

Wrestling Observer Newsletter

March 16, 1992

SUPERBRAWL II

Thumbs up 383 (90.3 percent)
Thumbs down 10 (02.4 percent)
In the middle 31 (07.3 percent)

BEST MATCH POLL

Jushin Liger vs. Brian Pillman 367
Rhodes & Windham vs. Austin & Zbyszko 27
Rick Rude vs. Rick Steamboat 26

WORST MATCH POLL

Vegas & Morton vs. Hammer & Zenk 192
Sting vs. Lex Luger 76
Terrence Taylor vs. Marcus Bagwell 19

Based on phone calls and letters to the Observer as of Monday afternoon. Margin of error: 100 percent.

By the time most of you read this, any attempt to do a lead story will already be obsolete. The question on what, if any, impact the pro wrestling business will suffer will be a whole lot easier to ascertain. Rest assured that not only was Vince McMahon worried this past week, but there is also concern in the executive camp of World Championship Wrestling and the nation's third largest syndicated television promotion, Joe Pedicino's Global Wrestling Federation. What the other two companies fear is that if/when these stories break this week and sponsors get apprehensive over it, the World Wrestling Federation, which is pro wrestling in this country in most people's eyes, may very well suffer. But in the event the WWF is something sponsors don't want to be associated with, the expectation is sponsors will steer clear of the entire wrestling industry and the two other major syndicated promotions will suffer aftershocks from this earthquake. At the same time, there still may be no impact on even the WWF, let alone any other wrestling promotion that won't even be covered with this adverse publicity.

A steady stream of wrestlers were willing to come on the record and speak publicly this past week. What was amazing is that of all the wrestlers contacted, of the ones willing to talk, not one backed up the WWF's side of anything.

One wrestler who was very willing to risk whatever was left of his wrestling career was Billy Jack Haynes, 38, who was seething mad about an apparent rib played on him a few weeks back by Pat Patterson. Haynes spoke this past week to the Los Angeles Times, the San Diego Union, and People Magazine among others. After his interviews, there were allegedly two phone calls placed to his father in Portland on Friday morning and afternoon respectively, William A. Haynes, Sr., who is blind and not even "smart" to the wrestling business.

The first call to his father asked for Billy, and when he said he wasn't there, the caller said, "Tell your son to back off or jack off." A few hours later Haynes' father received a second phone call which said, "If your son doesn't back off what he's doing, he'll be six feet under."

The strange thing about these calls is that at the time they were placed, almost nobody knew Haynes had spoken to reporters. Unlike David Shults, who claimed to have received threatening phone calls after going on Inside Edition, which was viewed by millions, or myself, who got two threatening phone calls in January (which I blamed on random pranksters), nothing Haynes had said had been printed anywhere or even known about outside of a circle of about a half-dozen people.

As Haynes describes the story, his friend Brian Adams (Crush) was scheduled to return to the WWF. Adams, Mike Miller and himself were all, according to Haynes, listening on a speaker phone when Haynes asked Patterson for a job as well. Patterson offered Haynes a try-out at the tapings a few weeks back in Lubbock and Amarillo. Haynes drove down from Portland, Ore. to Lubbock and when he got there, Vince McMahon indicated he had no idea Haynes was going to be there and that he had already put together the television and couldn't give him a try-out match. According to Haynes,

Patterson started walking away and kept walking as he yelled for Patterson to come back and talk. The next day in Amarillo, he went to the taping again and Chief Jay Strongbow came up to him and said that Vince says he doesn't need you. Haynes said he exploded and Hercules (who was one of Haynes' friends when he worked with the WWF 1986-88) put his arm around him and said, "Billy, don't do it" since Haynes said he felt like punching McMahon out. "Thank Hercules for me not tearing Vince's head off," Haynes said. "Maybe I should have. But it's not worth going to jail for." He had to drive 1,700 miles home from Texas. "I had to suck it up. I drove 200 miles and just started crying. It broke me."

McMahon said that Haynes arrived unexpected looking for work. He said that Haynes had just stopped by without warning as he was moving from Portland to Tampa and came to the television tapings in Lubbock. He said he had no room for Haynes. Haynes, who still lives near Portland, doesn't know where anyone would get a story about him going to the tapings on the way to a trip somewhere else or moving to Tampa.

"George Zahorian went to jail for the crimes of Vince McMahon," Haynes said. Haynes recalled in 1987 when he was on a plane from Detroit to Miami and he was working while in severe pain with two broken fingers but he said McMahon wouldn't let him have time off since he was working in a major program with Hercules at the time. He was using Codeine and Tylenol III supplied by Zahorian because of the pain. "The codeine made the pain bearable. I took two on an empty stomach." Haynes, who was also on steroids at the time, saw his heart start beating irregularly which forced the plane to make an emergency landing in Charlotte where he was rushed to the hospital. "They (the doctors) told me I need either shock treatment for a pacemaker. I picked the shock treatment."

Haynes said that incident was enough to keep him away from steroids from that point forward, although he blames the heart problem more on the pain killers. When asked about the 90 percent figure that has been oft-used for steroid use in the WWF during that time period, Haynes felt that Billy Graham was being "very generous" to the WWF by saying 90 percent. "I think it was 100 percent. Everyone was on. I can't think of one guy who wasn't. There was too much of a supply and too much of a demand. Vince made sure there was both a supply and a demand. If it wasn't Zahorian, it was the doctor in (editor's note: Haynes specifically mentioned the doctor and the city but at this point it wouldn't be legally prudent to mention his name, although he was the third wrestler to go on the record with the same name) who came into the building with suitcases full of the stuff.

"The smaller guys were under the most pressure," he remembered. "If you didn't get big, you couldn't get a job. I didn't like steroids because they made me light-headed but I can't lie and say I didn't use them. I've shot up (named two of the WWF's current biggest stars besides Hogan)..."

Haynes said that he considered himself buddies with Hogan when both were in the WWF and recalled an incident where Hogan came to Oregon City several years ago to make an appearance at the grand opening of Haynes' gym. Haynes said that about a week before the opening, which Hogan had committed to months earlier and publicity was out, McMahon, who Haynes claimed knew about the commitment months ahead of time, tried to get Hogan to back out and make another appearance. Hogan refused, citing the earlier commitment. McMahon admitted Hogan did the appearance for Haynes against his will, and said that Hogan didn't charge Haynes an appearance fee, and wouldn't make an appearance that day McMahon had wanted him to make. But like many others, he points to Hogan's appearance on the Arsenio Hall show as a turning point.

"I've injected him myself on more than one occasion," Haynes recalled. "And he's injected me." When asked if he felt Hogan right now is an innocent victim since steroid use hardly begins and ends with Hogan or even pro wrestling, Haynes said, "He's an innocent victim up to a point. When you're using your name

to sell vitamins to children when you got big by using drugs you're not very innocent. Even though this business is a work, you have to draw the line somewhere. I know Hulk will hate my guts for saying this, but it's the truth."

Surprisingly, Haynes doesn't blame McMahon, as most others in the business do, for Hogan's performance on Arsenio.

"I think Vince filled his head up but Hulk has a brain of his own. He's the best in the business, the best there's ever been, at getting over with the public. It's b.s. to blame Vince. That was Hogan talking. If he was a man and Vince told him to lie, he'd go on television and tell everyone that he was told to say something and then tell the truth. But this business doesn't have a lot of stand-up guys. David Shults is one, Billy Graham is one and so is Rick Rude."

Haynes said he felt the drug problem in the WWF was as bad as ever when he was at the television tapings, describing various wrestlers as "zombies," but that steroid use was down, at least at that taping (this was the taping session where they filmed the Saturday Night Main Event on Fox where we here pointed out how most of the wrestlers appeared to be off steroids, which ironically, was also when the second unannounced test was done).

"I thought the majority of the guys were off the stuff. I don't know if they were all cycling down at the same time, but it looked like they'd shrunk. The majority had anyway."

Haynes said that when he was with the WWF and they tested for cocaine (mainly in late 1987 and early 1988), he felt the testing procedure was fake because the tests weren't monitored. He said the guys brought balloons and the guys who were clean would piss into the balloons for the guys who had used cocaine so they would have warm urine. When the guys went to give a sample, they'd empty the balloon into the cup and flush the balloon down the toilet and thus pass the test. This is the same trick regularly used in the past among college football players. Today's WWF tests are actually monitored by a witness to make sure the urine in the bottle came from the wrestler.

When asked about allegations of sexual harassment, Haynes described an incident which happened to him. "(An executive he named) wanted to get in my shorts. One night as I was coming out of the shower, () stuck his finger up my ass. I told him not to ever touch me again. He started laughing. I never talked with him again."

Sexual harassment and worse seems to be all over the news this week. Quite frankly, I don't think it would be prudent to get into a deep discussion over it if or until the lawsuit talked about in last week's Observer is filed, which should be about a week after you read this. Geraldo Rivera's television show "Now it can be told" is doing a segment and has already interviewed one boy, now 20, who has a story about his experience while working as a WWF ringboy at the age of 15. Barry Orton was also scheduled to be filmed for that show. Another former WWF wrestler gave a similar story as Orton this past week but was advised by his attorney not to try the case in the media but to take legal recourse instead and doesn't want his name out until that happens. Yet another wrestler, who never worked for the WWF, faxed us a letter on Sunday (which is being held pending further developments) because he was upset with McMahon's denial of Orton's statements. McMahon tabbed Orton an incredible worker but said there's no place in the business for a 185 pound guy who is a great worker with a bad attitude. Orton said he weighed about 215-220 legit when he first went to Titan, but quickly got to 235-240 legit after getting on steroids. According to Orton, McMahon told him after he'd gained the weight, "Hey, thanks for changing your appearance." He led me to believe it would be the only way I'd get a push. It was my desire to take the steroids although I never used them before being in the WWF, but it was encouraged by Vince. I don't know where the bad attitude comes in. I never said No when they asked me to put someone who couldn't lace my boots over. I wasn't like Legion of Doom who would say they won't do jobs. I can't figure out where any bad attitude would come from until I did the radio show (Wrestling Insiders three weeks ago where Orton made claims about sexual harassment)."

