess while the idea of it was good, the results weren't. Why the delays seemed to be more prevalent in New York and Kentucky than other states is beyond me, but we will try it their way. After a few weeks, if those of you in those states that have had delivery problems don't see things improving (which should mean delivery consistently by Mondays and usually on Saturdays in most of the country), please contact me and we'll try another method.

As the first issue of the new set, this means if you've got a (1) on your address that your current Observer subscription will expire in three weeks. Renewal rates within the United States, Canada and Mexico remain \$8 for four issues, \$15 for eight, \$22 for 12, \$28 for 16, \$42 for 24, \$56 for 32 and \$70 for 40 issues. Rates for the rest of the world for weekly airmail delivery start at \$11 for four, \$21 for eight, \$30 for 12, \$50 for 20, \$70 for 28, \$90 for 36 up through \$100 for 40. All subscription renewals along with reports from live shows, letters to the editor, news items and any other correspondence related to this publication should be sent to the Wrestling Observer Newsletter, P.O. Box 1228, Campbell, CA 95009-1228.

Fax messages can be sent to the Observer after Noon Eastern time (9 a.m. Pacific) on a daily basis at 408-378-6562. Phone messages can be left 24 hours a day at 408-379-8067. For the most up to date headlines on wrestling, I can be called on the Real Wrestling Hotline at 900-903-9030 (99 cents per minute) every Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

RESULTS

6/21 Savannah, GA (WCW - 1,500): Arn Anderson d Brian Pillman, Bullrope match: Dustin Rhodes b Bunkhouse Buck, Cactus Jack & Kevin Sullivan b Nasty Boys-DQ, U.S. title: Sting b Steve Austin-DQ, WCW title: Ric Flair b Rick Steamboat ****

6/21 Cuernavaca (EMLL): Onita Jr. (Akihito Ichihara) & Mestizo b Rey Bucanero & Babe Richard, Los Hijos de Huracan Ramirez I & II b Archangel de la Muerte & Guerrero de la Muerte, La Fiera & Hayabusa & Ultimo Dragon b Angel Blanco Jr. & Los Hijos de Angel Blanco I & II, CMLL welterweight title: Pantera II b Felino to win title

6/23 Mexico City Pista Arena Revolucion (EMLL): Turako b Durango Kid, Los Hijos de Angel Blanco I & II b Celestial & Solar II, Hector Garza & Bronco & Valiente b Javier Cruz & Tornado Negro & Kraneo, Emilio Charles Jr. & Pierroth Jr. & Angel Blanco Jr. b Los Brazos

6/24 Arena Mexico in Mexico City (EMLL): Legendario & Ultimatum b Supremo II (Mary Welles) & Rey Bucanero, Javier Cruz & Espectro Jr. & Cadaver de Ultratumba b Hayabusa & Americo Rocca & Chicago Express, Black Magic & Negro Casas & Mano Negra b Los Brazos, Atlantis & Ultimo Dragon & Rayo de Jalisco Jr. b Bestia Salvaje & Mocho Cota & Dr. Wagner Jr., Vampiro Canadiense b Samson Fuyuki

6/25 Apatlaco (UWA): Chola & La Indomable b Lady Star & Miguli, Casandro & Adrian El Exotico & Sexi Pisces b Ruben Juarez Jr. & Seminarista & Gamma, El Engendro & Scorpio Jr. & Shu El Guerrero b Karloff Lagarde Jr. & Principe Maya & Perro Silva-DQ, UWA trios title: El Signo & Negro Navarro & Rocky Santana b Los Villanos III & IV & V, Canek b The Killer-DQ

6/26 El Toreo in Naucalpan (UWA/AAA Double Power - 6,500): Mercenario & Black Jack & Spartaco b Falcon & Apolo & Kick Boxer, Solar & Winners & El Mexicano b Negro Navarro & El Signo & Rocky Santana, Los Villanos III & IV & V DDQ Rambo & Jerry Estrada & Fishman, Dos Caras & Transformer & Gran Hamada b El Satanico & Blue Panther & Solar-DQ, UWA hwt title: Canek b Mascara Ano 2000

7/1 Portland, OR (Oregon Pro Wrestling Federation - 175): John Rambo b The Bodyguard, Little Nasty Boy d Little Savage, Kat d Sabrina, Ole Olson b Sumito, Mike Miller & Lou Andrews & Ole Olson b Buddy Rose & Moondog Moretti & Buddy Wayne

7/1 Kings Mountain, NC (Southern Championship Wrestling - 57): Emilio Ulacia b Kevin Kirby, Flaming Youth b John Sullivan-DQ, Bad Dog (David Lynch) b Executioner (Mark Henderson), Scotty Hotbody & Scotty McKeever b Jay Eagle & Johnny Red Cloud, American G.I. & Dozer (Richie & J.R. Scruggs) b Jeff Viktory & Rick Starr-DQ

7/4 Osaka (All Japan - 2,050 sellout): Masao Inoue b Kentaro Shiga, Tsuyoshi Kikuchi b Tom Zenk, Abdullah the Butcher & Giant Kimala II b Ryukaku Izumida & Yoshinari Ogawa, Mighty Inoue & Haruka Eigen & Masa Fuchi b Giant Baba & Rusher Kimura & Mitsuo Momota, The Eagle & Johnny Ace b Kurt Beyer & Richard Slinger, Jun Akiyama b Johnny Smith, Stan Hansen & Takao Omori b Dan Kroffat & Doug Furnas, Toshiaki Kawada & Akira Taue & Tamon Honda b Mitsuharu Misawa & Kenta Kobashi & Satoru Asako 23:29

7/4 Aomori (New Japan - 3,260 sellout): Tokimitsu Ishizawa b Yuji Nagata, Hiro Saito b Michiyoshi Ohara, Kengo Kimura b Norio Honaga, Super Strong Machine b Akitoshi Saito, Jushin Liger & El Samurai & Shinjiro Ohtani b Max Moon & American Love Machine & Black Tiger, Akira Nogami & Takayuki Iizuka b Power Warrior & Tadao Yasuda, Shinya Hashimoto & Hiroshi Hase b Steve Regal & Too Cold Scorpio, Keiji Muto & Masa Chono b Nasty Boys, Osamu Kido & Riki Choshu & Tatsumi Fujinami b Tatsutoshi Goto & Shiro Koshinaka & Great Kabuki

7/5 Hachinohe (New Japan - 3,350): Hiro Saito & Norio Honaga b Tokimitsu Ishizawa & Yuji Nagata, Akitoshi Saito b Takayuki Iizuka, Black Cat & American Love Machine & Black Tiger b Jushin Liger & El Samurai & Shinjiro Ohtani, Power Warrior & Osamu Kido b Max Moon & Steve Regal, Hiroshi Hase & Tadao Yasuda & Shinya Hashimoto b Nasty Boys & Too Cold Scorpio, Tatsumi Fujinami b Michiyoshi Ohara, Riki Choshu b Kengo Kimura, Kuniaki Kobayashi & Great Kabuki & Shiro Koshinaka b Akira Nogami & Keiji Muto & Masa Chono

7/5 Warrensville, NC (SMW TV taping - 500): Scott Studd b Bruiser Bedlam-DQ, Scott & Steve Armstrong b Steve Skyfire & Chris Hamrick, Rock & Roll Express b Infernos (Brian Logan & Anthony Michaels), Tracy Smothers b Brian Lee, SMW TV title: Chris Candido b Studd to win vacant title, New Jack & Sheik Mustapha b Michaels & Hamrick, Thrillseekers b Logan & Skyfire, Dirty White Boy b Logan, Thrillseekers b Michaels & Hamrick, Jack & Mustapha b Studd & Skyfire, SMW tag title: Lee & Candido b Armstrongs-DQ, Dock fight: Smothers b Bedlam, Rock & Roll & Bambi b Lee & Candido & Tammy Fytch

