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## APPENDIX

### *TSN re an episode of WWE (CBSC Decision 02/03-1656, May 11, 2004)*

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#### I. THE COMPLAINT

The following complaint dated August 19, 2004 was sent to the CBSC:

I run a Community home for 4 adult Downes syndrome [*sic*, Down Syndrome] men and they are addicted to WWE. I find the portrayal of women on the show to be demeaning to say the least and it appears to be getting worse as illustrated on the show of 18<sup>th</sup> Aug. suggestion [*sic*] of a striptease for hulking men in a locker room, but what really did upset me was the depiction of a graphic scene as follows. One wrestler is handcuffed by another angry wrestler and suspended from a contraption of some sort. He is then verbally abused, has a rag shoved in his mouth and this other creature then pores [*sic*] over him gasoline (at least that is what it said on the gerry can). He then continues to be offensive and lights a match with the obvious intent of immolating this wrestler but decides then not to. I find this an extraordinary example of gratuitous violence that should NOT be allowed on Canadian screens. Can this XXX rated depiction of violent behaviour be stopped, if not why not?

#### II. THE BROADCASTER'S RESPONSE

The President of TSN responded to the complainant's letter on August 28 with the following:

Dear [...],

Thank you for your letter, which we received through the Canadian Broadcast Standards Council on August 19, 2003. I understand and appreciate your concerns regarding TSN's WWE programming.

Professional wrestling has a large and loyal following on TSN. However, acknowledging that all potential viewers may not be aware of the sports entertainment nature of *WWE Raw*, TSN screens a disclaimer at the beginning of each episode and out of every commercial break during the program advising viewer discretion.

TSN had no intention of insulting or offending our viewers. We regret that the interactions between the two wrestlers during the *WWE Raw* program that aired on TSN on August 18, 2003 upset you. It is important to note that our viewer feedback on wrestling is quite varied. While some viewers - like yourself - think more editing is required in our wrestling programs, there are those who feel there is too much editing.

In order to strike a balance between these opposing views and meet the network's commitment to quality programming, TSN edits WWE programming by referencing Canadian Broadcast Standards Council guidelines. We understand and agree that violence and violent behaviour is an ongoing concern in the world and therefore TSN strictly follows the Canadian Association of Broadcasters Violence and Gender Portrayal Codes when it comes to WWE programming.

TSN will continue to apply programming codes and standards to all our wrestling

broadcasts. To ensure the programs meet our requirements, the following activities will continue to be undertaken:

- \* Broadcast the program during evening hours only (9 p.m. and midnight ET)
- \* Preview all pre-taped programming for excessive material
- \* Preview all scripts for excessive material
- \* Edit unacceptable material where possible (program is live at 9 p.m. ET)
- \* Meet regularly with the WWE to communicate and discuss our programming codes
- \* Screen a disclaimer at the beginning of the episode and out of every commercial break during the program advising viewer discretion

We hope this letter conveys how seriously we take our programming responsibilities. Thank you for taking the time to write to us.

Yours sincerely,

[...]  
President, TSN

### **III. ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENCE**

After receiving the broadcaster's response, the complainant wrote to the CBSC the following message dated August 28, attached to a Ruling request Form.

Hello, not being very email literate I am returning my not satisfied with response form this way. I understand your definition of gratuitous to be correct and as such the episode I refer to had nothing to do with wrestling and as such was brutally gratuitous, can you review it and hopefully as a consequence a warning will be insufficient to excuse poor community standards.  
Thank you.