While McMahon's claim that Pat Patterson (Pierre Clermont) and Terry Garvin's (Terry Joyal) resignation wasn't an

admission of any wrongdoing and blamed it on media pressure, the fact is, with the exception of a few newsletters and one radio show, no names had been mentioned in any stories. Indeed, if there was no substantiation in all of this and no more stories had broken, those names wouldn't have even been known outside of hardcore wrestling circles and a few radio listeners. While the New York Post did break the story more than one week ago, a story Titan claimed to have been lacking substantiation, there were no names mentioned either in that story or in this newsletter until Patterson and Garvin resigned last Monday. Patterson and Garvin were two of the names mentioned by Barry Orton on the Wrestling Insiders radio show three weeks ago. But while McMahon claimed Patterson and Garvin resigned because of their love for the company and that the resignations weren't asked for, ring announcer Mel Phillips was suspended at the same time. Phillips, whose name hadn't publicly come up anywhere in regards to this story but people behind the scenes knew if/when stories went public he would inevitably be linked to it, was punished at the same time Patterson and Garvin resigned. This seems to ruin the credibility that Patterson and Garvin acted on their own in this manner without any encouragement or that there is no substantiation to the charges. McMahon admitted several years ago that Phillips, who has been in wrestling for about 30 years, was dropped by the WWF and indicated it was a disciplinary problem relating to the subject, but that he later took him back. I spoke with two different friends, one who owns a million dollar company and another a significant local lawyer and gave them both this situation, going under the assumption that they knew their two key executives were innocent and how they would handle it. All said they'd defend an innocent employee, particularly a loyal Vice President, in the face of unfair charges. Given the same circumstances that McMahon alleged, both said they wouldn't have accepted the resignations. McMahon said he had no choice in that Patterson and Garvin were going to refuse to come to work so he had to accept their resignation. Almost nobody in the wrestling business that I've spoken with this week believes Patterson, at least, is really not still a part of Titan, although that is a rumor that would naturally develop in a suspicious industry where everything is a work. That doesn't make it true.

McMahon has taken a new strategy this past week, seemingly admitting the company has made serious major mistakes, although not admitting to any of the mistakes in a specific matter other than saying in retrospect the Persian Gulf War angle and snake-bite angle may have been over the line, and trying to position himself as the sympathetic babyface being taken down by what he alleges as a conspiracy. Steve Planamenta was even quoted Monday in the Mexico City News that "steroids are a lot more widespread in the wrestling business. And that is kind of frightening." Planamenta admitted steroid use was still a problem and that it would take time to clean it up. Dan Denton, the reporter, who is a former pro wrestler in Canada and Mexico, did a column as part of his four-part series on steroid use in wrestling and said: "If the public is just figuring out now that there is a problem with steroid use in wrestling, then the public is just plain stupid. Do you actually think that people look like that naturally?" Denton said steroids were an issue that needed to be addressed, but he felt recreational drug use was a bigger problem than steroids. He also said he was very disappointed in WCW's response to this issue (Denton called WCW publicist Barry Norman, who no longer works for the company, prior to Kip Frey's implementing the new policy, and he felt Norman evaded the issue and never returned subsequent phone calls on the subject) and also the response by promoters in Mexico, which he said were both playing a waiting game rather than dealing with the issue. Denton said he believed there is a clean-up going on in the WWF because he thinks McMahon realizes the potential damage p.r. wise since he sells so much merchandise to children. One wrestler told us this past week he was told specifically by the office just a few days ago, "We've come to a point where size doesn't mean anything anymore. We'll always have our Earthquakes and Typhoons but no more steroids." McMahon told us on Sunday he believes the horde of bad publicity all coming at the same time is a conspiracy between Ted Turner and Joe and Ben Weider, his promotional rivals in the wrestling and bodybuilding business respectively and that they've worked together with Billy Graham. While McMahon is saying that and he possibly may even believe it, it isn't true, although McMahon claimed he has his own investigation out to prove his theory. The problem is that McMahon ran a very dirty operation for many years. He encouraged rampant use of

steroids, then denied it when it came time to face it, and his leading star issued a denial that every wrestler who worked for the company knew wasn't true. He didn't take action when certain situations took place, whether serious or in jest that many took seriously, which made an awful lot of people believe there was homosexual harassment tied into employment at the marginal level and perhaps even in regards to a push. Even if that wasn't the case, and I don't believe it was tied into a wrestler receiving a top position, there are enough people who have come forward with similar stories to make me think there is some smoke in this fire or at least belief in the wrestlers' minds, at least for the marginal position wrestlers. That kind of thing can't be hidden forever. When you throw in allegations by minors, at least three of whom have come forward, and a lawsuit just filed two weeks ago by the would-be voice of the World Bodybuilding Federation, that is an overwhelming amount of corroboration in such a short period of time that this was a company completely out of control in many different directions. When you tie those problems being apparently widespread, or at least knowledge of those problems being widespread, coupled with the fact that there were so many people who believed they have been stepped on that were working there at the time this was all going on, and it's a testimony to the just how closed-knit the wrestling business is and the fear of the power of Vince McMahon that none of this came out years ago. Ultimately, this is the best thing for pro wrestling. If the allegations are true, then certainly this type of activity will never be ignored in the future. In the long run, if McMahon survives this onslaught, and he almost surely will, in order to survive, many aspects of the business that were seen as simply part of the sleazy nature of wrestling, will no longer be tolerated which only makes it a better business for everyone.

By the end of this week, we'll have a better idea of how strong this will all break. As of press time Monday, two newspapers, the San Diego Union and the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette had gotten a measure of cold-feet. The San Diego story was actually completed back on Feb. 11, but the finished product was so filled with so many different shocking allegations to people who aren't familiar with wrestling that it apparently scared the paper into putting the deep freeze on the story although at press time it appears the story will run this coming weekend. In Pittsburgh, the newspaper had a major problem with any allegations regarding Hulk Hogan doing drugs other than anabolic steroids which caused reporter Mark Madden to become livid to the point of getting a speeding ticket in Ohio at the prospect of coming out with a story the same day as the Los Angeles Times and not getting nearly as deep into the story, despite having every bit as much if not more knowledge of the subject. The Pittsburgh and Los Angeles stories both were concentrating on Hogan, as was another story that will be released on Monday in People Magazine. The San Diego story was on the business in general. The much-talked-about 20/20 piece may be postponed for one more week or may have run on Friday because so much has broken as of late. The WWF's strategy in regards to 20/20 was to agree to be a part of the piece only if McMahon could go on live with Barbara Walters after the piece airs and not to be taped and be a part of the piece. Expectation from here is that it's unlikely 20/20 will agree to that, although with McMahon talking everywhere else, it wouldn't surprise me to see him eventually agree to become a taped part of the piece. The WWF's attempted counter at People was to agree to let the magazine interview both McMahon and Hogan for a story provided Irv Muchnick be pulled from the story. People backed Muchnick, and McMahon ended up talking to him Monday night and to show just how high a priority it must have been for McMahon, the one-hour conversation took place from Mobile, AL during the final television taping before Wrestlemania. The Los Angeles Times story on Hogan is scheduled for Thursday. McMahon asked Hogan to just one interview regarding this publicity onslaught, with the times, and Hogan refused.

Speaking of Wrestlemania, the complete show for 4/5 in Indianapolis has Hogan vs. Sid Justice with no guest referee (which pretty well confirms that it would have been Lou Ferrigno had they not had their falling out), Ric Flair vs. Randy Savage for the WWF title, Undertaker vs. Jake Roberts, Roddy Piper vs. Bret Hart for the Intercontinental title, Money Inc. (Ted DiBiase & IRS) vs. Natural Disasters for the WWF tag team titles, Tito Santana vs. Shawn Michaels (who is going to get a strong singles push), Tatonka vs. Rick Martel, British Bulldog vs. Berzerker, Owen Hart vs. Skinner and Jim Duggan & Sgt. Slaughter & Big Bossman & Virgil vs. Nasty Boys & Repo Man

& Mountie. The show has been cut down to ten matches and just under three hours including intermission (which makes it about the same length as the recent WCW PPV shows) because McMahon felt previous Wrestlemanias simply has dragged on too long. Ticket sales are in the 30,000 range which means 72,500 paid, or anywhere close, is out of range, but it'll look more than healthy on television and they can cut down the arena to make whatever number they get into a full house.

Wrestlemania will also be the last booking for Hulk Hogan and among the last for Roddy Piper, at least for a while. Hogan, as mentioned earlier, will leave after Wrestlemania to do a movie and if he ever returns is a matter of conjecture. Piper's last U.S. appearance will be Wrestlemania but he'll stay on a few more weeks to work the European tour. Piper is leaving mainly to pursue acting although he may continue to work in some capacity as a television personality for WWF which would mean maximum exposure and limited travel. Legion of Doom returns at the television taping after Wrestlemania and is back for good. They probably will do an interview at Mania as well.

The situation with Hogan has been the subject of much speculation. McMahon has publicly, both here and in other interviews, claimed to have told Hogan to tell the truth on the controversial segment of the Arsenio Hall show last July. He said he was devastated that Hogan didn't tell the complete truth. However, the blame can't be shifted away from the WWF since in media questions regarding this subject, Steve Plamamenta, who represents the WWF, parroted Hogan's "three lines for therapeutic reasons" line in regard to Hogan's steroid use. McMahon can't shift the blame for the lie, and that's the correct word, all the way to Hogan. One WWF source, who is close to Hogan then McMahon parroted McMahon's version that Vince wanted Hogan to tell the truth and it was Hogan on his own who decided to lie, but in replaying that tape, the Arsenio interview was a promo for the WWF steroid policy and most of what he said appeared to have been coached. Most importantly, Hogan has had eight months to tell the truth and instead has refused to not only address the issue, but of late, even talk with the media.