7/6 Amagaseki (Pancrase - 4,910 sellout): Renco Parduel b Vernon White, Manabu Yamada b Utra, Wayne Shamrock b Matt Hume, Yusuke Fuke b Gregory Smitt, Bas Ruten b Minoru Suzuki, Jason DeLucca b Masakatsu Funaki

7/6 Towada (New Japan - 2,120): Tadao Yasuda & Shinjiro Ohtani & Tokimitsu Ishizawa b Tatsuhiro Takaiwa & Yuji Nagata & Manabu

Nakanishi, Tatsutoshi Goto b Norio Honaga, Kengo Kimura b Hiro Saito, Black Tiger & Too Cold Scorpio & Max Moon b Jushin Liger & El Samurai & Akira Nogami, Riki Choshu b Akitoshi Saito, Steve Regal & Nasty Boys b Takayuki Iizuka & Keiji Muto & Masa Chono, Tatsumi Fujinami & Power Warrior b American Love Machine & Black Cat, Kuniaki Kobayashi & Great Kabuki & Shiro Koshinaka b Osamu Kido & Hiroshi Hase & Shinya Hashimoto

7/6 Tokushima (All Japan - 1,800): Masao Inoue b Ryukaku Izumida, Yoshinari Ogawa b Richard Slinger, Abdullah the Butcher & Giant Kimala II b Kurt Beyer & The Eagle, Rusher Kimura & Mitsuo Momota b Mighty Inoue & Haruka Eigen, Masa Fuchi b Satoru Asako, Kenta Kobashi b Takao Omori, Giant Baba & Stan Hansen b Johnny Ace & Johnny Smith, All-Asian tag titles: Dan Kroffat & Doug Furnas b Jun Akiyama & Tsuyoshi Kikuchi, Toshiaki Kawada & Akira Taue b Mitsuharu Misawa & Tamon Honda

7/6 Aguascalientes (AAA): Prelim results unavailable, Jerrito Estrada & Espectrito & Fuercita Guerrera b Micro Konnan & Mascariita Sagrada & Octagoncito, Tony Arce & Vulcano & Rocco Valente b Rey Misterio Jr. & Volador & Lizmark, Perro Aguayo & Octagon & Tinieblas Jr. b Pirata Morgan & El Satanico & Espectro-DQ

7/6 Tampa (Ind - 275): Merc the Cruiser b The Menace, Billy Mack b Haystacks Calhoun Jr., Jeff James d Randy Fuller, Nuclear Assassin b G-Man-DQ, Motor City Bad Boys DDQ Mohammad Studd & Jeff Bradley, Horace Boulder b Hercules-DQ

7/7 Landover, MD (WWF - 1,800): 1-2-3 Kid b Kwang ***1/4, Duke Droese b Rick Martel DUD, WWF tag title: Head Shrinkers b Double Trouble DUD, Randy Savage b Jerry Lawler DUD, Nikolai Volkoff b Virgil DUD, IRS b Tatanka-DQ 1/2*, Yokozuna b Typhoon -*****, WWF title: Bret Hart b Owen Hart **1/2

7/7 Valley Forge, PA (WWF - 200): Jim Powers b Damien Demento, Mighty Doom b Little Leopard, Sgt. Slaughter b Pierre, Mike Sharpe b Glenn Osbourne, Heidi Lee Morgan b Rustee Thomas, Bob Backlund b Greg Valentine

7/7 Marukame (All Japan - 1,800): Masao Inoue b Kurt Beyer, Richard Slinger & Tsuyoshi Kikuchi b Kentaro Shiga & Yoshinari Ogawa, Abdullah the Butcher & Giant Kimala II b Tamon Honda & Takao Omori, Giant Baba & Rusher Kimura & Mitsuo Momota d Haruka Eigen & Mighty Inoue & Masa Fuchi 30:00, Dan Kroffat & Doug Furnas b Jun Akiyama & Satoru Asako, Mitsuharu Misawa & Kenta Kobashi b The Eagle (Jackie Fulton) & Johnny Ace, Toshiaki Kawada & Akira Taue b Stan Hansen & Johnny Smith

7/7 Harlan, KY (SMW - 250): Dirty White Boy b Kendo the Samurai (Brian Logan), Penalty box match: Thrillseekers b Well Dunn, SMW tag title: Brian Lee & Chris Candido b Steve & Scott Armstrong, Dock fight: Tracy Smothers b Bruiser Bedlam

7/7 Tokyo Korakuen Hall (Social Pro Wrestling Federation): Kamikaze b Fukumentaro, Isao Takagi & Hirofumi Miura b Hiroshi Shimada & Yoshiaki Yatsu, Masayoshi Motegi b Shinichi Nakano, Yatsu b Takagi

7/7 Maryville, TN (All State Wrestling): Shogun b Lone Star, Chic White b Bam Bam Christian, Regulator Stone & Steel DDQ Deke & Jody Ray Rivers, Rick Connors & Lone Star b Bobby B & Dennis Coats, Rick Cannon b Tony Prichard

7/8 Meadowlands in East Rutherford, NJ (WWF - 4,000): 1-2-3 Kid b Kwang **, Duke Droese b Rick Martel DUD, WWF tag title: Head Shrinkers b Double Trouble *, Randy Savage b Jerry Lawler **, Nikolai Volkoff b Virgil 1/2*, IRS b Tatanka-DQ **, Yokozuna b Typhoon DUD, 60:00 marathon match: Bret Hart b Owen Hart 3-2 **1/2

7/8 Sapporo (New Japan - 6,000 sellout): Tokimitsu Ishizawa & Yuji Nagata b Tatsuhiro Takaiwa & Tadao Yasuda, Black Cat & American Love Machine & Black Tiger (Eddy Guerrero) b El Samurai & Too Cold Scorpio & Shinjiro Ohtani, Nasty Boys b Max Moon (Tom Boric aka Paul Diamond aka Haito aka Kato) & Steve Regal, G1 climax tournament elimination: Hiro Saito b Akira Nogami, Takayuki Iizuka b Great Kabuki-DQ, Osamu Kido b Michiyoshi Ohara, Yoshiaki Yatsu b Kengo Kimura, Non-tournament main events: Jushin Liger b Great Sasuke, Rick & Scott Steiner b Hiroshi Hase & Keiji Muto 20:55,

Shinya Hashimoto & Masa Chono & Power Warrior b Yoshiaki Fujiwara & Riki Choshu & Tatsumi Fujinami

7/8 Kochi (All Japan - 2,200 sellout): Mighty Inoue b Masao Inoue, Tamon Honda b Kurt Beyer, Jun Akiyama & Satoru Asako b Richard Slinger & Johnny Smith, Giant Baba & Rusher Kimura & Mitsuo Momota b Ryukaku Izumida & Masa Fuchi & Haruka Eigen, Abdullah the Butcher & Giant Kimala II b Dan Kroffat & Doug Furnas, Stan Hansen & Takao Omori b The Eagle & Johnny Ace, Mitsuharu Misawa & Kenta Kobashi & Tsuyoshi Kikuchi b Toshiaki Kawada & Akira Taue & Yoshinari Ogawa

7/8 Beckley, WV (SMW - 350): Dirty White Boy b Kendo the Samurai, Penalty box match: Thrillseekers b Well Dunn, SMW tag title: Scott & Steve Armstrong b Brian Lee & Chris Candido-DQ, Dock fight: Tracy Smothers b Bruiser Bedlam

7/8 Montgomeryville, PA (ECW - 175): Rockin Rebel b Steve Richards, Handicap match: Tazmaniac b Dino Sanna & Joel Hartgood, ECW tag title: Public Enemy b Mikey Whippreck & Jim Lano, Sabu b Mr. Hughes ****1/2, ECW title: Shane Douglas b Tommy Dreamer ***1/4

7/8 Tijuana, Baja California (AAA - 5,500 sellout): Rey Misterio Jr. & Torero & Latin Lover b Tony Arce & Vulcano & Psicosis ****1/2, Cien Caras & Mascara Ano 2000 & Universo 2000 b Los Payasos **3/4, Rey Misterio b Jerry Estrada-DQ ****1/4, Pirata Morgan & El Satánico & Espectro b Konnan El Barbaro & Perro Aguayo & Mascara Sagrada-DQ *3/4

