

TELEVISION

The Bombs and the Bummers: Ones to miss

Well, folks, it's that time again. Every time you watch television, you are assaulted by PREMIERE WEEK PREVIEWS. With all of the new shows, new episodes of old shows and schedule changes, it can get just a little confusing. To help, here's a guide of the shows to be sure to miss.

SUNDAYS:

Booker or Wiseguy, you be the judge. Fox Network, which scored an unexpected hit with *21 Jump Street*, tries to carry it one step further. Richard Grieco does his Ken Wahl imitation while working as an investigator for a Japanese-owned business in the U.S. At least Vinnie goes American! Stephen J. Cannell, the creator, isn't known for bombing-out, but this one just isn't too promising.

Free Spirit (ABC) is another clone, this time of *Bewitched*. Now, I'd be the last one to gripe about witchcraft on television, but all the good gags were used last time. The only magic that might save this one is the time slot; *Murder, She Wrote* will hardly appeal to the same audience and *Sister Kate* has an equally unspectacular plot.

Sister Kate, NBC's Sunday-night offering, stars Stephanie Beacham of *Dynasty* as, yes, a nun. She's in charge of seven orphans of various ages and will have her work cut out for her. The Pope may have to intervene to save this one.

MONDAYS:

Someone at CBS thought scheduling *The People Next Door* in the same lineup as *Murphy Brown* and *Designing Women* might add to the network's high ratings on Monday nights. I doubt it. Judging from the previews, this show never should have made it off the drawing board. The program revolves around Walter Kellogg (Jeffrey Jones), a cartoonist who can make his imagination come to life. Okay, so it's an original, but what are they going to do when the gag gets old?

Alien Nation (Fox), otherwise

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t.v.

known as *V Strikes Back*, is based on the 1988 movie of the same name. The movie featured aliens with splotchy skinheads and bad intentions, and the series promises more of the same. The aliens look like a family of Gorbachevs.

TUESDAYS:

Remember when Jack Scalia fell from J.R.'s apartment window on *Dallas* two years ago? Maybe he should've gone splat. In *Wolf* (CBS), he plays a truly original character — a framed cop with a chip on his shoulder. Sure, he's better looking than Roseanne Barr, but can he steal her audience? He probably would've found better luck playing Sue Ellen's dead boyfriend.

Of course, I have to mention another of CBS's new Tuesday offerings: *Rescue 911*, featuring William Shatner. It'll take more than cardiopulmonary resuscitation to revive this baby. The show promises live footage of death-defying rescues and serves up Captain Kirk without his *Enterprise*. If it's a choice between Tony Danza, Andy Griffith, and William Shatner during this time slot, I think I'll read my Western Civ.

WEDNESDAYS:

Not to completely rake CBS over the coals, but I do have to mention *Peaceable Kingdom*, featuring Lindsay Wagner without her bionic parts, and Tom Wopat (Luke Duke) without Bo, Daisy and the General Lee. This show has an original idea, which is more than most shows can say. It's about a zoo within the home. On the positive side, good scripts might save the day. But don't expect to watch this one as you bake your Thanksgiving turkey. Hey, maybe Boss Hogg will make a guest appearance.

To counter this winner, ABC of-

fers *Doogie Howser, M.D.* He's a second year resident going through puberty. Just what you look for in a doctor, but can he reach the operating table? Neil Patrick Harris held his own with Whoopie Goldberg in *Clara's Heart*, but it would take a miracle to save this one.

THURSDAYS:

Now isn't this an original plot? Right from the script of the movie *Young Guns* comes the series *The Young Riders* (ABC). With a cast straight out of *GQ*, as opposed to the Old West, it's just as well this show is buried in the time slot opposite *Cheers*. The best plot twist the writers could create was a girl disguised as a guy kicking some cowboy butt.

FRIDAYS:

On NBC this season, the Hardy Boy meets the Hunk (without the car) on a beach with lots of blondes. *Baywatch*, starring Parker Stevenson (at least he's better than Shaun Cassidy) and David Hasselhoff (Michael Knight), details the trials and tribulations of two average California lifeguards. It also features more bodies than a *Friday the 13th* movie. Hasselhoff almost drowned during filming (Maybe he should have. Kitt always had the best part on *Knight Rider* — at least he had snappy dialogue). This is definitely a show I can live without.

