

Black football on radio network

Mutual service will broadcast 11 games to 58 stations

A full schedule of Saturday-night football games between teams of leading black colleges and universities will be carried this fall by the Mutual Black Network, it was announced last week. Rights to the games were acquired from WIGO(AM) Atlanta, which will collaborate in their production.

Eleven games are scheduled, starting with Grambling College vs. Morgan State in New York's Yankee stadium on Sept. 9 and ending with the Atlanta Classic (Clark vs. Morris Brown) Nov. 23.

All games will be covered live beginning at 8 p.m. NYT on Saturdays, officials said, with play-by-play handled by Chico Renfro, a former pro baseball and basketball player who is now sports director of WIGO(AM) Atlanta, and Frank Bannister, MBN sports director. A pregame show will be scheduled each Saturday at 7:45 p.m.

Mr. Bannister said it would be the first time a full schedule of black college football games has been carried on a national radio network.

MBN, a service of the Mutual Broadcasting System, currently has 58 affiliates.

Other games on the schedule are: Sept. 16, Southern College vs. Texas Southern; Sept. 23, Tennessee State vs. Alcorn A&M; Sept. 30, Kentucky State vs. Jackson State; Oct. 7, Jackson State vs. Bishop College; Oct. 14, Florida A&M vs. Morris Brown; Oct. 21, Grambling vs. Jackson State; Oct. 28, North Carolina A&T vs. Morgan State; Nov. 4, to be announced, and Nov. 11, North Carolina Central vs. Howard University.

Two UHF's land major-league teams

1973 season will see White Sox on WSNS Chicago, Braves on WTCG Atlanta

The Chicago White Sox and WSNS(TV) in that city last week announced a three-year agreement for the ch. 44 outlet to carry the baseball club's games beginning in 1973. In addition, there will be a two-year renewal option. WFLD-TV Chicago winds up a five-year rights contract this season.

At least 144 games will be telecast next year with production to be directed by the White Sox.

Contract is the second major-league acquisition by a UHF station in the last month. Earlier, the Atlanta Braves and WTCG(TV) (ch. 17) announced a five-year rights agreement commencing in 1973. Jack Carlin, Braves broadcast director, said the TV schedule would be expanded to include 48 regular-season and two pre-season games. Braves telecasts, on WSB-TV Atlanta since 1965, has been confined to 20 games this year.

Mr. Carlin said the flexibility of an

independent, without network commitments, being able to handle more games in prime time was a major consideration in the new rights contract between the Braves and the Atlanta UHF.

The case for summer reruns

Viewers want chance to "catch up," broadcasters tell FCC in response to film editor's objections

A group of television licensees has beat the networks to the punch in telling the FCC that it would be "impossible" to implement a Hollywood film editor's proposal for a 75% reduction in the amount of reruns broadcast in prime time (BROADCASTING, June 19).

The broadcasters, all clients of the Washington communications law firm of Fletcher, Heald, Kenehan & Hildreth, claimed that a cutback in reruns of the magnitude proposed to the commission by Bernard A. Balmuth "would result in presentation of programming not needed or desired by viewers; would be detrimental to the efforts of stations to maintain a high level of programming, and unquestionably harmful to television stations in the industry."

Mr. Balmuth has claimed that a mandatory reduction in prime-time reruns would result in greater diversity in programming and increased employment for Hollywood editors and producers. Without commenting on the merits of this assertion, the licensees told the commission that Mr. Balmuth apparently is seeking this "narrow" form of relief at the expense of both the public interest and the broadcast industry on a whole.

They claimed that reruns serve a necessary function in that they enable TV viewers to "catch up" on programs they might have missed the first time they were shown. And based on summer ratings, they continued, there is "strong indication" that the public both accepts and desires this form of programming.

But of greater importance, the licensees indicated, was the fact that Mr. Balmuth has given "no hint" as to the economic feasibility of his proposal. They claimed that the cost of producing a 30 or 60-minute program for a network series has increased more than 50% in the past decade. And considering the higher cost of early-season production (pilot films, etc.), they claimed "it is apparent that reruns are a necessary ingredient to recoup costs."

The increase in sales necessary to finance a prime time schedule that is 75% free of reruns, they claimed, would be "incalculably large."

The licensees involved in the pleading last week were Capitol Broadcasting Co. (WRAL-TV Raleigh, N.C.), Clay Broadcasting Corp. (WVAY-TV Wilmington, N.C., and KFDX-TV Wichita Falls, Tex.), Griffin Television Inc. (KWTW-TV Oklahoma City), Leake TV Inc. (KATV-TV Little Rock, Ark., and KTUL-TV Tulsa, Okla.), and Rust Craft Broadcasting of New York (WROC-TV Rochester, N.Y.).

Program Briefs

Co-venture deal. Bill Bixby, who starred for three seasons in *The Courtship of Eddie's Father* on ABC-TV, has signed production development deal with Paramount Television on behalf of his own production company, B&B Productions. Deal calls for Mr. Bixby to star in and B&B Productions to coproduce pilot for possible series for 1973-74 TV season. B&B Productions, which also will develop other material for studio, is to locate on Paramount lot.

Hey, Ceas-co! Western Hemisphere Pictures Inc., New York, reports it has acquired TV distribution rights of *Cisco Kid* half-hour series and has placed it into syndication. Rights were obtained from Telecom Productions. Series consists of 156 episodes, produced in early 1950's by Ziv Television in both color and black-and-white.

Young voices heard. Two studio pages have been given opportunity by KTLA(TV) Los Angeles to research, write and produce half-hour program on pollution that station will air in morning-time period on Aug. 9. Special, *Speak Softly, But Speak*, is work of pages Gary Greenfield, 25, and Larry Wallace, 26. They presented their plan for producing program on what individuals can do to fight pollution to Station Vice President and General Manager John T. Reynolds and were afforded free hand and approval for project. Singer Jaye P. Morgan, whom Mr. Greenfield met while ushering for show she was guest star on at KTLA, will participate in ecology program.

Big ones from MGM-TV. Eight movie musicals will be redone as TV specials by MGM Television and Norman Rosemont. Titles, all MGM films, are: "The Great Ziegfeld," "Silk Stockings," "Babes in Arms," "Best Foot Forward," "Girl Crazy," "Lady Be Good," "High Society" and "Summer Stock." For Zeigfeld TV special, MGM will be able to draw on his autobiography as well as on his stage hits because it owns "the entire Zeigfeld entertainment rights."

Slice of underworld life. CBS-TV and Metromedia, Producers Corp. will produce two-hour special, "Honor Thy Father," based on Gay Talese's book about human side of underworld life. Program will be carried on CBS-TV during 1972-73.

Two in works. U.S.I. Network Ltd., New York, plans weekly, half-hour TV series revolving around success in business and 10-minute TV daily program on baby care. David Yarnell, president of U.S.I., said *America—The Men Who Make Her Great*, will focus on young businessmen who succeeded in recent years. Their firms will underwrite production costs, and programs will be offered free to stations. U.S.I. will arrange for national or regional sponsorship. Art Linkletter will be host. Second series, *Bringing Up Baby*, will be produced in association with Medical Communications Inc., New York, and Sharon Ritchie, former Miss America, who will be on with children specialists.