

April Parnell

From: venuestoday [venuestoday@mail.vresp.com]
Sent: Wednesday, May 14, 2008 5:59 PM
To: april@venuestoday.com
Subject: VT Pulse, May 14, 2008



VT PULSE

A WEEKLY PUBLICATION FROM VENUES TODAY

May 14, 2008 • VOL. VII, Number 15 • ISSN 1547-4143

Quote of the Week

"Every fighter needs an opponent and everyone needs Oscar."

— Darren Libonati of the Thomas and Mack Center in Las Vegas on fighter Oscar De La Hoya's recent deal with AEG.

Greetings April,

Did you know that Kenneth Feld took his Disney on Ice show global in 1985 at the insistence of then-Disney CEO Michael Eisner? The move paid off — nearly every Feld show now plays international dates and the company has grown into a global family entertainment brand. We want to hear your stories and tidbits about the Feld Family. Send them to linda@venuestoday.com.

In this Issue

THE NEWS

[AEG Comes In Swinging With De La Hoya Partnership](#)

[Madonna Cuts Landmark Deal With Secondary Market For Upcoming Tour](#)

[Spending down at Central Florida Fair](#)

HOT TICKETS

[Grohl Doesn't Foo' Around With Down Under Gigs](#)

THE BEAT

[On The Menu: Stanley Cups Semifinals](#)

[Quarterlies](#)

DEPARTMENTS

[Short Takes](#)

[HELP WANTED](#)

[CONTACT VT PULSE](#)

SHORT TAKES

>> IRL GOES WIRELESS WITH BELAIR - The Indy



Every year, we're confronted with hundreds of new gadgets and gizmos that are supposed to make life easier. What are these new, amazing products? And can they really help us?

Venues Today will tackle innovation in our June **Focus on Technology** issue.

ADVERTISE THE INNOVATIONS YOUR COMPANY OFFERS OR USES IN THIS ISSUE. CONTACT YOUR **VENUES TODAY ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE** TO RESERVE SPACE. DEADLINE IS MAY 16TH.

Racing Leagues' (IRL) IndyCar Series has signed a deal with BelAir Networks equipment to support the real-time transmission of race-related data and voice communications at 15 U.S. IndyCar Series races, plus an additional 16 events that comprise the Firestone Indy Lights Series, the IRL's driver development series.
Contact: Tracey Sheehy, (212) 616-6003

>> **LIVE NATION INKS DEAL WITH ADBRIGHT** - Live Nation and AdBrite have launched eFan Finder, a new proprietary service that helps local Live Nation concert promoters, artist managers and agents track and view the performance of Live Nation's online advertising campaigns for thousands of shows it produces and markets in North America each year.
Contact: John Vlautin, (310) 867-7127

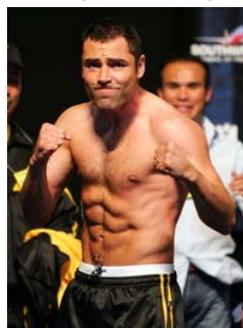
>> **JAMAICA HOSTS MEETING PLANNERS** - The Jamaica Meetings Exchange will be held June 5-9 at the new Riu Ocho Rios showcasing Jamaica's meeting & convention amenities. In addition to the trade show, the JAMEX program will include site visits to hotels, hosted functions and excursions to iconic attractions, shopping destinations and much more.
Contact: Sean Howard, (800) 526-2422

Like the timely news in this issue? Think somebody else should be receiving

VT NEWS

DEALS **AEG COMES IN SWINGING WITH DE LA HOYA PARTNERSHIP**

"Golden Boy" Oscar De La Hoya



Legend has it that boxing is one of the easiest games to fix, but that hasn't stopped AEG from making a bet on the sport and inking a deal with Oscar De La Hoya's Golden Boy Promotions.

AEG bought an undisclosed minority stake in Golden Boy, first established in 2001 and responsible for about 50 boxing events per year. While the non-exclusive deal provides an additional content source

for AEG's global network of arenas, it also breathes some life into the sport, suffering from an aging roster of marquee boxers and increased competition from Mixed Martial Arts organizations including the perennial Ultimate Fighting Championship.

