THE WASHINGTON POST

The Style Invitational

THIS WEEK'S CONTEST Week 677: The News-Gets Verse He Mashington Poste

he Empress has been immersed up to her diadem in a deluge of doggerel (the cream of the Week 674 limericks will appear next week) as well as thousands of takes on recent Post headlines. So why not put them together? This week: Sum up wittily in verse — but not a limerick — any article appearing in The Post or on washingtonpost.com from Aug. 28 through Sept. 4. If you're using the printed Post, please include the date, page number and headline; if you're freeloading from the Web, give the date and copy in a bit of the article. If you live in this area and won't pay 35 cents for a paper, you are a rat. As always, long poems must merit the extra space; four terrific short lines are way more likely to get ink than a pretty good

BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Winner receives the Inker, the official Style Invitational trophy. First runner-up gets a gross fake ear dripping with fake blood, with even some fake hair on it, all set in a foam hamburger takeout container, at right. It's a promotion for some DVD, presumably not "Winnie-the-Pooh Meets Holly Hobbie."

sonnet.

Other runners-up win a coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt. Honorable Mentions (or whatever they're called this week) get one of the lusted-after Style Invitational Magnets. One prize per entrant per week Send your entries by e-mail to losers@washpost.com or by fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Tuesday, Sept. 5. Put "Week 677" in the subject line of your e-mail, or it risks being ignored as spam. Include your name, postal address and phone number with your entry. Contests are judged on the basis of humor and originality. All entries become the property of The Washington Post. Entries may be edited for taste or content. Results will be published Sept. 24. No purchase required for entry. Employees of The Washington Post, and their immediate relatives, are not eligible for prizes. Pseudonymous entries will be disqualified. The Honorable Mentions name is by Kevin Dopart. The Revised Title for next veek's contest is by Eric Murphy of Ann Arbor, Mich

REPORT FROM WEEK 673

In which we asked you to write a "bank" headline that reinterprets an actual headline appearing in The Post or on washington post.com that week. More and more Losers systematically examined every headline in every paper all week long, submitting long lists of entries daily. And a lot of them sent in basically the same jokes. Funny but too frequent were entries along the lines of "Military Blimps Report for Duty: Army Relaxes Weight Restrictions for New Recruits"; "Going Once, Going Twice, Going Right in the Closet: Prostate Problems Make Nighttime Bathroom Runs Difficult"; and "Without Beard, Mystics Clinch Playoff Spot: Lady Hoopsters Vow to Keep Shaving in Postseason.'

Eeeww! Why Do We Wind Up With Prune Fingers at the Pool? Joey's Health-Nut Mom Takes Over Summer Camp Snack Duty (Brendan Beary, Great Mills)

Bird Flies After Resting It's Been a REALLY Slow News Day (Ken April, Arlington)

The winner of the ceramic dead-duck-looking towel hook: **Steroids Scandal on Deck for Baseball Hall Voters**

Some Sportswriters Suspiciously Typing 200 WPM (Peter Beckerman, Washington)

AND THE WINNER OF THE INKER (Fred Winter, Arlington)

She Says Tomayto, He Says Tomahto . . .

Dan Quayle Invitational Spelling Bee Ends in Tie

AND PAST THE COLON

A Terrible Tug for the Democrats Party's Woes Began When Monica Hiked Up Her Thong During Pizza Delivery (Rob Kloak, Springfield)

Boswell Readies for Fantasy Soccer Post Sportswriter Insists New Beat Is 'In No Way a Comedown' (Steve Fahey, Kensington)

What Does It Mean? Clinton's New Book Is Sequel to Acclaimed Study of

'Is' (Michelle Stupak, Ellicott City) Iraq at Risk of Civil War, Top Generals Tell Senators

Generals Now to Search Pope for Signs of Catholicism (Elwood Fitzner, Valley City, N.D.) The Last Honest Man

Archaeologists Establish That Fossil Is Older Than Adam and Eve (Rick Haynes, Potomac)

Raining Champions America's Top Distance Urinators Stream Into Town for Rooftop Finals (Kevin Dopart, submitted from vacation spot Naxos, Greece)

Gibson Reportedly Goes on Anti-Semitic Tirade 'Best Christian Theme Park Ride I've Ever Ridden,' Actor Heard to Say (Russell Beland, Springfield)

Tejada Is Adamant About Staying With O's Teammates Miffed Over All-Star's Inflexibility at **Pregame Tic-Tac-Toe** (Brendan Beary)

