

5B ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Can't ski? Snow tubing is latest range in West Virginia 9B.

ABC gets ratings victory

By David Bauder
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — It was a fairy tale week in the ratings for ABC.

The network, which has languished in third place for this television season despite its omnipresent "TV is Good" campaign, scored its first weekly win largely on the strength of Disney's new "Cinderella" movie.

An estimated 60 million people tuned in Sunday night to at least some part of the Rodgers & Hammerstein musical, which starred Brandy, Whitney Houston and Whoopi Goldberg. Many were young girls: a whopping 70 percent of girls ages 2-11 were watching TV at that hour.

After "Cinderella," many viewers stayed with ABC for its movie "Oprah Winfrey Presents: Before Women Had Wings."

"I don't think anyone predicted the magnitude of Cinderella's numbers," said Larry Hyams, chief researcher at ABC. "Once you got that audience and with the power of Oprah, you knew it was going to be a strong evening."

It was an opportune time for ABC to break NBC's five-week winning streak. The one-month "sweeps" period when ratings are closely watched to set local advertising rates began on Thursday.

For the week, ABC had an 11.0 rating and 18 share, Nielsen Media Research said. Second-place NBC had a 9.8 rating and 16 share, CBS had a 9.4 rating and 15 share and Fox had a 7.4 rating and 12 share.

Although "ER" held its customary spot at the top of the ratings, it had one of its lowest ratings in some time for an original episode. NBC said CBS' two-hour "Diagnosis Murder" siphoned off viewers.

Fox's season premiere of "The X-Files" finished among the week's top 10 shows, with its second most-watched episode ever. The episode broadcast after the Super Bowl last January was tops.

NBC's "Frasier," running well in the ratings this year, scored a rare victory over ABC's "Home Improvement."

Among the emerging networks, UPN had a 3.4 rating and 5 share and the WB had a 2.8 rating and 4 share.

A rating point represents 980,000 households, or 1 percent of the nation's estimated 98 million TV homes. Share is the percentage of those televisions in use that are tuned to a given show during a specified time period.

Ratings rose for nightly news programs in the wake of Wall Street's gyrations. "NBC Nightly News" was first with an 8.8 rating and 18 share, ABC's "World News Tonight" had an 8.3 rating and 17 share and the resurgent "CBS Evening News" had an 8.1 rating and 16 share.

For the week of Oct. 27-Nov. 2, some of the top 10 shows, their networks and ratings, were:

"ER," NBC, 20.6; "Seinfeld," NBC, 20.3; "ABC Sunday Night Movie: Oprah Winfrey Presents: Before Women Had Wings," ABC, 18.7; "Wonderful World of Disney: Cinderella," ABC, 18.4; "Veronica's Closet," NBC, 17.5; "NFL Monday Night Football: New England at Green Bay or Chicago at Miami," ABC, 16.8; "Friends," NBC, 16.3.

Usher says 'My Way' CD is his foray into manhood

By Michelle Dearmond
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES — To chart-topping rhythm-and-blues artist Usher, his latest album is more than just a collection of funky jams and sweet-talking ballads. It's a statement of his manhood — at age 18.

The babyface singer is barely old enough to vote and definitely not able to legally drink. But he

Only in America...



PHOTO/HBO PRODUCTIONS

Ving Rhames as Don King in the HBO presentation "Don King: Only In America," which premieres 8 p.m. Saturday.

...the saga of the myth, the man, the hair

By Winfred B. Cross
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Don King could talk a snake out of biting him if he could get it to listen, and I'm almost sure he could.

If you watch HBO's excellent "Don King: Only In America," you may be convinced as well. It's a fascinating docudrama examining what may be the most controversial figure in America.

The show, airing 8 p.m. Saturday, isn't preachy, nor is

it flattering. It's two hours of riveting television that's tumultuous but tempting, graphic but gratifying. It presents a straight-forward, basically no-holds-barred depiction of King. He was consulted and did make a few script changes, but this seems like something that would make him uneasy.

It starts off in 1954 while he was still a numbers runner and ends up with the Mike Tyson-Evander Holyfield ear-

bitting fiasco, neither of which King takes responsibility for. King's character even narrates the program, disputing footage and trying to put the best spin on troublesome situations.

You learn a lot about King. He's a smart, but ruthless, businessman who is afraid of no one. He's brutal, but, ironically, a good family man.

"Don King" does have its flaws. The numerous investigations and allegations are

alluded to, but never fleshed out. And King does seem to come off as some great American hero at times. That may be because of the top-rate nature of the production.