"Shame on UFC for even attempting to tell the world that boxing is a dying sport," said Darren Libonati of the Thomas and Mack Center in Las Vegas, which hosted a fight between Bernard Hopkins and Joe Calzaghe on April 19 that grossed \$11.6 million. "Boxing is cyclical and it's gone up and down over the last 30 to 40 years. When the heavy weights are firing, it's the best thing in the world."

Libonati said De La Hoya's celebrity has certainly helped the sport and created an environment where "every fighter needs an opponent, and everyone needs Oscar."

Whether the new AEG deal will actually include a De La Hoya fight remains to be seen. The scrappy super welterweight from East L.A. has promised to retire at the end of the year and recently beat Steve Forbes in front of 27,000 fans during a fight at the AEG-managed Home Depot Center in nearby Carson, Calif. De La Hoya is planning a highly anticipated bout with Floyd Mayweather Jr. on Sept. 20 at the non-AEG MGM Grand in Las Vegas, but he might have one more fight left before the end of the year — a fight that could take place at a number of AEG facilities including their new arena in Beijing, the O2 in London or O2 World in Berlin.

Regardless of where De La Hoya chooses to fight, the deal provides long-range vitality for Golden Boy as its stable of fighters grows older with former champions Bernard Hopkins, Shane Mosley and Juan Manuel Marquez all coming off losses.

"It just means that you'll have another option for you and your fighters to get dates," said Libonati. "When you have a stable of fighters, your biggest issue is how to keep them fighting. Guys get lost under these promoters and big stables of fighters."

AEG's financial backing and global venues could also give Golden Boy CEO Richard Schaefer more flexibility in pursuing Olympic Boxers who shine during the summer's Beijing Games, along with free-agent prospects. He's even considering an arena tour of young boxers.

"If you're a young fighter these days, Golden Boy is going to be the promoter you want to sign with," said AEG's new COO Dan Beckerman, who helped author the deal. "This deal gives them access to a number of arenas including our facility in Beijing, as well as the O2 in London where the 2012 games are being held."

If you no longer wish to receive these emails, please reply to this message with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line

Venues Today
P.O. Box 2540
Huntington Beach, California 92647

[Read the VerticalResponse marketing policy.](#)

it? You can add another VT Pulse recipient to your account for only \$50.



SUBSCRIBE

Not a subscriber? Here's what you're missing: 12 issues of the monthly magazine, 39 issues of the weekly VT Pulse (like this one) and unlimited access to our archive of charts and articles.

[CLICK TO SUBSCRIBE](#)



CONTACT US

To submit news or information, contact:

Linda Deckard
Publisher, Editor-in-chief
(714) 378-5400, ext. 22
linda@venuestoday.com

Dave Brooks
Senior Writer & Assignment Editor
(714) 378-5400, ext. 24
dave@venuestoday.com

Rob Ocampo
Hot Tickets/Top Stops Manager
(714) 378-5400, ext. 21
rob@venuestoday.com

For advertising

De La Hoya has a long history with AEG, going back to 2000 when De La Hoya fought Mosely at the Staples Center. Earlier this year, De La Hoya bought a portion of the Houston Dynamo Major League Soccer franchise from AEG and last week, AEG officials announced plans to erect a seven-foot-tall bronze statue of De La Hoya outside of the Staples Center.

The Staples Center's Lee Zeidman said that boxing continues to be a strong event for arenas, with promoters shooting for the 8,000-12,000 ticket sales range.

"We could do it up to 18,000, but most of these really big fights want Saturday nights for HBO broadcasting and it's hard for us to clear those dates unless it's during the summer because of our basketball and hockey teams," Zeidman said. "Regardless, I think boxing is here to stay from an arena point-of-view."

Beckerman said that boxing matches could really be held in any building type – from giant stadiums all the way down to small theaters, including the 7,100-seat Nokia Theatre at L.A. Live.

"It's really about finding the right size for the right guy in the right market," Beckerman said. "We can be really flexible and deliver large facilities for guys who are expecting large bouts, or more intimate settings for lesser known matchups."