7/8 Arena Mexico in Mexico City (EMLL): Prelim results unavailable, Americo Rocca & Pantera II & Apollo Dantes b Felino & Cachorro Mendoza & Javier Cruz, One night trios tourney: Silver King & El Texano & Dandy b Dr. Wagner Jr. & Gran Markus Jr. & El Hijo del Gladiador, Pegasus Kid & Vampiro Canadiense & Rayo de Jalisco Jr. b Negro Casas & Mano Negra & Pierroth Jr., King & Texano & Dandy b Pegasus & Vampiro & Jalisco to win tournament

7/8 Matsuda (All Japan women): Chapparita Asari b Rie Tamada, Infernal Kaoru & Etsuko Mita b Tomoko Watanabe & Kaoru Ito, Aja Kong & Suzuka Minami b Toshiyo Yamada & Takako Inoue, Yumiko Hotta b Mima Shimoda, Kyoko Inoue & Manami Toyota b Sakie Hasegawa & Bull Nakano

7/8 Dallas Sportatorium (GWF - 250): Mike Davis b Dapper Dan, Marc Valiant b Alex Porteau, Moadib b Mr. X, Al Jackson b Ebony Prince, Scott Putski b Black Bart, Moadib won Battle Royal

7/9 Nassau Coliseum (WWF - 3,100): Kwang b 1-2-3 Kid, Duke Droese b Rick Martel, Yokozuna b Typhoon, Randy Savage b Jerry Lawler, WWF tag title: Head Shrinkers b Double Trouble, IRS b Tatanka-DQ, Marathon match for WWF title: Bret Hart b Owen Hart 3-2 (tied, Bret won in sudden death after 60:00 expired)

7/9 Sapporo (New Japan - 6,000 sellout): Black Cat & American Love Machine b Yuji Nagata & Shinjiro Ohtani, Jushin Liger b Black Tiger, Power Warrior b Max Moon, G1 tournament final elimination matches: Yoshiaki Yatsu b Manabu Nakanishi, Takayuki Iizuka b Shinichi Nakano, Osamu Kido b Tatsutoshi Goto, Shiro Koshinaka b Hiro Saito, Non-tournament main events: Steve Regal b Masa Chono, Rick & Scott Steiner b Nasty Boys, Tatsumi Fujinami & Riki Choshu & Yoshiaki Fujiwara b Hiroshi Hase & Keiji Muto & Shinya Hashimoto

7/9 Matsue (All Japan): Satoru Asako b Kentaro Shiga, Richard Slinger b Masao Inoue, Kurt Beyer b Ryukaku Izumida, Dan Kroffat & Doug Furnas b Tom Zenk & Johnny Smith, Giant Baba & Rusher Kimura & Mitsuo Momota b Mighty Inoue & Haruka Eigen & Masa Fuchi, Johnny Ace & The Eagle b Giant Kimala II & Abdullah the Butcher, Toshiaki Kawada & Akira Taue & Yoshinari Ogawa b Tamon Honda & Tsuyoshi Kikuchi & Kenta Kobashi, Mitsuharu Misawa & Jun Akiyama b Stan Hansen & Takao Omori

7/9 Johnson City, TN (SMW - 600): Anthony Michaels b Steve Skyfire 3/4*, Penalty box match: Thrillseekers b Well Dunn **1/4, SMW tag title: Brian Lee & Chris Candido b Scott & Steve Armstrong ***, Dock fight: Tracy Smothers b Bruiser Bedlam ****, Cage match for SMW title: Dirty White Boy b Candido ****3/4

7/9 Los Angeles Olympic Auditorium (EMLL/Mexican Wrestling Federation - 1,650): Torito Sr. & Tercera Dimension & ? b Renegado Estrada & The Clown & Frankenstein DUD, Lady Victoria b Barbara Blaze -**, Super Boy & Capitan Oro & Principe Indu b Volcano Kid (James Aiono) & Metalico & Cosmos *1/2, Piloto Suicida & Mercurio b Lover Boy & Bobby Bradley Jr.-COR ***, Enigma de Oro & Kayam b Blue Demon Jr. & El Hijo del Solitario *, Los Brazos DCOR Los Mercenarios (Bill Anderson & Tim Patterson & Louie Spicolli) **3/4, UWA middleweight title: Ultimo Dragon b Negro Casas ****3/4

7/9 Nashville (USWA - 300): Jeff Gaylord b Tony Falk **, Doug Basham b Spellbinder ***, USWA womens title: Debbie Combs b Robbie Rage *1/4, Moondog Spot DCOR Tommy Rich *3/4, Doug Gilbert b Brian Christopher-DQ **3/4, First team to win twice wins W*ING tag title: Eliminators b PG-13 **1/2, PG-13 b Nobutaka Araya & Takashi Okano **1/4, Araya & Okano b Eliminators ****1/4, PG-13 b Eliminators-DQ **1/2, PG-13 b Araya & Okano **3/4, Christopher & Spot b Rich & Gilbert ***

7/9 Tokyo Theater (All Japan women): Chapparita Asari b Rie Tamada, Suzuka Minami b Tomoko Watanabe, Sakie Hasegawa & Kaoru Ito b Infernal Kaoru & Yumiko Hotta, Etsuko Mita b Toshiyo Yamada, Manami Toyota d Mima Shimoda 30:00, Aja Kong & Takako Inoue b Kyoko Inoue & Bull Nakano

7/9 Caguas, Puerto Rico (WWC): La Ley b Sabu (not original), Bob Rozallo b El Exotic, Doomsday (Glen Jacobs) b Invader #1 (Jose Gonzales), Carlitos Colon DCOR Fidel Sierra (David Cannell), Universal title: Hurricane Castillo b Dutch Mantel-DQ, Rey Gonzalez b Eddie Gilbert-DQ, Tahitian Warrior (Lloyd Anoaia) & Mohammad Hussein (Lou Fabbiano) b Pulgarcito & El Bronco

7/10 Maniko (All Japan women): Chapparita Asari b Rie Tamada, Little Buddha Man b Tsunokake, Infernal Kaoru b Tomoko Watanabe, Kyoko Inoue & Sakie Hasegawa b Etsuko Mita & Mima Shimoda, Takako Inoue b Kaoru Ito, Aja Kong & Toshiyo Yamada b Yumiko Hotta & Manami Toyota

7/10 Kahnawake, QUE (Ind - 200): Rock & Roll b Sailor Smith, Darkman b Pete McCoy, Kevin Martel b Dollar Smith, Sunny War Cloud & Dynamite Dan b Bob Crawford & Jeff Jefferson, Bob Dellasserra b Vic Tessier, Tito Santana b Richard Charland-DQ, Rick Martel b Greg Valentine

7/11 Chino (LLPW - 500): Michiko Nagashima b Jen Yamashita, Miki Handa b Michiko Ohmukai, Yasha Kurenai b Mikiko Futagami, Jen Yukari & Eagle Sawai b Carol Midori & Noriyo Tateno, Kurenai won Battle Royal, Rumi Kazama & Shinobu Kandori b Harley Saito & Mizuki Endo

Special thanks to: John Clark, Aresh Hamouyan, Chuck Langerman, Rob Feinstein, Jesse Money, Steve "Dr. Lucha" Sims, Brian Hildebrand, Tim Whitehead, Ric Davies, Bill Needham, Mike Omansky, Matt May, John Williams, James Hoback, Dan Parris, Lou Pickney, Peter Paulsen

JUNE BUSINESS COMPARISONS

WORLD WRESTLING FEDERATION

Estimated average attendance 6/93 2,610*

Estimated average attendance 6/94 2,940** (+11.2%)

May 1994 3,570**

Estimated average gate 6/93 \$33,930

Estimated average gate 6/94 \$37,860** (+10.4%)