There are no faults with Ving Rhames ("Rosewood," "Pulp Fiction" and "Con Air"), who is an absolute knockout as King. He has a chameleon-like air that makes him look different in each role. He flawlessly mimics King's

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Are song lyrics sending kids to grave?

By Libby Quaid
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Music often sends children powerful messages of violence and sex, lawmakers said, while the industry's voluntary labeling system tells parents too little about its content.

But a recording industry executive, Hilary Rosen, defended current industry practices and said researchers have found that while it may echo a teen-ager's emotional state, music is not the cause.

Rosen, president and CEO of the Recording Industry

Association of America, spoke Thursday at a Senate Government Affairs subcommittee hearing where a father blamed shock rock lyrics for his son's suicide.

"The American Academy of Child and Adolescent psychiatry lists 14 signs to look for in a suicidal child, and music is not among them," she said.

Lawmakers said they were not proposing legislation or censorship, but they want parents and music executives to pay closer attention to what teen-agers and

children are listening to. Sen. Sam Brownback, R-Kan., said rap and heavy metal songs about murder, suicide, rape and drugs help create a culture of violence that desensitizes young people.

"The majority of popular music does not contain violent or misogynistic lyrics," said Brownback, chairman of the subcommittee on District of Columbia issues. "Our concern is not with ... rock or rap. Our concern is with those songs that do glorify violence, murder and mayhem and condone the abuse of women."

Usher admits the experience with LaFace Records was a change from his first album, produced by Bad Boy Entertainment

mind, but admits that philosophy only works when others are willing to listen.

"I have to thank them for listening to me, and opening up to me," he says of Reid, Edmonds and Dupri. "I guess it's all about the people you work with."

Usher credits his mother (who now is his manager) with giving him the courage to speak his

founder Sean "Puffy" Combs in 1994. He says little else about that project, which bore the Top 10 hit "Think of You."

Usher says he asked Combs about his prospects for another album with Bad Boy, but it never developed.

"I asked him..." he says, his voice trailing off as it often does. "But there's no sour grapes. It just did."

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He read lyrics from shock rocker Marilyn Manson and asked whether record companies consider violent lyrics in deciding to sign an artist. Another senator, Joseph Lieberman, D-Conn., graphically described songs that exalt violence toward women.

Raymond Kuntz's voice broke as he told how his 15-year-old son, Richard, was listening to Marilyn Manson when he shot himself last Dec. 11. Near his boy's body, Kuntz discovered an English paper about the band, whose paper about the band, whose per-

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Sounds

Rakim's CD is worth the wait

Winfred B. Cross



Mase
Harlem World
Various producers
Bad Boy Records/Arista
Records

☆☆☆

With the help of producer Sean "Puffy" Combs, Mase became one of the most recognized voices in rap without making a CD, being featured on gold records by 112, Mariah Carey and Puff Daddy's "Can't Nobody Hold Me Down."

It was just a matter of time before he got his own record. Here it is. Harlem World, possibly the party record of the year.

Harlem World is a record which proves Mase has talent, albeit limited. His delivery is dry and understated, but works with the music he uses. Most of this stuff is based on samples, but cleverly so. "Do You Wanna Get \$" uses Peter Brown's "Do You Wanna Get Funky with Me," which sure to pull dance mavens to the floor. "Luv U So" combines Rose Royce's "Ooh Boy" and Tina Marie's "Square Biz" into another dance floor jam. "Feels So Good" borrows liberally from Kool and the Gang's "Hollywood Swinging."

Some of the samples aren't so obvious. "Cheat On You," which features 112, uses a small sample from Michael Jackson's "Don't Stop 'Till You Get Enough." "Niggaz Wanna Act" uses a hard to find Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes song named "Hostage."

Mase even proves he has a sense of humor. He and Puffy do a send-up of New Edition's "Jealous Girl" called "Jealous Guy." At least I hope this is supposed to be a joke, because it is the worst duet I've ever heard. It's downright hilarious. I just wish there wasn't so much foul language, talk of sex, drugs and violence. I guess it wouldn't be a rap album if it didn't.

Rakim
The 18th Letter:
The Book of Life
Rakim and Dino Delvaile,
executive producers
Universal Records

☆☆☆

I admit I'm essentially hip-hop challenged because I didn't pay too much attention to the art form in its early days. I remember hearing the name Rakim associated with someone named Eric B., but I don't know if I ever heard anything buy them.

Rakim's latest CD refreshed my memory. The limited addition version features a second CD of greatest hits. "I know You Got Soul" and "Mahogany" were radio staples. I see why hip-hop fiends couldn't wait for this CD.

Rakim's new stuff is just as compelling. Here's a brother who can get his point across without assaulting my ears with profanity,

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