



8th Year

March 19, 1979

Number 13

# Monte Carlo Show Opens

Producers Irvin and Kenneth Feld premiered the number three circus operated by Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey at Providence, R. I. on Feb. 20th.

The arena layout brings an authentic European one ring circus, with plush royal box seats, decorated with potted plants and prop hands uniformed in red coats with gold braid and wearing berets, as a multi-media show business event.

The Monte Carlo International Circus Festival Spectacular in every way is a jewel in the Feld's crowns. Built new from the ground up in about seven months, the show is moving on 15 cars, 3 flats (piggyback), 1 bi-level, 1 animal stock car, 1 storage car, 1 Pie car/generator and 8 sleepers. The train and wagons (former sea/land containers) are aluminum with the show's title on yellow decals. Baker Brown is the show's general manager.

An eleven piece band under the direction of Robert Franklin cuts a super musical program arranged by Bill Pruyn. Performance director Mike Gorman had the show running well on the third day when caught by this reporter.

All acts have received awards at the original Monte Carlo festival, and each is truly outstanding, with only three groups doubling. Elvin Bale opens the show with his cannon act and then an introduction is given by way of motion picture film on a large screen in the center of an enormous proscenium that serves as a backdrop and backdoor. The Gene Mendez high wire is rigged without poles on the left of the 42 ft. ring and with the Bale spacewheel in the air on the right. The ring and back piece are decorated with rippling lights that add much to the production.

France's Sergio, ringmaster/announcer who has handled

(Continued on Page 19)

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# Pot-Pourri

by Mike Naughton

Al and Joyce Vidbel were unable to make a date for the Emmett Kelly, Jr. Circus in Long Island when the temperature in the Catskill Mountains dropped to minus 35 degrees, freezing their fuel lines, brakes and plugs on their new '79 pick-up and tractor and trailer. Joyce reports, "we tried for six hours on Sunday morning to get started, but when one thing was corrected something else went wrong. On top of that all the pipes in the basement burst flooding the whole basement."

Tiny Phillips, Ron Lucas, James Kotter and Frank Meeker were among the CFA's attending Royal Hanneford Circus in White Plains. . . . Incline wire walker Jay Cochran made the Hanneford White Plains date.

Nancy Giordano is with Hubler Int'l . . . The Chandlers, Tom Sink and Middy Streeter will tour with the Carson & Barnes Circus . . . Dorian Blake and Janis will work on the Cole All Star show when the Chandlers leave to open with C&B.

Juggling rola bol-ist Billy Martin will return to the Great American Circus . . . Oscar Mescias and family will be with Roberts Bros. this summer, presenting cloud swing, one finger stand and foot juggling.

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**TWO SHOWS . . . .** by Billy Barton

The Moscow Circus, which closed its Puerto Rico run Mar. 4th, begins a stateside tour of fourteen weeks starting at Baton Rouge, La., Mar. 8th and will end its schedule in mid-June.

The orchestra is overseen by Keith Killinger who conducts ten side musicians in each city and is assistant to Russian Conductor Boris Porojetski who speaks no English. The American musicians carried with the show include Russ Darr, trumpet; Leo Mascitto, keyboard; and Brian Childers, percussion.

The program is colorful and typically Russian, opening with four Cossack riders speeding from four corners of the buildings bearing flaming torches and features an incredible bear act using 15 cages of bears.

\*\*\*\*\*

A report phoned in from New England where the Monte Carlo Circus premeired, advises that business in Providence was only so-so, and that while the show carries its own lighting and uses spots, there was a noticeable lack of gels with the show, everything was working in harsh white light. The advertising campaign bears the slogan the "best of the best" which professional observers claim is a misnomer and can only hurt the industry, not help it.

We are informed that the tiger act is small (five tigers), the only animals in the first half of the show are two horses, and that there is no elephant act as such; instead two elephants are used in a teeterboard display.

American acts on the show include Elvin Bale, trapeze and space wheel, Gene Mendez, high wire and Brian Fawcett, chimps.

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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16-18 Charleston, S. C.  
19-21 Albany, Ga.

## Carson & Barnes Circus

Mar. 19 Olney, Texas  
20 Graham  
21 Garland  
22 Dallas

## Hubert Castle Circus

Mar. 19-20 Missoula, Mont.  
22-25 Seattle, Wash.  
23-25 Ft. Wayne, Ind.

## Circus Vargas

Mar. 19-22 Thousand Oaks, Ca.  
23-26 Santa Maria

## Cole All Star TV Circus

Mar. 19 Bath, N.Y.  
20 Savona  
21 Mansfield, Pa.  
22 Jasper, N. Y.  
23 Shinglehouse, Pa.  
24 Canisteo, N.Y.