Of course Hogan is still only a scapegoat here for the hypocrisy of not only the wrestling business, but many major sports and society in general. Even though everyone knows the methods of getting a certain look, whether it's anabolic steroids or breast implants or plastic surgery, the society encourages the end result despite disdaining the methods to reach the end result. This results in denial and lies to pretend you got somewhere by "natural" methods. The same magazines which promote and push people in the role of heroes who took a certain road to get there will then take a negative approach to the methods they used, while knowing all along of the connection. But then, if there becomes a tie-in, such as a failed drug test, look what happened to Ben Johnson even though Florence Griffith-Joyner really did need a shave worse than Bruce Willis. Is this fair to Hogan considering how many wrestlers have used cocaine and steroids? That's a funny question. Is it fair that Hogan made more money in this business in three months then the combined income of every wrestler on the small circuits will during the entire year of 1992? Well, neither is fair. That's the advantages and disadvantages of stardom. Hogan knew the rules he was playing under because for the most part, he's predominantly benefitted from the good side of stardom and had his negatives covered up for him. Is it fair to talk about the cocaine? Well, he is a celebrity. He did allow himself to be marketed in a way where using cocaine could be considered an issue and if it's an issue, the truth in regards to the subject is also an issue. He never lied about the subject, but he's done numerous "Say no to drugs" speeches which makes any possible use of his own into something he has to be publicly held accountable for if he's going to publicly encourage kids on that subject. But he is a celebrity and the advantages that go along with it are the money and the fame and the disadvantages are that your life is more of an open book than the average wrestler. It may strike other pseudo-celebrities who have done cocaine the wrong way, but if it gets brought up, hopefully they'll learn the most valuable lesson we've all learned from Hulk Hogan, and that is, don't lie. At least not when you have a lot of enemies out there who know you are lying. At this point it's impossible to have any sympathy toward Hogan in regard to the steroids. He had a chance to tell the truth. He didn't, despite overwhelming evidence, for reasons only he can tell. But he won't tell. He didn't tell the lie just once. He spent the entire month of August, day and night, promoting

a movie and telling the same lie, and continued publicly repeating it through November. Then he's had months to come up with a reason why he lied. He ignored it.

If there turns out to be a story that could be crippling, it is the story Phil Mushnick wrote about last week. At this point, it's pretty much a story which we can't go into detail on it goes through the proper channels. The real game here is twofold. Can McMahon find the alleged victims and make amends (read that anyway you want to) before something is filed legally which makes the subject fair game to anyone? And if he does, will one or all accept? Quite frankly, some damage will be done in any case because of the "Now it can be told" interview, which is considered poor legal strategy for a potential case, has already been done. However, no matter how credible the charges may or may not be, shows of that type don't generally carry a lot of influence with the mainstream media. The fact that the CBS Evening News is now investigating this story upon filing makes this a loaded gun like one we've never seen before.

A lawsuit was filed two weeks ago in Stamford Superior Court by Murray Hodgson, 29, who was hired last summer to be the television voice of the WWF (When the WWF television show debuts on USA network in April, McMahon will be the host). Hodgson filed a suit claiming breach of contract and wrongful termination of employment against Titan Sports. There was also initially a sexual harassment charge filed against Pat Patterson. The charge had to be dropped because it didn't go through proper legal channels. McMahon claimed that the initial filing was a cheap shot in that it made public a passage, which he denied, that looks pretty sickening in print. Hodgson is under advice from his attorney not to talk with the press although his attorney, Ed Nussbaum of Stamford, CT, hasn't been shy about talking about the incident. Allegedly, on July 29, 1991, Patterson made a pass at Hodgson which he rejected, and three weeks later he was fired by McMahon. McMahon claimed it was because Hodgson was incompetent at his job.

In the face of all this media pressure, McMahon, as mentioned last week, hired Dr. Mauro DiPasquale, ironically considered the expert in North America on steroids and also at beating steroid tests, to upgrade the steroid tests. In the face of all the steroid criticism, McMahon once again is trying to switch the subject matter from rewarding wrestlers who look like Sid Justice to how much money he's spending on steroid testing. McMahon and Dr. Anthony Daly, the overseer of the Titan drug testing program, both admitted this past week that approximately 50 percent of the wrestlers tested positive at the first steroid test on 11/13 in New Haven. Since that time, there have been three tests, with the most recent showing approximately a 15 percent figure on those who have tested positive according to both. Wrestlers are only suspended (which nobody has been up to this point) if the level of steroids in their system doesn't decrease. Figures are misleading because there are still masking drugs that don't show in a urine test that can hide the presence of steroid metabolites. There are oral steroids that clear the system in as little as eight hours, although most take several days. It's pretty well-known that there will be a few weeks between tests, which would in theory allow a wrestler to go on orals for a week after every test and be pretty safe as far as testing positive, although McMahon claims upon close inspection other functions change while on steroids and use can be ascertained. In the other direction, oil-based injectable steroids like Winstrol V and Decadurabolin take a few months to clear the system, and in rare cases as long as six months. Hulk Hogan passed all four of his steroid tests according to McMahon and Daly (I bet that shocks you, huh?). It should be noted that the first time the NFL did drug testing, which was a non-penalized testing, that six percent of the players failed even though it was the general consensus about 40 percent of the players used steroids. Now, nobody fails the drug test even though the estimates are about 15 to 20 percent still use the stuff although one current coach told me the percentage couldn't be that high. McMahon also admitted that several of the wrestlers believed to be heavy steroid users had blood work done on them in the past two weeks to show the effects of steroids on their systems. For example, according to McMahon, Davey Boy Smith was discovered having a thyroid imbalance which means that without medication, his weight and bodyfat would balloon if he got off steroids because of a slow metabolic rate (since steroids artificially enhance your metabolic rate and can cause some body organs to shut down their natural production).

Here's some major WCW dates for the next few months. After the 5/17 PPV show from Jacksonville, there will be a Clash on 6/16 from Charleston, SC, a PPV from Mobile, AL on 6/20, the Bash is being moved from Baltimore to Philadelphia (why?) on 7/12, a Clash will be held either 9/2 or 9/3 from somewhere in Ohio and a PPV on 9/13 from the University of Colorado in Boulder, CO (aka Big Van Vader University) called "Campus Crush." While this isn't definite, I believe the tournament for the NWA title will take place from 8/7 to 8/12 in Japan with the final three nights at Sumo Hall in Tokyo. Starrcade in late December will be from the Great Western Forum in Los Angeles. There will also be a tournament this summer, probably in the United States, to determine the NWA world tag team champions who will eventually unify with the WCW tag team champions.

Bad news for WCW is that barring an unforeseen rabbit pulled out of a hat, the last card at the Meadowlands will be 3/31. Because of poor attendance, the arena decided to go with the WWF. The WWF pulled out of the building after the building booked dates with WCW. The strategy in this case generally is that they pull the power play of only booking one promotion or the WWF pulls out, and then pull out because in the long run they'll come back because WCW won't be able to draw as well in the building and it's worked almost every time.

Coming on the heels of the surprisingly weak showing on PPV of SuperBrawl II (WCW sources claim an 0.8 buy rate while most other sources are saying 0.6 to 0.7 which would mean somewhere between a \$2.4 and \$3.2 million gross) came figures that showed last weekend was the weakest as far as television viewership in many months. The heavily-pushed WCW show with Jim Ross and Jesse Ventura pushing the PPV and airing the tag team title change with Terrence Taylor & Greg Valentine beating Ron Simmons & Big Josh drew a 2.0 rating, the lowest in months. The Main Event show the day after the PPV, which traditionally does around a 3, did just a 2.3 while Power Hour on Friday night in a different time slot did a miserable 0.9. WWF didn't fair much better with All-American doing one of its lowest ratings of all-times, a 1.8 on 3/1 while Prime Time on 3/2 did a 2.4.

WCW came to town here on 3/7 for a show at the Kaiser Convention Center in Oakland as part of a three-day California swing. I didn't get the exact attendance but would estimate it at around 1,400 for a decent, but unspectacular show. The biggest news would have to be it was the first live show I've seen in I can't remember how long from either major U.S. office without a single no-show or changing of the card in any way.

- 1. Johnny B. Badd pinned Richard Morton in 11:12 with a schoolboy.** A better opener than you would think. **1/2
- 2. Terrence Taylor pinned Marcus Bagwell in 11:32 using the ropes for leverage.** They worked better together than in previous matches I've seen. Taylor did a lot of comedy spots. **
- 3. Cactus Jack went to a double count out with Abdullah the Butcher.** They brawled for 5:49 with a garbage can and some work on the ringside table. Still, Abdullah is pretty limited in what he can do and it takes a lot of Cactus' repertoire away. *1/2
- 4. Big Josh & Ron Simmons beat Vinnie Vegas & Mr. Hughes in 11:59 when Simmons pinned Hughes after Hughes collided with Harley Race.** Harley didn't take one of his picture perfect bodyslam or suplex bumps here. Hughes now wears red wrestling boots and a matching red band for his glasses. He needs to drop some weight as he looked too fat even in a suit. 1/2*
- 5. Barry Windham pinned Larry Zbyszko in 3:47 of a Texas Death match with an inside cradle.** DUD
- 6. Rick & Scott Steiner & Dustin Rhodes beat Arn Anderson & Bobby Eaton & Steve Austin in an elimination tag team match.** The storyline was the exact same as in Chicago the previous Sunday. An all-action good hard-hitting match. I kind of pity Anderson & Eaton because they've got to work with the Steiners every night for the rest of their natural lives which is no picnic. Actually there were a lot of people upset with the quickness of the latter falls. First fall went 13:23 with Austin and Rhodes both counted out. Second fall went 2:07 with Scott disqualified for backdropping Eaton over the top rope. So this left Rick with both Anderson & Eaton. Instead of getting a little

heat up for this two-on-one heel advantage, Rick simply pinned Bobby with a bulldog off the top rope in :32 and pinned Arn with a clothesline in :09. ***1/4

7. Sting pinned Rick Rude in a cage match in 10:32. This was also a good match but a bit short for a main event. Rude was excellent here. Finish saw a ref bump, Paul E. Dangerously threw the phone in, which Rude got. Sting picked Rude up for a back suplex and instead of the finish where Rude hits Sting with the phone from the position, Rude didn't hit Sting and Rude was pinned with the back suplex. Rude & Dangerously attacked Sting for a few minutes after the match was over. ***1/4

This is the first issue of the current four-issue set. If you've got a (1) on your address label it means that your Observer subscription will expire in three more weeks. Renewal rates remain \$6 for four issues, \$12 for eight, \$24 for 16, \$36 for 24, \$48 for 32 up through \$60 for 40 issues within the United States, Canada and Mexico. Rates anywhere else in the world are \$9 for each set of four issues up through \$90 for 40 issues for weekly airmail delivery. All subscription renewals, letters to the editor, reports of arena shows, news items and any other correspondence related to this newsletter should be sent to the Wrestling Observer Newsletter, P.O. Box 1228, Campbell, CA 95009-1228.

