



FOX

SEEKING SERIES TO BOLSTER FRIDAYS AND AVOID Q4 SLUMP

Fox's biggest objectives going into this year's upfront are bolstering the baseball-battered entertainment series on its fall schedule and coming up with the right Friday programming, particularly comedies.

Fox's schedule over the past few years has taken the network's executives on a bit of a roller coaster ride.

New series tend to struggle in the fall as they face post-season baseball pre-emptions. As a result, Fox usually lands in fourth place among its

broadcast competitors in adults 18 to 49 through the end of December.

Brad Adgate, senior VP of research for Horizon Media, calls this end-of-the-year slump Fox's "Achilles' heel of a horrible fourth quarter."

But Fox's fortunes changed

SNAPSHOT

When: May 18, 4 p.m. (ET)
Where: The Armory, 68 Lexington Ave. at 26th Street, New York
Key executives: Peter Liguori, president of entertainment; Jon Nesvig, president of advertising sales
Adults 18 to 49, season to date: 4.0/11, down 2 percent, tied for No. 1
Total viewers, season to date: 9.8 million, down 1 percent, ranked No. 3
2005-06 breakouts: "Prison Break," "Unan1mous"
Biggest holes: Wednesdays 8-10 p.m.; Thursdays 9-10 p.m.

Source: Ratings information is from Nielsen Media Research (Sept. 19, 2005-May 7, 2006).

dramatically in January with the addition of new seasons of "American Idol" and "24."

For the 2005-06 TV season, Fox made headway in the fall, thanks to the success of sophomore drama "House," the early launch of "Prison Break" and the success of "Bones."

The network already has picked up several dramatic thrillers or procedurals within the same vein as "24," "House," "Prison Break" and "Bones." On tap are: 20th Century Fox-produced dramas "Vanished" and "Primary," plus producer Jerry Bruckheimer's "American Crime."

With "Idol" and "24" off the schedule in the fall, the net-

FOX PILOTS

Comedy

(w) indicates a writer credit * indicates series has been picked up for fall 2006

Title	Studio	Executive producer
The Adventures of Big Handsome Guy and His Little Friend <i>Buddy comedy based on the short film about a nerd and his good-looking friend. Single camera.</i> Cast: Hayes MacArthur, Jason Winer, Mircea Monroe, Margo Harshman	20th Century Fox	Josh Sternin, Jeffrey Ventimilia (w)
Happy Hour <i>A guy loses his girlfriend, apartment and job and moves in with a ladies' man.</i> Cast: Lex Medlin, Nat Faxon, Jamie Denbo, Beth Lacke, Brooke D'Orsay	Warner Bros./Werner-Gold-Miller/Trailhead Prods.	Jackie Filgo (w), Jeff Filgo (w), Tom Werner, Eric Gold, Jimmy Miller
If You Lived Here <i>Tenants live in a corporate housing apartment complex. Single camera.</i> Cast: Jennifer Coolidge, Cameron Richardson, Boris Kodjoe, Michael Simpson, Reg Rogers, Zac Efron	Paramount	Andrew Reich (w), Ted Cohen (w)
Julie Reno, Bounty Hunter <i>A single mom in Reno, Nev., becomes a bounty hunter. Single camera.</i> Cast: Erin Daniels, Vincetn Ventresca, Holmes Osborn, Sean Peavy, Annie Potts	20th Century Fox/Phase 2	Michael Ross (w), Sandy Grushow, Paul Shapiro
More, Patience <i>A female therapist has trouble navigating her own life. First developed in 2001. Single camera.</i> Cast: Jennifer Esposito, Bianca Kajlich, Scoot McNary, Kristoffer Polaha	Sony/Pariah	Jed Seidel (w), Gavin Polone, Jamie Tarses
That Guy <i>A guy in his 30s realizes everyone in his life has grown up except him. Single camera.</i> Cast: Josh Meyers, Eric Matheny, Robyn Cohen	Regency/Montecito Pictures	Ivan Reitman, Matthew Carlson
*Til Death <i>Young, naive newlyweds move next door to a veteran married couple of 25 years.</i> Cast: Brad Garrett, Joely Fisher, Eddie Kaye Thomas, Kat Foster	Sony	Josh Goldsmith (w), Cathy Yuspa (w)
The Twelfth Man <i>Inspired by NBA player Paul Shirley's blog, in which he wrote about his career spent on the bench.</i> Cast: Brian Thomas Smith, Andrew Katz, Jodi Lyn O'Keefe, Julius Carry, Natalie Garza, Barry Bostwick	20th Century Fox	Dan Fogelman (w), Tim Story, Paul Shirley
Union Jackass <i>A British man reluctantly moves to Santa Monica, Calif., with his wife and young son.</i> Cast: Al Murray, Jenica Bergere, Christina Chang, John Ducey, Joshua Gomez, Colby Paul	20th Century Fox/Avalon	Dan O'Keefe (w), David Martin
The Winner <i>A successful man looks back to 1994, when he was a 30-something slacker going nowhere.</i> Cast: Rob Corddry, Keir Gilchrist, Erinn Hayes, Julie Hagerty, Lenny Clarke	20th Century Fox	Seth MacFarlane (w), Ricky Blitt (w)
The Worst Week of My Life <i>An adaptation of the single-camera BBC series that follows a couple in the final week before their wedding.</i> Cast: Zachary Levi, Jaime King, David Ogden Stiers, JoBeth Williams, Stephanie Lemelin, Anna Galvin, Charles Malik Whitfield	Regency/Hat Trick Prods.	Ed Decter, John Strauss (w)