## L. N. Fleckles Circus

to April 1 Detroit, Mich.

## Garden Bros. Circus

Mar. 19 Cornwall, Ont.  
24-25 Gulfport, Miss.

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Mar. 22-25 Oklahoma City,  
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Mar. 23 Brookville, Fla.  
24 New Port Ridley  
25 Lakeland

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Mar 16-25 Jacksonville, Fla

## Monte Carlo Circus

Mar 20-21 Owensboro, Ky.  
23-25 Carbondale, Ill.

## Moscow Circus

Mar 20-21 Big Springs, Tex.

## Sam T. Polack Circus

Mar 22-25 Canton, Ohio

Ringling-Barnum - Blue Unit  
Mar 20-25 Knoxville, Tenn.

Ringling-Barnum - Red Unit  
to Mar 26 Baltimore, Md.

Royal Hanneford Circus  
to Mar. 25 Chicago, Ill.

Royal Lichtenstein Circus  
Mar. 19 Brookings, S. D.  
20 Sioux Falls  
21 St. Peter, Minn.  
22 St. Paul  
24 Willmar

## ---- OTHER DATES ----

Blackstone Magic Show  
Mar 24-25 Santa Barbara, Ca.

Ethel's Greyhounds  
to Apr. 1 Detroit, Mich.

Flinstones on Parade  
Mar 22-25 Newcastle, Aust.

Holiday On Ice - Int'l Unit  
Mar 21-25 Abilene, Texas

Holiday On Ice - Nat'l Unit  
Mar 20-25 Lakeland, Fla.

Ice Capades - Cont'l Unit  
Mar 21-25 Nashville, Tenn

Ice Capades - Eastern Unit  
Mar 21-25 St. Louis, Mo.

Ice Capades - Western Unit  
Mar 21-25 Halifax, N.S.

Ice Follies  
Mar 20-25 Buffalo, N.Y.

Int. Assoc. of Auditorium Mgr  
Mar 18-21 St. Louis, Mo.

Jo Ann & Sunny - Seal Act  
to Apr. 1 Detroit, Mich.

Evel Knievel Thrill Show  
Mar 20 Whyalla, So. Aust.  
21 Broken Hill  
22 Port Pirie  
24 Adelaide  
25 Mildura, Vict.

Los Latinos - wire act  
to Mar 25 Chicago, Ill.

John MacKay - Clown  
Mar 22-25 Canton, Ohio



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Mr. Sensation - Aerialist  
Mar 19 Cornwall, Ont.  
24-25 Gulfport, Miss.

White House in Miniature  
to Mar 25 Waukegan, Ill.

Tom Ogden - Magician  
Mar. 20 Teaneck, N.J.  
23-25 Grossinger, N.Y.

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THE VICTOR JULIAN dog act, presented now by LEO COFFEY (Cocque) will finish its tour with Hanford and also play the Medora Musical this summer - as usual. A phone call from Cocque, several weeks prior to this column seeing print, furnished additional information and more explicit details regarding the death of our dear friend. During the hoop jumps with the Dalmatians, one of the dogs caught its hind leg in the hoop which set Sir Victor spinning, causing a heart attack.

Two women sitting in the front section (who turned out to be nurses) rushed into the ring to revive the stricken performer's heartbeat. Within seconds the ambulance arrived (an extraordinary event in itself - usually one takes forever to materialize!). Efforts to reactivate Victor's heartbeat were successful but a rupture of some sort in the stomach (never explained) caused internal hemorrhaging and owing to Victor's weakened heart it was impossible to apply the needed blood transfusions. As Cocque explained: "They kept his heart going but couldn't keep him breathing." In short our beloved Victor died, where he preferred, in center ring, a star to the very end.

THREE years back ED MIGLEY premiered his Circus Odyssey in San Juan, P.R., followed by a short but successful run in New England. Meanwhile the industry waited to hear more from this young producer. That wait has ended. Ed announced he is enlarging his show, changing the format to a three-ringer, and is in the midst of negotiating commitments that will give his show a lengthy route in 1980 of Shrine, Police and College Dates.

JIM SWAFFORD evolving into something of a globe-trotter, flew to Mexico City to see Circo Atayde prior to its closing, reports a happy time, with the HALL Family, the MARCANS, and ChiChi CANISTRELLI ATAYDE. Jim planned to visit the Moscow Circus in Texas immediately upon his return to the West Coast. EMMETT KELLY, Jr. informs me that their Stony

Brook, L.I. College date in February was fraught with problems (which I will not go into for confidential reasons) buy says that veteran agent ROSE ADAIR saved the day and the date with prompt and efficient action.