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EMLL

Misterioso & Volador won the Mexican tag team titles from Tony Arce & Vulcano on 3/8 at Arena Mexico in Mexico City. Cien Caras kept the CMLL world heavyweight strap beating Salomon Grundy on the same night.

America (formerly Pantera II) won the CMLL welterweight belt on 3/8 at Arena Coliseo in Mexico City beating Fuerza Guerrera.

The 2/28 show at Arena Mexico in Mexico City was another hot one headlined by Pirata Morgan beating Masakre in a hair vs. hair match. Both guys juiced heavily and were biting each others cuts which shows AIDS awareness at its highest point. Morgan won the third fall via submission in a bout that went 20:00 ***1/4. Also Conan & Rayo de Jalisco Jr. & Perro Aguayo beat Sangre Chicana & Cien Caras & Mascara Ano 2000 in two straight falls in 19:27. The second fall ended with the heels DQ'd because they wouldn't pin Conan and all the faces were left laying when it was over to set up the next week main event. ***1/4. The best match on the show saw Octagon & Mascara Sagrada & Lizmark over Emilio Charles Jr. & Jerry Estrada & Pierroth Jr. in 13:14. Estrada and Pierroth both juiced. ***3/4. The opener saw midgets Espectrito Jr. & Pequeno Pierroth beat Mascara Sagrada (the great midget wrestler there's ever been) & Octagoncito in 15:13 **3/4.

Rival promoter Benjamin Mora, who has a running feud with Conan and publishes Lucha Libre magazine and promotes in Baja California brought in a bodybuilder who used to wrestle as Drago as the new Conan and wore Conan's old mask. However Antonio Pena took legal action since the Conan name is registered and he had to change his name to El Colosso. Mora also published some photos of Natural vs. Synthetic with a photo of Canek as natural and Conan as Synthetic. Canek ain't natural, folks.

Cien Caras defends against Canadian Vampire on a big show 3/15 in Monterrey which is expected to draw 15,000 fans.

Carl Styles is headed in and Negro Casas is expected to debut here in May and feud with Octagon and/or Atlantis.

Among the newcomers headed in are KKK, Ciclon Azul, Remolino Negro, Manos de Oro II and Rams (who wears a Los Angeles Rams uniform), MS 2 and MS 3.

This week's television show has a rematch with Conan & Rayo & Aguayo vs. Caras & 2000 & Chicana plus Salomon & Aaron Grundy (Mike Shaw) team with Lizmark vs. Nitron & Satanico & Morgan.

A new midget will debut shortly called Ultimate Dragoncito.

Women wrestlers Tania and Esther Moreno are both out of action with foot and ankle injuries respectively. Esther, who is probably the best non-Japanese women worker in the world right now, will be out two to four months.

WWF Vice President Dick Glover is negotiating to run a joint show in Mexico City with this promotion, probably around summer-time.

The Bestia Salvaje vs. Huracan Sevilla hair vs. hair match a few weeks back drew 15,000 fans to Arena Mexico.

UWA

Veteran wrestler Tamba the Flying Elephant will be retiring at the end of this month after fulfilling his current contracts. Tampa lost a hair vs. retirement match to Canadian Tiger (Mike Lozansky) on 2/28 in Netzahualcoyotl.

The UWA's television contract expired last week and both the UWA and Imavision want to continue airing UWA shows. The two sides are negotiating with two key points remaining in the negotiations which are, what arena to tape from each week and how long-term should the contract be. The UWA no longer wants the shows taped from El Toreo, which is the major house show card in the Mexico City area each week. Lately they've been taping the weekly Friday night shows in Netzahualcoyotl instead of the Sunday afternoon El Toreo cards, for airing eight days later.

The show taped this past Friday night had Fishman & American Eagles (Tony Anthony & Danny Davis) vs. Mil Mascaras & Enrique Vera & Villano III and Los Villanos vs. Rambo & Negro Casas & Baby Face.

Expect Canadian Tiger to turn babyface.

Mascaras is in all week since so many of the major UWA names and champions, Dos Caras, The Death Missionaries (Negro Navarro & El Signo & Black Power II), El Hijo Del Santo, Gran Hamada, Silver King, El Texano, Kendo and Dr. Wagner Jr. are all in Japan.

The El Toreo shows in which Bam Bam Bigelow headlined drew 10,000 and 8,000 fans respectively.

The 3/8 show at El Toreo in Naucalpan was headlined by Buffalo Allen (Badnews Allen) teaming with The Can-Am Express, DNS Furnas (Doug Furnas) and Phil Lason (Dan Kroffat) getting disqualified in the third fall against Mil Mascaras & Villano III & Canek. Kroffat & Furnas got over so well even though they were heels that the fans gave them a huge ovation after the match. Also Fishman & Rambo & The Killer beat Enrique Vera & Fantasma & El Colosso via DQ, Villano I & Super Raton & Super Pinochio beat The American Eagles & Kahos in two straight falls, Casandro & El Sicodelico & El Magnetico (making his El Toreo debut) beat Shu El Guerrero & Lobo Rubio & El Hijo del Diablo and Katana & Los Dragones Chinos beat Momotaro (Monkey Magic Wakita) & Ricky Boy & Angel Mortal.

ALL JAPAN

The 3/4 show at Tokyo's Budokan Hall drew a new building record of 16,300 fans and set a new gate record for the All Japan promotion headlined by Jumbo Tsuruta & Akira Taue capturing the PWF world tag team titles beating Terry Gordy & Steve Williams in 31:18 when Tsuruta pinned Williams after a back suplex. In the co-feature, Stan Hansen retained the triple crown pinning Mitsuharu Misawa with a lariat in 19:12. In other results, Giant Baba & Andre the Giant & Dory Funk beat Tsuyoshi Kikuchi & Kenta Kobashi & Toshiaki Kawada in the all-time miscarriage of justice result when Dory made Kikuchi submit with the spinning toe hold in 14:48, Dan Kroffat & Doug Furnas retained the Asian tag team titles beating Joe & Dean Malenko, The Wild Bunch (Masa Fuchi & Motoshi Okuma & Haruka Eigen) beat Isamu Teranishi & Mighty Inoue & Rusher Kimura, Johnny Ace pinned Yoshinari Ogawa, State Patrol (James Earl Wright & Buddy Lee Parker) beta Fire Cat (Brady Boone) & Richard Slinger and Mitsuo Momota pinned Masao Inoue in the opener.

The tour finished up with sellouts the final two nights as well.

3/5 in Funabashi drew 2,900 as Tsuruta & Taue & Ogawa beat Parker & Ace & Hansen when Tsuruta pinned Parker, Williams & Gordy beat Misawa & Kobashi in 24:17, Furnas & Kroffat

beat Kikuchi & Kawada, Baba & Andre & Kimura beat Wild Bunch, Funk & Momota beat Inoue & Teranishi, Malenkos beat Slinger & Fire Cat and Wright pinned Satoru Asako.

3/6 in Hirosuka drew 3,900 as Tsuruta & Taue & Fuchi beat Misawa & Kawada & Kikuchi when Taue pinned Kikuchi with the golden arm bomber in 24:57, Williams & Gordy beat Malenkos when Gordy made Joe submit to the STF, Andre & Funk & Kobashi beat Fire Cat & Ace & Hansen when Kobashi pinned Fire Cat, Kroffat & Furnas beat State Patrol to retain the Asian tag team titles when Furnas pinned Parker and Baba & Kimura beat Eigen & Okuma.

The 3/1 television show headlined by Tsuruta vs. Kobashi drew a 5.4 rating.

The Budokan TV show aired Sunday night.

NEW JAPAN

Apparently those involved in the NWA world title tournament from 8/7 to 8/12 will include Sting, Rick Steiner, Rick Rude, Scott Steiner, Big Van Vader, Keiji Muto, Tatsumi Fujinami and Riki Choshu plus others.

3/8 in Izumisano drew a sellout 2,380 as Choshu & Muto & Hiroshi Hase beat The Samoans (Samu & Kokina) & Bam Bam Bigelow when Choshu lariat Samu in 10:48, Takayuki Iizuka & Shinya Hashimoto beat Vader & The Killer Bee (Brian Blair), Masa Chono beat Masanobu Kurisu via DQ, Akira Nogami & Jushin Liger beat The Mad Bull Busters, Shiro Koshinaka & Osamu Kido beat Samurai (Osamu Matsuda) & Black Cat, Kengo Kimura pinned Scorpio and Koji Kanemoto pinned Hiroyoshi Yamamoto.

3/6 in Matsudo drew a sellout 2,330 as Choshu & Muto & Iizuka beat Samoans & Vader when Choshu pinned Samu, Chono & Hashimoto beat Killer Bee & Bigelow, Hase & Kimura beat Kurisu & Tiger Jeet Singh, Nogami & Liger beat Cat & Samurai, Hoshino & Koshinaka beat Mad Bull Busters via DQ and Kido pinned Kanemoto.

