

## Chicago White Sox will move over to UHF in 1968

UHF made another gain in its quest for programming last week when the Chicago White Sox announced that starting in 1968 the games of the American League team will move from WGN-TV Chicago to WFLD(TV) there. WFLD plans a color network in several states for the Sox.

Earlier this year it was announced that the long radio association of the White Sox and WCFL Chicago was over. Starting next season the large regional radio network for the club will be originated by WMAQ Chicago.

WGN-TV is carrying 65 Sox games once again in 1967 and also will again carry 81 games of the National League Chicago Cubs. WGN-TV has aired the Sox since 1950. WGN radio continues to carry the Cubs.

When WFLD takes over the Sox telecasts in 1968 the air schedule will be expanded to a minimum of 129 games and possibly the entire season. WFLD also expects to carry the Sox on its new Milwaukee TV station for which application is now pending before the FCC. Milwaukee has no baseball since the Braves moved to Atlanta.

**Large Hookup** ■ The regional

TV network that WFLD hopes to build for the Sox includes Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Wisconsin and parts of Michigan. Other areas without league franchises also may be added. WFLD has purchased four Marconi four-tube Plumbicon color cameras for use in the White Sox originations, continuing a color baseball tradition set there by WGN-TV.

The WFLD contract was signed Thursday noon (Nov. 10) and runs for five years with option for another five years. CATV rights are included. WFLD will pay the Sox about \$1.25 million a year. It is understood the team now gets about \$900,000 for both radio and television rights.

The only reason the White Sox decided to make the switch is because of the limited schedule on WGN-TV, which also carries the Cubs, according to Sox owner Arthur Allyn. He praised highly the cooperation and spirit of WGN-TV over the years.

The White Sox contract with WGN-TV expires with the end of the 1967 baseball season. It includes a provision whereby there is to be renewal negotiation between June 1 and Aug. 31, 1967, according to WGN-TV, but Mr. Allyn explained

Thursday that WGN-TV on its own had initiated this negotiation earlier and the terms were refused. Ben Berentson, WGN-TV vice president-general manager, explained that Mr. Allyn probably had reference to an informal luncheon talk. He said as far as WGN-TV is concerned the conversation was not negotiation and the contract provision is still legally in effect.

**Big UHF Figures** ■ Sterling C. (Red) Quinlan, president-general manager of WFLD, said that by the start of baseball in 1968 the UHF set saturation in the Chicago market should be "between 72% and 78%." WFLD operates on channel 32. Its prospective Milwaukee sister station will be channel 24.

Meanwhile last week Mr. Quinlan reported that A. C. Nielsen Co. has supplied WFLD with its special tabulation of UHF penetration in the Chicago metropolitan area based on the regular rating survey ending Oct. 19. He said the Nielsen data shows 40% UHF penetration, "confirming the 42% figure of the American Research Bureau." Nielsen also found multisite homes in Chicago now total 38.5%, he said, again confirming ARB's estimate of 40% multisite homes.

features and programming. Official has benefited recently from sales to U's of such programming as *Biography*, *Battle Line*, *Survival* and *Peter Gunn* and its feature-film product.

Sales by the Walter Reade Organization to UHF outlets have increased to more than 10% of its overall sales, according to Elliott Abrams, vice president, TV. He remarked that the stepped-up activity by UHF has had the effect of increasing sales to VHF outlets too, pointing out the competition has activated the market place generally.

Al Sussman, vice president and director of sales for RKO Pictures, predicted rapid growth of UHF-set circulation in key markets over the next five years, from the current 35% to about 90%. RKO Pictures has had "considerable success" with its sports programming and other product and has made good sales in Milwaukee, Chicago, Washington, Boston, Philadelphia and Detroit and has sales pending to Overmyer and Kaiser outlets, he revealed.

**Sees Prospects** ■ Richard Harper, vice president in charge of syndication

for Seven Arts Television, is heartened by prospects of UHF but points out that prices now constitute a problem for a number of such outlets.

Mr. Harper characterized U's as being in the "growing pains" stage, but predicted they would be in a stronger position when they start making inroads on the established V's.

Don Klauber, executive vice president of Seven Arts Associated, which handles sales of feature films, reported a "healthy amount of business" from U stations in recent months. He noted that some U's today cannot afford the high-budget features, but he pointed out that these stations can benefit from buying "high-value" rerun motion pictures that still garner sizable audiences.

Dan Goodman, vice president in charge of syndication for Screen Gems, describes UHF as a "constantly growing area of our business" and one that has bought considerable series product from SG, including *Dennis the Menace* and *The Flintstones*. He cited the proliferation of stations scheduled to go on the air in major markets within the next year or two as an indication that UHF will become a "stronger and stronger

factor." He felt most U's cannot afford the prime-time features SG sells but believes they can obtain value from the "many excellent reruns we have on hand."

Jack Lynn, vice president for syndication for Trans-Lux Television Corp., pointed to the growing number of sophisticated broadcasters entering the UHF arena (Kaiser, Storer, Overmyer) as proof that this medium holds out "high hopes." Trans-Lux is "just beginning to sell to U's," he said. The assurances that this market is bound to grow will encourage the company and others to experiment with different types of programming to reach the various audience segments that large number of U's are likely to attract, Mr. Lynn observed.

Clyde R. Spitzner, general sales manager of the Triangle Stations said sales of its syndicated product to UHF outlets are "progressing," but he acknowledged that they were "not so great as last year's predictions would have indicated." He added that UHF sales should increase as the market grows from year to year.

Bill Clark, general sales manager,