

Sunday is 'Day One' for ABC news magazine

Forrest Sawyer leads youthful news team

By Dan Rice

Forrest Sawyer, one of broadcast journalism's most intrepid field reporters, has taken a new desk job. Known for his reports from war zones and disaster areas, Sawyer is now the anchor of ABC's Sunday news magazine, *Day One*, debuting March 7.

Sawyer is a four-year veteran of ABC News, having anchored *World News Sunday* since 1989 and frequently reported for *Nightline*. He says *Day One* will have a younger outlook than CBS' *60 Minutes*, whose time slot it follows.

"We're younger people, for one thing, so we have slightly different interests," Sawyer says. "We are of a different generation and we're going to approach things a little differently. The show's going to be edgier, too, I think. Some of the pieces will have more bite. Sometimes sarcasm. The way it's edited and put together will reflect the sensibilities of today a little more than some of the other news magazines."

Each hourlong broadcast gives the *Day One* team the capability of going live to the scene of a late-

breaking news story.

"One of the things that we'll want to do is have the ability to cut to breaking news as it happens," Sawyer explains. "And it's pretty much our watch on Sundays. So if news breaks we want to be able to dump everything that we've planned and go cover it if necessary."

Joining Sawyer on the beat are correspondents Shella MacVicar, John Hockenberry, Jeff Greenfield, Michel McQueen, Lisa McRee, Lloyd Kramer and Jay Schadler. The team will be flexible in the number of stories they present each week; Sawyer says they could devote the entire hour to the coverage of one story if warranted. Other story topics will range from those touching on the human condition to offbeat items.

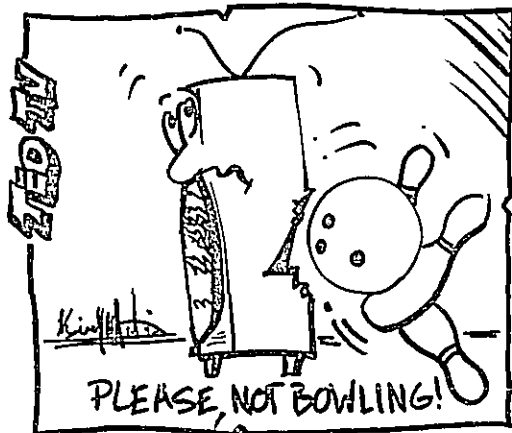
"What we're in right now is just a remarkable period of competition among the news magazines," Sawyer says. "It's just knock-down-drag-out competition. It's like the old newspaper days. It works out now that if one show gets (a story), that's it, it's kind of an exclusive. And we'll try to get our share of those."

Despite the probability that *Day One* will inherit some of *60 Minutes*' audience, Sawyer realizes that there is no guarantee for the show's success.

"Eight o'clock (Eastern time) is a real tough, competitive time period. *Murder, She Wrote* is one of the most popular TV programs on now. We've got our work cut out for us. I think the best thing we can do is just keep our heads down and try to put on a good television program. The powers that be, they're at a higher pay grade than I am."

Sawyer has distinguished himself in the past on more dangerous ground. During his eight months in the Middle East in 1991, he was the first TV correspondent to tape American bombing assaults along the Kuwait border, and he filed the first live report from the battlefield during the ground war.

Sawyer has also covered the plight of Kurdish refugees in Iran, the U.S. invasion of Panama and the devastation of the Atlantic coast by Hurricane Hugo. He admits he will miss the action of field reporting in his new post but hopes "we'll have some stories that break on our watch, and we'll be able to get some of the juices running and do the old firehorse trick again."



Country favorite Willie Nelson serves as host for Friday's installment of *ABC In Concert*.