SNAPSHOTS: Tis said that JOHNNY WALKER, Jr., will work bulls this season on Carson & Barnes. . . One of the Samoyed Huskies worked by JAN JOYNER on Circus Vargas dropped dead of a heart attack in the ring. The autopsy disclosed the animal possessed an extra "small" heart. . . RON MORRIS flacked the Dothan (Ala) date for Garden Bros. in March. . . 22 yr. old TUFFY NICHOLAS is concession boss on that show which will field two Canadian units this season. . . Reports are that ringmaster AL DAWLEY lost extensive and unique jewelry, stolen during the Polack Louisville Shrine date. . . PRINCE BOGINO, clawed recently, will not work the second KAY ROSAIRE cat act inked for Gatini. Name of the new trainer thus far is not available for release (later, kids). . . JANICE and MIKE ARIA have readied their Golden Retriever Dog Act. . . JORGE BARREDA has added flashy new lighting effects to his wonderful, fast-paced lion act. . .

And brother JOSELITO, already one of the absolute best single high wire artists, gets better and better with each new season. . . Didyaknow Joey BRUCE WARNER is a Pro R.N. (Registered Nurse). . . The Rochester Shrine date was the scene of an impromptu gathering of FSU Students including the Sensational Leighs, Jo Ann Jennier and members of the Flying Lanes. Jo Ann outdid them though - she graduated from THREE different universities.

LINE-UP for the Dobritch Int'l Circus New Orleans Police date this month includes: Lawrence Grant, cats, the Trio Vasquez, head-balance trapeze, Norbu, Johnny Laddie and Co., unsupported ladder, The Great Vashek, inclined walk, Davide Zoppe's Rhesus Monkeys, Mister Sensation, the Flying Vasquez Troupe,

(Continued on Page 17)



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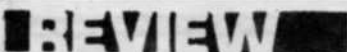
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## MONTE CARLO CIRCUS... by Donald Kowell

After extensive promotion the Monte Carlo Circus Spectacular showed in Syracuse, N.Y. on Feb. 27 and 28 at the Onondaga County War Memorial Auditorium. The four performances were fairly well attended.

Anybody that missed the 2 hour and 45 minute show lost out on one of the most exciting shows ever. All the flavor of a European circus was evident the second you walked into the arena. The elaborate single center ring, the plush red box seats, props, color and the mammoth ornate red and gold illuminated backdrop at which the center was a projection screen. Here at the beginning and between certain acts, film shots of the actual Monte Carlo Circus in Europe were shown as well as several short messages from his Highness Prince Ranier II, about his creation, the circus festival in Monte Carlo. Combine this with lights, a brassy circus band on a plush stand in old-fashioned circus uniforms, a French ringmaster and you had a show must of us will never forget.

The show ran as follows: Opening by multimedia, the ringmaster, Sergio, Elvin Bale Human Projectile, the Riding Richters, the Albarracines, aerial acrobatics, Luis Munoz, low wire, Gabor Eotvos, musical clowns, the Wee Gets, acrobatics, Brian Fawcett's Chimps, Elvin Bale, trapeze, Intermission, Karoly Donnert, tigers, tigers and horses, Gene Mendez, high wire, Eotvos clowns, the Richter Family Elephants, Duo Dobritch, perch act, the Eotvos Family, flexible bar gymnastics, Elvin Bale, on the whirling wheel of death, the Silagis, teeterboard, Finale with the entire cast.

Each act had elaborate costumes and performed with such preciseness that no act was better than the other. But then there is Elvin Bale who made my wife almost faint and yours truly to drop his camera. The fast and efficient prop crew dressed almost as sharp as the band really worked quick but with ease despite an early season.

The physical appearance of the 15 car train, parked near the building, and the wagons all closely resemble RBBB. Although I missed the unloading, I was around for the load-out. At this point Europe disappeared when several riggers were loading Ringling style wagons in RBBB jumpsuits, but circus is circus and I

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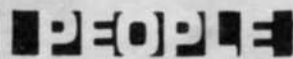
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## Show Report

### SHRINE CIRCUS... by Frank Smith

The Shrine Circus here at Hartford, Conn., offered a good program with some fine acts. The actual show program varied some from previous reports.