The largest roadblock to getting big fights in U.S. arenas remains competition from Las Vegas venues, which can offer a higher guarantee to promoters because it's offset by gaming money. Most of the headliner, broadcast fights are still held at the MGM Grand Garden Arena or the nearby Mandalay Bay, but that could change by 2010 when AEG plans to open its own 22,000-seat arena in Sin City, along with a whole litany of other development projects of different sizes. — Dave Brooks

Interviewed for this article: Dan Beckerman (213) 742-7120; Lee Zeidman, (213) 742-7255; Daren Libonati, (702) 895-3727

LAST CHANCE TO ADVERTISE IN OUR FELD SPOTLIGHT



Coming in June. Contact your Venues Today account executive to reserve advertising space:

Eastern US – Sue Nichols (615) 662-0252 or
Sue@venuestoday.com

Texas – Pauline Davis (615) 243-7883 or
Pauline@venuestoday.com

Midwest & West Coast & Intl – Rich DiGiacomo (310) 429-3678 or
Rich@venuestoday.com

**information,
contact:**

Sue Nichols
Eastern U.S.
(615) 662-0252
sue@venuestoday.com

Pauline Davis
Texas
(615) 243-7883
pauline@venuestoday.com

Rich DiGiacomo
Mid & Western U.S.,
International
(310) 429-3678
rich@venuestoday.com

April Parnell
Director of Marketing &
Sales
(714) 378-0056
april@venuestoday.com

**To update a Fair or
Festival Listing for
the VT Resource
Guide, contact:**

Nazarene Kahn
Resource Guides
Coordinator
(714) 378-5400 ext. 25
resourceguides@venuestoday.com

**HELP
WANTED**

**[VIEW THE FULL
LISTINGS](#)**

**Kent (Wash.)
Events Center/SMG**
- Director of Finance

**Kent (Wash.)
Events Center/SMG**
- Director of
Operations

**Kent (Wash.) Event
Center/SMG -**
Director of Sales &
Marketing

**Jackson (Miss.)
Convention
Complex - Director
of Operations**

**Hartman Arena,
Park City, KS -**
Operations Manager

**Cincinnati
Playhouse in the
Park - Ticket System
Admin**

**[VIEW THE FULL
LISTINGS](#)**

TICKETS

**MADONNA CUTS LANDMARK DEAL WITH
SECONDARY MARKET FOR UPCOMING TOUR**

Madonna



Madonna has made a career of doing things first. And her latest trailblazing move is one that could fundamentally shift the often-tense dynamic between artists and the secondary ticketing market. The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame singer announced that she would be teaming up with eBay's StubHub in the U.S. and Canada and Viagogo in Europe to offer officially sanctioned secondary ticket options for fans unable to secure tickets to her upcoming "Sticky and Sweet" tour through primary means.

The deal allows Madonna to work around one of the frustrations that many artists have long complained about when it comes to the secondary market: how to get a cut of the action.

StubHub will be the official "fan-to-fan ticket marketplace" and the company's head of business development for music, Chuck La Vallee, calls the deal the wave of the future in ticketing. "We think this is a watershed moment for the industry and it will lead to increased collaboration with more prominent music artists," said La Vallee. "Madonna has always been a trendsetter, but this is part of the future of ticketing."

Positioning the deal as the first of its kind with an artist of Madonna's magnitude for an entire tour, La Vallee said StubHub didn't have to pitch the singer on the concept, but rather the marriage was a collaboration that just kind of "fell into place" at the right time. Madonna is about to leave her longtime label home at Warner Bros. to begin her \$120 million deal with Live Nation, which covers everything from her touring and merchandising to album releases. "We did not pitch her, but just reinforced the idea that StubHub is the number one fan-to-fan marketplace in the world and the opportunities presented to Madonna by partnering with us are bigger and better than any other marketing partnerships she could find."

One of the advantages for Madonna is the fact that La Vallee said StubHub reaches a different audience than the one her team might normally reach through traditional marketing in newspapers, TV and the Internet. "I've been in the business 20 years and shows come and go through New York and I never know they're coming," he said. "There are absolutely fans out there looking elsewhere, other than traditional advertising, for a tour, and we reach that fan very well. StubHub has a huge marketing machine that reaches people who might not see an ad in the 'Village Voice' or hear a commercial on radio or TV."

