



8th Year

April 9, 1979

Number 15

R-B BUYS ICE SHOWS

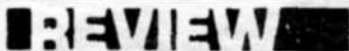
The purchase of Ice Follies and the Holiday On Ice shows by Ringling Bros.-Barnum & Bailey Combined Shows, Inc., was announced in a joint statement by both circus and ice show officials on Mar. 22nd. The sale included the business and assets of three ice shows for an undisclosed amount of money.

The operation of the ice shows was immediately placed under the personal supervision of Irvin Feld, President and Chief Executive Officer, and Kenneth Feld, Executive Vice President of the Ringling-Barnum Circus. They are also the producers of "The Greatest Show on Earth."

Arthur M. Wirtz, Chairman of the Board of Wirtz Productions Ltd., said, "My associates and I are delighted and honored that Ice Follies and Holiday On Ice, attractions which we love so much, will now be part of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus Family. Irvin and Kenneth Feld are dedicated to preserving the tradition of excellent family entertainment. Their involvement with the shows is a guaranteed assurance that the same integrity, care and concern for the highest level of quality - the same unlimited scope of imaginative and exciting entertainment that the public long has associated with the Greatest Show on Earth - will be extended to Ice Follies and Holiday on

Irvin Feld commented, "My son, Kenneth, and I recognize the need for family attractions and how important Ice Follies and Holiday On Ice have been in filling and accommodating that demand. We enthusiastically welcome the affiliation with these splendid shows and look forward to continuing to bring them to the public. We believe that maintaining high creative and artistic standards is the best means of upholding and in-

(Continued on Page 8)



SHOW TIME USA ... by Theo Mandrake

Show-Time USA, a new magic-variety show, is making the rounds in Ohio. We caught the show March 10th at the Bowling Green High School (Ohio).

The show stars the Amazing Kelmar, a young man in his mid-20s who gets a lot of time out of smaller magic. Opening the program was a variety of magic - gloves to flowers, rope stretching, cut and restored rings of rope, a handful of loose chain links joined together when tossed into the air and climaxing with a nice rabbit production. Kelmar then worked with two children from the audience with a comedy cut and restored rope, and removing the boys underpants as a finish.

Next on the bill was a puppet act presented by Miss Sharon (Kelmar's wife who assists him throughout the show). The puppets are of the Muppets type and work to a recorded track.

Kelmar appears again, this time dressed in an Indian Neru jacket and presents the Linking Rings.

One of the highlights of the show is Dum-Dum the Clown (Red Penly) who presented a funny gag with a soda pop tray.

Following this magic tricks are shown to the au-

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dience and they are told about a magic packet that is to be sold, wherein they can learn the tricks shown (paddle, clinging glass, card tricks, etc). An intermission followed.

The second half opened with a flashy oriental act using silks, and ended with a squared-circle production of silks and a rabbit. This was followed by Dum-Dum doing a number of balloon sculptures.

An E.S.P. experiment was then presented, followed by comedy juggling and gags by the clown. Kelmar then returned to present an escape from 100 feet of rope and closed the show with his escape from a strait-jacket.

The grand drape on the stage did not work and there was little in the way of lighting so this did hamper the show, as props were moved on and off behind the performer. The sound needs some work, but over all the 300 some people who saw the show seemed to enjoy it. I was surprised to see such a large show without the use of illusions, but Kelmar kept them entertained throughout the show.

After talking with Kelmar he said the show was going into the barn and will return next fall. He plans to add an illusion or two, plus his own lights and he may use live music.



PEGGY FLEMING, skating star, is featured in a unit of the Ice Follies which is playing a month's engagement at Harrah's in Tahoe, Nevada.

FRANK W. VAN FLEET is confined to the Burlington Wds. Conv. Home, Sunset Road, Burlington, NJ 08016. He would enjoy receiving mail.

VINCE CARMEN is featured with his illusions in the Acurama Show which opened in Maracaibo, Venezuela on March 30th.

THE CIRCUS REPORT is compiled and edited by Don Marcks, 525 Oak St., El Cerrito, Calif. - 94530. Phone: (415) 525-3332.

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SHOW DATES

Beatty-Cole Circus

Mar 29-Apr 1 Mary Esther,
Apr. 2-4 Pensacola Fla.
5-8 Mobile, Ala.
9-10 Gulfport, Miss.
11-12 Laurel
13-15 Jackson

Carson & Barnes Circus

Apr. 9 Mineral Wells, Tex.
10 Burkburnett
11 Sulphur, Okla.
12 Pauls Valley
13 Seminole
14 Mustang

Hubert Castle Circus

Apr. 9 Mitchell, S.D.
10 Chamberlain
11-12 Yankton, S.D.

Circus A La Mode

Apr 13-14 Berkeley, Calif.

Funs-A-Poppin Circus

Apr. 11 Yucca Valley, Calif.
14 San Diego

Lin-Rich Animal Circus

Apr. 9-14 Youngstown, Ohio

Monte Carlo Circus

Apr. 10-22 Chicago, Ill.

Moscow Circus

Apr. 11-15 Memphis, Tenn.

Police Circus

Apr. 13-15 Seattle, Wash.

Ringling-Barnum - Blue Unit

Apr. 10-22 Washington, DC

Ringling-Barnum - Red Unit

to June 3 New York, NY

Roberts Bros. Circus

Apr. 14 Zephyr Hills, Fla.