The program included: Dan Conn, band leader; Single girl on trapeze with neck swivel; Single girl doing hair hang; the Hawthorn Tigers presented by Wade Burck; Phillips Canines; Mr. Ron, juggling; Clowns (4) with steam roller finish; The Knops, double perch; Cowboy Joe Phillips riding 'Golden Mist'; The Knop Duo and Little John, balancing; The Robertos, on bounce board; Clowns with Jargo Giraffe; Les Marek Flyers (making their debut here); Wade Burck with the tiger riding an elephant; Rianos Duo, slack wire; Eugene and Aurelia, wire act; the Horwath Chimps; the Clowns and Fun with Eggs; The Jabcszinski Troupe, 7 people teeterboard act; Wade Burck and the Hawthorn Elephants; The Nerveless Nocks, sway poles.



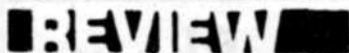
MANZINI, escape artist, is back doing shows after recovering from an accident suffered during the recent TV Circus Championship Show. BOB CARROL is appearing on the same show doing magic, comedy and ventriloquism. ALLEN KAMINSKY handles the concessions during the shows.

MIKE SPORRER reports he found two new circus books in the Seattle, Wash., library. They are: History of the Circus by Nicolas Bentley and Circus, An Investigation Into What Makes the Sawdust Fly. The books were published in Britain and are not on the American publication listing.

BOB STODDARD, who produced five clown shows and "Clown Day" at the Texas State Fair last year reports that fair officials in Toronto are interested in a "Clown Day" feature for their fair.

enjoyed every moment of the banging and shouting and general organized commotion. At the runs I joined the transportation crew by their bonfire in anticipation of the wagons arrival. It was evident, however, that the friendly crew, recruited mostly from RBBB, still showed signs of early season loading problems, when the equipment arrived.

All in all, I hate to admit it but I think I enjoyed this show more than most because of the one ring - you could appreciate each act to its fullest. Amid the braves, the rhythmic hand clapping, the warm and friendly French ringmaster, and the fast paced band, everyone, especially me, felt we were really under the big blue big top at the Festival International Du Cirque De Monte Carlo.



## MONTE CARLO CIRCUS . . . by Don Covington.

It was a thrill to observe a performance of the new Monte Carlo Circus during its opening stand in Providence. Ringling has done a beautiful job in framing this show and the RBBB executives in evidence at Providence are obviously keeping close tabs on the show's operation.

There wasn't any doubt about the Ringling connection with the show. A few of the big show's beautifully painted semis and tractors labeled variously Ringling Bros. and Sells Floto (last seen at the Ohio State Fair Thrill Circus date) were parked behind the arena.

The show train was conveniently parked almost directly behind the Civic Center. It is painted with the show's color scheme - a series of yellow and orange diamonds with a large logo (similar at a distance to the GSOE globe) which reads 'Festival International du Cirque De Monte Carlo Spectacular'. Also several wagons from the train and one semi parked outside the building had the new paint scheme.

Inside the lobby was overflowing with concession stands, featuring Monte Carlo and RBBB posters and the familiar assortment of Astro-lights, ray guns, balloons, jewelry and inflatables - all with the circular orange Monte Carlo logo. The program book, priced at \$2.50, is beautiful and printed in both French and English. It contains features on Monaco, Prince Ranier, the Gold and Silver Clown Awards (including a list of yearly winners), The Felds and features on all the performers. Advertising in the book includes a number of European companies and all ads are of the highest class.

This obvious attention to detail show throughout the organization and is not lost on the public, which is made to feel they are participating in an extension of the prestigious European event, not just seeing selected acts perform.

Details have been fastidiously handled and the cumulative effort is amazingly persuasive. For example:

+ Concessionaires all wear blue jackets with fly pockets and epaulets and berets. The sprinkling of foreign accents behind the counters further add to the Continental feeling.

+ Once the performance begins, no vendors are allowed in the arena. They return only at intermission - giving an entirely different aspect to the seating area.

+ The band wears red uniform jackets with gold piping and the young director, Robert Franklin, wears white gloves to conduct. They sit behind ornate music stands and an emphasis on woodwinds over pure brass gives a European sound to the excellent Bill Pruyun score.

+ The arena is partitioned off to form a three sided viewing area with the end filled by a massive entrance

arch containing a large movie screen, three curtained entrances, and two huge replicas of the gold clown statue. Running lights in the arch and also in the wide European style ring curbs are used to emphasize acts entering and leaving.

+ A series of Royal Boxes, sold at top ticket prices, are set up on the floor next to the ring. They contain plush chairs, partitioned off by thick red curtains. Potted plants surround the boxes, band stand and entrance areas.

+ The prop crew wears red uniform jackets with gold piping and berets, and are positioned at military attention around the entrance and the ring as needed. This feature alone gives a very European look to the proceedings - a major change from the usual American prop men lounging around the rings in coveralls.

