



5th Year

February 2, 1976

Number 5

Hanneford Wins Cleveland For '77

The Al Sirat Grotto Circus, produced by Tommy Hanneford, will shift its dates to October for 1977. Glenn Parkins has signed contracts for the Royal Hanneford Circus to appear there over Columbus Day, for a seven day stand.

The recently concluded engagement at Cleveland broke all previous attendance records and press coverage was lavish.

Clevelanders have hailed the 1976 Al Sirat Bicentennial Circus as the best circus ever seen in their city.

Awards Time

The Circus Hall of Fame, at Sarasota (Fla.) will hold its Annual Circus Hall of Fame Award Presentation on Feb. 7-9, with a special Memorial in honor of Col. William Naramore, who was president of the Hall of Fame

(Continued on Page 14)

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SHOW MADE EARLY BOW

A long 1976 season got underway for Stebbing's Royal European Circus when the show opened at West Palm Beach (Fla.) for a Jan. 23-Feb. 1 engagement. It was the third year the show has played for the South Florida Fair & Exposition.

This year's tour will take the circus into the Gulf states before it heads north towards New England by way of the Mid-Atlantic area. By the end of August the northern dates will be completed and they'll head south towards Florida.

New for the show this year is a March 2-7 date at the Fun Coast Family Fair at Punta Gorda (Fla.). Other fair dates will include Monticello, N.Y., Long Island, N.Y., Greenville, N.C., Shelby, Va. and Richmond, Va. Other Stebbing units will be playing grandstand, indoor and promotional dates in the east.

The show currently travels on 19 units and carries a big top that is an 85 ft round end with one 40 ft. middle piece. New trucks have been added and a new 40 KW will be added to the show soon. In all a season of some 14,000 miles is anticipated.

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PEOPLE

RAYMOND DUKE will be working as Producing clown with the Fisher Bros. Circus this year. He has already booked many of the show's spring dates.

CAROL STEBBING is breaking a group of young tigers and leopards, plus lions for the 1977 season.

JOHN STRONG recently visited Wallace & Rogers Circus and says it is the best show of its size he has ever seen.

DON F. SMITH showed his circus films for a Clinton (Mich) Children's Christmas Party and will produce a Circus Nite for a local Senior Citizens group this month.

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Hanneford Off And Running

The Tommy Hanneford Al Sirat Bicentennial Circus in Cleveland (Jan. 19-25), loaded with productions and complicated technical affects, made a favorable impression on the opening night crowd. What normally takes weeks of rehearsals was accomplished overnight and this spectacular production breezed through in two hours and fifty-five minutes - a mere ten minutes over schedule, something virtually unheard of in productions of such magnitude.

Other than Ringling, no touring indoor show carries such production, lighting and staging effects. The flooring is blue and white checkerboard celotex, with red carpet throughout the area. Red, white, blue and gold curtains cover the arena, the ring curbs are red, white and blue and banners stream from the ceiling.

The circus has many outstanding highlights (see program on another page). The Hanneford Riding Act continually wins standing ovations.

Two outstanding production numbers dominate the first half: "This Is My Country", a Bicentennial spec rich in color, pageantry, lighting and costuming, depicting the history of the U.S. and its moments of glory, and the "Salute To Hollywood" aerial ballet, a re-creation of Hollywood's golden era of the 20's and 30's, which was an instant hit with first nighters. Vocalist Ernie McLean sings such numbers as "Hooray For Hollywood," and "You Ought To Be In Pictures" and conductor Leo Mascitto does

a great job, not only with the various productions, but also with the entire musical score.

Other smaller productions include: "Razzle Dazzle", an opening wherein everything revolves, spins, runs, rotates, on the ground and in the air to original music and lyrics in less than two minutes. "Planet of the Apes" introduces Johnny Zoppe's new Space Odyssey Aerial Act, and the "Flags of All States" finale preceding Eddy Ventura's Rocket Car is a colorful feature.

There are very few announcements in the show, mostly voice over, with four or five pre-announcements. These and speculation are handled by Philip Morris.

Visiting showmen and performers assess Royal Hanneford's entry into the major circus field as an important one, and there is little doubt that this show will be the talk of the industry for months to come.