Royal Lichtenstein Circus

Apr. 9 Ann Arbor, Mich.
10 Flint
11 Detroit
12 Cleveland, Ohio
13 Oberlin
14 Gambier

John Strong Circus

Apr. 9 Brawley, Calif.
10 El Centro
11 Gila Bend, Ariz.
12 Coolidge
13 Prescott
14 Kingman
15 Lake Havasu

--- OTHER DATES ---

James H. Drew Exposition

Apr. 9-14 Charlotte, N.C.

Gutis Family - Jungle Parody

Apr. 10-14 Barre, Vt.

Holiday On Ice

Apr. 11-15 Columbia, S.C.

Holiday On Ice - Nat'l

Apr. 10-15 St. Petersburg, Fla

Ice Capades - Eastern Unit

Apr. 10-16 Salt Lake City,
Utah

Ice Capades - Western Unit

Apr. 12-15 Austin, Texas

Ice Follies

Apr. 10-15 Oklahoma City,
Okla.

Magic Time USA - Prof. Miller

Apr. 8 Kingston, NY
9 Oneonta
10 Waverly
11 Mechanicsburg, Pa.
12 Harrisburg
14 York

Manzini Escapeology Show

Apr 11-12 Albion, Mich.
14-15 Allen Park

Paul Royter - Magician

Apr. 9 Great Falls, Mont.
10 Havre
14 Guymon, Okla.

Ed Russell - ringmaster

Apr. 9 Mitchell, S. D.
10 Chamberlain
11-12 Yankton, ND.

White House in Miniature

Apr 12-22 Memphis, Tenn.



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Hoxie Bros. Circus

Apr. 9 Merritt Island, Fla
10 De Land
11 Gainesville
12 Ocala
13 Lake City
14 Kingsland, Ga.
15 MacClenny, Fla.



A LETTER from DENNIS STEVENS came bearing the distressing news that popular bandleader HENRY KYES died in Sarasota at the age of 88. The jovial Kyes was known affectionately as the "Paul White-man of the White Tops," trouped on all the major tent shows and was for many, many years musical director with Polack Bros. Circus - up until his retirement, in fact. Henry was extremely well-liked, possessed of a great sense of humor, and was one of the finest circus bandleaders this business ever had. Rest in Peace, dear friend.

More Musical Notes: Organist VIRGINIA LEE FENTON is making the Japan tour with PAUL KAYE. She and her drummer partner left Mar. 23rd and return to the USA Apr. 29th. The circus is appearing in two cities, Nagoya and Takaoka which involves 14 working days and the excited Virginia hopes to get in a bit of sightseeing. Her note to me reveals the Keyboard Mistress is "thrilled beyond words."

SNAPSHOTS: Composer BARBARA TAGGART writes she received a letter from A.S.C.A.P. which included a cash award for her musical compositions including several circus tunes. Barbara says she was surprised and pleased. . . IRVIN FELD will produce a second TV Special featuring SIEGFRIED & ROY for NBC-TV, planned for a Thanksgiving showing. . . Swedish juggler KRIS KREMO is out of the Lido Show in Vegas because of an auto mishap. The juggler's spot has been taken over by ventriloquist BARCLAY SHAW - temporarily, of course. . . THE WAZZANS write from Australia that they have enjoyed their tour "down under" and will be saddened to see it end. . . SANDY BUMPY HOUGE dropped a line to say that all the Bumpies (now retired) have adjusted quite well to the "outside world". . . AL VIDBEL played the Montreal Shrine date without JOYCE who had to stay behind to take care of the baby elephant they couldn't take into Canada. We really missed you Joyce!. . . The SWAYING STARS are now four since

daughter LUCY has been in the act (since the Texas dates last season). The act is spot-dating the Garden route, makes dates for Hubler, and will play the Baltimore Shrine in Nov. . . MERLE and PAM COOK start out their season with dates for EDDIE ZACCHINI and then play fairs for GASTONI.

REGGIE ARMOR has bounced back from his almost fatal injuries of last season to sub for IAN GARDEN as technical advisor on the Canadian TV series CIRCUS! while Ian went to handle his Montreal Shrine date - meanwhile the producer told me that Reggie will be the manager of one of his units this season. Acts taped on the Circus program Mar. 12 thru 21st included: James Zoppe Riders, Ethel's Greyhounds, Lilli-Ana's leopards, Juggler Ken Sherburne, The Albertis, Milton Zamudio (high wire), Escape artist Dick Schick, the Herandez Troupe, Randy & Sylvia, The Gutis Family, Cheri Troy, Upton's Cradle, Adele and Gory, Vidbel's elephants and ponies, Alek Sebesteyn's Poodles, Kurt's Chimps, Hansini Duo, Alice's Birds, the Sathia Duo (aerial act with Sa Sa Armor and Kathia) and Freddy Kursawe, bike soloist, with others still to be to signed.