+ The single ring allows rigging to be positioned from above more than below and there is an excellent unobstructed view from the seating area.

+ Lighting is excellent with extremely large number of spots positioned on outriggers suspended from the central rigging.

+ The overall effect is class all the way with no holds barred to make this appear an expensive European style program.

The acts presented fit right in with this top dollar format. Everyone of them is worthy of your undivided attention.

The program at Providence included:

+ Elvin Bale's Rocket as an opener (a late addition apparently, as it doesn't appear in print)

+ The Riding Richters, a Hungarian bareback act

+ The Albarracines, from Columbia, an aerial cradle act, during which Ms. Rosalba supports her husband for some amazing feats.

+ Luis Munoz, the Spanish low wire artist recently seen on the TV Special America vs. The World.

+ Gabor Eotvos, Hungarian musical clown and a real show stopper. He plays 24 musical instruments and has the audience eating out of his hand within minutes after the act has started.

+ The Wee Gets, the children of the Albarracines,

(Continued on Page 15)

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## SAWDUST TRAIL

by M. L. DUPONT

The Sam T. Polack date of Feb. 7-11 for the Shrine in Louisville offered 12 performances in 5 days. The press and TV were generous in their coverage and the Rix Bears drew a full page feature story with photos on Feb. 8th. Al Dawley, ringmaster extra-ordinary, handled the announcing, while John "Yo Ho" MacKay was in charge of clown alley.

Ad mats received by this writer indicate that the RB BB Blue Unit is using a different series of ads than the Red Unit. One ad from Atlanta reminds me of the old days. Ads read all new 108th year (Red is in 109th year). New! Unique! The most lavish show ever - three rings of Indian and African elephants.

Lion trainer and performer Wayne Ragen, who this reporter wrote about on the C&B No. 2 unit, received excellent reviews for his Milwaukee date. Wayne is working 3 lions and 3 tigers, with one a male Siberian. Also at the Milwaukee date was Bobby and Rosa Gibbs

Turn about is fair play. For years American producers have been going to England and Europe for acts, now David Smart, of the Billy Smart Circus, is in America securing acts for later in the year. The show will have a 12 week undercanvas date at Battersea Park, London, starting June 26th.

Collectors who don't collect letterheads don't know the thrill they're missing. I have several old ones in my collection and am indebted to Tex Dreyfus of Houston for sending me 8 more. Tex is a collector of many years and has a vast collection of books and other things. One of his model circus wagons is featured in Plowden's book "Singing Wheels and Circus Wagons."

By the time this appears in print members of the Dallas 'Ed Millette Tent' will have traveled to Conroe (Texas) to see the opening of Gopher Davenport's Jungle Wonder Circus. He is expected to have an all new concept, a European style one ring top, and a

free zoo on the midway. Clark's cats and Fulbright's horses are said to be there too. This reporter would appreciate a run-down on the program and show equipment. We would also like to know where he is playing so we can visit, but we won't betray his trust by releasing any of the route.

On Feb. 15th, the local Shrine club wired RBBB in Washington, DC to arrange a date for a co-op thing like last year when the Red Unit played Monroe, La. As of the end of Feb. the Shriners had no word from the show and were looking to other shows for plans to set a circus date.

Charlie Campbell is reported to have had a gall-bladder operation and we wish him a speedy recovery. He is well known for his "Today Is Circus Day . . . ?" sheet which comes out each week.

Both Jack and Jake Mills have now been enshrined into the Circus Hall of Fame. Also enshrined there recently were three members of the Wallenda troupe Herman, Helen and Joe Geiger, plus the late Karl. The other two were Aerialist Janet May and elephant man Stewart Graven.

Jim Howle, former RBBB Circus Clown and artist, held an exhibit of his work at a suburb of Atlanta, Ga., not long ago. I'd like to thank Jim for the fine engraved invitation and am sorry to say that I wasn't able to attend. We wish him well in his work.

Ringling's Blue Unit had a tie-in with Del Taco of the Atlanta area. Opening night was half price with a coupon. Tickets were \$7, \$6, \$5 and \$4, so half price offered a great reduction.

## PEOPLE

KAY PITTENGER, aerialist with Beatty-Cole last year, will be off the road this season while putting a new act together.

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## Show Report

The Shrine Circus program at Madison, Wisc. (Feb. 23-25) and at Albany, N.Y. (Mar. 10-11) were produced by Bill Kay and included a staff of: Patricia Kay, talent coordinator; John Malett, musical director; Sue Ossmann, secretary; Bob Miller, supt.; Les Earls, lights; Bob Johnson and Jack Healy, advertising.