HENRY THOMPSON is reportedly painting the Sells & Gray Circus and will tour as its Side Show manager.

PEOPLE

THE GREAT MICHAEL (Mike & Patti Wudtke) juggling and impalement, will tour with Sells & Gray Circus this season.

BILL BRINLEY will have his 1" scale model of Dailey Bros. Circus displayed at the Warwick Mall (Warwick, R.I.) during school week this month.

STEVE "Unique" McPEAK made the front page news when he recently walked 100 ft. in the air atop a crane at a Las Vegas construction site. He doubled for actor David Birney in the 'Killer Clown' segment of TV's Street of San Francisco and has walked across several bridges and dams. He now plans to walk across the Brooklyn Bridge.

THE HASSANIS have been booked into the Stardust at Las Vegas for some 3 months with options for additional time.

STU MILLER played a Dec. 29 date at Providence, R.I. with his Prof. Miller's Magic Show, featuring the Diaz Family.

BOBBY BEROSINI has his orangutans at Florida's Busch Gardens.

NOLLY and POLLY TATE recently bought a new house trailer to replace the one that was wrecked on a winter tour. VIRGINIA FENTON has also replaced the trailer she lost this winter.

AN ENTERTAINING SHOW

The new edition of the R-B show (Blue Unit) is described by Variety as being the top circus in the country. The show offers thrills, chills and spectacles for everyone with a total of 23 displays in two acts.

The Jan. 14th review names Ursula Bottcher and her polar bears; Jeanette Williams and her horses; Charley Bauman's tigers; the riding routines of the Romanovi, Slavovi and Paniotovi troupes, as well as the aerial feats of the Farias and Gaonas. Incidentally, Tito Gaona is now doing a triple blindfolded.

Crowd pleasers include Alex Gautier's elephants in Red, White and Blue Rampage; the spec devoted to 200 years of the circus and the wedding of Michu. Another feature has the clowns working as gymnasts with a horse and mats.

Of special interest is the mention that Elvin Bale was not performing because of an accident (see CR, Jan. 19 - Page 4). Also sitting on the sidelines is the Tzekovi Troupe (wire act) because of a rigging accident that injured one of the group.

Readers Please Note!

TV's "Streets of San Francisco" featuring the U.S.A. Nat'l Circus was postponed last week and will now be aired on Feb. 26

BILLY BARTON....

THE PLANET OF THE APES lives again! TOMMY HANNEFORD is featuring it, Manhattan lawyer MICHAEL MILLER and "Oli-ver," his Feature-Creature seem to be living it, and

HOXIE TUCKER underscores it all with the Gargantuan Gorilla he will tour in a special cage outfitted with air-conditioning and 3/4 inch glass windows. 1976 is the Year of the Dragon. Sounds more like the Year of the Monkey to me!

DATeline MIAMI: The ORANGE BOWL game on New Year's Day might better have been termed a "Meeting of the Candy Butchers". Pitchin' and Winnin' were TOMMY CLARK, EDDIE SAYE, THE WALKERS and JOHNNY WALKER, Jr., with his new bride, LAURA HERRIOTT - for starters...

Conducting the University of Miami Band, CHARLES SCHLARBAUM recorded two sides of rags, gallops and marches for Heritage Records, nationwide distributors to colleges and libraries. The music recorded was written by two late composers CHARLES DUBLE and WALTER P. ENGLISH who arranged and played for such circuses as Sells-Floto. None of the music has been recorded before.

Speaking of Music: The WIND JAMMERS held their annual convention in Cincinnati Jan. 30 to Feb. 1. Ever hear of three men leading a band simultaneously? Happened at the Ringling Opening DICK BARSTOW, BILL PRUYN, and RONNIE DRUM were the "Three Men On a Baton".

HINES and PATTY RUCKER returned to JIM NORDMARK's International All Star when it reopened Jan. 29th at Statesboro, Ga. Chuck Schlarbaum, who has more band units than the Colonel has chickens, has one with All Star helmed by JIM AMATO who was with Hoxie last season.

