

FAMILY FAIRE

'Roundhouse' adds punch to Saturdays

By Chris Carpenter

On a night when anyone old enough to have a driver's license is elsewhere, Nickelodeon offers Snick, or Saturday Nickelodeon, two hours of prime-time programming for kids. The second of Snick's four distinctly different series is *Roundhouse*, a bare-bones variety show that makes up for a small budget with big energy.

Call it *Sonny and Cher* with oversampling, *Donny and Marie* sans disco, but a more appropriate label might be *In Living Color* for pre-teens. *Roundhouse* producer Buddy Sheffield, a former *Color* writer, doesn't discount that comparison.

"I created a lot of the sketches that some of you probably hate," Sheffield recently said of his old job at a press gathering. "and ... a lot of kids watch [*In Living Color*]. If they're going to watch that kind of show, we might as well give them one that has the right kind of values and is planned for them and not pick them up by accident."

True to at least one trait of its Fox ancestor, *Roundhouse* is peopled by an extremely talented ensemble cast that delivers both deft humor and dance moves with synchronous timing and acrobatic vigor. Wedged between established Nick faves *Clarissa Explains It All* and *The Ren & Stimpy Show*, *Roundhouse* makes a solid case for a new Saturday night fever.

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WEDNESDAY



Tony Danza serves as host of *Gettin' Over*, a series of three specials saluting young people who have overcome obstacles in their lives. The first installment airs Wednesday on ABC.

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