The program featured: Geronimo, high dive; Tony Smaha, Jr., dressage horse; the Sonoro Trio, aerialists; the Yanos Chimps; Clowns; the Carmen Sisters, acrobatics; Clowns; the Royal Hungarian Troupe; Clowns; Elephants presented by Roman Schmitt; The Jordanas, upsidedown unicycle; The Vasquez Flyers; Miss Zaza, doves; Clowns; Gina's Royal Palace Leopards; Miss Lisa, high trapeze; The Verdus Troupe, rolling globes; Edca Schmitt, bengal tigers; Jorge's Comedy car; The Three Smahas, Lipizzan Stallions; Clowns; Stacy Moore's Madcap Mongrels; Le Castros, high wire.

## PEOPLE

ETHEL JENNIE writes she is training an understudy for her poodle "Fifi". The new addition was acquired from MRS. RONNA PRATT, of Detroit, who is the daughter of GRACE McINTOSH. Her balancing sword and knife were made by LEO ZACCHINI and the portable ladder was made by OSSIAN WIRENGARD.

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## Show Report

GARDEN BROS. CIRCUS... by Billy Barton

Garden Bros. Circus began its 1979 season at Reading (Pa), Feb. 22-26 for the Rajah Shrine Temple, playing at the Rajah Theatre. The cramped conditions make it extremely difficult to present a show as the stage is not deep enough to set a full ring. Fortunately, the weather was mild which boosted attendance. Nine shows were presented in the four days, to very good business.

Omitted on this date was the new opening production still being finished by Roger Prystanski which will be unveiled full-scale in Montreal (Mar. 15-18) along with a finale. Also excluded from the program were the Flying Lar-Rays. The act appeared in the following spot, Allentown (Pa), Mar. 3-6.

Program for Reading was: National Anthem, Overture (Charles Schlarbaum Conductor), the Hawthorn Lions and Tigers presented by Lou Regan, Living Cartoons, Mister Sensation, The Aquilars, perch, Rumpy, clown specialty, The Garden Bros. Liberty Horses, Jack Cook's comedy car, Aerial Ballet.

James Zoppe Resinback Riders opened the second half, followed by the Venturas, cradle-perch (The Lar-Rays), The Vickina Troupe, teeterboard-risley, the Clown Bake Shop, featuring Rumpy and Jack Cook, the Hawthorn Baby Elephants presented by Lou Regan. Ian Garden was ringmaster.



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### DON COVINGTON REVIEW (Continued)

performing a ground acrobatic turn which won them the Children's Award at Monte Carlo.

+ Brian Fawcett's Chimps, represent the USA with a beautiful act featuring striking costumes, props and routines.

+ Elvin Bale returns with his Gold Clown award winning trapeze number, followed by intermission.

+ Karoly Donnert, from Hungary, presents 5 tigers in a low key but exquisitely crafted cat act concluding with two tigers on two horses, alternately mounting and dismounting.

+ Gene Mendez, with some heart-stopping high wire specialty.

+ The Richter Family, presenting an unusual number with three elephants and some teeterboard routines.

+ Duo Dobritch, from Switzerland, follow with a perfectly executed perch act.

+ The Eotvos, now out of their clown make-up, present a flexible bar-gym act including some incredible blindfolded double back somersaults.

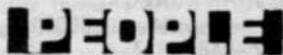
+ Elvin Bale, stuns the audience with his daring on the Whirling Wheel of Death.

+ The Silagi Troupe, from Bulgaria, offer some fine

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**AUSTIN MILES**, circus chaplain and ringmaster, was the subject of a TV Special filmed during the Aut Mori Grotto Circus at Youngstown, Ohio.

**KEN BENSON** and Shirley the elephant were the subject of photos and a story in the Jan. 12th issue of the *Monroe (La.) News-Star*.

teeterboard routines.

I've saved the best treat for last, French ringmaster Sergio, is the final magic ingredient that cements this incredible group of extraordinary acts together. Sergio never leaves the ring. He is involved in everything that is going on. His handsome good looks charm the audience from the start and his heavy French accent, though hard to understand a lot of the time, tops off that unmistakable aura of sophisticated entertainment.

When the stage crew is moving props or the filmed scenes of Monte Carlo are finished on the large movie screen, Sergio simply moves into the audience to sample some popcorn, charm a pretty girl, or talk to a child. He obviously loves his work, admires and understands the performers and has the audience firmly in his besequined pocket from start to finish.