Though La Vallee would not discuss financial terms of the deal, he said StubHub would do an "enormous" amount of online advertising as part of the deal, leveraging the full

weight of eBay, as well as search sites such as Yahoo! and Google. Even though StubHub is the official secondary partner on the tour, other secondary sellers will be able to get in on the game, but La Vallee said the official endorsement from the Madonna camp will give StubHub extra credibility and recognition in the space. "Fans will know the artist is endorsing this site and a bit part of why Madonna chose us is because we have a fan protection guarantee which says we will get your seats or replace them with some of comparable or better value if there is any issue, or your money back," he said.

In addition to offering tickets for resale by fans, Europe's Viagogo will also offer "VIP packages" with marked-up tickets that feature extras like backstage passes, t-shirts, laminates and potential artist meet-and-greets, according to founder Eric Baker.

After leaving StubHub and starting Viagogo in 2005, Baker said he made a point of working with the music industry on charity auctions and cutting deals with labels such as the Warner Music Group (home to Madonna) in order to pave the way for deals like the Madonna pact. "We've always believed that if someone buys a ticket it is theirs to do with what they want and what we've done with sports teams is say, 'how can we work with you to create a better offering and better service for the fan?'," said Baker. "But also a better economic opportunity for the artist."

Baker would also not discuss financial details of the Madonna deal, but said that as the official partner for the European leg of the tour, Viagogo will make some "economic contributions" to support the tour while providing their traditional service. The Wall Street Journal reported that unnamed sources close to the deal said Viagogo is paying Live Nation and Madonna a flat fee, while StubHub is offering a percentage of revenue on top of a fee. While Madonna does not have any economic incentive for the tickets to be sold at a higher value, fans using Viagogo can be assured of a secure transaction that is endorsed by the artist. Viagogo benefits by the official designation, but also with promotion in print, online and e-mails.

Baker has also pledged to provide "tons" of offline and online marketing for the cause, though he said he couldn't speculate on any sales projections.

StubHub spokesperson Sean Pate, head of corporate communications, predicted that the official Madonna seal of approval could prove a tipping point for fans as well. "There is still a demographic out there who is tenuous about purchasing from a secondary seller," he said. "That endorsement will be the tipping point that makes fans feel okay about it. Not that eBay is, but with Madonna on board I don't think they'll think we're a fly-by-night company."

Live Nation has booked the tour into a handful of stadiums, which Madonna has not traditionally played, as well as the traditional arenas.

Contacted for this story: Eric Baker, (44) 20 3003 6428; Sean Pate and Chuck La Vallee, (415) 222-8442

FAIRS & FESTIVALS SPENDING DOWN AT CENTRAL FLORIDA FAIR

Young knights in training at the Central Florida Fair, Orlando



A lot of free tickets went out the door to maintain the status quo at the Central Florida Fair, Orlando. The April 17-27 fair drew 198,000 total attendance, about the same as 2007 when 200,000 were counted, but paid attendance was 93,000, down considerably, and spending on food and games was significantly down, said fair manager Charlie Price.

“We saw a major, major cash shortage,” Price said, proving his point with one astounding statistic - ATM usage at the fair was down 75 percent from a year ago. Price compared it to the spending patterns during the recession of the mid-’70’s.

Food and game income was off 35-50 percent. “People just didn’t have any cash,” Price said.

He was struck with the reality that middle income families are very budget conscious right now. On a bright note, advance sales were up 33 percent. But the first week in March when prices at the grocery stores and gas pumps jumped, sales slumped, he said. “Gas prices were up 38 cents a gallon in the two weeks before the fair.”

In today’s world, he watched the “typical family that comes to the fair at five buy a cotton candy and one large Coke and share,” he said.

Gate admission was \$10 for adults, \$5 for children, cut to, \$5 and \$2, respectively if bought in advance. Senior citizens and students were charged \$7 at the gate. Wristbands, good for admission to the fair and all rides, were \$25 on the weekend. In advance, those wristbands sold for \$15. The fair also offered family packs for \$80, good for four admissions and wristbands. To boost sales, they offered two-for-one ride bands Monday through Thursday for \$25.

