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The cast of *Gladiators*, including Albury strongman Derek Boyer, will be hoping for ratings success.

Gladiators in ratings war

VISION viewers will be spoiled for choice from next week as the battle between the networks heats up.

After a two-week break, the rating period starts again on Sunday and network roadcasters are preparing to out their big guns.

Shows that have been on hiatus since Easter will return, while the networks will also launch a number of new shows.

Among the most high-profile new series will be Seven's version of *Gladiators* starting Sunday, which stars Albury's Derek Boyer as the underdog, while Nine launches its drama *Sea Patrol II* on Monday.

talk show *Rove Live* on Sunday will give it a further boost.

The ABC, meanwhile, should draw in big audiences with Andrew Denton's interview with fallen AFL star Wayne Carey on Monday night.

Both Nine and Ten have made substantial gains this year, but leading station Seven believes it can hold its position with a raft of new programs, which it has held back from earlier in the year.

Seven programming manager Angus Ross says he isn't concerned about Nine's line-up and definitely not *Sea Patrol II*.

"It's not exactly a smash hit returning," Ross said. Nine would not comment on

position after growing its audience this year thanks to shows such as *Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares*.

"We know it will continue to be tough but we are pleased with our performance to date," a Nine spokeswoman said.

Ten Holdings executive chairman Nick Falloon said the network was in one of its best positions as it headed into the rest of the year thanks to its mix of Australian and US shows.

Among shows to be launched after Easter on Seven are the documentary *Palin's New Europe*, British series *Mistresses* and Australian show *Crash Investigation Unit*.