Wind was against most of the acts on MIKE DOUGLAS the week of Jan. 5th. Mario's Mad Hatters spent more time chasing hats than catching them, Tommy Hanneford got wrapped up in his coat, and it was nip and tuck whether Prince Najvez could even work or not. Camera angles on some of these shows was ineffective. Tajana came off best (Jan. 13). Due to the nature of the act cameras were forced to dolly in on the cage. The Prince says he is ready for Commercials. "One was inserted right in the middle of my act! It came off better than I did!"

DATeline VENEZUELA: Acts are really having themselves a ball down here. Too bad business isn't as jolly. Reports are that attendance leaves much to be desired. (Continued on Page 13)

Ready For '76 Season

Texans are preparing for a busy circus year as the season gets underway in that state. Dailey Bros. opened near San Antonio on Jan. 10th and then moved into the valley area. Franzen Bros. opened at Mathis on Jan. 31st and Mid America Circus will move into the state in March. Circus Vargas also has a long series of Texas dates after its 1976 opening in Alabama.

TV CIRCUS

The "High Flying Hamburg Circus" seen on TV last week was filmed in Hamburg, Germany with host Bill Bixby.

Featured in the one hour special were:

- The Flying Palacios - aerial
- Niedermayer's bears
- The Great Fattini - sway pole
- Los Diabolos - ladder balance
- Joe Seitz - high wire
- The Fischer elephants
- The Stephanies - balancing
- Adrienne's chimps
- Monalito - sword balance
- The Robertos - trampoline
- The Lucyx - wild animals

TV Awards

Winning awards at the 2nd Annual Int'l Circus Festival at Monte Carlo (Dec. 26-30) were:

Golden Clown - grand prize to Alexis Gruss, horse trainer.

Silver Clowns were presented to: The Flying Farfans, Little John (acrobat), Nicolini's Chimp act and Gert Aimoneit Barnum, wild animal trainer.

The Texas-based Fisher Bros. Circus will open their season at Weslaco on Feb. 12th and will be playing throughout the state. They plan a new program and a Bicentennial production and color scheme.

All of the show's rolling equipment, seats, etc., have been newly painted - red, white and blue. Each of the show's trucks bear the title "Fisher Bros. 1776 Circus."

PEOPLE

JESSIE MOYER, wife of Chas. Moyer, recently visited her daughters and family in Southern California. She also visited the Frank Deans,

W. D. WASHBURN (Sparky) is currently touring with the Dailey Bros. Circus in Texas.

ATTENTION

AGENTS - PROMOTERS - SPONSORS

You can contact me daily 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. by calling:

(714) 741-0530

BIG JOHN STRONG

G-M's 76 Tour Set

Plans for an extensive coast-to-coast tour for the George-Matthews Circus were announced last week by show manager Sid Kellner. We will open the circus at Parkersburg, W. Va., on April 1st, he said.

"We are working on a tour of 35 weeks, playing a combination of sponsored and cold dates," Kellner told CR. "Most of our major engagements have already been set and we are now scheduling the smaller towns and those dates that will be used to break up what otherwise would be long jumps."

The program, Kellner added will feature a variety of our standard acts, plus several new additions, thus making it an all new and enlarged performance. A full 10 to 12 piece band will be carried and Ed Russell is returning to handle the ringmaster and side show duties. "We'll have a show the public will really enjoy."

The show trucks are to be repainted in red and white, and no new additions are planned at this time. The big top, orange and white, is still like new and will be used at every engagement

Miscellaneous

Commerford & Shea Animal Shows have just released a new full color brochure on their various show operations.

Wallace & Rogers Circus was held over at Lion Country Park until the end of February.

King Bros. Circus plans to open their season in Florida on April 4th.

Arrest Made

Night club hypnotist Ronald Dante was arrested by FBI agents at Santa Barbara (Calif.) on Jan. 22nd after he failed to surrender in Tucson (Ariz.) as previously agreed to. He had been ordered to report to Arizona authorities where he was to start a prison term for an attempted murder.

The FBI booked Dante into the Santa Barbara County jail, and charged him with unlawful flight to avoid prosecution.

people

ELOISE BERCHTOLD is breaking a cougar, 2 jaguars, a bear and 3 leopards for her new 1976 mixed animal act.