Participation was a bright spot, with more animal exhibit entries than the fair could handle, a trend that held true with the Ranch Rodeo (teams of four working cowboys and cowgirls doing horseback chores). Price said the fair saw \$228,000 in market animal sales so “prices held up.”

And there were even more creative exhibit entries for contests such as the second annual Peanut Butter and Jelly Cook-off, which explored every type of food imaginable made with peanut butter and jelly.

Sponsorships were up 12 percent, well into the six figures, he said. The fair sold the back of the ticket for the first time. Local radio station Real Radio 104.1 brought its Monsters of the Morning djs for a Monsters of the Fair promotion which was highly popular, he said.

Wade Shows provided 66 rides on the midway, including their new roller coaster, which will only play six fairs this year and was dubbed the Monster Coaster for Real Radio. Price said the carnival gross was about the same as last year for rides.

The talent budget was \$130,000. All shows are free with the price of admission.

Looking forward, based on his early-fair experience, Price predicted rural fairs will not be affected by the economy as much as urban fairs, but the latter will take a hit. Mostly, he said, he “feels sorry for the carnivals because of the price of diesel.” Even theme parks in Orlando are emphasizing local sales as travel drops.

And, by the way, one attendee at the Central Florida Fair who got a free ticket is of note: Mrs. Fair was 100 years old and attending her 95th Central Florida Fair. She started attending at the age of 5 and missed only one fair since, during World War II. 2009 dates are to be decided. Price said they may incorporate the first week in May next year. — Linda Deckard

Interviewed for this story: Charlie Price and Tiffany Lee, (407) 295-3247

Mid-Year Deadline - Note Your Calendar

We're getting ready to wrap up the first half of 2008!

Our July issue will spotlight our much-anticipated [Mid-Year Hot Tickets and Top Stops](#) charts. Don't be left out, make sure your reports are submitted early!

The included events **MUST** have taken place between **Oct. 16, 2007 and May 15, 2008.**

The deadline to submit concert and event grosses for the mid-year charts is Wednesday, **May 21st**. You may submit your reports via our website at www.venuestoday.com, e-mail them to HotTickets@venuestoday.com or fax them to (714) 378-0040.

HOT Tickets

HOT TICKETS is a weekly summary of the top acts and ticket sales as reported to VT PULSE. Following are the top 20 concerts and events, the top 5 in each seating capacity category, which took place since April 22, 2008.

GROHL DOESN'T FOO' AROUND WITH DOWN UNDER GIGS

15,001 or More Seats	10,001-15,000 Seats	5,001-10,000 Seats	5,000 or Less Seats
<p>1) Kenny Chesney Gross Sales: \$3,563,206; Venue: M&T Bank Stadium, Baltimore; Attendance: 42,316; Ticket Range: \$99.50-\$49; Promoter: AEG Live, Baltimore Ravens, The Messina Group; Dates: May 10; No. of Shows: 1</p> <p>2) Foo Fighters Gross Sales: \$2,725,179; Venue: AcerArena, Sydney, Australia; Attendance: 30,962; Ticket Range: \$95.60; Promoter: The Frontier Touring</p>	<p>1) Foo Fighters Gross Sales: \$1,646,038; Venue: Vector Arena, Auckland, New Zealand; Attendance: 22,801; Ticket Range: \$78.28; Promoter: The Frontier Touring Company; Dates: May 5-6; No. of Shows: 2</p> <p>2) Kenny Chesney Gross Sales: \$423,382; Venue: Charleston (W.Va.) Civic Center Coliseum; Attendance: 8,541; Ticket Range: \$69.50-\$29.50; Promoter: AEG Live, The Messina Group, Varnell Enterprises;</p>	<p>1) Carlos Santana Gross Sales: \$348,169; Venue: New UCF Arena, Orlando, Fla.; Attendance: 5,537; Ticket Range: \$115.50-\$40.50; Promoter: In-House; Dates: April 29; No. of Shows: 1</p> <p>2) Juanes Gross Sales: \$315,250; Venue: El Paso (Texas) County Coliseum; Attendance: 4,508; Ticket Range: \$97.50-\$57.50; Promoter: In-House, Cardenas Marketing Network, Live Nation; Dates: April 23; No. of Shows: 1</p>	<p>1) Jerry Seinfeld Gross Sales: \$568,589; Venue: Fox Theatre, Atlanta; Attendance: 8,512; Ticket Range: \$77-\$47; Promoter: JS Touring; Dates: May 2; No. of Shows: 2</p> <p>2) Dolly Parton Gross Sales: \$524,378; Venue: Chicago Theatre; Attendance: 5,821; Ticket Range: \$147-\$57; Promoter: Jam Productions; Dates: May 8-9; No. of Shows: 2</p> <p>3) Rent Gross Sales: \$358,227; Venue: Fox Theatre, Atlanta;</p>