Giants' Shockey Is Left Dazed After Practice Collision But Plans to Keep Practicing Colliding (Howard Walderman, Columbia)

Clubbing, Relaxing in Iceland Seal Hunts Aren't Just for Canadians (Kirk Zurell, Waterloo, Ontario)

Half the Effort. Twice as Easy. How to Pick Up Homely People Over Forty (Judith Cottrill, New York)

Free Optical Mouse Three Blind Mice Protest Outside White House to **Demand Release of Their Visionary Leader** (Peter Metrinko, Chantilly)

7.7 Million to 8.2 Million International Cricket Tournament Gets Underway With Typical Match (Kevin Dopart)

Bush Focuses on Domestic Agenda Upstairs Maid. 11 a.m.: Downstairs Maid at Noon (Ed Gordon, Hollywood, Fla.)

25% Off Jockey Pudgy Rider Makes Weight as Amputee

(Pam Sweeney, Germantown) **Boy George to Pick Up Trash in Aug. Heat**

Warm Weather Best for Dating Bimbos, Singer Says (April Musser, Atlanta) **Stop the Band-Aid Treatment**

Tween Girls Demand Real Bras (Kevin Dopart) **Putting Their Mouth Where the Money Is** Pickpockets Get Creative With New Technique

(Deborah Guy, Columbus) As Bush Outlines Cease-Fire Terms, U.N. Talks Stall

Ignoring U.S. President, Security Council Discusses Adding Toilets to HO (Fil Feit. Annandale) In the Twilight, a Champion Still Looks for a Spark

Tonight on ESPN, the World Series of Firefly Catching

Humbled in Minors, Church Finds Groove Choir Now Sings in Major Keys Only (Andrew Hoenig, Rockville)

A 10-Year Checkup Retiree Tells of 'Longest Wait Ever' at Internist's Office (John Shea, Lansdowne, Pa.)

After Physical, Bush Is Called 'Fit for Duty' Reporters Seek to Clarify: 'Can You Spell That Last Word?' (Brendan Beary)

Speed Urged on Expanded Kindergarten 'Just Feed 'Em Ritalin,' School Board Advises as Class Is Enlarged to 35 Five-Year-Olds (Elwood Fitzner; Rob Kloak)

'It Felt Like a Good Place to Start a Family' **Couple Arrested for Lewd Conduct at Mattress Store**

BY JULIA EWAN — THE WASHINGTON POST

(Jane Auerbach, Los Angeles)

Review Finds Shortage of Workers Long-Awaited Review Had Been Delayed Because of **Shortage of Workers** (Peter Metrinko)

Advance, Retreat or Punt New Offensive Coordinator Simplifies Redskins **Playbook** (George Vary, Bethesda; Andrew Hoenig)

Climbing the Charts From His Bedroom Wilt Chamberlain's Life Remembered (Marty McCullen, Gettysburg, Pa.)

Strong Earnings Reports Boost Stocks And Big Losses Tend Not To (Russell Beland)

Big Pronouncements in August Can Haunt You in

Santa Knows If Gibson's Apology Is Sincere

(Drew Bennett, Alexandria) When We Want Your Opinion We'll Tell You

Post Welcomes Bill O'Reilly as New Ombudsman (Steve Fahey)

Fashion Clearance

Next Month (Ira Allen, Bethesda)

Actresses Submit to Review Panel Before Being Seen in That Atrocious Thing (Judith Cottrill)

Chief Links Need for Curfew to 'Irresponsible' Exhorts Children to Keep Mommies, Daddies In at

Night (Michelle Stupak) **Carpenter's Bruised Thumb Has Improved** Construction on Capitol Visitor Center May Resume

Bluegrass Cat Rolls Popular Kentucky Snack Attacked By PETA, ASPCA

(Jeff Brechlin, Eagan, Minn.; Dot Yufer, Newton, W.Va.) Feeling Unwelcome, Some Gays Vacate Virginia

'She's a Nice Lady but There Was No Real Attraction' (John O'Byrne, Dublin) The Center Cannot Hold



NFL Cracks Down on Illegal **Blocks** (Pam Sweeney)

Next Week: Limerixicon 3, or **Anapest Destiny**



For Mature **Audiences Mainly**

MUSIC, From D1

or less consider him to be the epitome of contemporary-pop cool. Which he totally is — in my expert,

