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SUMO WRESTLERS DESCEND ON THE BAY AREA ONCE AGAIN SUMO WRESTLERS WALK IN THE ING BAY TO BREAKERS

OAKLAND, Calif. – May 15, 2006 – World Sumo League 2006 Mega Tour wrestlers descend on the Bay area once again, this time to walk in the infamous ING Bay To Breakers on Sunday, May 21, 2006 dressed in their *mawashis*, traditional loin covers.

The ING Bay To Breakers, known for attracting thousands of Bay area residents dressed in what can only be described as Halloween costumes, runs 7.5 miles from the Embarcadero to the breakers at Ocean Beach. Sumo wrestlers may be larger than the average runner, but they are strong and muscular. When in training, they'll practice 1,000 Yori (advance towards the opponent in a squatting position) and do 500 Tsuki (strike opponent's chest with both arms, either in simultaneous or alternate motion in upward direction, making him lean back) all before breakfast.

The sumo wrestlers will also be attending the ING Bay To Breakers press conference on Friday, May 19, 2006 at the Hyatt Regency in the Embarcadero Center, to escort the professional runners from around the world who will be competing for the \$32,000 cash prize for first place.

The walking wrestlers include:

Harrington Wa'a (height: 6'3"; weight: 380 lbs) hails from Hawaii, where he was the Hawaii State Junior Men's Champion and the Hawaii State High School Champion. His other titles include Aichi Tournament 1st Place and 1st Place Junior World Sumo Tournament. Harrington has been happily married for many years to Iolanda Wa'a with whom he has five beautiful children. Wa'a's favorite food is fried chicken.

Kamikiiwa, also known as Wayne Vierra, Jr. (height: 6'1"; weight: 330 lbs) is 34 years old and currently resides in Hawaii with wife Maxine and children, Megan and Simeon. Vierra has been the Hawaii State Sumo Champion since 1996. In 2000, he was the Champion in *Night of the Giants* at Lake Tahoe., and came in third place in the World Sumo Championships. Vierra is a five-time World Championship qualifier and a four-time North American Champion. From 1990 – 1991 he was a professional SUMO with the Azumazeki Stable in Japan – his fighting name is Kamikiiwa. He has been a Sumo wrestler since the age of 15 and is coached by Dr. John Jacques.

Ronny Allman (height: 5' 11"; weight 305 lbs) was born and raised in Norway where he currently resides with his wife and two children. Ronny was a child actor who was the star of the most popular children's TV series of its time. He was less than 10 years old when he was discovered in a local acting school where he was cast as the young star of a family television drama about a young boy from the city who moves to the countryside. As he grew older, his interests changed and he turned to sports, trying his hand at American-style football and Greco-Roman wrestling. About 15 years ago, he turned to Sumo wrestling and soon became one of the most successful Sumo wrestlers not only in Norway, but all over Europe.

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WORLD SUMO CHALLENGE AT OAKLAND ARENA/2

Stiliyan Georgiev (height: 5'9"; weight: 200 lbs) is a native of Bulgaria. He is the smallest wrestler on the WSL tour. Although he is small for a Sumo, he is very strong and talented. He uses his strength, speed and stamina to defeat many opponents much larger than him. Growing up, he studied judo and became a champion martial artist in Bulgaria and later throughout Europe. He became interested in Sumo five years ago when he saw a match in Bulgaria and thought he could compete. He began training with a Sumo wrestler/coach and developed many Sumo fighting techniques. At the World S.U.M.O. Challenge at Madison Square Garden in October 2005, he quickly became a fan favorite when he defeated one of the biggest wrestlers in the tournament, a 460 pound giant-of-a-man from Hungary. Stiliyan recently moved to Atlanta, Georgia, where he is training and coaching young high school age athletes.

Sumo wrestling is one of the oldest forms of martial arts and Japan's national sport. The most notable feature of the sport is the size of the athletes, ranging from 200 to 600 pounds. Sumo opponents battle barefoot and wear a *mawashi*, a traditional loin cover. The object is to throw your opponent outside an 18-foot ring, called a *dohyo*, or knock him to the ground. Wrestlers use many moves, including the *oshi-dashi*, or push, to drive an opponent backward, and the *tzuki-dashi*, or slap, to upset an opponent's balance.

Tickets for the World S.U.M.O. Challenge at the Oakland Arena are on sale now through the Oakland Arena Box Office or through Ticketmaster by logging on to ticketmaster.com or by calling (510) 625-TIXS.

The Sumo wrestlers will be in town from the afternoon of May 18th through the afternoon of May 21st. If you'd like to interview them, please call Jennifer Cooke at (415) 279-5558 to schedule.

Funding for this event is provided by the marketing budget of the Joint Powers Authority for the city of Oakland, county of Alameda.

The Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum Complex, including the Oakland Arena and McAfee Coliseum, is home to the Oakland Athletics, Oakland Raiders and Golden State Warriors as well as a host of other sporting events, concerts and family shows. The Coliseum Complex is jointly owned by the City of Oakland and Alameda County and managed by the Oakland Coliseum Joint Venture (OCJV), owned in majority by SMG. SMG is the world's leading company in the private development and management of public assembly facilities, including 180 properties in arenas, stadiums, convention centers, performing arts centers and recreational facilities around the world.

Big Boy Productions, LLC is a New York-based sports and entertainment company that is dedicated to developing world-class Sumo wrestling in the United States and around the globe as a professional sport.

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