JACKI ALTHOFF's Wonder Bears and KATRINA's Cossack Chimps have been booked for the 1976 tour of "Grande Circo y Magico" Music Hall Revue which opened at Sao Paulo, Brazil, on Jan. 25th.

ROUTES

- Cole All Star TV Circus
 Feb. 2 Curwensville, Pa.
 3 Smethport
 4 Fort Allegany
 5 Franklinville
 6 Portville, N.Y.
 7 Olean
 8 Ellicottville
- Tommy Hanneford Circus
 Jan 30-Feb 15 Detroit, Mich.
- Happytime Circus
 Feb. 3-8 El Centro, Calif.
- Holiday Hippodrome
 Feb. 2 Plainview, Texas
 3 Mineral Wells
 4 Greenville
 5 Sherman
 6 Cleburne
 7 Waxchachaie
 8 Corsicana
- Polack Bros. Circus
 Feb. 4-8 Louisville, Ky.
- Ringling-Barnum - Blue Unit
 Feb. 4-8 Jacksonville, Fla.
- Soviet Circus
 Feb. 4-8 Nassau, L.I., N.Y.
- Stebbing Royal European Circus
 Feb. 5-8 Orlando, Fla.
- John Strong Circus
 Feb. 2 Lakeside, Calif.
 3-8 San Diego
- OTHER ROUTES
- American Freedom Train
 Feb. 3-5 Albuquerque, N.M.
 7-9 Odessa, Texas

New Book

What's it like to be an animal trainer with the Greatest Show on Earth? How does one get started in such a hazardous occupation? Charley Baumann tells the story of his life in the circus and his 25 years with the big cats in "Tiger Tiger" which will be released this month.

The 279 page book is published by Playboy Press and will be available at your local bookstore. It sells for \$10.00 and contains several pictures never before published.

Bauman started out as an apprentice horse trainer and got his first experience in the steel arena when he saved a trainer who was being mauled by lions. That raw courage won him his first job as a wild animal trainer and eventually led to his feature spot with Ringling-Barnum. Today, he serves as both a tiger trainer and performance director.

Charley tells how he trains his tigers, most of which he raises himself. He also tells about escaping animals, how he was gored by an elephant, the women in his life and the daily strain of managing a performance of the circus.

You'll enjoy the book and certainly collectors will want to add it to their circus library.

POLACK BROS.

Braving frigid temperatures and a heavy accumulation of snow, some 30 members of the J. E. Warner CFA Top attended the opening performance of Polack Bros. Circus at Flint (Mich.) on Jan. 17th. The show was produced for the Elf Khurafeh Temple and drew good crowds for its entire run.

The program, presented in the IMA Auditorium, featured:

Tarzan Zerbini - wild animals
 Jorge's Phunny Ford
 The Aerial Ballet
 Sebastian's poodles
 Miss Francesca - single trapeze

Willie Lenz - chimps
 The Juggling Villams
 The Flying Medallions
 The Fullbrights - dressage
 The Canestrellis - trampoline
 Rosell Troupe - high wire
 Polack Bros. elephants

Due to many unavoidable circumstances this debut performance was not without mishaps. The most unique was a complete forward somersault by feature elephant "Baby Mike" when he apparently lost his balance and overturned while doing a head stand.

..... George DaDeppo

ROUTES

Black Watch Troupe

Feb. 4 Baltimore, Md.
 5 Hampton, Va.
 6 Raleigh, N.C.
 8 Charlotte

Mad World of Magic

Feb. 2 Silver City, N.M.
 3 Lordsburg

Miscellaneous

Several Circus Vargas performers recently worked a date at California's San Quentin prison.

The Belle Vue Circus, of Manchester, England, was featured on TV last week.

In Memoriam

CARL S. SMITH, passed away at his Auburn, N.Y. home on Jan. 13th. He joined the CMB in 1938 and was an active member of the organization and John Pawling Ring. The ring quarters were on his property and many model meetings were held there.