Company; Dates: May 2-3; No. of Shows: 2

3) Monster Energy AMA Supercross
Gross Sales: \$1,404,028; Venue: **Sam Boyd Stadium, Las Vegas;** Attendance: 26,444; Ticket Range: \$66-\$24; Promoter: Live Nation Motorsports; Dates: May 3; No. of Shows: 1

4) Jay-Z, Mary J. Blige
Gross Sales: \$1,286,598; Venue: **The Palace of Auburn Hills (Mich.);** Attendance: 12,625; Ticket Range: \$300-\$49.75; Promoter: Live Nation, Palace Sports & Entertainment; Dates: April 25; No. of Shows: 1

5) Kenny Chesney
Gross Sales: \$910,237; Venue: **Ford Center, Oklahoma City;** Attendance: 13,295; Ticket Range: \$72.50-\$62.50; Promoter: AEG Live, The Messina Group, Varnell Enterprises; Dates: May 2; No. of Shows: 1

Dates: May 8; No. of Shows: 1

3) James Blunt
Gross Sales: \$401,649; Venue: **Brisbane (Australia) Entertainment Centre;** Attendance: 5,458; Ticket Range: \$80.77; Promoter: The Frontier Touring Company; Dates: May 2; No. of Shows: 1

4) Steve Harvey
Gross Sales: \$326,721; Venue: **Jacksonville (Fla.) Veterans Memorial Arena;** Attendance: 8,323; Ticket Range: \$43-\$35; Promoter: Steve Harvey Radio Network; Dates: May 10; No. of Shows: 1

5) Sugarland
Gross Sales: \$276,412; Venue: **ASU Convocation Center, Jonesboro, Ark.;** Attendance: 7,274; Ticket Range: \$38; Promoter: In-House; Dates: April 26; No. of Shows: 1

3) Robert Plant & Alison Krauss
Gross Sales: \$265,860; Venue: **Knoxville (Tenn.) Civic Coliseum;** Attendance: 4,396; Ticket Range: \$66-\$46; Promoter: AC Entertainment, Outback Concerts; Dates: April 22; No. of Shows: 1

4) Juanes
Gross Sales: \$202,544; Venue: **Magness Arena, Denver;** Attendance: 3,897; Ticket Range: \$80-\$39.50; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: April 25; No. of Shows: 1

5) Andre Rieu
Gross Sales: \$198,468; Venue: **Pensacola (Fla.) Civic Center;** Attendance: 3,442; Ticket Range: \$73-\$53; Promoter: Dutch Performances; Dates: April 24; No. of Shows: 1

Attendance: 7,036; Ticket Range: \$58-\$23; Promoter: In-House; Dates: April 25-27; No. of Shows: 5

4) Katt Williams
Gross Sales: \$276,444; Venue: **Fox Theatre, Detroit;** Attendance: 4,794; Ticket Range: \$68.50-\$45.50; Promoter: Live Nation, Olympia Entertainment; Dates: April 24; No. of Shows: 1

5) Rodney Carrington
Gross Sales: \$250,425; Venue: **Fox Theatre, Atlanta;** Attendance: 6,300; Ticket Range: \$39.75; Promoter: Outback Concerts; Dates: May 3; No. of Shows: 2

Compiled by Rob Ocampo. To submit reports, e-mail HotTickets@venuestoday.com or fax to (714) 378-0040.

