

KW, Roseanne talking talk

Sitcom star expected to announce plans for daytime strip

By Cynthia Littleton

So long, ABC; hello, syndication. Roseanne is expected this week to announce plans to launch a talk show with the one distributor whose reputation as a scrappy independent matches her own: King World Productions.

Details of the project were scarce last week, but it's expected to be an hour strip in the daytime talk/variety vein, targeted for launch in fall 1998. Representatives for King World and Roseanne declined comment at press time. Sources on both sides said they were getting close to a deal and that an announcement was tentatively sched-

uled for May 21.

This isn't the first time Roseanne and King World have talked about working together. In 1995, King World said it planned to revive *Hollywood Squares* with Roseanne as host/producer. But that project ran into a snag involving King World's contract to distribute its game shows, *Wheel of Fortune* and *Jeopardy!* (see story, page 34).

Roseanne, whose nine-season run on ABC ends this month, hinted at a "major announcement" to come this week when she appeared on CNN's *Larry King Live* May 12.

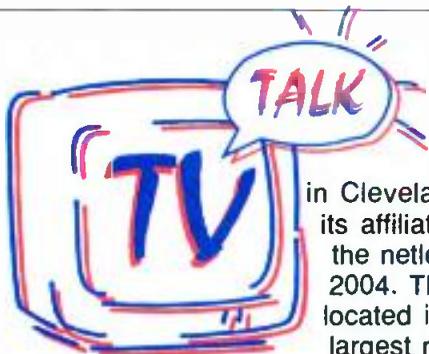
If it happens, Roseanne would become the fourth "name" to land a big-money talk show deal since February.



Roseanne will try her hand at daytime TV.

Her predecessors—Keenen Ivory Wayans, Magic Johnson and Howie Mandel—each netted \$5 million or more upfront.

KW had also been pursuing Bette Midler as a daytime diva, but the success of last year's "First Wives Club" reportedly changed Midler's mind about taking a stab at TV. ■



WUAB picks UPN, again

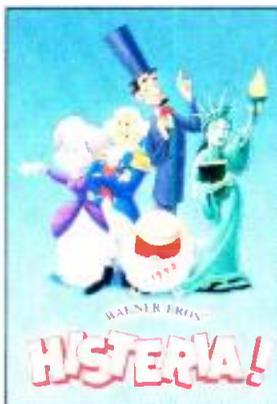
WUAB(TV), UPN's primary affiliate in Cleveland, Ohio, renewed its affiliation agreement with the netlet last week through 2004. The station—which is located in the nation's 13th-largest market—had been a secondary WB affiliate, but will be exclusive to UPN beginning in January 1998. "We believe that it is important that wuab carve out a unique identity in the Cleveland market," said station general manager Tom Griesdorn. "UPN, along with our 10 o'clock news and our sports franchises, gives us that opportunity."

Storm takes on WNBA

Hannah Storm will call the play-by-play for the Women's National Basketball Association on NBC. Storm will work with Hall of Famer Ann Meyers, who will provide the analysis. *The WNBA on NBC*, which begins Saturday, June 21, will feature 10 regular-season games, with the WNBA Championship on Saturday, Aug. 30.

'Histeria!' at WB

Histeria!, a new animated series from Warner Bros., will join the Kids' WB! lineup in fall 1998. The FCC-friendly *Histeria!*, from Tom Ruegger, looks at world history through comedy sketches and informational bits. "We believe



there is no better way to serve up history to young people than in this fast-paced, entertaining format with Tom and our talented Warner Brothers animation team at the helm," says Jean MacCurdy, head of programming for Kids' WB!

New from Fox Kids

Fox Kids will debut a new weekday schedule May 26: 7 a.m., *Bobby's World*; 7:30 a.m., *Bobby's World*; 3 p.m., *The Adventures of Batman & Robin* (new time); 3:30 p.m., *Spider-Man* (new time); 4 p.m., *Big Bad Beetleborgs*; 4:30 p.m., Mondays-Thursdays, *Power Rangers Turbo* and Fridays, *Mighty Morphin Power Rangers* reruns.

CBS wins sweeps week

CBS grabbed the second week of sweeps with a 10.1 Nielsen Media Research household rating/17 share, barely ahead of NBC (10.0/17). ABC earned an 8.3/14, Fox a 7.1/12. The first-night performance of the CBS miniseries *Mario Puzo's The Last Don* beat NBC's *Timecop* and ABC's *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* combined, with a 17.8/29. The weekly win marks CBS's first in a May sweeps since 1992. NBC still ruled the adult 18-49 demo in the second week with a 6.7 rating, while ABC and Fox battled it out for second with a 5.1 and CBS trailed in fourth with a 4.3.

NATAS to honor Mr. Rogers

Children's TV icon Fred Rogers will receive a Lifetime Achievement Award for Daytime Television during the 24th Annual Daytime Emmy Awards on May 21. The award is presented by the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences for "outstanding achievement...so extraordinary and universal as to be beyond the scope of the Emmy Awards." —LR