

BITTS AND PIECES

TIME OUT

Networks get involved in pay-per-view enterprises

'MTV Sports' has its highs and lows

By Steve Paschal

The music and sports worlds collide this week when *MTV Sports*, the latest in a proliferation of cable magazine shows, makes its debut.

What is supposed to be an MTV approach to reporting sports, from the conventional to the bizarre, comes off as choppy and disjointed, and the coverage is so superficial that it does little more than whet the viewer's appetite. It's unfortunate, too, because the segments on Building, Antenna, Span, Earth (B.A.S.E.) and bungee jumping and the profile of sky-surfer Patrick de Gayardion merit better treatment.

However, the first episode has its highlights. The feature on de Gayardion includes breathtaking footage of him "hanging ten" on waves of air over the French Alps. And when one bungee jumper gasps and sputters, "It's good to be alive," after she takes the plunge, real insight into the adrenaline rush daredevil athletes experience comes through in the biting audio track.

On the other hand, the time devoted to the World Mud Bowl could have been better spent expanding one of the other segments. There's also the obligatory weekly vignette on "Rock 'n' Lock" style events, featuring celebrities from the music, movie and television industries that begins with a racing school attended by Danny Osmond and Paulson's Rock Rocket.



Rod Stewart

How much is enough? NBC, which has secured broadcast rights to the 1992 Summer Olympics, is apparently milking the quadrennial sports event for every last drop of revenue. In addition to the regular coverage offered free on the airwaves, the network, in a ground-breaking partnership with Cablevision, will be hawkking their pay-per-view *Olympics Triplecast* on the side. This more extensive coverage will be provided live and commercial-free simultaneously on three channels, so cable fans can be as zealous as they want to be.

Some guys have all the luck. Promotion is everything in the concert business, and it surely doesn't hurt to have two huge corporations backing you. Capital Cities/ABC Video Enterprises and Madison Square Garden, a Paramount Communications company, have married their considerable resources to develop and market pay-per-view programming. The joint venture commences with a series of music-event programs, the first being *Valentine Vagabond: Rod Stewart Live on Valentine's Day*, to be shown live from the Universal Amphitheater in Los Angeles.

Collect 'em, trade 'em, turn 'em in. Trading cards have long been popular in America, particularly this last year, in which traditional baseball players have been joined in cardboard immortality by the likes of Desert Storm warriors and *Twin Peaks* characters. Now, America's Trading Cards has announced its new line of "Most Wanted Fugitive" cards for the serious collector/bounty hunter. Each "state-of-the-art" card features a bad guy's photo and description, plus a full-color typical scene in which the criminal might be lurking. A list of phone numbers in dozens of states is provided so that the eagle-eyed consumer may alert the proper authorities.



Anjelica Huston and Anthony Edwards star in *Mr. North*, airing Friday on Bravo.



Rue McClanahan is Irrepressible Blanco in *The Golden Girls*, Saturdays on NBC.



Before he played Matt Dillon, James Arness starred as *The Thing*, which airs Monday on The Disney Channel.