

DIVERSIONS

W W F
ACTION

KING KONG
BUNDY

vs.

Jake
'The Snake'
Roberts

Featuring

Jimmy Hart
'The Mouth of the South'

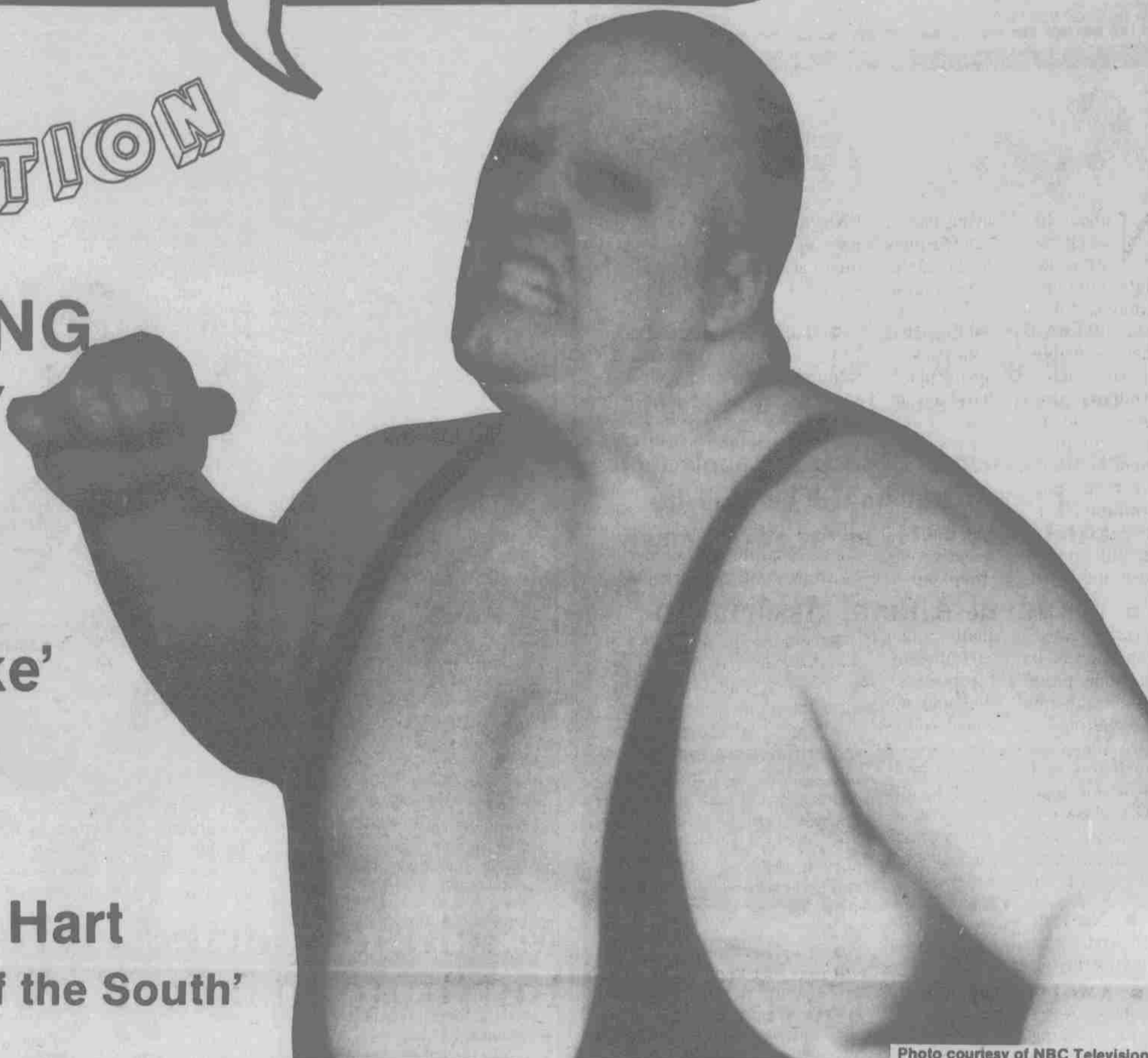


Photo courtesy of NBC Television

By Jeff Apel
Diversions

Rowdy Roddy Piper isn't expected to be there, but the feud between adorable Adrian Adonis and the Scotsman best known for wearing a red and black kilt will still be ongoing when the World Wrestling Federation makes its debut in Lincoln Monday.

Jimmy Hart, Adonis' manager, said the feud with Piper originated when Adonis was asked to fill in on Piper's wrestling talk show, "Piper's Pit."

Almost immediately after filling in for the Europe-bound Piper, Adonis changed the appearance of the show by decorating the walls with flowers and renaming the program the "Flower Shop."

Hart said while he and Adonis both thought the program change was for the better, Piper became so enraged when he returned from his European wrestling tour that he tore down Adonis' feminine-looking studio.

That action set off such evil feelings between Piper and Adonis that the two

wrestlers are now out to get one another, Hart said.

"We're in a war," Hart said. "But we're ready to come out in combat fatigues and kick ass."

Hart said because of such rivalries wrestling is now able to maintain a steady stream of fans.

Despite a slight decrease in the overall interest in wrestling in the mid-to-late '70s, Hart said the WWF is back stronger than ever, largely because of special wrestling events like Wrestlemania I and Wrestlemania II.

Those two events not only helped to rekindle the interest of long time fans but also helped to gain new fans, Hart said.

"Wrestling is big everywhere," Hart said. "Everybody has heard about it. We just put it on a broader spectrum."

WWF's acquisition of Vince McMahon Jr. as the league's president also helped increase interest, Hart said.

McMahon, who bought the federation's television rights from cable television giant Ted Turner, turned the league into an instant success by getting the best athletes available, Hart said.

Hart said the WWF's superior athletes keep the three major wrestling organizations — the WWF, American Wrestling Association and the National Wrestling Alliance from forming a unified alliance.

"The WWF is so far ahead of everyone it's a joke," Hart said. "We don't need anybody else because we don't see their talent. They need us more than we need them."

Hart said he is somewhat mystified by how he and the wrestlers he manages earned the villain label.

Because of their "bad-guy" image, Hart said, it isn't unusual for obnoxious fans to hurl cups of beer when any of the wrestlers he manages compete.

Hart said he partially solved the problem of all the insults he normally gets by carrying a megaphone to the ring so he can shout instructions to his wrestlers.

Hart said it was through the use of his megaphone he earned the nickname "The Mouth of the South."

"It doesn't bother me that people don't like us," Hart said. "Everybody is human, and I just want to be Jimmy Hart. When you snooze, you lose."

Hart said he is looking forward to competing in Pershing because it will mark the Lincoln debut of the Honky Tonk Man, a wrestler he describes as an up-and-coming star in the WWF ranks.

The Honky Tonk Man will face former intercontinental champion Pedro Morales in one of the feature matches on the card. Other top matches include a midget tag-team match and a match between Jake "The Snake" Roberts and 400-pound King Kong Bundy. Pershing officials said Tuesday that plenty of tickets remain for Monday's event. Wrestling begins at 7:30 p.m.

Hart said he's interested in how the fans in Lincoln will treat the wrestlers.

When he tours near his home in Memphis, Tenn., Hart said he runs into rednecks in cowboy hats who like to yell and scream.

Hart said that crowd is a sharp contrast from the fans the WWF gets in New York. He said fans in the Big Apple are more the type that say "Hey brother, how's it going?"

"Wrestling fans everywhere are fairly knowledgeable," Hart said. "It's just some act differently than others."