CLOSEUPS: The girls on the Garden Montreal date tossed a birthday party between shows for songstress MICKEY GARDEN who, being a sentimentalist, broke down and cried. . . Sponge-plunger RUTH ANN sleeps - are you ready for this - on the floor which she prefers to a Beautyrest mattress (oh my aching back). . . During my stint in Canada I re-encountered the ROBERTSON Family whom I've not seen for some years - Maurice, Francoise, daughter Lauren and son Reggie, along with his young wife. The troupe will be with Cirque Gatini this season. I was shown pictures of Lauren's new revolving aerial act styled with an Indian motif. . . Also spotted in the hallway was TOMMY COOPER, and a number of visitors from Cirque Gatini. . . HERTA

(Continued on Page 16)



BEATTY-COLE CIRCUS . . . by Jack Hunter

The Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros. Circus played Charleston, S. C. on March 16-18, a month earlier than last season. This was the third date for the show and they jumped from here to Waycross, Ga., for one day, then to Albany, Ga.

The big top was the same one that was used last year and their new side show top had not yet arrived. They have a new big top on order which will be red, white and blue.

Both shows on Friday were given to 3/4 houses, and the 1 and 4:30 p.m. shows on Saturday were presented to straw houses. The Saturday evening show was a 3/4 house and both Sunday shows were SRO's.

Mary Johnson, Marketing Director for the show, did an outstanding job of promoting the circus. She truly loves the circus and is 100% for and with it.

The new advance clown, Elmo Gibb, is great. He visits hospitals, schools, day care centers, etc. Then was on hand for the tent raising and kept the many school kids on the lot entertained.

Col. Trevor Bale, the show's ringmaster is outstanding and we did get a chance to talk about a few old memories.



R. P. GRAY writes that his company's name has now been changed to "Great Texas Show Productions." The address is still the same: Box 53, Liberty Hill, Texas 78642.

The Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros. Circus is a great show and all of its people are friendly and courteous and interested in their show. All of the people are looking forward to playing for the CFA convention this year.

The show program features: Dave Hoover, wild animals; Walter & Ingrid, plate spinning; The Ruwills, plate spinning; the Flores Duo, aerial cradle; the Ferreira Duo, aerial cradle; Trevor Bale's High School Horses; Mile. Angela, juggling; The Haucks, juggling; the Romeros Duo, ground perch; Julio & Antonio, ground perch; Semon's Chimps; Aerial Ladder number with Marie Christine on the revolving trapeze; the Alvarez Troupe, flying trapeze; John Welde's bears; The Apollos, adagio; Hans & Sigrid, adagio; Miss Bonnie, cloud swing; Sr. Valdez, head balance trapeze; a teeterboard display with The Estradas, Orlando and Celina and the Martin Trio; Fred Logan's elephants with the long mount.

Many thanks to Fred Logan for helping me up on Pete the elephant.

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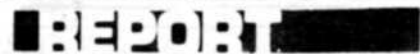
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CARSON & BARNES . . . by Ron Sanford

The writer (Beatrice, Nebr.) as well as Larry Chartier (Manhattan, Kans), and Mr. and Mrs. Jim McRoberts (Topeka, Kans.) were in Hugo, Okla., for the opening day of Carson & Barnes Circus (Mar. 16).

Last year's top was used, set up on the show's winter quarters lot. All 5 rings are worked at the same time throughout the show program and costumes are beautiful. Everyone agreed this year's program is stronger than that of last season.

This year's spec is "The Glory of Old Mexico" and includes some fabulous costumes.

The menagerie has 25 elephants, a hippo, zebra, yex, llamas, camels, and a variety of caged animals. In the midway are a pony ride, refreshment stand, snake show and a Geachelone Elephantopus Show.

All trucks are well painted for the tour. New this year is the cookhouse truck and spool truck, also new are two carnival lights.

The show has a new paper this season which is sure to attract people, and there is a new program with lots of color photos.

R-B BUYS ICE SHOWS (Continued)

creasing our audiences. The circus is the oldest touring family attraction and we are thrilled at the opportunity of having these beautiful and ever-popular ice extravaganzas as part of our organization."

Ice Follies was the first ice show to be introduced in this country, and was produced and presented to the American public by Arthur M. Wirtz in 1936, at the Chicago Stadium starring the legendary Sonja Henie. Holiday on Ice, which has two touring companies, was founded in 1947.

The 109 year old Ringling Bros.-Barnum & Bailey Circus was purchased by the Felds in 1967, and became a Mattel subsidiary in 1971. Since then the circus has expanded to two units and a Clown College has been established.

Earlier this year the Felds launched a third unit, the International Circus Festival of Monte Carlo Spectacular, presented under the high patronage of His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III.

Miscellaneous

The Beatty-Cole Circus has been drawing starw houses almost daily since they opened their 1979 season.

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SHRINE CIRCUS ... by Bill Galloway

For the second year, the Cyprus Temple Shrine Circus was produced by William Kay. Rainy and cold weather did not deter the crowds, as promoter Kris Krenkle brought in the largest attendance in the 26 year history. The March 10 and 11 shows for the Albany, N.Y. Temple had standing room only for the five performances. Visitors included Louis Stern (84 years young), former producer of Polack Bros. Circus, agent Tibor Alexander, Mike Naughton and Al Vidbel.