May 1994 \$57,520**

Percentage of house shows sold out 6/93 0.0

Percentage of house shows sold out 6/94 7.1**

May 1994 5.0**

Average cable television rating 6/93 2.1

Average cable television rating 6/94 2.0 (-5.0%)

May 1994 2.0

Major show 6/93 -- King of the Ring (est. 1.1 buy rate/est. \$2.6 million gross/6,500 sellout/\$78,000 live gate)

Major show 6/94 -- King of the Ring (est. 0.73 buy rate/est. \$1.85 million/12,000 sellout)

Est. Buy rate -33.6%/ Overall PPV show est. revenue -25.4%

**Denotes all-time record low monthly attendance in recent years*

***Foreign dates not included in average*

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING

Estimated average attendance 6/93 825
Estimated average attendance 6/94 1,150 (+28.3%)
May 1994 1,460

Estimated average gate 6/93 \$7,500
Estimated average gate 6/94 \$10,200 (+26.5%)
May 1994 \$13,300

Percentage of house shows sold out 6/93 0.0
Percentage of house shows sold out 6/94 0.0
May 1994 0.0

Average cable television rating 6/93 2.0
Average cable television rating 6/94 2.0
May 1994 1.9

Major show 6/93: Clash of Champions -- 6,000 fans/2,000 paid/\$20,000/2.6 rating)

Major show 6/94: Clash of Champions -- 6,700 fans/4,044 paid/\$42,000/3.0 rating) Rating +13.3%

ALL JAPAN PRO WRESTLING

Estimated average attendance 6/93 3,400
Estimated average attendance 6/94 1,950* (-42.6%)
May 1994 3,230

Estimated average gate 6/93 \$115,600
Estimated average gate 6/94 \$68,250* (-41.0%)
May 1994 \$118,520

Percentage of house shows sold out 6/93 100.0
Percentage of house shows sold out 6/94 50.0
May 1994 61.5

Average television rating 6/93 2.9
Average television rating 6/94 1.8** (-37.9%)
May 1994 1.2**

Major show 6/93 -- Budokan Hall (16,300 sellout/est. \$840,000)

Major show 6/94 -- Budokan Hall (16,300 sellout/est. \$850,000)

**All Japan only ran two regular house shows in June so comparisons are misleading*

***Because of time slot change, comparisons are misleading*

NEW JAPAN PRO WRESTLING

Estimated average attendance 6/93 4,650
Estimated average attendance 6/94 4,070 (-12.5%)
May 1994 2,950

Estimated average gate 6/93 \$198,520
Estimated average gate 6/94 \$177,180 (-10.7%)
May 1994 \$103,180

Percentage of house shows sold out 6/93 50.0
Percentage of house shows sold out 6/94 76.9
May 1994 40.0

Average television rating 6/93 6.0
Average television rating 6/94 1.9* (-68.3%)
May 1994 1.7*

**Because of time slot changes, comparisons are misleading*

EMLL

The 7/9 return to the Olympic Auditorium in Los Angeles headlined by Ultimo Dragon retaining the UWA middleweight title beating Negro Casas drew an estimated 1,650 fans. Ticket prices were lowered from \$32 to \$18 from the previous show to \$18 to \$10 on this show, so even though the crowd was up about 200 paid from the last card six weeks earlier, the gate was down. They only flew in seven EMLL wrestlers and filled the card out with locals. Reports were the show was okay with the main event of Dragon-Casas hitting ***3/4 because the third fall was too short. Los Brazos worked with The Mercenaries in the semifinal which was a bloody double count out with Brazo de Plata doing his fake heart attack for the second straight show. No return date was announced.

EMLL and the American-based Mexican Wrestling Federation ran a successful show on 7/10 in Fresno, CA drawing 2,000, which is great for a show without the wrestlers having any local television exposure, particularly when you consider that it was appealing to a Mexican audience using a Japanese wrestler as the main event babyface and had no top drawing Mexican faces underneath. Dragon again retaining his title beating Casas in a ****1/4 match. The fact that EMLL could draw that well without television is a pretty strong indication that it would be an even stronger market for AAA. WWF was in Fresno about a week earlier and drew 3,000.

Pegasus Kid (Chris Benoit) returned on 7/8 to Arena Mexico teaming with Vampiro & Rayo de Jalisco Jr. in a four-team trios tournament. The tourney came down to The Cowboys (Silver King & El Texano & Dandy) beating Pegasus & Vampiro & Rayo de Jalisco Jr. when Vampiro was pinned in the third fall after a foul and post-match saw the two face teams brawl all over the place for several minutes. Earlier in the tournament, The Cowboys had won a non-title match over CMLL trios champs The White Wave (Dr. Wagner Jr. & Gran Markus Jr. & El Hijo del Gladiador), and after the win challenged for a title match, while the Pegasus team had beaten Mano Negra & Negro Casas & Pierroth Jr. in an okay match, with Pegasus and Casas only in against one another for a short period so it was kind of disappointing.

Pantera II captured the CMLL welterweight title from Felino on 6/21 in Cuernavaca.

Numacchi (Saemi Numata), the All Japan woman wrestler who retired in February, will come out of retirement here to team with Reina Jubuki (Akira Hokuto).

ALL JAPAN

Pretty uneventful week with mainly weak crowds as well. The only title match of the week had Dan Kroffat & Doug Furnas retain the All-Asian tag titles beating Tsuyoshi Kikuchi & Jun Akiyama on 7/6 in Tokushima.

Tom Zenk returned after testifying on 7/9.

Television on 7/2 did a 1.2 rating.

NEW JAPAN

The two consecutive nights in Sapporo on 7/8 and 7/9 both sold out the 6,000-seat Nakajima Sports Center for major shows. The four survivors of a two-night tournament which would determine the final slots for the G-1 climax tournament that will be held 8/3 to 8/7 at Tokyo Sumo Hall were Yoshiaki Yatsu, Takayuki Iizuka, Osamu Kido and Shiro Koshinaka.

In the key matches on 7/8, Black Tiger & American Machine & Black Cat beat Shinjiro Ohtani & Too Cold Scorpio & El Samurai when Tiger pinned Ohtani; Jushin Liger pinned Great Sasuke in 15:15 with a super fishermanbuster, Rick & Scott Steiner beat Hiroshi Hase & Keiji Muto in 20:55 when Scott pinned Muto with a DDT off the top rope and Power Warrior & Masa Chono & Shinya Hashimoto beat Yoshiaki Fujiwara & Riki Choshu & Tatsumi Fujinami when Warrior pinned Fujiwara. The next night saw Liger pin Tiger with the super fishermanbuster (This was built up on 7/6 when in a six-man, Tiger pinned Liger with his swinging DDT off the middle rope), Steve Regal (who is getting a strong push) upset Masa Chono, Steiners over Nasty Boys and Fujinami & Choshu & Fujiwara beat Hase & Muto & Hashimoto when Fujinami made Hase submit to the figure four leglock.

Already rumors that the 1/4 Tokyo Dome main event will be Antonio Inoki's final match vs. Hogan.

Nasty Boys only other loss this tour was to Muto & Chono.

Television on 7/2 did a 1.5 rating featuring the eight-man Michinoku Pro vs. New Japan match from 6/15 at Budokan Hall.

After losing to Liger, Great Sasuke issued a challenge for Liger to appear on a major Michinoku Pro card putting his IWGP jr. title against Sasuke's independent jr. title.

They are negotiating to bring back Gran Hamada in August for a match with Liger.

OTHER JAPAN NOTES

Pancrase held a show on 7/6 in Amagaseki with a lot of surprises. First off, Renco Parduel, who made it to the semifinals of the Ultimate Fight II before losing to Royce Gracie, debuted in the opener and took more than 14:00 before he could make Vernon White submit in the opener. Parduel was supposed to score an easy squash win to set up a match with Minoru Suzuki on 7/26. The second surprise was that Suzuki was knocked out in 3:00 by a knee to the chin as he was going for a takedown by Bas Ruton, a kick boxer who has pretty well destroyed everyone he's faced thus far but was considered not to be able to beat Suzuki because of the latters' wrestling and submission ability. Then in the main event, Jason DeLucca, who made it to the second round of Ultimate Fight II before losing to Gracie, absolutely demolished this group's top star, Masakatsu Funaki in 1:01 with a kneelock submission. Speaking of the Ultimate Fight, UF III, originally scheduled for Tokyo, will instead be on 9/9 in Charlotte and Wayne Shamrock will be appearing with Funaki as his corner man.

