

TV needed an over-the-air partner in order to give fans as many prime time games as possible. Now independent WCIU-TV Chicago, will run 8 Cubs and 24 White Sox regular season games in prime time. Neither station would discuss details of their arrangement. But it is believed that WGN-TV will keep all the ad inventory and is buying air time on WCIU-TV. Under this new deal, this season, WGN-TV will air 71 Cubs and 29 White Sox games. With WCIU-TV on board, the total number of White Sox games on over-the-air TV is 53, the same as last year. While the total of Cubs games on both stations is 79, that's 12 fewer than in 1999.

**Sony Corporation of America and Sony Electronics Inc. have created a new business unit,** the Broadband Services Company, that will aim to exploit Sony content and technology to create new service businesses. The unit will be headed by Emily Susskind, who has served as Sony Corp. of America's senior VP of Interactive Services since October 1998 and has been instrumental in negotiating recent deals with Cablevision and TiVo to manufacture new digital appliances. "Sony has a multifaceted stake in the shift to broadband content distribution, as evidenced by our recent agreement with Cablevision to support their development and implementation of digital cable systems and services," said Sony Corp. of America Chairman and

## HBO adds afternoon boxing series

HBO will add yet another fight franchise to its boxing lineup, this one with dancing girls, a hot New York deejay, and the endorsement weight of Oscar De La Hoya. *KO Nation*, premiering Saturday, May 6 at around 5 p.m. ET, is intended to make boxing fans of 18-24 year-olds, since the majority of current followers are 55-plus, said Seth Abraham, president and CEO of Time Warner Sports. Most of the matchups will take place on U.S. college campuses. It'll air on Saturday afternoons because young guys tend to be out of the home on weekend nights.

Expect hip music, true storylines (as opposed to the theatrical WWF versions) and whatever image the term "knockout" conjures up when applied to a group of dancing women, but *KO Nation* will not be the WWF of boxing, Abraham said. "We regard this journalistically as a sport," he said. "This is not a circus." HBO tapped four-time world champion De La Hoya to provide analysis. The rest of the team includes announcer Fran Charles, a NewsChannel 4 anchor; host Ed Lover, best known as co-host of *Yo, MTV Raps*; Max Glazer, a Gotham spin master who will be deejay for the program; and Julie Lederman, a licensed boxing judge who will serve as *KO Nation's* unofficial judge. HBO already carries around 40 fights a year, including pay-per-view, but Abraham stressed *KO Nation* will bring in new fighters. Six cards each are planned for 2000 and 2001.

—Deborah McAdams

CEO Howard Stringer "We are delighted that Emily, who has been central to all of these negotiations, will now lend her considerable talents to implement this strategy for Sony."

**Krvk(tv) Phoenix reporter Bill Mosley was arrested last week on charges of assaulting his girlfriend; at one point threatening her with an open pocket knife,** according to police reports. Mosley pleaded not guilty, and was released on bail. He is on personal leave from his station, which says it was the first media outlet in the market to air the story.

**A new study by The Screen Actors Guild found that African Americans on television are "ghettoized" and underrepresented on both Fox and NBC.** The SAG study says African Americans are overly cast in situation comedies and relegated to

shows that are only on Monday and Friday nights. The study, conducted by University of Southern California professor Dr. Darnell Hunt, examined 384 episodes of 87 different network series in late 1999. "There are some noteworthy exceptions, of course, but the numbers clearly indicate a pattern in which African American performers are concentrated on situation comedies, on the newer smaller networks (UPN and WB) and on two nights of the week," Hunt says. On NBC and Fox's "under-representation," according to the SAG report, most African American characters are not "central to their respective program's story line." The report pointed to CBS' positive track record of having African American actors in leading positions on 66.7% of the network's prime time shows.

'Who Wants to Be a Mil-

**lionaire?' has paid off in big hits for ABC.com,** which saw a 60% jump in traffic last month to 4.4 million visitors, up from 2.7 million visitors to the site in December, according to Media Metrix. Since the ABC series debuted in January through mid-February, ABC.com recorded 43 million downloads of PC users playing the online version of the game, and more than 2.5 million visitors went to the *Millionaire* winner's page.

### Correction

A story on Shop At Home Inc. (B&C, Feb. 21, page 6) understated the number of cable homes in which the shopping network is available. It is on a full-time basis by systems serving 11.2 million homes and on a part-time basis to 45.4 million that primarily air the network in fringe hours. The company's full-time equivalent cable carriage comes to 22.5 million homes.

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