THE BEAT

ON THE MENU STANLEY CUP SEMIFINALS

Flyers Fans



Game 3 of the Eastern Conference Stanley Cup Finals
Wachovia Complex, Philadelphia
May 13
Catering Entity: Aramark
Attendance: 19,965

Menu:
\$4 - hot dog
\$3.50 - soft pretzel
\$7 - crab fries with cheese
\$7 - \$7.75 - cheesesteaks

Aramark worked with Global Spectrum, which operates the Wachovia Center, in order to make sure all food was "creative and appetizing," as John Page, Global

Spectrum chief operating officer, said, including the creative packaging choice of an Incredible Hulk hand that holds drinks.

Global Spectrum also worked to create “an event within an event” by holding a block party to hype up Flyer fans in the parking lot. “We created a block party concept and extended it into our parking lot, so we picked up another 100-150 square yards of service area,” said Page. More service area allows for more promotional opportunities that are also popular with fans, including appearances by the Bud Girls and representatives from Captain Morgan. Despite their efforts, the Pittsburgh Penguins beat the Philadelphia Flyers 4-1.

Food items available at the block party included the Burger in Paradise; Key West Grilled Chicken Breast Platters; Spanish Rum and Maple Glazed Roast Pork Sandwiches; Pizza Hut slices and frozen margaritas and Landshark Lager from Margaritaville Brewing Company. The restaurants inside the Wachovia Center, including Finnegan’s Wake and Cadillac Grille, were also opened early for fans.

Preparation: Planning for the event began as early as March, and other games and events held at the Wachovia Complex are used as test runs, “to get out the wrinkles,” Page said. Because there is significant investment and cost, the management and staff continue to refine the process with each event, finding out what sells and what doesn’t sell, what works well and what needs to be improved.

Commemorative Items: The Philadelphia Flyers did a collaboration shirt with the rock band Megadeth. There was also a commemorative puck sold highlighting the inter-state rivalry in the Eastern Conference Finals.

Staffing: About 100 people were added to the staff with each game, totaling 450 between the Wachovia Complex staff and the Aramark staff.

Final Thoughts: Page noted that the biggest challenge in setting up events like the games of the Eastern Conference Stanley Cup Finals is simply preparation and making sure everything flows smoothly. T

The collaboration between the concessionaire and Global Spectrum was key. Food items sold included 2,301 hot dogs, 3,693 soft pretzels, 1,642 orders of crab fries and over 2,000 cheesesteaks. He said 755 pounds of meat were used for the cheesesteaks. — Linda Domingo

Interviewed for this story: John Page, (215) 389-9552

QUARTERLIES

Venues Today is launching a new feature, analyzing the quarterly reports of publicly traded entertainment companies. This month, we look at the Q1 reports for five newsmakers that frequently get mentioned in *Venues Today*.

Live Nation (NYSE: LYV)

Stock (Tuesday close): \$15.12

History: Traded as high as \$12.20 on Feb. 28 and as low as \$9.22 on Jan. 22

Market Cap: \$1.1 billion



Report: Live Nation has reported a Q1 loss of \$35.4 million, compared with \$45 million a year earlier. Revenue was up 22 percent over the same period at \$636.5 million.

That figure beat most analysts’ predictions, who estimated the company was closer to bringing in \$568.1 million. CEO Michael Rapino explained in a conference call that recent acquisitions by the company, coupled with an uptick in summer concerts pre-sales, helped Live Nation soften the bleeding. Total attendance was up 3.6 percent over last year. Rapino also said a new deal with Jay-Z was expected to generate \$36 million in net income over the next 10 years.

Analyst: Alan Gould of Natixis Bleichroeder said, “The company indicated that it has not seen any effects of a soft economy on its business, which we view as an encouraging sign, given the perceived discretionary income nature of the concert business. Furthermore, the 2008 concert season appears to be shaping up better than we had expected going into the year.” Gould maintains a “buy” rating for the company’s stock.