3/5 in Otaki drew 1,700 as Vader & Bigelow & Killer Bee beat Kimura & Muto & Chono when Bigelow splashed Kimura, Choshu & Iizuka beat Singh & Kurisu, Samoans beat Hase & Hashimoto, Cat & Samurai beat Liger & Koshinaka, Nogami & Kuniaki Kobayashi beat Mad Bull Busters and Kido pinned Scorpio.

Last week's television show did a 6.7 Video Research rating.

OTHER JAPAN NOTES

WING had a big show on 3/8 at Tokyo's Korakuen Hall before a sellout 2,300 fans as Mr. Pogo beat Mitsuhiro Matsunaga when the ref stopped the match when Matsunaga was unable to continue after Pogo threw fire in a Bunkhouse match main event. Also Ivan & Vladimir Koloff DDQ Head Hunters from Puerto Rico, Aja Kong & Bison Kimura beat Kyoko Inoue & Akira Hokuto in a women's match, Miguelito Perez pinned Vic Steamboat, Yukihiro Kanemura pinned Rip Rogers and Iceman (Ricky Santana) pinned Ryo Miyake.

Universal opened on 3/7 in Yokohama before 2,300 fans as Los Brazos beat Kendo & Dos Caras & Gran Hamada, The Death Missionaries (Signo & Navarro & Powerslam Johnny Bonello aka Black Power II in Mexico) beat Dr. Wagner Jr. & Silver King & El Texano and Punish & Crush (Akiyoshi & Takayama in Mexico) & El Hijo del Santo beat The Global trio (Lightning Kid & Dynamic Lynn aka Jerry Lynn & Ricky Rocket who may be Ricky Rice but I'm not sure) plus Kauro Maeda beat Miori Kamiya in a womens match. All the six-mans are part of a week-long trios tournament.

3/8 in Osaka drew a sellout 2,200 as Texano & King & Wagner beat Santo & Punish & Crush, Kendo & Caras & Hamada beat Death Missionaries, Global trio beat Los Brazos and Suzuka Minami pinned Maeda.

The Global trio replaced El Exoticos (May Flowers & Rudy Reyna & Pimpanela Escarlata) who do the transvestite gimmick.

Akira Maeda's RINGS on 4/3 in Hiroshima has Maeda vs. Volk Han from the Soviet Union.

Rings announced new rules in that pinfalls no longer count for a victory. The only way to win is either knockout or submission.

WING on 3/6 in Hitachi drew 1,256 as Perez & Pogo beat Kanemura & Matsunaga, Koloffs DDQ Steamboat & Iceman and Head Hunter B beat Rogers.

All Japan women taped television (airing Monday night) before 2,800 in Yokosuka as Toshiyo Yamada & Manami Toyota retained their UWA (Mexican) world tag team titles beating Yumiko Hotta & Suzuka Minami in 22:47 plus a battle of regular tag partners saw Bull Nakano pin Akira Hokuto, Kong & Kimura beat Kyoko Inoue & Sake Hasegawa, Debbie Malenko & Takako Inoue beat Bat Yoshinaga & Tomoko Watanabe and Etsuko Mita pinned Kuaro Ito.

Next big women's show is 3/20 at Korakuen Hall with Hotta & Minami vs. Yoshinaga & Watanabe, Malenko & Hasegawa defend the Japanese tag team titles against Mariko Yoshida & Mima Shimoda returning from Mexico, Nakano vs. Kyoko Inoue in a non-title match and Kong & Kimura vs. Yamada & Toyota with the WWWA tag titles against the UWA tag titles. The big show after that is Wrestlemarinpiad on 4/25 in Yokohama headlined by Nakano vs. Kong for the WWWA singles title.

SWS on 3/14 in Aomori has Yoshiaki Yatsu & King Haku vs. George & Shunji Takano, Genichiro Tenryu & Takashi Ishikawa vs. Hercules & Berzerker, Samson Fuyuki & Fumihiro Niikura & Naoki Sano vs. Shinichi Nakano & Tatsumi Kitahara & Kenichi Oya.

3/16 in Akira has Yatsu & Haku vs. Tenryu & Ishikawa, George Takano vs. Hercules, Kendo Nagasaki & Berzerker vs. Shunji Takano & Oya.

3/18 in Niigata has Yatsu & Haku vs. Takanos, Undertaker vs. Ishikawa, Tenryu & Fuyuki vs. Nagasaki & Berzerker and Sano & Ultimate Dragon vs. Dandy & Goro Tsurumi.

3/22 at Korakuen Hall has Undertaker vs. Haku, Tenryu & Fuyuki vs. Nakano & Kitahara, Hara vs. Yatsu and Dragon vs. Dandy.

WING has the first scaffold match ever in Japan on 3/13 with Iceman vs. Perez.

Rings drew 5,160 on 3/5 in Amagasaki with Akira Maeda beating Buzariashvili Ramazi in the main event in 11:18 with a half crab.

JAPANESE TELEVISION RUNDOWN

2/8 NEW JAPAN: 1. Tony Halme pinned Kim Duk in 7:20 with a Samoan drop. Fans really boo Halme because he's just not good enough and they keep pushing him. DUD; 2. Hiroshi Hase & Masa Chono beat Shiro Koshinaka & Tatsumi Fujinami in 15:51 when Chono made Koshinaka submit to the STF. Match was disappointing except when Hase was in and he was great. ***1/2; 3. Choshu & Muto & Hashimoto beat Much Rambo & Bigelow & Scott Norton in 13:37 when Hashimoto pinned Rambo with a running DDT. Bigelow was very good but he could only carry things to an average level since Rambo is pretty green. **

2/9 ALL JAPAN: 1. Taue & Ogawa beat Kikuchi & Kawada in 17:11 when Taue pinned Kikuchi with the golden arm bomber. Pretty solid early and turned into a good match with all the hot moves and near falls. About what you'd expect. ***1/2; 2. Hansen pinned Tsuruta with the lariat to win the Triple crown. Jumbo worked on Hansen's arm early. Hansen came back working on Tsuruta's knee. Kind of a sluggish match that got good at the end with near falls that looked to be the finish. Tsuruta kicked out of a lariat and laid down for the second one. ***1/2

2/9 ALL JAPAN WOMEN: 1. Takako Inoue beat Kamiya in 16:48 to keep the Japanese title. They really messed up a lot of moves in the first half of the match. In fact, the whole match was a communications disaster at one point. They got back on track and it was good with Inoue winning with a back suplex. ***1/4; 2. Kyoko Inoue & Yamada beat Malenko & Hasegawa in 19:49 when Yamada pinned Hasegawa after Inoue gave her an elbow drop off the top rope. Inoue & Yamada did all kinds of great Lucha Libre moves early. Both Yamada and Hasegawa

went back-and-forth with great kicks. ***1/2; 3. Kong DDQ Nakano. The match really never got started with them brawling all over the arena with foreign objects and furniture. ***1/4

2/15 NEW JAPAN: 1. Akitoshi Saito beat Michiyoshi Ohara in a karate vs. wrestler match in 6:15 via knockout. They work these matches to look like shoots and they're very exciting. The karate guys and wrestlers are at ringside cheering their guy on and broke out into a fight of their own as well. Ohara juiced heavy. **1/2; 2. Liger pinned Honaga with a Frankenstein off the top rope to win the IWGP jr. title and keep WCW lightheavyweight title in 17:30. Liger did all sorts of great moves to make the match. Not the greatest Liger match ever but still awesome. ****; 3. Muto & Hase beat Fujinami & Koshinaka in 20:03 when Hase pinned Koshinaka with the Northern Lights suplex. Koshinaka worked almost the entire match getting pounded on and Fujinami and Koshinaka split up after the match. ***; 4. Choshu & Chono beat Rambo & Bigelow in 13:02 when Choshu pinned Rambo with a lariat. Good when Bigelow was in. Bad when Rambo was in. **

GLOBAL

Results from 3/6 at the Dallas Sportatorium before 575 fans saw: ESPN air date 3/24--Bull Pain pinned Brian Ferrar, Dark Patriot pinned Gary Young after a loaded head-butt, The California Connection (Rod Price & John Tatum) beat Chaz & Tug Taylor when Chaz was pinned after a Tatum superkick and Black Bart retained his Brass Knux title beating Sam Houston via knockout when Scandor Akbar hit Houston with a foreign object. For ESPN air date 4/1--Steven Dane pinned Ferrar, Barry Horowitz pinned Chaz Taylor with a finish when Bruce Prichard shook the top rope and Taylor was crotched and fell into the ring to be pinned, Bart retained the Brass Knux title by hitting Tug Taylor with his branding iron and Bill Irwin pinned Pain with Gary Young in drag as Big Bertha Young in Irwin's corner to counter Samantha. Young was apparently hilarious in this don't miss performance and the finish saw Young kiss Pain on the lips and he was so upset that Irwin pinned him. For ESPN air date 3/31--The Viper (Mike Davis) pinned Ferrar, Dane drew Houston, Terry Garvin pinned Horowitz in a non-title match. The main event was scheduled as Dark Patriot defending the North American title against The Patriot, however since Del Wilkes is headed to Titan, he didn't appear and was replaced by Garvin. Eddie Gilbert was the ref and Bruce Prichard was placed in a cage. Gilbert favored Garvin as ref. As the match went on, ref Eddie Gilbert and brother Dark Patriot nearly came to blows and James Beard came out and removed Eddie as ref saying that he wasn't going to let a biased ref continue with the match. Garvin ended up pinning Dark Patriot and was given the belt. After Prichard was released from the cage, he, Big Bad John and Horowitz triple-teamed Garvin until Eddie Gilbert made the save. Prichard then began arguing with Beard and Joe Pedicino about the title situation since the contract was for Patriot and not for Garvin. Beard said he had to agree with Prichard's claim so Dark Patriot kept the strap. The finale had Gilbert beating John after hitting him with a chain.

3/13 at the Sportatorium has Price & Tatum defending the tag team titles against Scott Putski & Young, Dark Patriot vs. Garvin for the North American title and Gilbert vs. Big Bad John in a hair vs. hair match with falls counting anywhere in the building plus a 15 man Battle Royal.

