

TUESDAY UPDATE: RAW DETAILS, IMPACT RATINGS, WWE BIZ, BROCK, LUCHA MURDERS, KONG, MISAWA SHOWS, MORE

By Bryan Alvarez

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We're looking for your thoughts on Saturday night's UFC 100, so you can leave a thumbs up, thumbs down or thumbs in the middle along with a best and worst match to dave@wrestlingobserver.com

We're looking for live reports from Smackdown and ECW which will be taped tonight in Miami.

We're also looking for reports on Friday night's TNA house show in Jamestown, NY, Friday night's WWE show in Manila, Philippines

All subscriptions to the newsletter and web site for more than one month will include what is traditionally our most talked about and best selling issue of the year, the 2009 Hall of Fame issue. Starting this coming week in the Observer we are doing an historical look at the biggest draws in history and in looking at those numbers, a number of names come up as potentially overlooked candidates. We'll have more in that direction over the next few weeks as well as a Hall of Fame preview issue after all the ballots are cast but before the Hall of Fame issue itself. So several special issues are coming over the next six weeks.

We've got a look at UFC 100's attempt to become the biggest non-boxing PPV event in history with a look back at Dana White, Vince McMahon, the difference between the two, how both got into power, how history of given both men credit for things they didn't do, the real story of UFC's rise to prominence and what slowed it up, and what was really the night where UFC broke through as a television entity, and it was not Griffin vs. Bonnar.

We also have a look at Edge's torn Achilles tendon, and different ideas bounced around regarding what happens next, as well as what plans for Edge and the tag title that have been thrown out the window.

We also have a look at the public funeral of Mitsuharu Misawa,

the biggest athlete funerals of all-time and where it ranks, as well as the new power hierarchy in Pro Wrestling NOAH including who gained and lost power, and what Misawa's wishes were for the promotion in the event he could no longer run things.

We've got a lot of history in this coming week's issue of the Wrestling Observer Newsletter. We have a feature looking back at the biggest event of each year in pro wrestling since 1900, as well as all the record-breaking events in both recorded pro wrestling and MMA history. Japan, Australia, Europe, U.S., Canada and Mexico are all covered in a look at many of the biggest pro wrestling and MMA events of all-time.

The feature also looks at wrestlers who may be considered strong Hall of Fame candidates based on these records, as well as others who were big draws who for other reasons may not be strong candidates. We look at dozens of different names, as well as former football players who were among the bigger draws in wrestling history, the case for two of the biggest candidates as promoters, as well as what wrestlers make the list the most times in their career. We also look at the enduring legends, people who drew the biggest crowds of the year more than a decade apart.

This is probably the most complete look at huge match draws, in the context of their era, that has been produced, and we will have more on the subject in future issues.

Among the notes in this issue's listing include:

--Every attendance record in history dating back to 1908

--What U.S. star drew 65,000 fans to a show in Greece

--The first successful baseball stadium shows

--The only year when a woman's match was the biggest attended pro wrestling match in the world

--The first time the biggest attended pro wrestling match was headlined by a member of the Gracie family

--What NFL legend twice had the biggest drawing U.S. match of the year

--First \$100,000 house

--First closed-circuit show

--Largest crowd in history

--Business of early Wrestlemanias

--First Tokyo Dome sellout

--All-time Mexico attendance record

--All-time record gate

--What wrestler drew the largest crowd of the year the most times

--Who had the most enduring drawing power

The issue is available today for subscribers to the web site.

The Wrestling Observer ranges from 25,000 to 40,000 words covering pro wrestling and MMA all over the world.

Each issue has coverage and analysis of all the major news, plus every issue breaks major news stories before the Internet sites and has the most complete look at the business as a whole anywhere.

