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THE FRONT SECTION

WWE to bring 'night full of excitement' to JLC

JOHN M. MILNER
Special to London This Week

London pro wrestling fans are gearing up for what could be the biggest wrestling event in the city's history. World Wrestling Entertainment will broadcast its highly-rated Monday Night Raw program live from the John Labatt Centre Aug. 16.

WWE superstar Maven promises Raw will provide "a night full of excitement."

"It's like no other show you've ever seen," the former schoolteacher turned wrestler adds. "It's like a live movie. It's an event."

"The response has been terrific," says Holly Kjeldgaard, the assistant general manager and director of marketing at the John Labatt Centre. "(The WWE) has a big following around the world," she notes, adding it's "a big deal" for the community.

Meanwhile, local wrestling fans couldn't be more excited.

One London resident who made it sure to get his ticket for

the show is Jason Houlihan. "It isn't often that you get something on this scale in the wrestling business ever to come to London," says Houlihan.

The staff at the John Labatt Centre is excited as well, says Kjeldgaard. "It's a great product (and) great people to work with."

This is only the third WWE show, but second televised event, since the organization's return to London after an absence of nearly seven years. Maven predicts the fans will be "ready for a good show," something the WWE is eager to provide.

With Monday Night Raw being one of the WWE's premiere shows, many top WWE superstars will be there. They include Toronto's Trish Stratus, Triple H, Ric Flair, Kane, Winnipeg's Chris Jericho, Edmonton's Chris Benoit and Randy Orton.

Wrestling fans also know Raw is also where most of the twists and turns of the WWE's storylines or "angles" play out.

"That's what the Raw brand is all about: The angles. It makes or

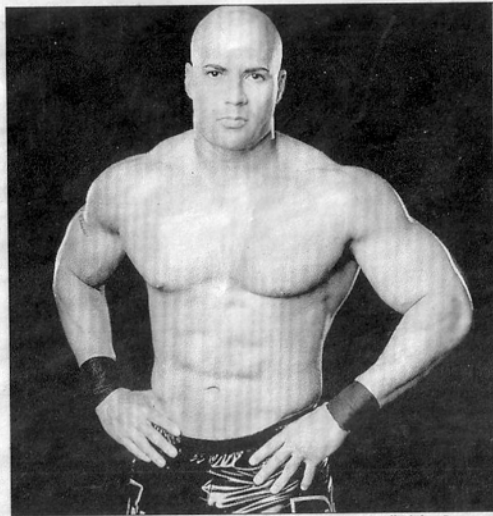
breaks an entire show," explains Houlihan.

The WWE will be coming off of their annual SummerSlam pay-per-view, to held the night before at Toronto's Air Canada Centre. Maven notes there will be added excitement coming off one of the WWE's biggest events. He said such broadcasts tend to be "high-powered" and fans can look forward to an "excellent program. Lots of things go down."

"That's a definite bonus for sure," opines Houlihan about the London show being a post SummerSlam Raw. "It's the fallout from the pay-per-view that will make it extra special!"

For the wrestlers, Maven says because the show is made for TV, operating under a two-hour time limit, there is added pressure to "get the show in." However, he adds he "still gets excited when that music hits and I know Raw is about to start."

Start time at the JLC is 7:45 p.m. The show is broadcast live on Spike TV in the U.S. and on TSN in Canada.



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Maven, one of the World Wrestling Entertainment wrestlers coming to the John Labatt Centre next week promises a show "like no other show you've ever seen."