Drama

Title	Studio	Executive producer
13 Graves <i>A retired treasure hunter searching for his brother stumbles upon a quest to find 13 caches of Incan gold.</i> Cast: Matthew Lillard, Katheryn Winnick, Norman Reedus, Eric Stonestreet, Rochelle Aytes, Robert Forester, Treach	20th Century Fox	J.H. Wyman (w), Reid Shane
*American Crime <i>A high-power L.A. law firm represents rich and famous clients involved in media-driven trials.</i> Cast: Victor Garber, Kerr Smith, Eamonn Walker, Rebecca Mader	Bruckheimer/Warner Bros.	Jerry Bruckheimer, Jonathan Littman, Jonathan Shapiro (w), David McNally
Beyond <i>A team of idealistic NASA Jet Propulsion Lab workers take on new threats.</i> Cast: Jonah Lotan, Rachael Stirling, Merrin Dungey	20th Century Fox/Imagine	Brian Grazer, David Nevins, David Self (w)
Damages <i>A Chicago legal drama in the vein of "Nip/Tuck."</i> Cast: Cole Hauser, Kristin Lehman, Adam Rothenberg	20th Century Fox	Jonathan Lisco (w)
Drive <i>Drivers compete in an illegal road race across America. Pilot shooting in June.</i> Cast: Emma Stone, Alan Ruck, Melanie Lynskey, Andres Saenz-Hudson, Shahine Ezell	20th Century Fox	Tim Minear (w), Ben Queen (w), Greg Yaitanes
Faceless <i>To avenge his family, a federal prosecutor takes on a new identity within the mob.</i> Cast: Sean Bean, Stana Katic, Reed Diamond, Kevin Alejandro	20th Century Fox/Flame/Management 360	Tony Krantz, Joel Carnahan, Daniel Rappaport, Evelyn O'Neill
*Primary <i>A couple negotiate their relationship as they work together on an FBI crisis management team.</i> Cast: Ron Livingston, Rosemarie DeWitt, Michael Cudlitz, Raquel Alessi	20th Century Fox	Craig Silverstein (w), Tim Story
Southern Comfort <i>The wife of a Southern mobster takes over the business while her husband is in jail.</i> Cast: Madeleine Stowe, Eric Roberts, Jessica Stroup, Charlayne Woodard, Reiley McClendon, Travis Fimmel	20th Century Fox	Tony Gayton (w), Joe Gayton (w), Greg Yaitanes, Kevin Topolsky
*Vanished <i>A senator's wife goes missing as part of a larger conspiracy.</i> Cast: Gale Harold, John Allen Nelson, Joanne Kelly, Rebecca Gayheart, Margarita Levieva, John Patrick Amedori, Chris Egan	20th Century Fox	Paul Redford, Mimi Leder
The Wedding Album <i>A photographer and his assistant capture wedding glamour and dysfunction. From a script first developed in 2001.</i> Cast: Bruno Campos, Tara Summers, Ptolemy Slocum, Eva Pigford, Jayce Bartok, Ahshlie Atkinson, Connie Stevens, Tony Lo Bianco	Film Buff/ Greenblatt-Janollari/Fox Television Studios	Andy Tennant (w), Wink Mordaunt (w)

work's early drama pickups could cover those openings. The lingering question is what the network's executives plan to do about their biggest challenge over the past few seasons: Fridays.

This season Fox scheduled Fridays at 8 p.m. with comedy "Malcolm in the Middle," which is ending its run, followed by "The Bernie Mac

Show," which is on the bubble but could be back for 13 additional episodes.

Stalwart "That '70s Show" is also retiring, leaving Fox with few comedies other than its Sunday block of animated series and a likely return for rookie live-action "The War at Home."

That helps explain the network's early series pickup of the sitcom "Til Death," which stars

"Everybody Loves Raymond" alumnus Brad Garrett.

One comedy getting buzz is 20th Century Fox's blog-inspired sports comedy "The Twelfth Man," said Carolyn Finger, VP of media firm TVTracker.com.

Fox's early pick of multicamera comedy "Til Death" is a bit of a counterintuitive choice, according to Bob Gersh, a partner and founder of The Gersh Agency.

This year network executives are showing renewed interest in the single-camera format. Single-camera comedies are shot like traditional dramas and do not employ simultaneous-camera editing or studio audiences.

"It would be sort of ironic if the ones getting the most buzz are the four-camera shows," Mr. Gersh said. ■

—CHRISTOPHER LISOTTA



"Til Death" (Fox)