His brothers were troupers and worked under the name of the Hardy Bros. (jugglers). They were with Hagenbeck-Wallace in 1914-15 and Barnum & Bailey 1917. They also worked in vaudeville.

Survivors include his wife, Ethel, a son Carl, Jr., and his daughter Lois Horsman.

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SHRINE CIRCUS

The circus program presented by the Royal Hanneford Circus for Cleveland's Al Sirat Grotto Circus featured:

Slide for life - Overture - "RAZ-ZLE DAZZLE" with Doubleday & Co., The Woods (cradle), Keppo Sisters, Martells, Gibbs Storybook, King's Storybook, The Dionnes, Maas, Jr., Aerial Revolves: Misses Kim, Marina, Nancy and Roberta.

Tajana - trained tigers

The Astros - aerial motorcycle

Gibbs Ponies - Sanger Riding Academy - Rosa's Ponies

Tony Fossett - bounding rope

"Salute To Hollywood" aerial ballet - Keystone Kops, Mack Bennett Bathing Beauties, Gold-diggers, featuring Marina Radelescu - Russian aerialist

Victor Julian - poodles

Janos Chimps - Gina's Leopards - Tajana and Rama

The Clowns

Planet of the Apes - introduces Zoppe's Space Odyssey

Morris & Co. - Baron Von Frost - Signor Rai & Co. - illusions

"This Is My Country" a Bicentennial Pageant with entire company and three herds of bulls

-- Intermission --

Overture

The Flying Dells - aerialists

Winn Troupe - Inclined wire walk

King's Elephants - Royal Hanneford Elephants - Gibbs Elephants - a total of 10

Bertini Troupe, bikes - Hungarian Troupe, risley - Dionne Troupe, acro - Sulo Sisters, rolling globes

Tongo & Irene & Co. - gorilla parody with chimps

Hanneford Family Riding Act

Eddy Ventura, Rocket Car

"Flags of All States" Finale

Exit Overture

The show's staff includes:

Tommy Hanneford - executive pro.

Leo Mascitto - bandleader

Ernie McLean - vocalist

Philip Morris - announcer

Billy Barton - aerial ballet

Dwight Hanson - prop supt.

Hans Winn - Assist. to producer

Don Basham - wardrobe

Jack Burke - lighting

Spec created by Philip Morris Planet of the Apes, courtesy of 20th Century Fox; Masks by Don Post Studios; Costumes by Eaves, Morris and Iris Keppo; Salute to Hollywood created by Billy Barton; Properties created by David (Wally) Jones; Music by Maas,

(Continued on Page 14)

SAWDUST TRAIL

Word has it that Mel Silverlake, owner of Fisher Bros. Circus, has sold his show to John Frazier for the 1976 season. Fans will remember this reporter had said the McDonald Hamburger chain was considering the show. Last year some of the Fisher animals were on the Frazier show in Canada and the hippo died on tour up there.

Ken "Turtle" Benson will be on the above show this year. He will be in charge of animals and doing his juggling act. In '74 he was on Carson & Barnes when he broke his back and had to wear a complete body cast - thus gaining the name "turtle."

The Shriners of the Northeast Louisiana Shrine Club have been thrown a curve by the Monroe Civic Center. The Shrine circus has always been at the center in October or November, following the Longhorn Rodeo. Officials talked them into a May 1-2 date, so as not to conflict with the rodeo and now a stock show and rodeo will be ahead of them from Feb. 9 to 14th.

An almost lost art is being revived and that is the Calliope. A \$35,000 calliope has been built for a new \$19 million sternwheeler "Mississippi Queen" scheduled for completion this year. The Oct. 4, 1975 issue of

FOR SALE

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- ENQUIRIES WELCOME -

The Waterways Journal carries a story and photo of the new 44 whistle steam calliope.

BILLY BARTON (Continued)

MICHAEL CHERRICK's appearance on the doomed HOWARD COSWELL show was finally aired Jan. 10th. His act was cut, but what he did was super-cool. This boy's style and showmanship is superb!

FLYING MEDALLIONS into the Medinah Temple for Paul Kaye. This is the act JIMMY CAVARETTA is in and his appearance wherever he appears should cause a riot this season, thanks to PLAYGIRL's five page layout, plus nude centerfold!