The Observer is now in its 27th year of being the leading insider pro wrestling publication in the world. The biggest and most influential names in the pro wrestling industry as well as the MMA industry, from bookers, to promoters to Hall of Fame wrestlers and fighters to the biggest current names, both on camera, and behind the scenes, along with thousands of readers in all 50 states and 30 countries subscribe. Many have subscribed as long as 20 years or more straight. They get the most detailed and inside coverage of what is going on all over the world and an accuracy from having the most inside sources that can't be found on the web. Everyone from Wall Street to the major offices to the TV networks in U.S. and Japan turn to the Observer for what is going on in the business. If you are a new subscriber ordering 24 or more issues, you can get one free classic issue of your choice sent to you today. With a 40 issue subscription, you can get two free classic issues sent to you

today. Just send your Visa or Master Card order with your name, address, phone number, Visa or Master Card number and an expiration date to dave@wrestlingobserver.com or you can order by faxing that information to 408-244-3402. You can also subscribe via paypal at www.paypal.com and using the dave@wrestlingobserver.com address or subscribe via check, cash or money order, as well as credit card, by mail, by sending to Wrestling Observer Newsletter, P.O. Box 1228, Campbell, CA 95009-1228. We also have a look at Waldo Von Erich, who passed away this past week, and his rivalry with Bruno Sammartino, Bill Watts and others.

We also have more on the deaths of Mexican minis the Jiminez brothers, including with major WWE PPV shows both men worked, and more details regarding their murders.

We've got an update on Jeff Hardy's future, Matt Hardy's surgery, notes on WWE television production, the head of a major station talks about what the station needs to break through to being a top five station on cable, and where wrestling could fit.

We also look at Jerry Lawler running for mayor, the Jericho vs. Miz feud, update on both the WWE video game and TNA video game going forward, as well as where the UFC game fits into posturing for the WWE game.

We've got notes on some of the PPV shows for WWE for the rest of this year, reviews of Ted DiBiase and what he was best known for as a wrestler, notes on WWE travel, update on Mr. Kennedy, and business notes from all of the WWE shows over the past week.

We also have notes on a new WWE signing, a former wrestler with national exposure getting a name change, plus a look at all the shows both domestically and on the two international tours this week.

We've got an update on Lavar Johnson, the Strikeforce heavyweight who was shot this past week, including the big fight he was about to be announced for the next big show.

We've also got a feature on Billy "Red" Lyons, including what he was best known for in Toronto, his career title history, his early days in wrestling, his heyday, The Flying Redheads, his tag team with The Destroyer and lifelong friendship, some of his biggest matches and the latter stages of his career in Toronto.

We also have preliminary numbers for the Judgment Day PPV and how it performed compared with last year's show.

We also have our usual weekly features, including the most

detailed look at the ratings of the major shows, including what segments gained and lost viewers, results from the major league arena events over the past week, and the major TV show reviews.

Also in this week's issue:

--80s and 90s star needs emergency surgery and career looks to be over

--Two big names for more than 20 years talk about doing a career vs. career main event on a major show later this year

--Unique match where all six wrestlers opposed their real life brother

--Retirement of a Hall of Famer and another says he's slowing down and may never wrestle outside his home town

--International promotion signs up with a Canadian company to market house shows, English language television, PPVs and merchandise in the U.S.

--WWE pulls wrestler from a major show for interesting reasons

--A look at the All Japan junior heavyweight tournament

--Heavyweight vs. junior heavyweight champion match takes place this past week

--Motor City Machine Guns lose belts in Japan

--Former ECW champ set to have a program with current IWGP champ

--First news on the G-1 Climax tournament

--Former promoter sentenced to a year in jail

--Update on Brian Blair's situation

--Update on Roddy Piper's legal situation

--Internal predictions for UFC 100

--Newest members of UFC Hall of Fame

--UFC gets gigantic television breakthrough

--Lots of new UFC matches and big shows for the rest of the year

--WWE's biggest star (according to Vince) and one of UFC's biggest stars hit it off

--UFC may sue rival promotion

--Update on next Strikeforce show and next Affliction show

New subscribers ordering 24 or 40 issues have to let us know what major story (ies) of the past 11 years you are most interested in and we'll send the issue with the best coverage of that story. We've got coverage of every major PPV event and world wide spectacular, every major star switching promotions, histories of companies like FMW, Rings and New Japan, retirement and obit issues of every major star who fits into those descriptions over the past 11 years, as well as our biggest issue every year, the annual awards issue, and our most controversial issue of every year, the Hall of Fame issue. Our most requested issues in our history are:

*November 17, 1997 (full details of everything leading to the most famous wrestling match finish of modern times at the Survivor Series plus a history of in-ring double-crosses)

*December 21, 1998 (the complete Vince McMahon-Bret Hart conversation right before the Survivor Series match so you'll know exactly what was said

--the conversation played in edited form both on the inaugural broadcast of Confidential as well as in Wrestling with Shadows, but everything that was said between the two about the match that was going to take place that same night)

*August 1, 1994 (the most detailed coverage anywhere of the Vince McMahon steroid trial, an issue praised in numerous newspaper article and Sex, Lies and Headlocks)

*March 26, 2001 (death of WCW and history of pro wrestling on the Turner networks)

*October 22, 2001 (why the adult audience has left pro wrestling in such great numbers and what needed to have been done to save them)

*July 8, 1991 (Ric Flair leaves WCW as world champion/Zahorian steroid trial)

*February 8, 1993 (the life and times of Andre the Giant)

*May 13, 2002 (the life story of the most incredible pro wrestling career ever, a look at Lou Thesz, in one of the largest issues of our history)

*January 27, 2003 (part one of the two-part series covering the career and life of The Sheik)

*February 3, 2003 (Part two on The Sheik including thoughts from people who worked with him and where he stands historically)

*March 24, 2003 (history of the WWWF title, inside behind the Sammartino, Backlund and Backlund era)

*April 21, 2003 (history of WWF continues with the expansion nationally, the death of the regional territories and the rise of Hulk Hogan)

*May 12, 2003 (The life and death of Elizabeth, and the rise of fall of Lex Luger)

*June 9, 2003 (Part 1 of history of WWF vs. WCW wars and what many say was the greatest year in U.S. wrestling; plus a look at Fred Blassie)

*June 16, 2003 (Freddie Blassie through the eyes of his biggest rivals and friends)

*July 28, 2003 (Part 2 of the history of the WWF vs. WCW war and the plans to make new superstars in the early 90s, what happened, and the night where the three biggest wrestling companies in the world combined for a joint show and what happened)

*August 25, 2003 (2003 Hall of Fame issue with huge profiles on the controversial career of Shawn Michaels, Chris Benoit as well as historical features on Earl Caddock and Francisco Flores)

*September 22, 2003 (Part 3 of the history of the WWF vs WCW war with the seeds that caused the collapse of the industry in the 90s, Zahorian trial, Gulf War controversy, Flair leaves WCW while holding world title and much more)

*October 27, 2003 (The fascinating life of Stu Hart plus the story of Road Warrior Hawk)

*January 19, 2004 (2003 Awards issue)

*February 2, 2004 (History of Toronto wrestling, Jack Tunney life story, Royal Rumble and Battle Royal history)

*February 23, 2004 (History of Guerrero family with Eddy's win over Brock Lesnar)

*March 1, 2004 (History of WWF continues with the period that brought the company down in early 1992, the mistakes, the real stories and how the business changed)

*March 8, 2004 (History of Wrestlemania, its greatest matches and best and worst shows as voted both by wrestlers and non-wrestlers and Wrestlemania history books)

*July 5, 2004 (A look behind the scenes and Ric Flair's book and his background with Eric Bischoff and Hulk Hogan)

*July 12, 2004 (A look at more on Ric Flair's book and his comments on Bruno Sammartino, Bret Hart and Mick Foley)

*August 16, 2004 (History of the Olympians in pro wrestling)

*August 23, 2004 (2004 Hall of Fame issue and biggest issue of the year with huge profiles on Kazushi Sakuraba, Undertaker, Bob Backlund, Masahiro Chono, Ultimo Dragon, Kurt Angle and Tarzan Lopez

--this counts

as one issue if you are asking for a free issue, but ordered separately, due to size, is \$6 in North America and \$7 overseas)

*October 4, 2004 (the life and times of Big Bossman; as well as details of the life and times of one of the most influential men world wide in pro wrestling history, Jim Barnett)

*November 15, 2004 (the full story of what happened between Kurt Angle and Daniel Puder, plus coverage of the most important week in the history of TNA)