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**PEOPLE**

**DUKE ANDERSON**, clown, is recovering from a recent heart attack and would enjoy hearing from show friends. Write him at: 2741 North Leavitt St., Chicago, Ill. 60647.

**ART PETRI** (Jolly the Clown) produced several clown shows last year and during the Holiday season played Santa, despite a cast on his leg. He suffered a fractured ankle when he slipped on an icy street.

**SIEGFRIED & ROY**, Las Vegas stars, have added two baby Lep-Jags to their collection of animals. The cubs are a cross between a leopard and jaguar and it is expected they will grow to become the largest spotted cats in the world.

**LES SCHMITT** (Backwards the Clown) has reportedly merged his business with Schmitt & Jones Theatrical Enterprise, Inc., of Evansville, Ind.

**BOB McCALL** reports that members of the Roland C. Butler Tent, CFA, attended a recent performance of the Funs-A-Poppin Circus in Apache Junction, Ariz. It's a good show, he says, and is produced by **BETTY WENDANY**.

**LOU FLOWERS STODDARD**, well known circus artist, has been invited to display her clown paintings at the 1979 Texas State Fair. This will be the third year in a row that her paintings have been exhibited at the fair.

# Show Report

CIRCUS VARGAS . . . by Albert F. House

I spent a week in Sunny California (Feb. 17-24) and visited Circus Vargas in the Los Angeles area, catching the show at the Carson Mall, in Carson, near Long Beach.

On the midway were all the stock, horses and elephants. Gone was the big side show and petting zoo that formerly occupied that spot. Other attractions included a six sweep pony ride, elephant ride and a Moon Bounce. Trailers occupying prominent places were the comfort station at the head of the midway, the ticket trailer in the center and the concession trailer at the side. All attractions were well painted or well flashed.

The show carries 11 elephants, two of which are big tuskers. Four elephants are owned by Rex Williams. Other stock carried by Williams and displayed are a tiger, a camel and two white horses, one of which is ridden in the center ring during the elephant act.

There are many horses on the show, as there are three liberty acts. The 8 Apaloosas, formerly the Hoffmeister act, is worked by Mary Ruth Herriott in Ring 1, an act of 8 Anadulusians is worked by John Herriott in Ring 3, and a 6 act of brown Arabians, appears infrequently. Additional show owned horses are Gen. Vargas, an all white albino and two other high school horses trained by Don McLennon, but not always used in the show. In all there are 25 show-owned horses plus 6 ponies and 5 privately owned horses.

(Continued on Page 18)

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## BILLY BARTON (Continued)

Susan Sheryll's Afghans, Vashek & Kathy, aerial motorcycle, elephants. Clown productions by JIMMY DOUGLASS and Company, music by RAY HART-ZELL.

LARRY KENT advises that Hoxie's Big Top has reinstated its side show managed by HENRY THOMPSON, formerly with Sells & Gray. MIKE CECERE acquired two male lions from JUNGLE LARRY and is breaking them for the act. Meanwhile a lioness produced five cubs, now about two months old. . . DUTCH CRAWFORD will handle the bulls, WALT STIMAX is producing clown and JIM ROYAL is ringmaster. The Ape Show has been repainted by Thompson and is back on the Great American unit. Larry visited RBBS Red twice in Miami Beach and attended a party given by JOEY HODGINI. Some of the guests included: Duane Thorpe, Lenard Wollen, Dale Longmire, Dutch Crawford and many others.

CLOSEUPS: "The Way of All Flesh" Irrepressible COUNT NICHOLAS finally did it! He had his face and neck lifted (Top That, Emmett). . . JOE BAUER flies to Europe. . . Set for Pittsburgh's Kennywood Park are the Flying Lanes, the Dolly Sisters, and the James Zoppe Riders. . . LOU ANN JACOBS plans to spot date between the Hanneford split-season. . . Reliable Pro-Reports indicate DOROTHY WINN and RON KELROY did an outstanding job with the Saginaw Shrine date. . . Clowns JOHN MACKAY and JOE SHERMAN made spots for the Bill Kay Circus. . . Last year CARLOS OBANDO did a skywalk in below zero temps in Rochester on a day proclaimed as Carlos Obando Day by the Mayor. . . JIMMY DOUGLASS and VERN WOERNER will make dates for Carden-Johnson's third unit. . . CLIFF VARGAS tells me he plans to come no further east than Texas - sorry about that CFA's. . . Juggler KEN SHERBURNE visited old pal IAN GARDEN during the Reading Shrine date. He had just come in from doing the EMMETT KELLY, Jr date on Long Island which AL and JOYCE VIDBEL couldn't make because the brakes on the elephant truck froze in 35 below zero weather. Also on that program were the Great Erick, high wire, Cimse's Dogs, Crawford & Gloria, Zippy the TV Chimp, Miss Carol, bird act and Jules Epstein, music.