The program featured: Introductions; Overture; Tiger act presented by Edca Schmitt; Clowns and Dog Pie; Geronimo (John Jordan) plunge; Yano's Chimps (Dubsky); Clowns and Watch Repairs; Elephant and Rhino presented by Roman Schmitt; The Jordanas, Upside down unicycle (John and Lisa Jordan); Stacy Moore and the Mongreal Revue; Intermission; Hansinis (Hans Kraus), sword and ladder; Gina's Uncaged Leopards (Dubsky); Miss Delisa (Lisa Jordan), single trapeze; Jana and her Birds of Paradise (Dubsky); Adele and Gory, gorilla parody (Hans Kraus); Clowns and Long Shirt; Royal Hungarian Troupe, risley (Dubskys); Elephants presented by Roman Schmitt; The Castro Bros. on the high wire; Exit Marches.

Clown Alley included: Joe Sherman, producing; Bill

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Rare Find

More than 500 reels of vintage film, discovered during a construction project at Dawson City, are painstakingly being restored by members of Canada's National Film Archives. About one third of the work is completed, but several more months will be required before the project is completed.

All of the film was produced between 1903 and 1929 and it includes prints of Samuel Goldwyn's "Polly of the Circus," a Mae Murray silent movie called "Wild Fire", and a 1915 picture starring Lionel Barrymore. Many of the reels contain films showing Canada's part in World War I, some of which are said to be the only ones in existence.

Distributors shipped films to the Yukon for about 25 years starting in 1900 for the miners who were caught up in the gold rush. Because of the shipping costs the films were just left there, and apparently a good deal of it was dumped in back of Dawson City's Golden Tooth Gerty's gambling hall.

Miscellaneous

Paper for both the Fisher Bros. Circus and Carson & Barnes Circus was displayed in the same store windows at Universal City, Texas. The C&B paper was for an April 3rd date.

Funs-A-Poppin Circus was featured at the Date Festival in Indio, Calif. and while there booked several other fair dates for later this year. Visitors at the fair date included Wini McKay, Chester Cable and Poco the Clown.



SUSAN and STAN MULFORD (he is with the Nordmark Productions) are the parents of a baby boy - Stanley Harwood Mulford IIII, born in Sarasota, Fla. on March 25th. The new arrival weighed in at 8 lbs. 11 oz.

DONNA TRAINA and TRACY METCHECK have established themselves as unique tightwire performers and were featured in the Van Nuys, Calif. "Valley News" on March 23rd.

KIMO SHULZE, popular Texas clown, has teamed up with other performers and created their own Sidewalk Circus in Guatemala. The show is already scheduled for a tour in Central America and Europe.

MEL HALL visited friends with the Carden-Johnson Circus when that show opened at Lake Chalmers, La., on March 19th.

CLARENCE HASTINGS writes that CFA's from all over Michigan attended the Monte Carlo Circus at Grand Rapids and then were guests along with show folks at a party at the home of HERMAN BRAND-MILLER



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SAWDUST TRAIL

by M. L. DUPONT

Al Dawley, ringmaster for the Sam T. Polack Circus at Pine Bluff (Mar. 16-17) was the subject of several feature stories in the local press. Also during that engagement Al Dawley, John MacKay, Clown, Lee Keener, Diano's elephants and producer Sam T. Polack were made Honorary Members of the Shrine Club. This makes at least 12 clubs for Al and several for John that I know of.

A Mississippi CFA'r made a 100 mile round trip to Hattiesburg to visit Circus Genoa on opening date only to find they opened in Robertdale, Ala. Since there was a variety of routes listings it was difficult to know just where they were. My regret to Harold Causey for the long trip in vain. By the way Harold saw the Moscow Circus and said he wasn't too impressed.

The Millette Tent CFA of Dallas all met on the C&B lot on Mar. 22nd for their meeting and to attend the show. Their next lot meeting will be with TNT & Royal Olympic which is set to play a local Mall. After the show they plan a cook house dinner.

Christmas in March? Yes, that's what this writer has been experiencing. First I received a package of circus letterheads from Houston, some European programs from Hartford and a variety of old items from Sikeston, Mo. My thanks to all of those who send me items along with news and information.

Thanks too to those people who wrote and said they would enjoy more European show items. Here are a few tidbits: Senior clown Eddie Orry, with James Bros. will be back in the ring this spring after recovering from a heart attack. Mary Chipperfield had her cat act at the Kevin Hall Circus, promoted by the Glasgow District Council. Bad weather over the Holidays cut attendance at Liverpool for the Chipperfields Circus. The paper "World Fair" carried an ad that "a new circus would open in March 1979"

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PEOPLE

JOE MYERS (Jo-Mar the Clown) will be with Robert Bros. Circus again this season, as producing clown.

DICK OSLUND, magician, is presently out booking dates for the 1979 tour of Circus Girard.

RALPH HARTMAN, recently visited MEL SILVERLAKE's Fisher Bros. Circus when the show was playing at Marion, Texas, on Mar. 14th.

and was looking for tent people (canvas), billers, mechanics, electricians, stilt walker and midjets. James Bros. formerly a 2 pole tent show is going to a 4 pole top and will sell their old tent. The Gerry Cottle Circus tented it right through the winter season, something not usually done in England because of the bad snows they often experience. In 1930 the Great Carno Circus did the same thing, got caught in a heavy snowstorm and their tent collapsed, causing thousands of dollars in damage.

Shows playing in Britain are: Belle Vue, Kelvin Hall, Austen Bros., London Circus, Chipperfields, Circus Hoffman, Circus Reunion, then Billy Smarts and the Gilbert Bros. and Robert Bros. are set to open soon.