Centerplate (AMEX: CVP)

Stock (Tuesday close): \$4.77

History: Traded as high as \$12.37 on Jan. 22 and as low as \$9.79 on March 17

Market Cap: \$101 million



Report: Centerplate reported a net loss of about \$11.2 million, up from \$8 million

during the same period last year, mostly from lagging sales on the convention center side. The company's CEO Janet Steinmayer also announced that beginning in June, the company was going to stop paying shareholders monthly dividends and use the money for long-term investments.

"This is not an easy decision and we recognize that it may have a negative impact on some of our (shareholders)," Steinmayer said.

The loss and subsequent stock drop has been partially linked to the company's failure to secure the concessions contract for the new Yankees Stadium in New York, set to open in 2009. The company has also brought on UBS Investment Bank to evaluate a number of ideas for shoring up the company's finances, including selling the company.

"What we are looking for here really is to explore all of the options which would make sense for us given the current economic and competitive environment," Steinmayer said during the conference call after she was asked about selling Centerplate.

Analyst: "It seems to me that the losses are tied to operational issues and not the economy because most retailers are showing a slowing in sales, but not losses," said private investor Devin Walsh during an analyst conference call. "Centerplate needs to go contract-by-contract and reduce expenses at each facility."

InterActiveCorp (NASDAQ:IACI)

Stock (Tuesday close): \$23

History: Traded as high as \$26.28 on Jan. 2 and as low as \$19.01 on March 10

Market Cap: \$6.4 billion



Report: Profits dropped about 13 percent because of marketing and other expenses. Net income was \$52.8 million in the first quarter compared with \$60.8 million during the same time last year. Quarterly sales rose to \$1.6 billion, up about seven percent from last year and ahead of Wall Street's estimate of \$1.53 billion. Ticketmaster reported revenues of \$349 million, but saw some added margin pressure from acquisitions.

CEO Barry Diller is pushing forward with a plan to split IAC into five separate companies, which will include a spinoff of Ticketmaster. Diller recently won a court dispute with shareholder Liberty Media Corp. to push forward with the sale, but Liberty has since announced plans to appeal the decision.

Analyst: "IAC has acquired numerous companies in the past and we expect additional acquisitions. Such acquisitions may be dilutive or expected synergies or business expectations may not be realized," Gould wrote in his report on the company.

eBay (NASDAQ: EBAY)

Stock (Tuesday close): \$31.41

History: Traded as high as \$30.74 on March 27 and as low as \$25.72 on March 10

Market Cap: \$40.8 billion



Report: The online auction site, which owns StubHub, reported a 22 percent boost in first quarter net income to \$460 million, compared to \$377 million last year.

Total revenue rose to by 24 percent to \$2.19 billion. The Marketplace business unit, which includes StubHub, delivered revenues of \$1.25 billion over the quarter, growing at 23 percent.

Analyst: Firm Piper Jaffray isn't so sure about the company, issuing a report on Wednesday that it has removed the company from its Internet Top Pick list, but it still maintains a "Buy" rating for the company. The report said it believes slower buying activity linked to a softening economy will reduce market growth in the second quarter.

World Wrestling Entertainment (NYSE: WWE)

Stock (Tuesday close): \$16.50

History: Traded as high as \$19.34 on March 24 and as low as \$13.73 on Jan. 24

Market Cap: \$1.2 Billion



Report: WrestleMania XXIV helped put Vince McMahon's wrestling empire over the top with profits up 29 percent to \$19.5 million. Quarterly revenue soared by 51 percent to \$162.6 million. Company officials estimated that WrestleMania XXIV televised from the Citrus Bowl, Orlando, contributed about

\$4.6 million in profit and \$31.3 million in revenue to the company. Live and televised entertainment revenue jumped to \$99.8 million from \$63 million, while consumer products revenue increased to \$43.4 million from \$37.4 million.

The McMahon family announced it will pay dividends of 36 cents per Class A share on June 25 to all shareholders of record on June 13.

Analyst: "First quarter trends were mixed, with North American attendance down nine percent adjusted for WrestleMania," said Gould. "This was the first decline in domestic attendance in three years but is largely driven by smaller venues in the touring schedule in 2008 versus 2007." — Dave Brooks

Interviewed for this article: Alan Gould, (212) 698-3158