Michinoku Pro announced a major show for 7/30 in Iwate with help from WAR and All Japan women, headlined by Ultimo Dragon & Great Sasuke vs. Ginsei Shizaki & Gedo and Sato & Piloto Suicida & Ultra Taro vs. Super Delfin & Super Boy & Gran Naniwa.

Pancrase announced 9/1 in Osaka with Shamrock vs. Funaki on top, and 10/15 at Tokyo Sumo Hall with the winner of that match against Suzuki, although the upsets at the show this past week take the edges off those matches which were announced a few days before the Amagaseki card.

Rings confirmed a show on 8/27 in Russia with Akira Maeda vs. Andre Kopilov, Volk Han vs. Sotir Gotchev and Nikolai Zouev vs. Mitsuya Nagai as the headliners.

The magazines this past week featured as their main stories that Seiji Sakaguchi of New Japan and Antonio Pena have reached an agreement and that AAA will send a whole crew for a New Japan tour by the end of the year, probably starting by sending in a tag team in October for the tag team tournament. Speaking of magazines, WCW officials explained the Clash finish so well to the press that every magazine in Japan reported that Johnny B. Badd beat Steve Austin to win the U.S. title.

Magazines were also speculating on which shoot group will sign Royce Gracie. It appears his older brother Rixon Gracie, 35, will work for Pancrase.

NOW has a tour from 7/10 to 7/14 with Chris Adams, Rod Price, Pat Tanaka and Dusty Wolfe.

IWA changed all its cards so the line-ups listed last time are out. 7/14 will have Canek & Crash the Terminator vs. Head Hunters on top. 7/16 has Nobutaka Araya vs. Dick Slater, Yukihiko Kanemura vs. Tracy Smothers and Head Hunters vs. Crash & Takashi Okano. 7/17 is Hunters & Johnny Gomez vs. Araya & Crash & Slater.

As of 7/4, standings in the All Japan women Grand Prix tournament are Yumiko Hotta with nine points, Sakie Hasegawa with eight, Takako Inoue with seven, Suzuka Minami with six and Toshiyo Yamada with five. 7/16 is a TV taping in Omiya with Aja Kong & Bull Nakano & Minami vs. Hotta & Kyoko Inoue & Manami Toyota, Yamada vs. Hasegawa and Takako vs. Mima Shimoda. 7/17 back at Korakuen Hall has Kyoko Inoue defending the All-Pacific strap against Takako Inoue, Yamada & Hasegawa vs. Toyota & Kaoru Ito, Nakano & Etsuko Mita & Shimoda vs. Kong & Hotta & Rie Tamada. Mariko Yoshida, who has been out of action for more than one year with a broken neck, will return on these shows in five minute exhibition matches leading to her full-fledged return on 8/24 at Budokan Hall. Reggie Bennett starts as a full-timer next month. Nakano is out of

action with an injury, which may or may not be an angle for 7/14. On 7/11 at the LLPW show, Shinobu Kandori, who faces Bull in a chain match, "accidentally" was kicked in the eye by tag partner Rumi Kazama, went berserk and destroyed Mizuki Endo with the armbar, and sold the eye huge which was an angle to work an injury for the big match. Combat Toyoda of FMW appeared at the show and did a stare-down in the aisle with Eagle Sawai and the two were held apart by the other women after Eagle's match after issuing challenges over the p.a. to build-up their meeting on 7/14.

USWA

Although Sid Vicious debuted on the 7/4 show in Memphis doing a run-in, he wasn't at television now billed for this week's card, although they pushed the fact he was there hard enough to make it appear that he'll be back. He looked to be about the same size as when last seen on a national basis in October.

The 7/4 show drew about 1,250 fans and \$5,000 (all tickets were \$4).

Television on 7/9 opened with PG-13 defending the so-called W*ING tag team trophy against Masters of the Orient (Takashi Okano & Nobutaka Araya), who were in their last USWA match before returning for the IWA tour that starts 7/14. PG-13 won the match. After the match, The Eliminators came out and challenged them and they got into a brawl which saw the Eliminators bust the W*ING trophy. Speaking of Eliminators, they shot some publicity photos with Harvey Whippleman as their manager, which apparently means they'll be getting a shot with WWF, which is a surprise given that one of the two (the one who isn't Perry Saturn) has only been wrestling for a few months and is still really green.

They aired a clip from 7/4 with Jerry Lawler defending the Unified title against Tommy Rich. After a ref bump, Dream Machine came down and hit Lawler with a chain and Rich had him pinned, but Frank Morrell saw what happened and instead disqualified Rich.

They also aired a clip of the six-man handcuff match from 7/4 with Lawler & Brian Christopher & Moondog Spot vs. Rich & Doug Gilbert & Machine. Everyone was handcuffed to their corners except Lawler and Rich when Vicious came out and choke-slammed Lawler, who sold the move great, like he was dead. Vicious said that he was in to stay, which certainly doesn't constitute truth in advertising. They aired an interview from WWF where Jim Ross interviewed Lawler, who was a face, talking about his barbed wire match with Rich.

Christopher then challenged Machine which ended with Doug Gilbert interfering, followed by Moondog Spot with garbage cans and boards, Rich and finally the return of manager Scott Bowden, who gave Gilbert a bottle which he broke on Christopher's head.

Another match from 7/4 aired with Koko Ware vs. Reggie B. Fine ending when Koko hit the ref and was suspended (ironic since he's was advertised on all the spot shows).

Christopher & Spot did an interview where Christopher said they were bringing a second Moondog back for a match with Dream & Rich & Gilbert.

Finally PG-13 did an interview with J.C. Ice talking about being the son of Bill Dundee and said he'd be just like his father, smaller than all the other wrestlers but willing to take a beating and come out the winner.

7/11 line-up has Spellbinder vs. Jeff Gaylord, Fine vs. Colorado Kid, Bart Sawyer (who returned this week from Portland) vs. Tony Falk, Spellbinder vs. Doug Basham, PG-13 vs. Eliminators, Dream vs. Christopher for USWA title, Lawler vs. Rich barbed wire and Dream & Rich & Gilbert vs. Christopher & Moondogs.

Bert Prentice missed all his weekend shots and may or may not come back.

SMW

Jim Cornette must be pulling out his hair over the happenings of this past week which have wreaked havoc on his plans for the fall. First off, Jake Roberts departed without warning last week leaving him without a top singles feud and having to change the title back to Dirty White Boy before he was planning to do so. He then had arranged a "surprise" angle for 7/9 in Johnson City where Chris Walker (the Tom Prichard lookalike that was in the WWF until the crackdown on guys with that kind of physique got serious) would debut and attack White

Boy to set up a feud, which in itself was a gamble because Walker has no proven track record to carry a top singles feud. But Walker didn't show up, so who knows the status of that. The biggest angle of the fall was scheduled to be a feud where Steve & Scott Armstrong would turn heel and feud with their father, but that looks to be either in danger or out the window because Steve Armstrong has gotten a regular job with All Japan as The Masked Falcon (a role originally designated for Curtis Thompson), to be new tag team partner for The Eagle and will work the last three All Japan tours of 1994 so he'll have extremely limited availability after mid-August.