Even in England they have problems getting help, but one ad of interest stated: "Ground available for circus in 1979 - Hastings Brough Council. Applications are invited from circus proprietors to stage their circus in Hastings. A 2 acre side is available." Now where in America can a circus get that kind of cooperation?

The Davenport Jungle Wonders Circus was spotted along I-55 on March 7th in North Houston. The fan who sent me the information said he was enroute to the airport when he spotted the circus. The main top appeared to be blue and a two pole tent, with a square end top also on the lot. Elephants were staked out on the midway. Trucks were well painted.

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REVIEW

SHRINE CIRCUS . . . by Billy Barton

The Karnack Shrine Circus produced by Ian Garden at the Forum in Montreal (Mar. 15-18) gave 9 performances in the four days, three of which were turn-aways. Excellent weather greeted the show, which is unusual for March. There were only brief snow flurries on two occasions and mild temperatures overall. The St. Patrick's Day Parade, an important event for the French Canadian city did not affect the Sunday shows, both of which were packed and jammed.

Producer Garden launched his full production for this date, a special opening called "That's Entertainment", a "Rhapsody In Blue" (space-styled) web number, and a European Finale called "Before The Parade Passes By". The numbers featured songstress Mickey Garden, and were produced by Roger Pry-

stanski.

The show received lavish press coverage and uniformly good reviews. The program featured: Anthem, Shrine Parade, Overture, Miss Ruth Ann, sponge dive; "That's Entertainment" opening spec; the Hawthorn lions and tigers presented by Lou Regan; Mister Sensation, aerial; Jack Cook's comedy car; the Hollywood Horses; Baby Ronni, worked by John Cuneo; Al's Ponies; Rhapsody In Blue Aerial Ballet featuring Evy, the Girl in the Moon; Gasberry & Co., comedy; Rumpy, clown specialty; The Flying Lar-Rays; Intermission; The Aquilars, perch; Edwardos, bikes; Alain, sword balance; Rumpy; Sebestyen's Poodles; The Vickinas; display with the Chris Albertis, Kurt Symanski's chimps, Gypsy Alice's birds; the Bake Shop with Jack Cook and Rumpy; Les Blocks, high wire; Vidbel's elephants and Cuneo's elephants; The Swaying Stars; "Before The Parade Passes By", finale.

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HOXIE BROS. CIRCUS

HOXIE BROS. CIRCUS . . . by John Hart

Floridians in three west central cities, Brookville, New Port Richey and Lakeland, were treated to a Mar. 23-25 preview tour of the 1979 edition of the Hoxie Bros. Circus. According to owner L. B. "Hoxie" Tucker the show would return to quarters for several days before starting its formal tour.

The show as presented at New Port Richey, under the auspices of the Police Benevolent Association, consisted of: Spec "Circus on Parade"; Lisner Duo, aerial balancing; Patti Antalek, high school horse; the Campa Sisters and Stimax Trio, juggling; Valentino Duo, French trapeze; Clowns, with Construction Crew and Bank Robber; Patti Antalek, Canine Capers; Jim Royal and Tiffany Light Fantastic Illusion; Clowns with Space Rocket; The Campa Family, unicycles; Intermission; Jim Royal and Tiffany Bondage Illusion; Coloring Book Pitch; Reggilton and Co., musical comedy; The Stimax Chimps; Balloon Pitch; Patti Antalek, military ponies; Danuska and four girls on web; Clowns with a child's dressing contest; Loyal Repensky Riders, with Roman and trick riding; Jim Silverlake, two elephants.

The show's lion act and flying act were not used at New Port Richey due to the soft ground.

The show is expertly paced by Jim Royal in his second year with Hoxie as ringmaster. Walter Stimax heads up Clown Alley which is undoubtedly the

IN MEMORIAM

EMMETT KELLY (80) who made millions of people laugh as "Weary Willie" died following a heart attack at Sarasota, Fla. on March 28th. He was featured on Cole Bros. and Ringling-Barnum, as well as many other shows. He was an annual feature at a Reno Casino and was reported to be working on a film story about his life.



strongest ever seen on a home show.

Costuming was bright and fresh showing off Betty Tucker's flair for spectacular, but durable attire, that lasts well into the season.

Canvas crews of both the Hoxie and Great American shows were being used for set up and tear down. It was obvious that this was both a training and "weeding out" exercise.

According to Joe McMahon, general agent in charge, the actual on the road show will be much stronger with the addition of the lion act, flying act and the six "punk" elephant act which was playing elsewhere this week. However, just on the basis of what was actually seen, it is this writer's opinion this is probably the best show Hoxie and Betty Tucker have ever presented.

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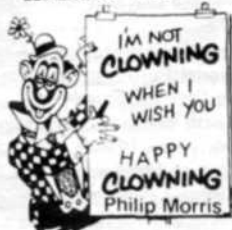
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REVIEW

MONTE CARLO CIRCUS . . . by Jon Friday

Ready or not, the long-awaited premiere tour of the Festival International du Cirque de Monte Carlo Spectacular through the U. S. and Canada, complete with a souvenir program half-English and half-French like a *Montreal menu*, is now underway. Stressing quality rather than quantity in the finest European circus tradition and backed with all the know-how, might and proven track record of Ringling-Barnum, this is the show to watch in '79. I predict this show will make waves that will effect everyone in the circus field and the net result can only be vast improvements and renewed interest.

