CBS Sports to play on USA Network

Sports events that CBS either doesn't air or uses only in part will be made available to the cable programming company

Once again there's a broadcaster/cablecaster alliance in news. USA Network, under a new pact with CBS Sports, has obtained cable coverage of sports events to which CBS holds rights as part of a larger program package but doesn't broadcast or uses only in excerpts.

The specifics of the deal announced last week are that two of the Daytona Speedweek events, the twin 125-mile qualifying races and the Sportsman 300, were to be cablecast on USA Network—the former on a one-day delay, Feb. 12, and the Sportsman 300 on March 27.

CBS was to broadcast the Daytona 500, the premiere event of the Speedweek slate, live on Feb. 14. As part of the package under which it secured the rights to that event, CBS held those to the other Speedweek races as well.

USA and CBS said they are "continuing negotiations that would bring the USA other events not scheduled for live broadcast on CBS." Indeed, USA Network President Kay Koplovitz said she hopes the two will be able to forge "a USA-CBS relationship that will provide other world-class events to cable." Such an arrangement would closely mirror one that ABC had struck earlier with Entertainment and Sports Programming Network (Broadcasting, Sept. 28, 1981).

This new deal would provide CBS with a third entry into cable programming; the first was its CBS Cable cultural service and the second was the recently announced USA Network series, Woman's Day USA (Broadcasting, Feb. 8), a General Foods backed program produced by Young & Rubicam that will draw on the resources of the CBS-owned magazine.

Ratings Roundup

Although ABC-TV had the ratings power of "Superman" part I and NBC-TV emerged victorious from World War III, CBS-TV continued its winning ways during the week ended Feb. 7.

With a 19.9 rating and 31 share, CBS took prime-time honors for the 11th consecutive week, beating ABC's 18.0/28 and NBC's 15.9/25.

On Sunday, "Superman" pulled a 29.6/42 in its 8-10 p.m. slot. Airing in ABC's Code Red (13.0/20) opener and Today's FBI (15.5/25) closer, the night was worth a better-than-usual 21.9/33 for the network but still not enough to overtake CBS's regular lineup's 24.7/37.

NBC was the big loser that night with Peacock Showcase (12.0/19) and The Day the Bubble Burst (12.7/19).

NBC's fortunes, however, were considerably better on Monday when the second half of World War III brought a 23.5/36, beating the head-to-head competition of ABC's Pry TV (16.0/24) and CBS's series.

CBS had its long-form entries on other nights: successful with Thursday's Hallmark Hall of Fame: The Hunchback of Notre Dame (20.5/32) and Saturday's theatrical "Silver Streak" (19.8/33) but losing with the Bette Davis made-for-TV, A Piano for Mrs. Cimino (18.9/29), on Wednesday and Million Dollar Infield (11.9/19) on Tuesday.

CBS won Thursday through Sunday; ABC won Tuesday and Wednesday and NBC took Monday.

The week saw CBS get off to a hefty lead in the February sweeps. After the first five days of the Arbiton begun Feb. 3, it was CBS's 21.5 to ABC's 17.3 and NBC's 14.4. The Nielsen count, begun a day later, showed CBS even stronger with a 22.8 to ABC's 16.7 and NBC's 13.4.

The First 20

1. 60 Minutes CBS 30.2/47
2. "Superman" part I (movie) ABC 29.6/42
3. Dallas CBS 28.1/45
4. Trapper John, M.D. CBS 25.2/41
5. The Man From Sacramento ABC 25.2/39
6. Three's Company ABC 24.9/37
7. World War III part II NBC 23.5/36
8. Hart to Hart ABC 23.1/38
10. Magnum, P.I. CBS 22.8/35
11. M*A*S*H CBS 22.7/32
12. Jefferon's CBS 22.4/32
13. Falcon Crest CBS 22.0/39
14. Full House ABC 22.0/32
15. Archie Bunker's Place CBS 21.7/31
16. One Day At A Time CBS 21.4/30
17. Real People NBC 21.1/31
18. Alice CBS 21.0/29
19. Hart to Hart ABC 20.9/33
20. Hallmark Hall Of Fame: Hunchback Of Notre Dame (special) CBS 20.5/32

The Final Five

67. McLain's Law NBC 11.3/18
68. NBC Magazine NBC 11.1/18
69. King's Crossing ABC 10.2/16
70. Cimino and Company ABC 9.8/17
71. Billy Crystal Comedy Hour NBC 9.7/17