*January 24, 2005 (2004 Awards issue, Rock and WWE part company)

*March 14, 2005 (the 50 biggest money players in the history of WWF and a look at their Hall of Fame)

*May 9, 2005 (the life and times of Chris Candido)

*June 20, 2005 (The full story behind Paul Heyman and the death of ECW, as well as coverage of One Night Stand, Hardcore Homecoming and behind the scenes of both shows)

*July 18, 2005 (death of Shinya Hashimoto and his records with a look at the fall of New Japan, the Matt Hardy angle, tons of WWE firings, Cornette firing in detail as well as problems of a WWE developmental territory in our biggest news issue of the year which is a double-sized issue and would be \$6 on its own and \$7 overseas)

*August 24, 2005 (2005 Hall of Fame issue with career profiles of Paul Heyman, HHH and Freebirds plus debut of MMA Hall of Fame)

*September 12, 2005 (History of Mid South Wrestling)

*October 10, 2005 (Life and Times of the Ultimate Warrior)

*November 21, 2005 (Life and Times of Eddy Guerrero and Crusher, double

issue \$6 on its own and \$7 overseas)

*December 5, 2005 (The Eddy Guerrero special issue, double issue \$6 on its own, \$7 overseas)

*January 9, 2006 (The life and times of Superstar Billy Graham, plus New Year's Eve 2005 coverage)

*January 16, 2006 (2005 Awards double issue, \$6 or \$7 overseas)

*April 3, 2006 (Story of Ann Calvello and the history of Roller Derby

--many called this the best issue of the Observer ever)

*April 10, 2006 (Behind the scenes at the 2006 Wrestlemania/Hall of Fame week)

*July 24, 2006 (The History of the Von Erichs and World Class Championship Wrestling

--the most unreal story ever in wrestling)

*September 4, 2006 (The Rise and Fall of Kurt Angle; 2006 Hall of Fame inductions of Eddie Guerrero, Paul Bowser, Masakatsu Funaki, Aja Kong and Hiroshi Hase including tons of wrestling history around the world from the 20s through the 60s, the evolution of working to not working in Japan, and a look at Guerrero in hindsight, double issue \$6 or \$7 overseas)

*October 9, 2006 (A look back nine years later at the life and legacy of Brian Pillman with tons of inside information about what made him tick as his real objectives)

*November 15, 2006 (History of WCW part one, Eric Bischoff's book and how the industry was changed forever)

*November 20, 2006 (History of WCW part two, Why Jim Ross left WCW, How Bischoff changed the company, signing of Hulk Hogan, Beginning of Nitro, Jesse Ventura, Brian Pillman, Chris Jericho and signing Wrestlemania planned celebrity away)

*November 27, 2006 (History of WCW part three, When Bischoff challenged

McMahon to fight; Truth and fiction around Bret Hart signing with WCW and why it didn't click)

*December 6, 2006 (details behind Pride's offers to sell promotion and Part four of History of WCW part four, Hogan-Goldberg match and why there was no rematch, WCW loses NBC network deal in 1999 and the real reasons the company fell apart)

*January 22, 2007 (2006 Awards issue, double issue \$7 on its own, \$8 overseas)

*February 14, 2007 (Life and Times of Bam Bam Bigelow)

*March 5, 2007 (WWE begins plans that will change the business)

*March 12, 2007 (Life and Times of Mike Awesome)

*March 19, 2007 (Life and Times of Ernie Ladd)

*April 4, 2007 (Life and Times of Badnews Allen Coage

--which many are calling one of the best issues in history)

*July 2, 2007 (Part one of the Benoit double murder-suicide)

*July 5, 2007 (Part two of the Benoit double murder-suicide)

*July 10, 2007 (Part three of the Benoit double murder-suicide)

*July 19, 2007 (Part four of the Benoit double murder-suicide)

*July 23, 2007 (Part five of Benoit double murder-suicide)

*July 25, 2007 (Part six of Benoit double murder-suicide)

*August 15, 2007 (The legend of the God of Japanese wrestling and his

influence on MMA, Karl Gotch)

*October 15 (2007 Hall of Fame double issue, \$7 on its own, \$8 overseas including inductions of The Rock, Tom Packs and the original Strangler Lewis)

*November 12, 2007 (Life and times of Fabulous Moolah and history of U.S. women's wrestling) .