The show opens with a band number with all the uniformed property hands standing at attention and then the Performance Director, Mike Gorman, introduces Sergio, the 29 year old ringmaster from Paris. Then a short film is shown of Monte Carlo which concludes with opening remarks and comments on the International Circus Festival of Monte Carlo by His Serene Highness Prince Ranier III. During the brief five year history of the Monte Carlo Festival only seven individuals or troupes have been accorded the Gold Clown Award, and Elvin Bale is the only one seen in this performance. There have been 21 Silver Clown Awards given to individuals or troupes which includes the Richter Family, the Silagis and Duo Dobritch featured in this touring show.

The Riding Richters present precision acrobatics on horseback. The Hungarians are skilled equestrians but the sextet remains fairly aloof towards the paying public. According to the program photos they present a most difficult free head-to-head stand with the underlander standing on the back of a moving horse. I don't see how I could miss such an outstanding feat if it was presented at Grand Rapids, but then I was distracted several times during the opening act by late-comers to the 7:30 p.m. performance. Sergio worked very hard to get a big hand for them with the European custom of a rhythmic applause with a beat that wasn't entirely a success.

Eli and Rosalba Albarracine, of Colombia, (S.A.) per form their unique aerial cradle routines next. Rosalba supports her husband by only one ankle during part

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of the routine as Eli executes a back plange off a foot loop attached to her other ankle. The Albarracines won special recognition at the 1976 International Festival.

Luis Munoz, of Spain, is known as a flamboyant performer and a low wire virtuoso executing both forward and backward somersaults with ease. He also has a dazzling smile and tons of personality that would win over any crowd even if he was a less gifted artist. It's during this act with all the by-play between Luis and Sergio, who acts as his assistant, that the audience begins to perk up and see that this isn't going to be just another circus.

The Gabor Eotvos, Hungarian Musical Clowns (4) present the ageless and traditional European art form as they did at the 1978 Circus Festival. Family patriarch, Gabor Eotvos, along with two sons and his daughter-in-law are finding many new friends among the appreciative audiences, both children and adults. Gabor Sr. has mastered 24 different musical instruments and he appears to produce at least half that number from the confines of his coat.

The Wee Gets are the youngest performers in the Monte Carlo Circus, consisting of Wilton, 16; Rosalba, 14 and Gloria, 12, the children of the Albarracines. They present many fast-paced hand balancing feats

(Continued on Page 15)

MONTE CARLO CIRCUS (Continued)

with the only props being a table and flight of stairs. Routines include two versions of a double handstand, in one Wilton is balanced on hands only while his sister does a handstand stop his neck. In another feat, the boy walks down the stairs in an upright handstand while his sister performs a handstand stop his feet. Also the girls offer a free head-to-head stand with the understander in a full split on the table. They took a nasty tumble doing the hand walk down the stairs at the show caught. This may have been a fake fall to gain more crowd interest, but I don't think so. The talented trio captured a significant accolade from the Children's Jury at the Monte Carlo Festival in 1976.

Brian and Leslie Fawcett present their jungle-themed chimpanzee act next featuring Bu Bu, 21; Tumbeлина, 10; Spitz, 5 and Brandy, 4. It's evident from watching these simians close-up that each one has a very distinctive personality and also they're unusually friendly, which is a sign they receive good treatment and care. The Fawcett Chimps were recently featured in Germany's Circus Althoff.

Elvin Bale displays his world-famous "heel catching" single trap routines which won him the Gold Clown Award in 1976. He now opens the number with a tricky, twisting heel catch and the climax is the forward dive to a heel catch. Elvin is well-known to circus fans and performers and has been a Ringling feature since 1969. Born in London, Elvin has packed a lot of circus into his 32 years and his aerial versatility was recently featured in the NBC-TV Special "Circus Super Heroes".

During intermission a cable mesh arena is raised from the ring curb and the Karoly Donnert Royal Bengal and Siberian tigers (5) open the second half of the program. The 33 year old Hungarian tiger trainer presents routines very similar to Charly Baumann of the Ringling Blue Unit, including the beautiful tigers walking on their hind legs, but with some novel twists such as one tiger sitting upright on another tiger that is lying down. The act gets into high gear when two large horses, their upper bodies protected by leather, are led into the arena which now holds only two tigers and the trainer. Both tigers not only ride horseback, they also leap back and forth from the floor to the horse's backs. The Donnert tiger act was awarded the "Prix du Club des Amis du Cirque Francais" at the Monte Carlo festival.

The Gene Mendez high wire act is presented directly over the Royal Box seats as the show continues and the arena is dismantled. Gene's high wire is suspended from the girders and his only prop is a jump rope. A series of high-wattage quartz lights is suspended directly over the high wire for added illumination. I would not want to depend on follow spots up on a high wire either. He walks to the main wire on his main guy line on an incline and returned into the stands via the same route.

The Eotvos men make a short clown entree dressed as ballerinas with a springy resonant object under each tutu which allows them to take a pratfall and bounce right back to their feet. Some of the Blue Unit clowns used this same bit last season when they presented their Clown Corps de Ballet. About this point in the show Ringmaster Sergio had taken his mike about 20 rows up into the seats and was busy making new friends. At one point in the program Sergio invited a young lad from the seats for a brief interview. Sergio asked the youngster if he knew where Paris was located and he got an immediate reply "In London."