It's that time of year when Nominations for Oscars roll around. Why don't we have similar awards for the Circus, with an Academy based in Sarasota run BY and FOR the circus industry?

Most startling rumor coming from Hollywood is that the screen's First Lady Miss BETTE DAVIS will portray JULIAN ELTINGE on film - the famed impersonator who played leading ladies on Broadway in the early 1900's.

Until the 30's "drag" was a highly respected art. The theatre had many such stars and the circus was "dragging" it up, too! The AVALON TROUPE (wire) dressed all their lads as lassies, as did other troupes including a famous all "girl" airplane aerial novelty. GEORGE LAKE was a sensation as VIVIAN WHITE and SLATS BEASON did a "drag" slack-wire. As a juvenile bandleader HARRY JAMES was "Alice

PEOPLE

RONNIE DRUMM is the new musical director for RBBB's Blue Unit this season.

in the Alice in Wonderland spec on the Barnes show. The "star" was BARBETTE who flabbergasted European audiences. Last known practioner was JACKIE LE CLAIR (single trapeze) on Ringling during the LALAGE era when that show was still under canvas.

BOBBY GIBBS visited five circuses in Mexico in that many days...Big news is that DOREY MILLER flew to Sarasota and bought OSCAR's ELEPHANTS but will not take delivery until the end of the season and after they wind up the TEXAS DATES...Acts arriving for the Cleveland date in a blizzard, some tied up for two days, and ROSA GIBBS, with camels and other livestock found herself sweating it out with a truck breakdown in a garage only 30 miles out of town.

SAM POLACK has added Phoenix and Denver to his early Spring route. The "monkey-business" continues with the rumor that Hoxie Bros. has acquired an orangutan.

Hagerstown (Md) circus fans, Adrian & Earl have a parakeet that immediately turns upside-down whenever they say "Billy Barton". If I were only THAT agile!

See you down the road, luvs.

Suit Set

Mattel, Inc., has asked the Federal Court at Los Angeles (Ca) for permission to sue its former auditors Arthur Anderson & Co. They charge the firm failed to follow accepted accounting practices in handling the Mattel audits.

In Aug. 1974, the SEC filed a complaint against Mattel alleging it had issued false financial statements and reports in 1972 and 1973. For fiscal 1975, Mattel took an extraordinary loss of \$16,400,000 for estimated settlement costs of class action suits filed after the SEC complaint. A special report prepared for Mattel in 1975 charged that the Anderson firm was negligent in auditing financial statements filed in and after 1971. Anderson has denied those charges.

Mattel's motion to file a suit against Anderson was made in connection with the class action litigation in Federal court. Anderson also requested court permission to crossfile against Mattel, alleging the company and certain current and former directors and employees misrepresented its financial affairs and deliberately misled the Anderson firm. Filing indicated Anderson will seek punitive damages of \$10 million and indemnification against any damages that may be asserted against it for Mattel's alleged misconduct.

In Memoriam

LORIN DAVIS HALL (87) retired RBBB contracting agent, died at Sarasota (Fla) on Jan. 18th. His show business career got started in vaudeville in 1908. In 1913 he was a part owner of the Hall-Latlipp Circus and he went on to work for most of the shows in the country. Survivors include his sons: Paul Lorin, Jr., Robert, Scott and Philip and a daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Kimball.

AWARDS TIME (Continued)

and one of the co-founders. He passed away in 1975.

Mrs. Bette Leonard, a long time member of the Awards Committee, will be in Sarasota for the presentations. Mrs. Leonard trouped with most of the big name shows, and at one time was a member of the Flying Zeneros. She now lives in Wichita, Kans.

CIRCUS PROGRAM (Continued)

Killinger and Schlarbaum; Razzle Dazzle created by Tommy Hanneford. "The Big Show's In Town," original music and lyrics by Billy Barton, arranged by Jerry Maas.

Production Directors: Tommy Hanneford, Philip Morris, Hans Winn and Billy Barton.

Producing Clown: Oopsy. Specialty Clowns - Wally and Cheryl.



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