The original plan was for Eddie Gilbert to turn back heel by turning on Garvin, but with the babyface void left by Patriot leaving, that won't be happening at least in the near future.

USWA

Jeff Jarrett is out of action with a legit back injury suffered in the gym rather than in the ring.

3/2 in Memphis saw The Fat Boys beat Tony Falk & Jim Steele, Miss Texas beat Dirty White Girl to win the USWA womens title, Brian Christopher beat King Cobra to keep the Texas title, Tom Prichard beat Dr. Death to keep the Southern title, Eric Embry beat Pat Tanaka, Koko Ware pinned Kimala to keep the USWA title when The Moondogs attempt at interference with a garbage can backfired and hit Kimala and Moondogs beat Ware (subbing for Jarrett) & Jerry Lawler when Lawler did the job, but after the match, Kimala made the save and ran the Moondogs out using a door and turned babyface.

3/3 in Louisville saw Falk beat Ricky Hayes, White Girl beat Connie, Prichard beat Steele, Christopher beat Kenny Kendall,

Embry double count out Tanaka and Moondogs & Black Dog bet Lawler & Prichard & Ware.

On television, Dr. Death hit Prichard with a bed pan and Nurse Kratchett hit Miss Texas over the head with the bed pan as well.

Prichard wrestled Tanaka in a face match on television 3/7 which ended with Dr. Death jumping in and attacking Prichard.

3/9 in Memphis had Falk vs. Hayes, Texas vs. Kratchett, Christopher vs. Tony Williams for the Texas title, Fat Boys vs. Scorpions, Prichard vs. Dr. Death in a bed pan on a pole match, Embry vs. Tanaka and the main event has Moondogs & Richard Lee vs. Lawler & Ware & Kimala.

HERE AND THERE

Lightning Kid & Jerry Lynn, who have feuded for a few years, made their tag team debut on 3/3 at The Mirage in the Twin Cities area for Pro Wrestling America before 300 fans beating Tommy Ferrara & Billy Blaze. Charlie Norris DDQ Punisher #1 in the co-feature.

Congrats to Dr. Joel Lerman for finishing the Napa Marathon Sunday in a time of 3:45. It's his first and most definitely last marathon.

Mick Karch's Saturday Night Ringside wrestling block in the Minneapolis area was canceled because the station was bought out by new owners who are turning it into a religious station.

Peach State Wrestling on 3/6 in Warner-Robins, GA drew 672 fans as R.D. Swain won a Battle Royal throwing out Billy Black in the finals, Paul Orndorff pinned Stan Lane managed by Ronnie Gossett with Nikita Koloff clotheslining Gossett at the finish, plus also working included Ranger Ross, Joel Deaton and Night Stalker.

Billy Anderson is sending proteges Tim Patterson and Samoan Cannibal to FMW for an April tour.

Larry Sharpe and Dennis Coraluzzo ran WWA wrestling on 3/6 in Union City, NJ before 300 fans as Bobby Muniz & Angel Vera won the WWA tag titles from the Lords of Darkness, Tricky Nicky won the welterweight title from Bud Lucious and Spider beat Joe Daniels to keep the WWA heavyweight title plus Victor Rivera Jr. drew Chris Candito. 3/7 in Woodberry, NJ drew a sellout 1,000 fans as Thor won a Battle Royal (taped for a segment on Fox television about a kid trying to be a wrestler), Chris Evans beat Candito in a hot match and Spider beat Joe Daniels via DQ. Promoter Coraluzzo was handcuffed to Amy Lee Murray but Dennis the Menace was knocked out and Murray got the key from him and interfered but the decision was reversed to set up a mixed tag on 3/28 in Clementon, NJ. They have a show 3/27 in Pikesville, MD headlined by Nikolai Volkoff vs. Kimala.

North Georgia Wrestling debuted with a taping on 3/8 in Alpharetta, GA before 80 fans with Festus, Steve Lawler, Convict Blade, The Jailhouse Rocker (Lawler's younger brother doing an Elvis gimmick), The Maulers (Rip Morgan & Jack Victory), etc. Scott Hudson and Steven DeTruth do the television announcing for this group which is run by Sam Kent.

3/7 in Portland saw Jesse Barr beat Buddy Rose via DQ, C.W. Bergstrom & Mike Winner beat Col. DeBeers & John Rambo via DQ, Bart Sawyer & Brickhouse Brown beat Al Madril & Mike Miller via DQ and in the main event, Steve Doll & The Grappler beat Ron & Don Harris via DQ. Pick up a pattern in those results? .

3/7 in Caguas, PR saw Randy Rhodes & Wild One beat El Corsario & Rockin Rebel, Sasha beat La Tigrese, Doug Masters pinned Rex King, Cyclone Salvadorino & El Bronco #1 beat Heartbreakers (Wendell Cooley & Frankie Lancaster), Ron Garvin pinned Invader #1 to keep the Universal title when Carlitos Colon came to ringside and accidentally hit Invader with a 2x4 (the long-awaited Colon vs. Invader matches seem impending), La Lei beat Fidel Sierra in a pole match and Colon double count out with Dick Murdoch.

Former wrestling manager Lou Albano has a major role in the new movie, "Complex World." .

Steve Gatorwolf has shows on 3/2 in Bagdad, AZ before 300 fans as Louie Spicolli pinned Electric Youth (David Gibson), Samoa Cannibal (James Aiono) beat Rip Savage via DQ, Star Man (Billy Anderson) beat Shawn Dakota, Cannibal & Youth beat Spicolli & Star Man and Gatorwolf beat Sheik Abdullah Hussain (Lou Fabbiano). Same grew drew 250 on 3/3 in Mesa, 200 on 3/4 in Prescott Valley, 620 on 3/5 in Tuba City.

WWA on 2/28 in Tijuana, Mexico drew 3,000 headlined by El Hijo Del Santo & Tinieblas Jr. beating Dr. Wagner Jr. & Negro Casas plus Tinieblas Sr. & Ultraman 2000 (Amigo Ultra for FMW) & Kamikaze Ninja beat Gigante Warrior (Butch Masters) & El Cobarde & El Caballon.

The new Stampede Wrestling in Calgary is apparently history.

Ladies Major League Wrestling on 3/1 in Port St. Lucie, FL drew 325 as Susan Green beat A.J. Watson, Penelope Paradise beat Alison Royal, Candi Divine beat Malia Hosaka, Pink Cadillac won a handicap match and Judy Martin & Leilani Kai became the first LMLW tag team champions Wendi Richter & Bambi.

ICWA on 3/5 in Tampa drew 200 as Alison Royal beat Paradise, Jim Backlund beat Mitch Incognito, Terminators (Al Greene & Marc Laurinaitis) kept the U.S. tag belts by getting DQ'd against Lou Perez & Allan Iron Eagle, Jim Neidhart pinned Star Rider Rock, Denny Brown beat Mark Starr via DQ.

WCW

The 3/9 television tapings in Anderson, SC before 3,500 fans (no idea of paid vs. paper) saw the debut of Steve Williams & Terry Gordy as a tag team. They worked three matches that were taped, but none will air on television until May because they aren't coming in until June to work a program with the Steiners. The gimmick on television is they are going to say that they aren't sure if they're coming in or not and that Japanese interests are trying to keep them from coming in. When they do arrive, they'll be renouncing their American citizenship and talking about how great Japan is and they'll be both billed from Nagoya, Japan. Told they looked phenomenal. Also debuting was J.T. Southern as a heel to feud with Van Hammer. Even though this program hardly promises to be a part of the improved wrestling product and downplaying gimmickry that they've been so vocal about, the initial angle was done well. Southern did an interview and said that Van Hammer, "Can't sing, can't dance, can't play guitar and can't wrestle." All the boys in the back were cracking up at the interview for obvious reasons, although for all we know, he really can dance. As for Southern, well, I've never heard him sing, but he definitely can play the guitar. Anyway, after Hammer beat Steve Armstrong, Southern did his speech and whenever Hammer tried to respond, Southern drowned him out by amplifying the guitar.

Kevin Sullivan was also at television and is going to feud with Cactus Jack at some point or team with him, I'm not exactly sure which.

Nikita Koloff also worked as a face.

Rick Steiner beat Steve Austin via DQ in a TV title match when Madusa interfered and it ended up with Scott hitting Paul E. with the telephone. Greg Valentine & Terrence Taylor beat the unhappy Patriots, Barry Windham & Dustin Rhodes & Ricky Steamboat beat Rick Rude & Steve Austin & Arn Anderson when Austin his Steamboat with a chair for the DQ, Steiners beat Larry Zbyszko & Austin, Tom Zenk pinned Valentine, Ron Simmons & Health Food Dog beat Vinnie Vegas & Diamond Dallas Page (Mr. Hughes no-showed television), Steamboat beat Eaton via DQ which ended when Rick Rude hit Steamboat in the nose with the phone and Steamboat will be doing a broken nose angle and finally Rhodes & Windham beat Eaton & Anderson in a non-title bunkhouse match.

Jesse Ventura will be featured on the George Michael Sports Machine tentatively on 3/23.

I believe Johnny B. Badd did sign his contract this week for \$156,000.

Missy Hyatt hasn't signed yet even though they pretty much reached an agreement a few weeks back.

3/4 tapings in Columbus, GA before 3,000 saw Steamboat vs. Anderson ending when Rude interfered but Steamboat made

his comeback and choked Rude over the rope with his belt, Simmons pinned Cactus Jack with JFD making a save, Zenk & Bagwell beat Taylor & Valentine in a non-title match.

The Bull Drop Inn with Dusty Rhodes will be brought back as a segment, probably not on the weekly television but on the big shows.

3/6 in Los Angeles drew 2,000 paid and 5,000 in the building as Richard Morton pinned Badd *1/2, Bagwell pinned Taylor clean **, Cactus double count out Abdullah **, Vegas & Hughes beat Simmons & Josh when Vegas pinned Josh *, Windham pinned Zbyszko in a 3:00 death match DUD, Steiners & Rhodes beat Anderson & Eaton & Austin in an elimination match **3/4 and Rude pinned Sting in a non-title cage match by using the phone in 12:00 ***.