The Richter Family are next with their trio of Indian elephants. The Hungarian Silver Clown Award winners present acrobatics on the backs of the bulls and at one point an elephant does a one foot stand on a revolving pedestal as a family member balances on the head of the beast in a handstand, sometimes a one-handstand. The conclusion is a back lay-out somersault to the back of a large elephant, propelled from a teeterboard by another elephant. This stunt has been performed by Gunther Gebel-Williams on Ringling Red for several years, but it will be new and novel to many people removed from the regular Ringling routes. Ditto for Elvin Bale's aerial antics.

Duo Dobritch were Silver Clown Award winners at last year's Circus Festival for their unique perch pole balancing act. You don't see forehead supported perch poles very often anymore and Zdravko and Cornelia Dobritch employ unusual props such as a bicycle that revolves atop a slender pole. At the Monte Carlo Festival Mr. Dobritch scaled a fixed pole monkey-fashion while balancing a long pole on his forehead with his wife atop it. This pole has been replaced by a guyed out ladder and Cornelia does a handstand atop the forehead supported pole, while Zdravko is balanced at the top of the ladder. When Mrs. Dobritch does her handstand atop the long pole she couldn't possibly be any higher as she's eye-level with the frame supporting the Elvin Bale trapeze and Albarracine's rigging. A safety line is employed for these feats.

The versatile Eotvos Family return again with their acclaimed flexible bar act (often referred to as a horizontal bar in Europe. It is confusing if you expect to see gymnasts swing around a fixed bar) they work in the manner of the Mecners and more recently the Metckaroffs. The Eotvos ladies are catapulted into a series of mid-air twists, turns and somersaults from a flexible bar held in the hands of the Eotvos brothers Gabor and Tibor. This voltage act was recently accorded the Prix de la Revue at the International Festival.

Elvin Bale returns to the spotlight as the "Phantom of Space" performing on the giant gyro wheel. Jeanette Williams, although not announced, assists and even takes a solo walk inside the self-propelled looper while twirling fire batons. The act is exactly the same as was seen on Ringling Blue the past several seasons, includ-

(Continued on Page 17)

BILLY BARTON (Continued)

CLAUSEN CUNEO, who retired a year ago, arrived in Montreal with husband JOHN to spend a week seeing shows, dine out and have a good time in general. She looks great, says she does NOT miss the business at all and has invited me to see that fabulous Frank Lloyd Wright home when I am in Wheaton - an invitation I plan to accept. . . Has anyone noticed how much like the fabulous RED SKELTON are JACK COOK'S facial expressions and body movements? I didn't until I heard the two compared several times by onlookers and it's true! Incidentally, the bake shop routine performed in tandem by Jack and ROGER "Rumpy" PRYSTANSKI is excellent. . . 22 yr. old TUFFY NICHOLAS positively MUST be the Circus World's Number One Sex Symbol of 1979! In Montreal the girls ran after this boy as though he were the only male in town. I never saw anything like it.

SETTING RECORDS STRAIGHT: A book, World of Clowns, by George Bishop (published by Brook House, L.A.) has a section on the Funny Ford which credits George Perkins (Perky the Clown) with creating four Model T Ford clown cars the first of which he built and worked in 1929 on the Al G. Barnes show. BUT the very FIRST Ford was designed and presented by GEORGE COOK in 1924 and that original Ford is still in operation, used by the son



REX HORTON, bear act, and GRAN MAR, high wire performer, visited ELAINE and BOB LUND and their Magic Museum in Marshall, Mich. late last month.

BUCKY STEELE's male elephant "Barney" was featured on the cover of Road King magazine. It was a cartoon which was a take off from his part in the Walt Disney film "Runaway on the Rogue River."

MERLE, whose son JACK, in turn, is currently performing with a car Merle and Jack rebuilt from the ground up in 1976. The pair bought a model-T which they reconstructed from a storehouse of parts accumulated since 1924 and which they augmented with new parts that are specially hand-crafted.

TIP for friends with sore muscles: Try Baumodyne Gel, an antiseptic linament massage which can be obtained only through a veterinarian. Jack and Patti Cook let members of the Flying Lar-Rays and myself try it and it's the best I've ever used.

ROGER "Rumpy" PRYSTANSKI was voted "Dog-catcher of the Year" during the Montreal Shrine date and was awarded a milk bone, a pan of water, and a "No Barking" sign. And with that I . . .
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MONTE CARLO CIRCUS (Continued)

ing the fake fall from atop the wheel while Elvin is balanced blind-folded. This act is definitely an American contribution to the international circus world. The counter-balanced revolving apparatus was conceived and patented about 30 years ago by Clay Beckett who became a circus performer at sixty-plus years.

The Silagis, 11 member Bulgarian teeterboard troupe display the sensational acrobatic skill that won them the coveted Silver Clown Award at the International Festival. If anything, the world-toured troupe has improved since last seen with Ringling-Barnum. Not content with an ordinary somersault to a four man high, Yanka Atanasova, the troupe's only female, does a double back to the four man high. She overshot the first attempt giving Sergio an opportunity to kiss her twice for encouragement on the second try. The troupe has also mastered the breath-taking five man high and every possible combination resulting in a four man high human pyramid is included in their fast-paced, precise and zesty repertoire.