There was still hope Roberts would show up on 7/9 in Johnson City for a cage match with White Boy, but he no-showed once again and that pretty well looks to be it for him here. Johnson City was a pretty hot show, partially due to Roberts no-showing because they had a great main event. At the show they announced that White Boy had won the title earlier in the week and that Roberts no-showed, "either for transportation problems or out of fear." They brought out all the heels and had the fans pick who White Boy was to face. The promotion didn't do anything to lead the fans in any direction, so the crowd response was a legit barometer over who was over and Candido was picked. White Boy pinned him in a hot cage match. Brian Lee threw in a glove, but White Boy backdropped Candido before he could use it, then pulled out a chain and hit Candido for the pin. After the match Candido & Lee argued for several minutes before Fytch calmed them down, but the two didn't want to shake hands when it was over. During the match, Candido missed a splash off the top of the cage.

Candido captured the TV title. Tracy Smothers had retained it five weeks so on the first television show taped 7/5 in Warrensville, NC, Candido beat Scott Studd to determine the new champion.

On the first television show, they aired a Cornette interview from the FITE boardroom saying that Bob Armstrong wanted a Coward Waves the Flag match and he wanted a Texas death match, so those matches would take place 8/5 in Knoxville and "Night of the Legends" and 8/6 in Johnson City for "Fire on the Mountain III" respectively with Bob & mystery partner (Road Warrior Hawk) & Smothers vs. Bedlam & Funk Brothers with Ron Wright and Cornette in the respective corners. Bob & Smothers did an interview, bringing Wright out as their surprise manager and showing a video from Starrcade '86 where Hawk threw Jim Cornette off the scaffold and of course Cornette freaked out finding out Hawk was the partner. On TV this past weekend, Bob talked about having a partner to team with him and Smothers, and Scott Armstrong said either he or Steve wanted to be his partner but Bob said he couldn't choose between his two sons so he was picking someone else. They also announced that on 8/5, Brian Lee & Chris Candido would defend the tag belts against Rock & Roll Express and that Rick Gibson (Robert's older brother) would be handcuffed to Tammy Fytch and Rock & Roll all but swore to God that they would win the belts that weekend, and with Lee's departure imminent, that would seem to be no surprise. The next night will be the second title match with Ricky Morton's hair vs. Fytch's hair. They aired a film of two masked men attacking The Thrillseekers. They said that Chris Jericho needed 18-stitches in the back of his head and aired an interview with Lance Storm with a bruised up face. The Seekers did an interview asking for the loser leave town on the Heavenly Bodies to be waived and they announced that the WWF would be sending the Bodies back for ten days in August for street fight matches. It actually wasn't the Bodies in the angle, but the guys in the filming did make it seem to be the case.

Lee and Smothers had a singles match. Before the match Fytch did an interview saying that she's been trying to get out of the hair stipulation but is running out of money. She said she wants the fans to send money for her legal defense fund and wanted Bob Caudle to put the address on the screen, but Caudle refused. Once the match began, they did a ref bump. Candido ran in and that brought out Rock & Roll, who hit Lee with the double dropkick and Smothers scored the pin.

On the next show, Cornette & Bedlam started the show walking around with picket signs saying they were on strike from SMW. They were "on strike" for three segments until Bob Armstrong, Smothers and Ron Wright ran them off.

"The Gangstas" debuted, Sheik Mustapha Saed & New Jack, billed from South Central Los Angeles but actually from North Georgia wrestling, doing a heavy black racist angle. They went about as far as

they could go with it and then farther than that, to the point of saying congratulations to O.J. because now there are two less to get rid of and talking about putting the Reginald Denny on those white boys. Let's just say the reaction has ranged from one end of the spectrum to the other. If a major promotion attempted to do this in a city of any size, they'd either be apologizing for it within a few weeks or be off television. The two needed a police escort out of town after the tapings. The two had a great ring entrance and New Jack is strong on interviews and the two have improved to being so-so in the ring. Expect Cornette, who has been looking for a long time to push black heels to his virtually all-white and he believes borderline KKK-like audience, to give these guys a major push. The only reason it hasn't happened yet is because he hasn't found a black heel who would do it.

The final television show (the weekend of 7/30 will be a one hour in studio show with no matches building up Night of the Legends) airs 8/6. Steve & Scott Armstrong opened the show talking about how they've been waiting for a tag title match and they'd be getting a chance on the TV show. Rock & Roll did an interview and they did a photo of what Fytch would look like bald. They started building up the King of the Mountain tournament on 8/13 in Morristown, TN. The tag title match saw a ref bump, Fytch interfered, Rock & Roll ran in and got the purse from them but the ref saw R&R in the ring and DQ'd the Armstrongs who were very subtle about being unhappy about not winning the belts.

Bobby Blaze has left the promotion, perhaps temporarily, so Brian Logan (Brian Keyes) worked as Kendo over the weekend.

On television this weekend they announced that the original Heavenly Bodies (Don & Al Greene) would be brought in for Night of the Legends.

HERE AND THERE

The debut taping for Jim Crockett Promotions, as mentioned last week, will be on 7/26, but it has already been moved to Chattanooga rather than Rainesville, AL as reported last week. Joe Pedicino will be handling the play-by-play with Tully Blanchard doing color. Because of Blanchard's religious work, he's going to play a babyface announcer role. Boni Blackstone will do interviews. No word on talent other than it is expected that Rock & Roll Express and Jim Cornette will be there from SMW and that Crockett is going to use Tommy Rich and Junkyard Dog as his top babyfaces, which doesn't exactly sound promising on the surface. The name Ole Anderson continues to surface as being part of this, but Anderson is still on contract with WCW working at the training school. The group will be called NWA, and they may run a tournament that night to determine NWA world tag team champions. They want to have an NWA champion for the first taping. Shane Douglas was offered the role but supposedly the money (reportedly \$150 per shot) may not be enough to get him to come in.

George "Crybaby" Cannon, a long-time wrestler, manager, booker and promoter, passed away on 7/1 from throat cancer. Cannon, believed to be in his late 50s, weighed more than 400 pounds during his wrestling days. He had a more-than-two-year horrible battle with the cancer which saw him weighing about 165 pounds at the time of his death. Cannon, who was the first "Beat the Champ" television champion for the old Los Angeles promotion on KCOP-TV in late 1968, was mainly a prelim wrestler based out of Windsor, ONT. His biggest career break came in late 1971 when he managed The Fabulous Kangaroos (Al Costello and the late Don Kent) to the Michigan-Ohio version of the NWA world tag team titles. He was later the booker for Pedro Martinez and Eddie Einhorn's International Wrestling Association promotion in 1975 that challenged many of the established NWA and WWWF promoters in a failed attempt to become a national promotion. Cannon also managed The Mongols (Newton Tattree aka Geeto & Bill "Demolition Ax" Eadie aka Bolo) and the late Eric the Red in that promotion. Cannon later promoted independent shows under the name Superstars of Wrestling, largely in Ontario and Newfoundland, and for a short while was a promoter for the WWF during the early stages of the expansion.

The shoot-style GAME promotion in Los Angeles continues to run at Yoahan Plaza in Los Angeles in Japan-town with bi-weekly shows, next one being 7/16. From our reports, some of the matches are definitely shoots with the guys getting busted and bruised up, and some of them are worked shoots. Those who attend have been extremely complimentary.

Caught several weeks worth of ECW tapes. Boy do I miss Joey Styles as an announcer. They had a ****+ match on television with Sabu and Too Cold Scorpio on TV a few weeks back taped from Montgomeryville, PA. The show that was scheduled to air on 7/5 was pre-empted because of the O.J. Simpson hearings and follow-up news coverage. Paul E. Dangerously did an interview going nuts about O.J. when the show aired two days later. This group also has the most interesting names for its jobbers, many of whom are named after local indie promoters that they have heat with like Joel Hartgood (after Joel Goodhart, the former Philadelphia promoter) and even cult hero jobber and TV champ Mikey Whipreck was named after Dennis Whiprecht, another local promoter.