Before I am further bombarded with letters re: the typo-error in spelling JOHN TRAVOLTA's name in my Feb. 26th column, please, everybody it WAS a typo-error! You can BELIEVE that I, of all people, sure know the correct name of Hollywood's new sex symbol!

That elusive drummer DRIFTY (Paul Cirkis) of whom I have heard so much the past two years appeared in the flesh for the Garden Bros. Reading and Allentown dates drumming for CHARLIE SCHLARBAUM. Not only do I now know the man exists, he subscribed to CR!

See you down the road, luvs.

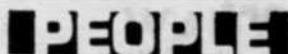
**CIRCUS VARGAS (Continued)**

The second flying act on the show is the Padillas, and fans will remember them from their fine work with the King Bros. Circus. The act has three men, with the triple somersault as their best trick. They get a large share of applause and are well received. The other act is the Flying Lantony's who have been on the show for the past few years.

The performance was backed by a five piece band, leaders are Dave Epperly, plus an organ and drums, a trumpet, sax and trombone. With amplification the band is heard throughout the top. Amplification is by means of three speakers at each of the second and third center poles. The speakers are columnar shaped so they don't interfere with the line of vision from the ends of the top.

The seating has new additions of all steel side rails on the ends of the stringers, and this also serves as a safe backrest for those on the top row of seats. The railing is about 3 ft. in height, and have small openings between the bars. The grandstand is now one of the safest I have seen and should pass safety inspections anywhere.

At the next stand, which was Rolling Hills, the motorcycle act of Julian and Monique was set up. The front midway was smaller and the stock was positioned at



VINCE CARMEN, magician/illusionist, is taking his full evening show off the road for several months in order to play dates in South America with "Acuarama On Parade" a show owned by PEDRO LAVIA. Vince will be presenting a full illusion show as part of Acuarama's program.

VLADO VLADIMIROV, former Ringling Cossack rider and his wife, MICHELLE, former Ringling show girl, along with their two children JESSE and BOGDEN now live in Las Vegas. Vlado is a dealer at the Silver Nugget in that city.

the back of the tent. A tree about 15 ft. tall was about 20 ft. within the top, and the big top crew had erected the top over and around the tree. It was the first time I have seen a tree inside the big top.

According to my count the show moves on 17 trucks. There are 3 straightbed trucks, one pulls the ticket trailer, an all hydraulic stakedriver, and a chair truck pulling a trailer which contains the front end bucket loader. The big top and seats are on 4 semis and one straight truck. There is one power plant, donniker, concessions, sleeper, two props, four elephants and two horse trucks. Other units were not immediately identifiable.

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**MONTE CARLO CIRCUS (Continued)**

the mike in Monte Carlo, took a crash course in English and handled the introductions well. His English will improve in a few weeks, but is well understood now. The rigging changes are covered by film clips from Monte Carlo.

A standout in the performance is 23 yr. old Luis Munoz, on the low wire, following in the footsteps of his father who is remembered as a great performer with Ringling-Barnum and Cristiani, on the wire and later as Capt. Astronaut the human cannonball on Beatty-Cole. It is a wonderful home-coming for young Munoz who has been playing in Spain since 1966.

Another big hit was Gabor Eotoves, musical clown, playing two dozen instruments. He wins the crowd quickly, and involves them as the act builds. Other acts are the Richters, bareback riding with two back somersaults to three horses at once, and an elephant act doing teeterboard somersaults to the animal's back, The Albarracines, aerial cradle, The Wee Gets, ground acrobatics, Brian Fawcett's chimps, Karoly Donnert, tigers and horse riding tigers, Gene Mendez, highwire, Duo Dobritch, perch act, The Evotvos Family, flexible bar act, The Silagis, teeterboard with a double somersault to four high. Elvin Bale does his cannon act, single trapeze and space wheel. With an intermission the show runs about 3½ hours.

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SUSAN and DAVIDE ZOPPE have fully recovered from their bad accident of last August. They are currently spot-dating with George Hubler, Eddie Zacchini and Emmett Kelly, Jr., plus Sandy Dobritch before opening in Canada with Circus Gatini.

COUNT NICHOLAS, circus ringmaster, has high praise for wire walker DINO MENENDEZ, who he says will soon be the youngest person to perform the backward somersault feet-to-feet on the silver strand. Incidentally Count Nicholas is compiling material for his biography.

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