*December 31, 2007 (History of Ric Flair and the heyday of wrestling at the Greensboro Coliseum)

*January 21, 2008 (2007 Awards issue, double issue \$7 on its own, \$8 overseas)

*March 17, 2008 (Life and times of Johnny Weaver)

*March 24, 2008 (Life and times of Gary Hart)

*April 10, 2008 (Farewell to Ric Flair; My thoughts, Shawn Michaels talks of Flair's meaning to him; Hall of Fame; Wrestlemania double issue, \$7 on its own, \$8 overseas)

*August 11, 2008 (Ric Flair leaves WWE; Updated history of pro wrestlers and MMA fighters who went to the Olympics)

*September 8, 2008 (2008 Hall of Fame double issue, \$7 on its own, \$8 overseas; part one of Killer Kowalski bio)

*September 15, 2008 (Life and Times of Evan Tanner)

*September 22, 2008 (The amazing career of Killer Kowalski, one of our most in-depth bios)

You can also order any of these issues on their own for \$4 in North America or \$5 overseas.

Rates are:

For the United States, it is \$12 for 4 issues, \$29 for 12, \$55 for 24, \$91 for 40 and \$118 for 52. In Canada and Mexico, rates are \$13.50 for 4, \$33 for 12, \$61 for 24, \$101 for 40 and \$131 or 52. In Europe, you can get the fastest delivery and best rates by sending to moonsault@mediaplusint.com. For the rest of the world, rates are \$15.50 for 4, \$41 for 12, \$78 for 24, \$126 for 40 issues and \$163 for 52 .

If you order by mail with a check, cash or money order (P.O. Box 1228, Campbell, CA 95009-1228), you can get \$1 off in every price range.

We now have available personally autographed copies of Tributes II, our latest book, as well as a DVD that comes with it talking more about the subjects in the book. The book covers the life stories of Lou Thesz, Wahoo McDaniel, Elizabeth, Fred Blassie, Road Warrior Hawk, Andre the Giant, Curt Hennig, Johnny Valentine, Davey Boy Smith, Terry Gordy, Owen Hart, Stu Hart, Gorilla Monsoon, The Sheik and Tim Woods. To get all of those biographies as back issues of the Observer would be a \$60 value today. This is a collection of some of the best Observer articles of the past several years in a hardcover, full-color format that is 239 pages. There is also a foreword by Bret Hart. The book price is \$12.95 plus \$3.50 for shipping costs in the U.S., \$10 for shipping costs to Canada and \$12 for shipping costs outside North America. You can order the book the same way you order the newsletter.

-- Raw hours were 3.32 and 3.77.

-- Impact did a 1.2 and 1.7 million viewers Thursday, peaking at a 1.40 for the final quarter, which is pretty good.

-- WWE will be reporting their second-quarter business results on August 6th, with a conference call hosted by Vince later that morning. This should be interesting as that's the WrestleMania quarter and the latest estimates are pointing to less than 1 million buys.

-- WWE: Allied Powers - The World's Greatest Tag Teams, available now. Click to check out the match listing or to order a copy.

-- Brock was on KFAN yesterday in Minneapolis playing hometown babyface.

-- Paul Heyman here argues that Brock's win over Mir doesn't make pro wrestling any more legitimate. Not sure who he's arguing with. Heyman has written some great stuff about Brock in the last few days.

- I was on ESPN Radio yesterday talking Brock, the UFC weekend, the potential buyrate, and tons more here, starting around the 14 minute mark.

- Dana White and Dave have also done about a million sports show interviews in the last 48 hours.

- The new issue of Figure Four Weekly is up right now for members with a huge look at UFC 100, including the latest buyrate estimate at press time, a behind-the-scenes look at the entire weekend including the Fan Expo, Urijah Faber seminar and Hall of Fame ceremony, tons of notes from various press conferences, my thoughts on all the Lesnar-related controversy, and an Octagon-side look at the main card.