They aired the post-SuperBrawl press conference which looked interesting although I'll bet nobody realized it was Nikita Koloff running around clotheslining everyone since it wasn't mentioned. I thought it was Jesse Ventura since they're both bald. Did you all notice Jason Hervey in the background maneuvering around so he could see the angle since people kept getting in his way? . . . I hope Eric Bischoff gets his game show hosting job because he's just so annoying to watch on television.

Main April house show feuds look to be Sting-Vader, Rude-Steamboat, Steiners vs. Anderson-Eaton, Rhodes & Windham vs. Austin & Zbyszko, Zenk & Bagwell vs. Taylor & Valentine, Pillman vs. Badd and Simmons & JYD vs. Cactus & Abdullah.

Kip Frey awarded Steamboat, Rude, Liger and Pillman \$2,500 each for being the hardest workers on the PPV show.

Don't expect Scott Norton until the summer at the earliest.

Expect Liger to return for the Bash in July and Great Muta as a babyface in May along with Tatsumi Fujinami.

Talk of making Liger & Pillman a team.

3/8 at the Omni in Atlanta drew 2,100 paid as Bagwell drew Mike Graham, Hammer pinned Page, Valentine & Taylor beat Patriots (all bad matches), Pillman pinned Badd, Simmons & Josh beat Hughes & Vegas, Windham pinned Zbyszko in a bullrope match which saw Rhodes & Austin both interfere, Rhodes pinned Cactus (real good), Steiners beat Anderson & Eaton in a non-title match and Sting & Steamboat beat Rude & Austin when Sting pinned Austin.

Ventura may lose his football announcing gig with the Minnesota Vikings over his going back into wrestling. According to the 3/3 St. Paul Dispatch Press, KFAN officials are uncomfortable with him working for WCW. "If that's the profession he chose, it doesn't coincide with our Vikings broadcasts," said Mick Anselmo, KFAN General Manager. "We have no interest in that (doing the Vikings) if he's full time with them (WCW)." Ventura said if he has to choose between the two, he'll choose wrestling but seemed unhappy since he worked with the WWF as an announcer at the same time he did the Tampa Bay Bandits radio broadcasts.

Wayne Coulter, who worked in public relations, was fired.

Center Stage on 3/3 before 700 fans included the TV that aired this past weekend as Freebirds beat Tracy Smothers & Thomas Rich, Morton beat Brad Armstrong using color commentary, Anderson & Eaton & Zbyszko beat Pillman & Zenk & Bagwell when Eaton pinned Bagwell and Austin pinned Hammer. This weekend has Paul E. Dangerously open with one of the best interviews in a long time, Rhodes & Windham beat Page & Rich in a horrible match, Valentine pinned Bagwell, Pillman pinned Morton, Scott Steiner beat Austin via DQ in a TV title match.

Freebirds gave a 30-minute, seven song concert after the Atlanta Hawks basketball game on 3/7 at the Omni. It was well received particularly because the band was real strong.

WWF

Highlights from television tapings that took place 3/9 in Mobile, AL saw the beginning of a feud with Bret Hart vs. Shawn Michaels for post-WM. Hart was wrestling Mountie when Michaels and Sherri came out and caused Hart to lose via count out.

Ted DiBiase didn't work because of a legit back injury although they kept the program with Natural Disasters going.

Newcomers at TV were Samoan Swat Team (Fatu & Samoan Savage) as babyfaces to fill the vacant tag slot with the break-up of the New Foundation and The Maulers (Rip Morgan & Jack Victory) as heels.

Hulk Hogan's post-WM movie is called "Rough Guys." .

The Madison Square Garden card aired on the MSG network head-to-head with the SuperBrawl PPV so I'm not sure about this cable rule of not putting free wrestling opposite PPV shows.

Entertainment Tonight on Thursday did a Wrestlemania plug.

The bodybuilding television show Body Stars debuts 4/4 on USA network at 11 a.m. Saturdays for a 13-week run. It'll concentrate more on soft-core health and fitness rather than hard-core bodybuilding.

Everyone is raving about the interview Ric Flair did on Superstars this past weekend regarding the Randy Savage match. Bet what you don't know is it was the 17th take. Says something about the difference between cranking out television and trying to put together flawless television.

3/7 in Chicago drew 7,500 as Tatonka pinned Skinner, Michaels pinned Jim Powers, Tito Santana pinned DiBiase, Bushwhackers & Bret Hart beat Nasty Boys & Mountie, Warlord pinned J.W. Storm, Bossman pinned Repo Man and Hulk & Roddy Piper beat Flair & Sid Justice when Hogan pinned Flair.

3/1 in Bangor, ME saw Warlord pin Chris Walker, Kato pinned Storm, Santana pinned DiBiase, British Bulldog pinned Rick Martel, Bossman pinned Repo Man, Natural Disasters beat Jim Duggan & Sgt. Slaughter via DQ and Hogan beat Flair via count out.

3/1 in Moline, IL drew 4,000 as Tatonka pinned Skinner -, Michaels pinned Powers **, Crush (Brian Adams) pinned Berzerker -***, Bushwhackers & Hart beat Mountie & Brian Knobbs & Michaels (they didn't lock up for 9:00) **, IRS pinned Virgil -, Owen Hart & Jim Brunzell beat Beverly Brothers *** and Randy Savage pinned Jake Roberts **1/2. Roberts got 30 percent of the cheers. When they announced Hogan's name about his new T-shirt, everyone booted. Six total no-shows.

2/28 in Normal, IL drew 4,300 as Michaels beat Powers, Tatonka beat Skinner, Crush pinned Berzerker, Bret Hart & Bushwhackers beat Michaels & Knobbs & Mountie, IRS pinned Virgil, Owen Hart & Brunzell beat Beverly Brothers and Savage beat Roberts in a cage match.

3/6 in Oshkosh drew 4,500 as Berzerker pinned Tom Stone (sub for Bulldog) DUD, Martel pinned Del Wilkes DUD, Crush & Brunzell beat Beverly Brothers **1/2, IRS pinned Virgil *1/2, Natural Disasters beat Duggan & Slaughter via DQ -1/2* and Savage beat Roberts in a cage match -1/2*.

THE READERS PAGES

Steve "Dr. Lucha" Sims of 1427 W. Dickens Ave., Chicago, IL 60614 puts out Lucha Libre weekly for \$1 per issue. This will turn out to be one of the best newsletters on the market.

Maniack at 2-19-8 Nishi Magome, Ota-Ku Tokyo 143 JAPAN has the new Wrestling Super Catalogue on sale for \$18. Please send dollar bills only as cashing personal checks in Japan is next to impossible.

John May of 1 Terry Circle, Hope, AR 71801 is looking for a VHS tape of SuperBrawl II.

Joseph Gianninoto of 472 Gramatan Ave., Mt. Vernon, NY 10552 is looking for a copy of the 1937 book "The Fall Guys" by Marcus Griffin.

Scott Decker of P.O. Box 5600, Hamden, CT 06518 has tapes for trade from everywhere.

Bill Brown of 168 Boston Rd., Middletown, CT 06457 is interested in trading videotapes and is looking for tapes of independent promotions.

Brian Dyke of 615 15th Ave. SE #3, Minneapolis, MN 55414 has a tape of SuperBrawl II and is looking for tapes of Crockett Cups in 1987 and 1988 and Clashes I-III and tapes of any Ric Flair vs. Barry Windham matches in exchange.

Bryan Platt of 3708 Elmley Ave., Baltimore, MD 21213 is looking for a tape of the 3/3 Joan Rivers show with Howard Stern as guest and AWA Superclashes, Wrestle Rock and Twin Wars and will trade anything on his list in exchange.

Jeff Mullins of P.O. Box 36819, San Jose, CA 95158 has newsletter Pro Wrestling Sushi for \$6 for four issues and if you order now you get a double issue free.

Gary Will of 55 Carolina St. N #901, Waterloo, ONT N2L 6B9 Canada is looking to compile a complete list of regional titleholders and is looking for histories of championships during the 1970s.

Rob Silvernail of 3057 Delaware Ave., Kenmore, NY 14217 is looking for any material on early 1970s WWF Assassin (Bill Walters) and a tape of Bruno Sammartino's birthday party incident.

Jeff Gagliardo of 5954 Hillrose Dr., San Jose, CA 95123 is looking for a tape of WrestleTalk with Jim Cornette and Dan Farren as guests.

Mike Sawyer of 831 Pasadena Ave., Niagara Falls, NY 14304 puts out the newsletter Legdrop for \$5 for five issues.

John Carella of 36 Tardy Ln., Wantagh, NY 11793 is looking for copies of Wrestle Rock '86 and early Traci Lords movies.

Ken Hamblin of 1611 S. 115th St., Tacoma, WA 98444 is selling wrestling Grab bags for \$6 with old programs, photos, posters, newsletters and other paraphernalia.

Mike Leathers of 3152 Altadena Ave. San Diego, CA 92105 is looking for a VHS tape of SuperBrawl II.

Alan Raskin of P.O. Box 14537, Philadelphia, PA 19115 puts out the newsletter Pro Wrestling Review. Send a SASE for more information.

Jim Murphy of P.O. Box 1536, Cayce, SC 29033 is looking for a regular supplier of All Japan and New Japan tapes.

Dave Perrotta of 26 Bendix Pl., Lindenhurst, NY 11757 is looking for old tapes of NWA World Championship Wrestling television shows.

Gary Langevin of 124 Maple St., Newport, VT 05855 is looking for WWF Championship Wrestling shows from 1984-86, all episodes of TNT, Prime Time and All American Wrestling from 1985-87, Tri State Wrestling, International Wrestling from Montreal from 1985, all episodes of Pro Wrestling this Week, Bob Luce Hall of Fame Classics and will trade anything in his collection in return.

