

FOCUS

Chappelle Drops By Show

(AP) — Is Dave Chappelle back? The AWOL comedian dropped in unannounced at two popular comedy clubs last Thursday night, saying he had just arrived in Los Angeles and felt like performing.

Daily Variety reported that Chappelle served up some impromptu standup to stunned audiences at the Hollywood Improv and the Comedy Store.

Chappelle, 31, took off last month to South Africa for a "spiritual retreat," leaving his fans - and even his agent and publicist - wondering where he went.

After Comedy Central announced that the planned May 31 debut of the third season of "Chappelle's Show" had been postponed, the magazine Entertainment Weekly reported that



Comedian Dave Chappelle on stage at the Laugh Factory in New York City in April 2004. (AP photo)

Chappelle had checked himself into a mental health facility in South Africa.

But Chappelle denied checking into a mental facility or having a drug problem in an inter-

view with Time magazine.

Instead, he fled to stay with friends in Durban because he wasn't happy with the direction of the show, which is behind only "South Park" as Comedy

Central's most-watched program.

An unnamed Comedy Central representative told Variety that network officials would be sitting down with Chappelle to talk business "really, really soon."

Former Soldiers Put Out Rap Album

War recording recounts horror

(AP) - As Staff Sgt. Terrance Staves dodged bullets recovering a burned-out Humvee in Baghdad's Sadr City, he heard a rocket-powered grenade zooming toward him. All he could do was hold his breath, he recalled, when it crashed into the armored Bradley vehicle sitting just feet in front of him.

Back at camp, Staves went to his makeshift recording booth to vent his anger and fear by spitting rap lyrics. Some of those lyrics were used on "Live From Iraq," an album he and a few other Fort Hood soldiers wrote, recorded and produced while on a one-year deployment in Iraq.

On the 15-track album, soldiers



Army soldiers from left, Mike Thomas, Edward Gregory, Terrance Staves, Neal Saunders and Mike Davis in Killeen, Texas. (AP photo)

voice frustration at what they call shabby equipment and the lack of support they feel from the American public. The album vigorously defends soldiers charged with crimes for actions committed during the conflict.

"I was outside the gate a lot and had a lot of stuff happen to me," said Staves, 26, of Houston. "So for

me to ... be able to get in the booth and let all my anger out was wonderful. Because sometimes you can't let all your anger out there because you might endanger yourself, your brothers or do something you're not supposed to do. It was a beautiful outlet."

The group led by Sgt. Neal "Big Neal" Saunders, includes

Sgt. Edward "Greg-O" Gregory, Staves, Spc. Michael "Paperboy" Davis, Sgt. Ronin Clay and Spc. Michael Thomas.

They were deployed with Taskforce 112 of the 1st Cavalry Division at Fort Hood on March 12, 2004, and returned exactly one year later.

Within two weeks, the CD was mastered and the group had 2,000 copies made. The group has sold about 1,000 copies through its Web site and a regional music store chain has agreed to sell it.

The album's title track recounts a particularly bloody day last April when eight of their fellow soldiers were killed in a fierce gunbattle:

"This here is blood of soldiers of which the streets are paved ... And there is no reimbursement for the price that we pay."

Fan Tackled at Snoop Dogg Show

(AP) - King County sheriff's deputies are investigating a concertgoer's claim that he was severely beaten onstage during a performance by Snoop Dogg at the White River Amphitheatre near Seattle.

Richard Monroe, 24, said performers had encouraged him to climb on the stage during the May 28 concert, which also featured The Game.

Some performers and others on the stage kicked and punched him, poured alcohol on him, ripped out his diamond earrings and

stole his watch, cell phone and wallet, Monroe said.

"They beat me like a slave," he told the Seattle Post-Intelligencer. "It's horrible. They just went too far."

Amateur video footage aired on KING Television showed a man being tackled by several others after approaching Snoop Dogg from behind and putting his arm around the rapper's shoulders.

Relatives told the newspaper that Monroe suffered bruised ribs, a broken nose and a split lip.

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