- Latest on the lucha minis murders here.

- ZZ Top, who will be the Raw GM's next week, formed their band in 1969, which was the year man went to the moon. Their last hit album came out in 1983, before WrestleMania 1.

- Awesome Kong wrote on her Twitter today: "Getting close to making a big announcement soon."

- Cyber Sunday has been renamed again, this time to "Bragging Rights". Wonder how long that'll last.

- WWE will be doing a WrestleMania-style Fan Axxess show for SummerSlam this year on August 22 and 23rd at the Nokia Plaza. Tickets are just \$15 and the password is AXCESS.

- Nigel McGuinness versus Tyler Black has been added to July 25th in Toronto.

- NOAH announced Mitsuharu Misawa tribute shows on September 27th at Nippon Budokan and October 3rd at Osaka Prefectural Gym.

- Lance Storm is switching weeks and returning to Figure Four Daily this Thursday because he's like a kid on Christmas after UFC Saturday night, and also has a lot to say about Seth Green and ZZ Top.

- TNA and WWE are both in Orlando on December 20th with TNA doing a PPV at the Impact Zone and WWE running Smackdown/ECW at the Amway Arena. Thanks to Fredrick Lumstrong and Devin Cutting.

- September 6th Dragon Gate USA show will be called Open the Untouchable Gate since they're in Chicago. Gabe Sapolsky has a new blog up here.

- Mistico is headed to Japan during the G-1 Climax tournament and will be doing special matches on August 13th in Aichi and August 15th at Sumo Hall.

-- Best TV show of the past week

Countdown to UFC 100 44.5%

Smackdown 18.2%

Countdown of Best 100 fights in history 12.4%

Raw 8.0%

Impact 6.8%

ROH 4.4%

AAA 2.9%

ECW 1.5%

Superstars 1.2%

Is all this publicity regarding Brock Lesnar good or bad for growth of MMA

Good 73.5%

Bad 8.7%

Will have no effect 17.8%

-- IRV on BROCK

-- Writer goes to Orlando to try to have a wrestling match, humbling ensues

-- Trish Stratus will be appearing on Jason Agnew's talk show The Surf on Thursday Night at 10pm on BITE Television. She'll be taking calls from viewers Thursday night starting at 10pm Eastern at 1-888-778-2483.

-- For those who have never seen one of these, TAG TEAM MMA.

-- An interview with Royce Gracie is up here

-- Xtreme Intense Championship Wrestling from Sunday in Warren, MI: Light Heavyweight Champion TD b Kid Statik, Chris McGinnis & Jack Verville, Hailey Hatred b Sassy Stephanie, Tag Team Champions The Family & Gutter b The Ringside Revue & Josh Movado, Eddie Venom b Jeff Brooks, Midwest Champion Jaimy Coxxx b Toby Klein, and The DBA pinned Xtreme Champion Jimmy Jacobs to win the title in a Fans Bring The Weapons Match.

-- Ric Flair will be at the FansEdge Sports Spectacular signing autographs this Saturday July 18th in Rosemont, IL. Also on Saturday for boxing fans, Jake LaMotta will also be signing as well.

-- NWA-MSW pro wrestling event Saturday July 18th, Community Building, Mt. Hope, West Virginia, Belltime: 8 pm est., All Tickets: \$6:00

-- BWO will hold the second annual Beach Party Show this Saturday night July 18, 2009 with a 7 pm bell time. All tickets are \$10.00 each. At BODYSLAM U School of Professional Wrestling located in the Pioneer Club at 209 Jefferson Ave. Hasbrouck Heights , NJ 07604.

-- ISPW from Saturday night: Chase Del Monte defeated "The Midnight Idol" Nicky Benz, The Logan Brothers defeated Stronko & Bokara, Rob Eckos defeated Julio Dinero (w/ Miss Michelle) with Flash as special guest referee, Rick Fuller defeated Crowbar in a I Quit Match, Roxxi defeated Brooke Carter, Judas Young captured the ISPW World Heavyweight Championship eliminating Rick Fuller to win Summer Rumble.