

WWF fans ready to pack the political arena

BY BILLY O'KEEFE

TMS CAMPUS

During a recent appearance on "Late Night with Conan O'Brien," Paul Levesque, known more famously as World Wrestling Federation superstar Triple H, described WWF fans as "like Trekkies, but not nerds."

Phillip Macy, 18, doesn't disagree one bit. Sporting a bright orange Tazz t-shirt, a pair of the Rock's sunglasses, and two tickets for the live event set to roll in about 12 hours, Macy is the quintessential WWF superfan, a Trekkie with muscles.

"I'm pretty much into anything [the WWF] is selling," says Macy, who cut out of work in hopes of spotting some of his favorite wrestlers as they pulled in to the arena's parking lot. "Anything." Well, almost anything.

"Except that whole voting thing," he adds. "That seems kind of pointless to me, although it's a nice effort I guess."

Macy is speaking of the WWF's brisk but calculated entrance into the political arena, a move that took basically everyone by surprise. Wrestlers commanded

the floor at both conventions this summer, and if you thought you saw the Rock on MSNBC, you weren't having delusions.

Additionally, and perhaps most importantly, the WWF has converted more than 100,000 fans into registered voters through live events and its Web site, wwfvote.com. And the federation issued a challenge in August to both Vice President Al Gore and Gov. George W. Bush, requesting their presence for a televised debate—in the middle of the ring, of course.

Unfortunately, while no one can deny the numbers, the candidates can do their best to brush them off. And that, according to a recent announcement by WWF superstar Mick Foley, is exactly what they're doing.

"We're feeling a little bit ignored," he told the capacity crowd—and a television audience of millions—during a recent taping of "Raw is War," the federation's live Monday night telecast.

So maybe Al and George W. aren't listening. But how about the fans?

"I think a lot of us are inspired to vote because of this," says Lauren Melby, a fan for more than 10 years. "It's almost

like the wrestlers are out there saying, 'Hey, we're on your side.'"

Melby, 22, says she plans to register through the WWF's program, adding that while she's unsure as to whether she'll actually go out and vote on Nov. 7, registering alone is quite an achievement.

"People sometimes say that anyone who isn't registered to vote is stupid," she says. "But it's not like I can't read or something. I was just too disinterested to care. I almost still am, actually, but this way I can at least have the option to change my mind."

With only a handful of tapings left until Election Day, the "Smackdown Challenge" may not come to fruition. But while some fans would like to see the two candidates lock it up on live TV, the effort is what fans find most endearing.

"I will admit that they [the WWF] have a lot of guts for doing this," says Macy. "They showed us that they respect us, even if the candidates do not. And they really did get some results. I'm still skeptical, but if they keep talking after the election ends, I'll listen."

Campus Crime Blotter

WEEK OF SEPTEMBER
18 - 24, 2000



decal stolen from his vehicle at "EE" lot. 4:18 p.m. - Erin Nicole Miani, 25, of 5836 Renee Court, was charged with expired registration and expired inspection on Riegel Rd.

Sept. 22

1:10 a.m. - Ryan Richard Risley, 27, of 7201 Scallop Lane, was charged with failing to stop at a flashing red light and possessing an open container of alcohol on Randall Drive.

11:04 p.m. - A student was referred to the Dean of Students office (DOS) for possession of marijuana. A non-student was trespassed from the university for the same violation.

Sept. 23

4:07 a.m. - A student was referred to DOS for being visibly overcome by alcohol at Galloway Hall.

3:26 p.m. - A student reported a window broken out of his vehicle in "B" lot.

10:31 p.m. - A poster belonging to Campus Activities was reported stolen from Trask Coliseum.

Sept. 24

8:49 p.m. - Elizabeth Stewart Gaige, 21, of 711 Apt. G Clearwater Court was charged with failure to yield right-of-way after an accident at Crews and Randall Drive with a car driven by Michael Colon, 21, 323 H Racine Drive. Colon, Gaige, and Michael Legaru, 22, also of 323 H Racine Drive, were treated by medical personnel after the accident. Gaige's vehicle suffered \$5000 in damage, and Colon's vehicle suffered \$8000 in damage.

Source UNCW Police

September 18

10:45 a.m. - A student reported the larceny of a textbook from the bicycle rack at Dobo Hall.

2:04 p.m. - A woman reported the larceny of a cell phone from Trask Coliseum.

September 19

9:51 a.m. - A gate at the visitor parking lot was reported damaged.

8:53 p.m. - A student reported damage to her vehicle that was parked in the International/Honors parking lot.

September 20

11:06 a.m. - A woman reported a hit and run accident on campus.

2:30 p.m. - A student reported damage to her vehicle in "P" lot.

September 21

10:46 a.m. - A traffic accident on Wagoner Drive resulted in \$50 in damage to a vehicle.

12:22 p.m. - A Suites resident reported receiving harassing phonecalls.

1:38 p.m. - An incident of communicated threats occurred at Galloway Hall.

2:24 p.m. - A student reported a parking

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