Frank Strom of 81 Sargent St., Revere, MA 02151 is looking for a tape of the LPWA PPV show and will trade tapes of All Japan women in exchange.

George Foster of 931 Mears Ct., Stanford, CA 94305 is looking for photos of Woman, Misty Blue, Missy Hyatt, Sherri Martel and Lady Blossom.

GOODHART REFUNDS

This is a follow-up letter to the recent one about refunds for TWA tickets. I've listed some instructions below which may be helpful. Anyone who had purchased tickets directly from TicketMaster or TicketMaster tickets from Joel Goodhart may return them for a refund by going to the Philadelphia Civic Center box office or to their place of purchase. These tickets must have the code "adult" on top of them. If not, they must be returned for a refund to the Pennsylvania State Athletic Commission. Those tickets should have a "K-Prom" on top of them. When mailing your tickets to the commission, please photo-copy them for your records in case they are lost. For people who have only canceled checks and no tickets, there is a possibility you may not get a refund. But the Athletic Commission told me if they're sent in with a letter there is an outside chance of a refund. Remember to photo-copy all

correspondence for your own records. All refunds will be on a first come, first served basis. The commission can't reimburse you for tapes or fan club money so don't waste your time on that. All requests can be sent to the Pennsylvania State Athletic Commission, Room 611 A, Transportation Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120. If any additional questions from anyone should arise, feel free to contact me at Excalibur Promotions, 1020 Cooper St., Deptford, NJ 08096. I made one mistake in my last letter I want to correct. The commission didn't seize Joel's bond but seized a letter of credit for \$10,000 through his bank. He was under the old system where a bond or a letter of credit was needed to be licensed. Now a bond is required. They no longer will take a letter of credit.

*Dennis Coraluzzo
Woodbury, New Jersey*

SUPER BRAWL

SuperBrawl gets a major thumbs up from me. My only complaint about the show as Sting's reaction to winning the world title. Usually athletes are a bit more enthusiastic when they achieve their lifetime dream. It's appropriate Jushin Liger vs. Brian Pillman took place on leap year day, as matches of that calibre occur in the United States about as often as we have a Feb. 29. I've thought for a long time that Pillman would make an excellent choice as world champion. He has it all, great babyface charisma, intense interviews, youth and he's a fantastic wrestler. He's shorter than most of today's wrestlers but that could be used to his advantage. He could be an underdog champion who overpowers his larger opponents through superior skill and raw courage like Bob Backlund in the early 80s. If only Brian's dad was the booker.

*John McAdam
Nashua, New Hampshire*

SuperBrawl was an average show. Jesse Ventura and the Jushin Liger vs. Brian Pillman match made the show. Lex Luger vs. Sting was disappointing. Luger will go down in history as one of the worst world champions of all-time. He looked terrible in almost every one of his major matches. I wish WCW would change its name to NWA and forget about trying to be the WWF. Forget the rampway and fireworks and produce PPV shows like they did in 1989.

*Jason Leier
Sacramento, California*

Thumbs up live. Everybody on the card looked good. Why were there so many announcers? I've seen Jushin Liger in better matches on tape but he impressed the audience enough for them to stop that "USA, USA" chant and give him a huge ovation when he hugged Pillman after the match.

*Rocco Malce
Chicago, Illinois*

Jesse Ventura's line about the Vinnie's he's known as hysterical, but it didn't make SuperBrawl II into the tremendous show it was supposed to have been. The opener was good, but there were dead spots in between the high spots and the finish was disappointing. The Dusty finish in the tag title match was inexcusable. Both that finish and that booker should be put into permanent retirement. The Rude-Steamboat finish detracted from an otherwise good match. Finally, the world title match was very poor but considering the shape Lex Luger was in, he probably couldn't have done much better. Overall I'd give it a 6.5 on a scale of one-to-ten.

*Michael Bahn
New York, New York*

On 8/26 at SummerSlam, Curt Hennig entered Madison Square Garden with a serious back injury and managed to put on an excellent match with Bret Hart. On 2/29, Jushin Liger entered the Mecca Arena with bruised ribs and Brian Pillman entered with a bad back. The two put on what will surely be the match of the year in the United States (***3/4). Do you suppose that at Wrestlemania VIII that if Randy Savage and Ric Flair roll into the ring on wheelchairs, that they'll have the greatest match in the history of pro wrestling?

*Evan Schlesinger
Great Neck, New York*

Thumbs up. The reduced number of matches gave each match more time to develop. Most of the matches were good and none of that were that bad. Best was Windham & Rhodes vs. Austin & Zbyszko. Worst was Vegas & Morton vs. Zenk & Hammer which was below average, but not that bad. Steiners vs. Anderson & Eaton was a great match until the Dusty finish. Liger vs. Pillman was a good match but it wasn't as good as Liger's matches with Naoki Sano. Luger vs. Sting was okay and Steamboat vs. Rude was very good but suffered from the screw-job finish. Madusa looked good enough to add a star to every match she was at ringside for.

*Tim Whitehead
Johnson City, Tennessee*

SuperBrawl II ranks with the 1989 Bash as one of the great PPV shows ever. It was well-paced, with Jushin Liger stealing the show. It was great to see him live. I loved Jesse Ventura's comments on Vinnie and bodybuilding. Is it just me, or is Shiro Koshinaka one of the most underrated wrestlers in the world?

*Michael Long
Whitestone, New York*

WCW

You made an interesting point when you wrote that the American public can't equate U.S. economic problems with a guy in a space-suit doing gravity-defying moves as suggested by Brian Pillman. However, aren't U.S./Japanese economic relations so strained right now with Japanese leaders being quoted (or misquoted as they have suggested) that the American work ethic is weak while our government is attempting to shift the focus of our nation's economic difficulties from ourselves to blaming Japanese greed and resistance to fair trade practices. Any Japanese wrestler right now is almost certain to draw heel heat whether the promotion pushes the point or not. With the shift of wrestling ever-so-slowly moving toward the athleticism which Japanese promotions have so successfully employed, will this be hampered here in the states whenever a Japanese wrestler works here since the American babyface vs. Japanese heel scenario will be inherent in any such match-up? Won't the rule of thumb then become ceremonial salt and Asian nerve holds as opposed to numerous high spots and big moves with exciting near falls?

*Chris Martin
Springfield, Illinois*

During the last Clash, Jim Ross said that Big Van Vader was a two-time All-American at Colorado at the No. 1 draft choice of the Los Angeles Rams. What year was the draft and under what name did he play football?

*John Hoven
San Dimas, California*

DM: Big Van Vader's real name is Leon White. He did play football at University of Colorado and was a very good college player although I'm not certain if he was on any All-American teams. He was predicted to be a first round draft choice (I believe in 1978) but while running a 40-yard sprint for NFL scouts he suffered a pretty severe injury which put his playing pro ball into question. The Rams actually did still pick him, in his injured condition, but it was in the sixth round. He spent a few years on injured reserve but never could make the full comeback.

I need to express my disgust with WCW. Now, I don't think anything is all that bad about the organization, but one thing has really gotten to me. I've seen in the past few weeks little clips of the Steiners beating the Road Warriors and the Nasty Boys. I shrugged it off as a playful little stab at the WWF. The next week they showed clips of Sting and Lex Luger beating Sid Vicious. That got to me a bit more. This weekend, they crossed the line. The segment was to feature how Sting and Luger used to be friends to set up their SuperBrawl match, it just so happened that each and every clip featured Ric Flair. The biggest shot at Flair was during a flashback to Wrestle War '90 when Luger had Flair in the torture rack and Jim Ross did a voice-over on the clip with comments like "Luger had Flair beaten here" and "Flair was about to lose his title," all suggesting that Luger was better than the WWF champ. I fail to see why WCW would sink that low. They seem to be relying on

these clips to get by as competitive. Do they need to do this? No. Ric Flair was the man who made their promotion for a decade. I'm disappointed to see WCW stab him in the back like this.

*Dave Prazak
Lisle, Illinois*

WWF

It appears that Vince McMahon is making Pat Patterson and Terry Garvin the sacrificial lambs in this episode. Yet, according to Phil Mushnick's article, Vince doesn't admit to any wrongdoing by either party. What does he mean when he says they have been the target of unfair innuendos? Once again, instead of facing the issue head-on, he tries to skirt the issue and hopes it will go away.

*Joseph Dante
Union, New Jersey*

As the father of a nine, seven and three-year-old who all got turned onto pro wrestling by me, it is my sincere wish that pro wrestling and the WWF in particular take a searching and fearless inventory of themselves, publicly admit to the mistakes they've made in the past and move forward with a clean company in all matters. We all make mistakes in our lives. It is the winners who learn from them and are not doomed to repeat them.

*Kevin Moran
Stockton, California*

By your own admission, it is hardly fair to judge Hulk Hogan against his image before he was that image in regards to cocaine allegations. I don't know of a single wrestler who qualifies for anything approaching sainthood. I'm aware of temptations of life in the last lane. As for people being able to make an argument that using cocaine is okay if you do it on your own time and it doesn't interfere with your job but the argument not holding water with steroids because of the competitive advantage, that holds no weight in a court of law. A magazine interviewer reported on the Joan Rivers Show about a month ago that it is a condition of interviewing Arnold Schwarzenegger that steroids won't be discussed. I've often heard it said by various sportswriters that Schwarzenegger suffered kidney damage from steroids and believe Roy Firestone mentioned it on the Ron Reagan show. Isn't the head of the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports an appointment made specifically for the kids of America. Who do you think has more of an effect on the youth of America than Schwarzenegger?

*Teresa DeMarie
Tuckahoe, New York*

DM: The entire anabolic steroid issue has turned many athletes and celebrities into major hypocrites and liars, only two of which are Hulk Hogan and Arnold Schwarzenegger. And I believe Schwarzenegger has far more impact on kids, particularly teenagers, in this country than Hogan. As far as Hogan goes, and I'm sure you're well aware of, the cocaine allegations now cover a time period well after Hogan was portraying his current image and not just before he was his current marketing image.

