

## media monitor

By STEVE K. WALZ—TELEVISION WRITER

# Pageant pressure mounts for Kim Seelbrede

**New York**—For the first time in its illustrious 30 year history, the Miss Universe Beauty Pageant will crown a heavenly body in Manhattan, when the festivities are beamed around the globe from the majestic Minskoff Theatre on Monday, July 20.

While many people feel that the locale will enhance the chances of the lovely Miss USA, Kim Seelbrede, one cannot negate the fact that last year's Universe victor was American Shawn Nichols Weatherly. Can the Americans capture the crown with its \$100,000 cash/prize incentives two years in a row?

"Although the prospect of having two in a row brings my chances down to almost nothing, there really isn't any politics amongst the judges," said a cautiously optimistic Seelbrede. "They really don't care where the girls are from and, in a way, I might have a slight advantage over the other girls, since I'll be on my own turf."

### Padded judgement

Besides the obvious pressures Kim will have to deal with during the course of the pageant, she will have to endure the media-hyped spectre of "the Fountain that wasn't." For those of you who don't remember —the Miss USA entrant from New York, Deborah Fountain, was implicated in a scandalous brouhaha when the pageant honchos discovered that she had padded her physical attributes. Fountain countered that she was given a swimsuit much too large to accommodate her physique and lambasted the pageant promoters for making her a scapegoat. Deborah went so far as to allege that other girls in the pageant had added an inch or two to their forms via illegal methods.

Seelbrede is still seething over the zealous approach by the media to pit the newly crowned Miss USA against Deborah, who said that Kim should have ended up in twelfth place. "I cried myself to sleep the first two nights with all the stuff that was happening with Miss New York," Seelbrede bitterly reflected.



Kim Seelbrede (pictured right with Shawn Weatherly) cried herself to sleep after her lurid encounter with the media-hyped Deborah Fountain incident.

"The whole thing was just blown out of proportion. We've all forgotten Miss Fountain, but the media will continue to exhume it—so to speak."

Putting the kibosh on negativisms isn't something new to the sensitive 20-year-old from Germantown, Ohio. Kim shyly admitted that she had to work hard at being beautiful. "I was homely in the sense that I was very skinny, and had large feet, ears and knees. But when I turned 13, things started to change for the better. You get to be a certain age and you learn to do what's best for you in terms of what to maximize or

minimize," Kim revealed.

Although the hazel-eyed blonde isn't sure about her professional aspirations, she is toying with the idea of joining the lucrative field of broadcasting. Seelbrede added, "This year will open lots of doors for me if I allow them [pageant promoters] to do it. Communications is a bit glamorous, but right now I'm very self conscious when I'm on TV. I'm freer in still photography. You know what I'd enjoy? To do some far-out photography in some real high-fashion exotic colors, in a real exotic setting." Cheryl Tiegs ... beware.