Also on NBC this season, it's "the old-fashion cop near retirement who is teamed up with the rebel" theme revisited in *Hardball*. Sound like a recent movie sequel to you? John Ashton (Dick Butkus look-alike) and Richard Tyson (Lost Boys reject) star in this thrilling drama.

SATURDAYS:

Living Dolls (ABC) stars Mother Walton (Michael Learned) and four favorite stereotypes — the Brain, the Spoiled Brat, the Airhead and the Attitude Problem — as owner and employees of a model agency. As a spinoff of *Who's the Boss*, it already has one strike against it, and guest



Photo courtesy WPTF-TV

Richard Tyson and John Ashton (l-r) are bad cop/good cop in 'Hardball'

appearances by Alyssa Milano and Tony Danza won't help a bit.

Is this comedy or glitz? With Sam Micelli (Milano) always interviewing the models for her school's newspaper, it will be hard to tell. This story idea didn't succeed with Morgan Fairchild and Nicolette Sheri-

dan (Paige on *Knots Landing*) in the flop *Paper Dolls*, so why revive it now? This one's worth avoiding.

Believe it or not, there may actually be a few new shows worth watching. Stay tuned next week for the better half of this season's TV premieres.

Battle for the Ratings: The Network Premieres Square Off

	Erik Flippo	Lisa Reichle	Laura Ross	Richard Smith	Kelly Thompson	Dave Glenn
Free Spirit (ABC) vs. Sister Kate (NBC)	Free Spirit	Sister Kate	Sister Kate	Free Spirit	Sister Kate	Sister Kate
Life Goes On (ABC) vs. Booker (Fox)	Booker	Life Goes On	Booker	Life Goes On	Life Goes On	Life Goes On
Famous Teddy Z (CBS) vs. Alien Nation (Fox)	Famous Teddy Z	Famous Teddy Z	Famous Teddy Z	Alien Nation	Famous Teddy Z	Famous Teddy Z
Chicken Soup (ABC) vs. Wolf (CBS)	Wolf	Chicken Soup	Chicken Soup	Chicken Soup	Wolf	Chicken Soup
Doogie Howser M.D. (ABC) vs. Nutt House (NBC)	Nutt House	Doogie Howser	Nutt House	Nutt House	Doogie Howser	Doogie Howser
Young Riders (ABC) vs. Top of the Hill (CBS)	Top of the Hill	Young Riders	Top of the Hill	Young Riders	Young Riders	Young Riders
Baywatch (NBC) vs. Snoops (CBS) vs. Family Matters (ABC)	Baywatch	Baywatch	Snoops	Baywatch	Baywatch	Baywatch

Omnibus Picks of the Season

Because we are such sportswriter wannabes, the Omnibus staff has decided to add a special feature to our TV preview issue, the Omnibus Picks of the Season. With so many mediocre premieres coming out this fall, we decided to try our hands at predicting the ratings winners.

Featured judges this week are: Erik (I already have a middle name) Flippo, Lisa (did anyone get a hardship parking permit on this campus?) Reichle, Laura (I have no middle name) Ross, Richard (I'm a movie guy. Why do I have to judge TV?) Smith, Kelly (I don't know why I moved here from Oregon) Thompson and guest Dave (summer *Tar Heel* god) Glenn. Here's the plan: we figured out

when the new premieres will be running against each other and each picked the one we think will get higher ratings. We'll publish the results soon, and give the winner the *You're ugly and you watch too much TV* award.

In the meantime we have developed some sub-awards for the best explanations we gave for our picks. *Sister Kate* — "I don't care. *Murder, She Wrote* is going to kick some butt," Lisa Reichle. *Alien Nation* — "I'll pick a movie spinoff any day," Richard Smith. *Wolf* — "Those damn Weight Watchers ads are getting on my nerves," Kelly Thompson. *Baywatch* — "I know most of those girls," Dave Glenn.