Rey Gonzalez & El Bronco captured the WWC tag titles from Tahitian Warrior & Mohammad Hussein on 7/6 at the television tapings in Tola Alta, Puerto Rico. On 7/9 in Caguas, after Eddie Gilbert was disqualified against Gonzalez, Hurricane Castillo did a run in and Gilbert threw a fireball at him. They are building up for a ring surrounded by fire War Games type match with Dutch Mantel's team against Carlitos Colon's team. Doomsday (Glen Jacobs) is getting a renewed push using the heart punch gimmick, and used it to beat Invader #1 in Caguas.

The Inside Pro Wrestling radio show on Talk America Radio Network airs Saturdays at 9 p.m. Eastern on stations in Chicago, Boston, St. Louis, Denver, Portland, Fort Wayne and Providence. For satellite dish owners, you can pick the show up on wide band S3, Ch. 9, 6.8 audio.

Dennis Coraluzzo has shows 8/6 in Jackson, MI headlined by a Texas death match with Sabu vs. Chris Benoit, Jim Duggan vs. Ludvig Borga, Black Hearts vs. Osamu Nishimura & Jonnie Stewart plus Johnny Gunn, Al Snow and Skinner (Steve Keirn).

Tom Ramirez, who promoted the AAA show in Las Vegas on 5/28, booked the Silver Nugget for a return show on 7/23. With AAA already booked in Chicago, he went after EMLL, but apparently was talked out of that and will instead run, with a \$25 top price, a show headlined by Papa Shango vs. Virgil and using Southern California wrestlers underneath.

AAA

Antonio Pena and Juan Francisco Cortez, who run the wrestling end of AAA, were in the United States over the weekend meeting with Ron Skoler (who promotes the U.S. shows under the IWC banner) in New York and Skoler also has meetings with the Televisa (which owns the company) board in California.

It appears everything is straightened out regarding the minis and they'll all be staying.

Los Angeles tickets go on sale 7/18. No definitive word one way or another if there will be a show in San Jose on 8/5.

The television show that aired on 7/9 was done from the studio airing matches from the TripleMania shows that didn't air previously in the United States (except for Los Angeles), the Konnan-Jake Roberts hair match, the eight man tag from Zapopan with Jushin Liger, the match where Los Payasos beat Los Hermanos Dinamita to win the trios belts and the return match between those two teams in a cage. The show included six commercial spots for upcoming U.S. shows, three for Chicago and three for New York. They go back with up-to-date shows this coming weekend which should be the show taped 7/1 in Veracruz, and the card taped 7/8 in Tijuana should air the following week.

Tijuana drew yet another sellout of 5,500 for what was described as a very entertaining live show with a weak main event. On top, Konnan & Perro Aguayo & Mascara Sagrada were disqualified against The New Infernales. Konnan looked as big or bigger than the last time he was in Los Angeles. Konnan was either off the juice or way down during the last few months, and it was reflected since his wrestling was starting to get better. Like many others, he appears to have less stamina and has less agility carrying the added muscle. The funny thing is, even at a muscular 205 as opposed to 245, he's still got a better physique than anyone else in the promotion so his gimmick works and he's every bit as over at the lighter weight. The highlight in Tijuana was a ****1/4 match with local hero Rey Misterio beating Jerry Estrada via DQ, and there was another hot match with Tony

Arce & Vulcano of the Destruktrores teaming with Psicosis to lose to Latin Lover & Torero & Rey Misterio Jr. Arce, Vulcano and Psicosis also started up a feud with the Dinamita, attacking them after their match with Los Payasos.

WCW

The next Clash is pretty well set for 8/24 in Cedar Rapids, IA. It appears that one of the matches will be Antonio Inoki vs. Steve Regal, and for political reason Inoki will almost have to go over.

There will be numerous changes on the wrestling hotline as Mike Tenay was asked to do a second date and Mark Madden was added, although we're not certain who will be replaced. We've heard conflicting reports on the status of Bobby Heenan, although it appears he'll remain on Sundays. Madden will now be put on Wednesday rather than Sunday, which is Jesse Ventura's spot. Tenay was asked to do Monday, which was Gordon Solie's spot. Apparently Madden, whose move to being a WCW hotline employee spells the end of his newsletter column, was told he'd have to submit either a complete script or an outline of a script of what he would be saying ahead of time before going on the air.

Besides the 1.8 on Saturday and 1.4 on Sunday last week, the Pro show did a 1.3 and the Clash replay did a 1.4.

The actual gate in Philadelphia for Slamboree was \$33,426, which is a much lower figure than was originally reported here.

Vader was featured in an interview on the "E Network" with the other stars of the movie he did two weeks back in Japan.

The "Thunder in Paradise" episode where Terry Funk has a starring role airs this week.

Supposedly the word has come directly from the top that the heavy blood violent matches, such as the two Cactus Jack matches from the PPV's and the Dustin Rhodes-Bunkhouse Buck first match are no longer to be tolerated, even on PPV. The fear is with the national and congressional mood against violence on television, Ted Turner, a major public figure who has to be in step with the times, doesn't want to be caught with an achilles heel. Since Vince McMahon has also come down hard on the same subject, McMahon must be afraid that unless wrestling is toned down, a spotlight will shine on him as well. WCW's television is already edited to death in Europe, where the standards on television violence are already stricter. As someone who enjoyed those three matches, I don't like this direction, but I also realize that to survive in business in 1994, you can't ignore the outside world. All the complaining about how it used to be doesn't mean diddly if it's going to end up costing exposure in a business in which exposure is the foundation.

WWF

No real updates regarding the Joey Marella death. Apparently Harvey Whippleman has told the other wrestlers that reports Marella wasn't wearing his seat belt were incorrect. Marella's death wasn't acknowledged on any of the television shows or the radio show. Whippleman had also fallen asleep in the car, and awoke when the car hit a tree after Marella had fallen asleep at the wheel.

Business was poor as largely was match quality on the weekend house shows. Meadowlands drew about 4,000, Nassau Coliseum about 3,100 and Landover, MD about 1,800. Both New York shows were headlined by marathon matches with Bret vs. Owen. In both cases, Bret won 3-2, with Owen taking a 2-1 lead and Bret coming back. At the Meadowlands, Bret got the sharpshooter on with five seconds left to win the fifth fall. In Nassau, they were tied at the end of 60:00 with Bret winning in a sudden death period (around 1975, WWF booker Pat Patterson, when he was U.S. champion, had a classic Cow Palace main event against Don Muraco in a marathon match with the same sudden death finish). Nobody was raving about the matches even though the 60:00 was legit. Bret submitted twice both nights. Really, as far as reports from house shows go, Bret vs. Owen has to be considered the major disappointment of the year as far as match quality goes.

Also over the weekend, The Head Shrinkers title defenses against Heavenly Bodies matches were switched to Shrinkers defending against Double Trouble, since Jimmy Del Rey is still injured.

There's been serious discussion of bringing Chris Benoit in full-time as part of a pushed babyface tag team.

Apparently there has already been mentions on television, not to mention in the magazine and on pizza boxes of Undertaker vs. Undertaker even though as the storyline had advanced on television, fans aren't supposed to know there are two of them. Usually this kind of television not being caught up with every other form of publicity doesn't happen here.

There may be some question as to whether Bruce Hart will be appearing at shows in Bret's corner for matches with Owen who will have Jim Neidhart in the corner. On last week's promos for the California shows, they mentioned Bruce being in the corner. This week it was just said that Bret may have a family member in the corner with a graphic shown of Bruce.

Television the weekend of 7/4 saw Raw do a 2.4, which is understandable for a show at 9 p.m. that evening, All-American a 1.8 and Mania a 1.1.

For those who listen to the WWF radio show, the regular caller who goes by the name Disco Inferno is Glen Gilburnetti, the Georgia indie wrestler who used the Disco Inferno name in Memphis. He's friends with Johnny Polo.

"Summer Sizzler tour" will be in Madison Square Garden, Nassau Coliseum and Meadowlands from 8/25 to 8/27 with the same three headliners--Bret & Razor vs. Owen & Neidhart, Tatanka vs. IRS strap match and Head Shrinkers vs. Michaels & Diesel. For all the positives of adding the special effects and creating a more major league entertainment atmosphere at the shows, I think it's more than offset by running three nights in succession in the same market with the same line-up as the crowds this weekend indicated.