Timberlake is building buzz for the Sept. 12 release of his second solo album, "FutureSex/LoveSounds." But he's also stating his case to be taken seriously as an artist. If Exhibit A was his unexpectedly superlative post-'N Sync debut, 2002's "Justified," then the latest piece of evidence is this tour, on which Timberlake is eschewing pop spectacle for a plain old

No big dance sequences during the 90-minute set, though Timberlake did glide, pop, strut and high-step for a few bars here and there. No mechanical stage parts or pyros or other special effects aside from a well-considered light. And no wardrobe changes, either, even if the star did ditch his dark suit jacket after three songs — and eventually untucked and un-

buttoned the shirt. The stripping came just before Timberlake performed the thumping "Rock Your Body," during which the predominantly female audience repeatedly shouted the lyric that immediately preceded Janet Jackson's Super Bowl wardrobe malfunction: "Better have you naked by the end of this song." Timberlake

never did oblige. At least not in the sartorial sense. Putting his music and neck-hair-raising falsetto front and center, he did strip away the pop veneer and sang without the aid of prerecorded backing vocals. He also played a little bit of Fender Rhodes keyboard and acoustic guitar, and he even made like an actual bandleader, gesticulating in the manner of Prince and James Brown to cue and otherwise communicate with his tight, dexterous 11-piece backing group.

There was much to discuss, from stop-on-a-dime dynamics — as featured in a sultry reading of "Justified's" Spanish-inflected hit, "Senorita" - to frequent shifts in keys, tempos and even musical styles: During an encore performance of "SexyBack," for which Timberlake was joined onstage by the new single's mad-professor producer Timbaland, the band suddenly changed directions, recasting the buzzing, electro-R&B song as an exuberant, D.C.-style go-go jam. (In both live iterations, "SexyBack" trumped the



Justin Timberlake and Co. at 9:30, part of a rock club tour intended to create buzz for the upcoming release of his second solo album, "FutureSex/LoveSounds."

digitized-sounding recorded version, as Timberlake's unprocessed vocal was superior and seemed more inspired.) Sometimes, the songs themselves changed completely. For instance, the syncopated dance-pop of Timberlake's "Like I Love You" abruptly gave way to the metallic crunch of Nirvana's "Smells Like Teen Spirit." Whether Timberlake was trying to make a statement by interpolating the latter song is unclear. But following the unexpected mash-up, as he sat down to play a new Prince-like slow jam, "Until the End of Time," he exhaled and noted that he's getting

"too old for this." And, it seems, for some of his fans, as the smoldering show was open only to those 18 and over. Something about not wanting to offend the yutes with his salty language and dirty dancing. Not that the age restriction thinned the crowd any, as all 1,200 tickets

sold out in about eight minutes. The show opened with an amusing instrumental rock-opera rendition of Prokofiev's "Peter and the Wolf," which morphed into a punched-up version of "Cry Me a River," Timberlake's infamous kiss-off of his ex, Britney Spears. Suggesting that he has more than just early Michael Jackson records in his collec-

tion — though he's definitely studied plenty of those - Timberlake quoted Carly Simon during the opener, sneering: "I bet you think this song is about you." (Well, yeah, sure she does, given "Cry Me a River's" lyrics and the fact that a Britney doppelganger appears in the video.)

Likewise, Spears is certain to figure that the new "What Goes Around" is about her. The song should probably be subtitled "Cry Me Another River," as it echoes the earlier Timberlake hit both musically and thematically, what with Timberlake singing: "I was ready to give you my name." (Nice trade-down by Britney, by the way: Instead of sticking with the potential future king of pop, she's married Kevin Federline, who is, at best, the new Vanilla Ice. Don't cry for Timberlake: He's with Cameron Diaz, though she didn't appear to be with him Friday.)

Of the new material unveiled by Timberlake, the standout was "My Love," a sweet love song with simple lyrics and complex, polyrhythmic music. The studio version features a romantic rap cameo by T.I., who isn't necessarily known for writing tender lyrics; in T.I.'s absence at the 9:30, Timberlake — who isn't known for rapping, period — capably handled the verse himself. He also beat-boxed at several points during the show, well enough that he never threatened to embarrass himself.

More importantly, he successfully argued his case that he's matured and developed as an artist and as a performer to the point that it's no longer necessary to consider him a guilty pleasure. He's beyond that, and so are we. Ten million Justin Timberlake fans can't be wrong, no matter how old they are.