Sergio then brings back all the circus artists for a final bow and they line the ring curb in the finest European tradition. When the band stood up and applauded there was almost a standing ovation, but it would have been better here to just let the crowd show their appreciation in their own way. After the performers left the

arena Sergio became even more joyful than earlier and went over to the bandstand and took the baton away from Robert Franklin and led the band for its exit march, and they played until the arena was nearly empty. Sergio remained on the floor to sign autographs and talk with anyone that cared to meet him. As difficult as his guttural English is to comprehend for Americans (a blue collar type man behind me kept remarking it sounded like Jacques Cousteau was in the circus) over the mike, there's little doubt that Sergio is going to make a lot of new friends for the circus. Because of Sergio the Monte Carlo Circus seems like a very friendly show, much more friendlier than most other shows.

The layout for the Monte Carlo Circus is very simple. Behind the singe ring is a huge stationary backdrop with huge replicas of the Gold and Silver Clown Awards on either side and the movie screen in the center. Instead of being on an elevated bandstand, the 12 man band is seated on a platform to the right of the screen. Like the Moscow Circus there are four banks of beam lights hung about the outside of the ring.

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SPECIAL

FLORIDA NOTES . . . by Circus Joe Valenciano

The Florida State Fair, operating from April 4 to 15 features the following talent: Chic, a disco group; Dr. Hook, rock and roll; Country music stars Eddie Rabbitt, The Kendalls, Bill Anderson, Ferlin Husky, plus musical stars such as Anita Bryant, The Dukes of Dixieland, Jim Schwall Band, The Harmonicats, The Murphy Family, and the Ink Spots.

Back after a few years absence is the Sprint Car Auto Races, driving on a new half-mile oval dirt track.

On the Fair's midway is the Royal American Shows with the latest in thrill rides and attractions. Also at the fair are such features as a Hot Air Balloon Race, Parades, Disco Dancing, Sky Diving, American Bowling Congress and the Cypress Gardens Water Ski Show.

Show Report

Florida's Egypt Temple Shrine Circus was produced by Carden-Johnson Circus and included a program book which carried a front cover photo of Bill Kormpates, high act performer. Also featured on the program book was Don Witt, who sold more than \$4000 in ads alone for the temple.

Advance sales of tickets for the circus were reportedly up 30% over that of last year. The sale of advertising and promotional material was also up over the previous year's sales.

The circus program included: Spec, "Circus on Parade"; Red Hartman, wild animals; The Cavanaugh's and The Armstrongs, aerialists; Cuccillo, trampoline; Clown Number; George's Camels; Medro's Dogs; Rizzi's llamas; Clowns; Gina, sword balancing; Gilberto, bounding rope; Hanzini, sword balancing; The Zapata Bros., high wire; Alberto Zoppe, mixed animal revue; Aerial Ballet; Intermission; The Great Kormpates, high act; Maria, Carla and Janie, equestrians; Adele & Gory, comedy gorilla; Clowns; The Alberto Riding Academy; Armondo and Ms. Medro, balancing; Clowns; Circus elephants; The Flying Carrolls; Finale.

PEOPLE

HAZEL PHILLIPS has been named Chairperson for the Ladies Luncheon for the CFA Convention which will be held in conjunction with the Beatty-Cole Circus.

ROBERT HOCUM who is making his European debut with the Blackpool Tower Circus will go on tour with the Circus Baruni in Germany. Also appearing at the Blackpool Tower Circus is the Salvadors.

REPORT

Circus Fans from Texas report the Jungle Wonders Circus has been playing that state and is presenting an impressive appearance, with a good program. Attendance has been good at all stands.

The show is using a two pole big top, with aluminum poles. They have a fork lift and cables to guy out the tent. The midway includes a red and white marquee, plus the show's animals as a free attraction. Some of the animals displayed are: cats, bear, camel, llama, guanaco, white rhino, 7 elephants, etc.

The program is presented in one ring, which is surrounded by quartz lights. Music is provided by an organ with a good speaker system. The acts are: cat act, wire, elephant, dogs, ropes, pony, juggling, llama traps, chimp, pony drill, web, dogs, zebra, dog and pony, hair hang, plates, horses, cloud swing and elephant number.

SPECIAL

Last month New York's Supreme Court Justice Edward Greenfield ruled that 103 year old New York law which prohibits youngsters from appearing in a circus was unconstitutional.

The ruling came as a result of a suit filed on behalf of seven youngsters who perform with the Ringling-Barnum Circus.

The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children was named in the suit, but the Judge ruled the Society's role was moot because a recent change in the law had reduced its participation to that of consultant, with the final decision to be made by the Mayor's office.

Last year the Society filed charges against the circus during its Madison Square Garden engagement. They attempted to have the children removed from the circus performance.

ED BERG has been hospitalized for several weeks and would enjoy hearing from friends in and out of show business. Write him at: 6433 West 82nd Place, Burbank, Ill. 60459.

LUCY LOYAL, former show girl with the Carson & Barnes Circus, is now touring with the Mel Silverlake Fisher Bros. Circus.

FRED WENDANY recently celebrated his 72nd birthday while appearing with the Funs-A-Poppin Circus. Other members of that circus who recently celebrated birthdays are: DOLORES CORONADO, HEIDI WENDANY and LIBBY FERRIS.

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