THE READERS PAGES

MISAWA-KAWADA

Whomever reported to you that the 6/3 Budokan Hall match between Mitsuharu Misawa and Toshiaki Kawada was only a **** match must have only watched the first half of the match. The match aired in two parts. The entrances, ring introductions and first 18:00 aired on 6/4, while the 6/11 show carried the last 18:00 along with a significant amount of post-match coverage. Taken out of context, the first 18:00 of the match was in the **** range. It was smartly worked, as they established the storyline of the match in that the two had faced each other so many times that they "knew" each other's spots. When one wrestler would try their signature spot, the other would counter to block it, and often have the counter countered as well. The spots fit into the recent history of the feud with Misawa working on Kawada's bad knee, while Kawada worked on Misawa's injured upper back. It was all solid, with the highlight being Kawada selling his knee. Misawa juiced from the left inner ear at 7:00 after a series of elbows and kicks. The down side was that All Japan fans have been trained that these important matches always go so long, so they don't start popping big until after they've heard the 15:00 call. Sure enough, the place started popping at 15:00 and shortly thereafter, Misawa hit an elbow smash out of nowhere to elicit the first screaming call of "Kawada down! Kawada turned the tables in short order, with a Fuchi-style dropkick to Misawa's upper back followed by a enzuikneedrop off the second rope. The crowd and announcer were starting to get borderline out of control when the television show ended.

The second show picked up at the Fuchi dropkick, some overlap to bring the match into context. It was one great spot after another. Kawada kept trying for the power bomb while Misawa kept trying for the Tiger driver. The match and crowd built toward what everyone expected to be the finish, with Kawada hitting a dangerous backdrop followed by a power bomb at the 25:00 mark to win the Triple Crown, except Misawa kicked out at two-and-seven-eights in one of the greatest near falls I've ever seen. The pop was unbelievable. Had Misawa been pinned, this would have been a strong match of the year candidate. Instead, they worked another 11:00 of tremendous spots back-and-forth with the crowd and announcer going bonkers the entire time since it constantly looked like it might be the finish. The finish was the same as in all Misawa-Kawada matches, Kawada being knocked out at the end. The method was a new one. Misawa hit a dangerous Tiger driver that looked to be a very risky bump for a wrestler as valuable as Kawada to take. Kawada sold the move for

what seemed to be 5:00 after the match, while Misawa was in the ring selling the effects of being in an epic war.

I'll give this match the highest compliment possible. I don't ever recall a Flair-Steamboat match this good. It was so good that even though the "wrong" guy won for the maximum reaction, it was still an all-time classic. The crowd heat was unreal for the last 20:00, while it was the greatest called match I've ever heard. The finish was beyond clean and decisive. All Japan has created an organization and style where a wrestler as over as Kawada can be completely destroyed in a main event, yet gain from it because it was such a good match. The psychology allows the promotion to put on constant perfect World title matches, where there is always a clear cut winner and loser, but the challenger can lose and come out stronger than before. Kawada has been losing these Triple Crown matches since 1989, but he's still over bigger than ever. Let's face it, there isn't a wrestler in the United States anywhere near as over as Kawada. At this point he is a clear cut choice for Wrestler of the year, and he's probably pushed past Kenta Kobashi as the best male worker in the world.

My top ten matches of the year thus far: 1) Misawa & Kobashi vs. Kawada & Taue 12/3/93; 2) Misawa vs. Kawada 6/3; 3) Misawa & Kobashi vs. Kawada & Taue 5/21; 4) Kawada vs. Williams 4/16; 5) Pegasus vs. Sasuke 4/16; 6) Toyota & Yamada vs. Kansai & Ozaki 12/6; 7) Mascarita Sagrada vs. Espectrito 3/12; 8) Michaels vs. Ramon 3/20; 9) Kawada & Omori vs. Kobashi & Asako 2/19; 10) Kawada vs. Williams 3/29.

To paraphrase Karl Marx, Ric Flair is the opiate of hardcores. In the past ten years, there have been many great workers that lost it due to age, apathy or injury. When the likes of Dynamite Kid, Barry Windham, Randy Savage, Riki Choshu, Tatsumi Fujinami, Yoshiaki Yatsu or Keiji Muto started slipping, they were hammered. But for some reason, the same standard hasn't applied to Flair. While admitting that Flair is the reason I became a serious fan, I have to say it's time to shake off the stupor and face reality. None of Flair's big matches this year have been very good, let alone approaching a match of the year. The most overrated was the 4/17 match with Steamboat. The previous night in Tokyo saw some of the best wrestling produced all year. While it would be unrealistic to compare Flair and Steamboat with the Super J Cup matches, to compare it was Kawada vs. Williams Champion Carnival final is more than fair. Kawada vs. Williams had better psychology, contained more advanced moves, it was better executed, more brutal, had better selling, more credibility, had a clean and satisfying finish, drew more heat, had a better storyline and was more emotional and did a better job of making both wrestlers look strong and did a better job of advancing the promotion to the next big match. The reality is Kawada vs. Williams was vastly superior in all the items listed above with execution being the only item even remotely close. Flair-Steamboat had a noticeable lack of heat, a dreadful finish, antiquated maneuvers and a muddled storyline. It was a *** match at best. They shouldn't get bonus stars because they are supposed to have a classic match every time out.

Near the end of 1994, the hottest promotion in the world was Pancrase. It was speculated that the success of real shooting would likely spell the end for worked shooting. While the new group probably accelerated the inevitable drop of Rings, and nobody cared about PWFG to begin with, something strange happened to Pancrase and UWFI. Pancrase appeared to peak after a half-dozen shows and lost its fire. Contrast this with the phenomenal success of UWFI and growth of Takada into a major superstar. I have some thoughts, but am at a loss to identify the key reason.

I think you'll enjoy the Vader-Tamura match. Smartly worked and good heat. Tamura is one of the more underrated workers around. Vader let him look good before beating him. Takada-Albright was similar to their previous matches, or perhaps a notch or two down. Other matches had better give-and-take, but the heat in the last 5:00 of this one may have been better. Takada is over like hell and he knows it.

*John Williams
Arcadia, California*

JAMES DUDLEY

Hall-of-Famer James Dudley
Was always at Vince McMahon Sr's right hand

He drove the limo every day
And did more work than Arnold Skaaland
But if he came 20 years later
I'm really sorry to report
That Dudley wouldn't be driving anymore
He'd be testifying in court

Scott Wallask
Billerica, Massachusetts

FLAIR/HOGAN

Being a major Ric Flair fan that had to put up with the constant abuse of Hulk Hogan is better than Ric Flair, especially in the mid-to-late 80s, it infuriates me that it looks like Flair will be putting Hogan over without the reciprocal happening. I would have thought Flair would have had more pride to prevent this from happening.

Jeff Zinger
Woodstock, Ontario

Hulk Hogan and Ric Flair will draw and make money. It will do well enough that they'll extend Hogan's contract. Also, Vince McMahon will not spend a day in jail.

Jim Burgett
Memphis, Tennessee

STEROID TRIAL

Just out of visceral concern for the future of my beleaguered favorite sport, I was almost ready to wish Vince McMahon the best of luck as he heads to court. When he gave the nod to Bret Hart as his standard-bearer at the direct expense of Lex Luger, I wanted to believe the man had seen the light. Now after the mystifying return of Jim Powers, my faith in him has been severely shaken. Granted Curt Block's disclaimer, but Powers is a Popeye who looks like he's eating some very suspicious spinach. One minute the WWF comports itself as a paradigm and the next minute the company mirrors a defiant syndicate. I have enjoyed the WWF for 20 years and pray for the sake of the wrestlers and the honest employees that the federation weathers this storm, but frankly, I don't think a mere slap on the wrist will suffice. What's more, the real shame is that professional wrestling can't survive another savage media blitz.

Eddie Bailey
Aberdeen, Maryland