

Washington Post Co. has made first entry into cable TV business by purchasing 50% interest in SportsChannel Associates from Charles F. Dolan's Cablevision Program Enterprises. SportsChannel serves 270,000 cable subscribers and 100,000 pay subscribers in New York area. Deal also includes 25% interest in New England SportsChannel. In prepared statement, Washington Post Co. President Richard D. Simmons said "this venture is a splendid opportunity for our company to enter a cable programming business with exceptional potential for profit growth." WPC spokesman described venture as one of "new media" that complements company's newspaper, broadcast station and programming interests. SportsChannel exclusive offerings include New York Yankees and Mets games, New York Islander hockey games, New Jersey Nets basketball games, New Jersey Devils hockey games and New York Racing Association events. New England SportsChannel carries Boston Celtics basketball games and Hartford Whalers hockey, as well as offering most New York SportsChannel events. WPC also is applicant at FCC for cellular mobile radio system in Washington market.

Senator Barry Goldwater (R-Ariz.) is expected to introduce FCC reauthorization bill today. Bill sets ceiling of \$86.4 million for fiscal 1984 and 1985 but allows for discretionary funding for salary, retirement and other employee benefits. Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Justice, the Judiciary and Related Agencies is holding hearing, March 2, on FCC FY 1984 budget.

Senate Rules Committee is planning hearings some time in March on resolution (S. Res. 66) that would allow television and radio coverage in Senate. Senate Rules Committee Chairman Charles McC. Mathias (R-Md.) had hoped to move resolution, introduced two weeks ago, quickly through committee and to floor. However, several senators requested hearings. Senators making request were Russell Long (D-La.), Quentin Burdick (D-N.D.), J. Bennett Johnston (D-La.), Lloyd Bensten (D-Tex.), John Danforth (R-Mo.), William Proxmire (D-Wis.), Mack Mattingly (D-Ga.), Christopher Dodd (D-Conn.), Walter Huddleston (D-Ky.), John Stennis (D-Miss.), David Boren (D-Okla.) and John Tower (R-Tex.).

Special, market-by-market sweep reports that will exclude ratings for ABC-TV's 18-hour blockbuster *Winds of War* from averages for month of February are to be issued by A.C. Nielsen Co. along with regular quarterly sweep reports this spring. Request for special reports came from NBC-TV on behalf of many of its affiliates, according to spokesman for Nielsen, who said some CBS-TV affiliates have also requested special breakout. Reports, which spokesman said will "in no way resemble Nielsen's regular sweep reports" and so could not be mistaken for them, will be issued in at least top 50 markets and perhaps more, depending on requests from stations.

HBO has signed agreement with Silver Screen Partners, newly-formed limited partnership which hopes to raise \$75 million or more to produce theatrical films, whereby HBO will participate in packaging selection of films to be produced, and will also have the exclusive pay-cable rights to those films. In return, HBO is guaranteeing investments of limited partners who participate. Silver Screen recently filed its limited-partnership offering with SEC, which, if approved, will be offered to public in April. Minimum partnership share will be priced at \$5,000 and it's anticipated that entire offering underwritten by E.F. Hutton, will be sold in two or three months. Roland Betts, president of International Film Investors Inc., is president of Silver Screen. Partnership hopes to produce 10 to 12 films annually per year and repeat offering on annual basis.

In addition to exclusive pay-cable rights, for showing after first theatrical runs, HBO is to receive 5% of profits derived from all runs other than pay-cable (theatrical, videodisk, etc.).

Senator Bob Packwood (R-Ore.) told members of communications task force of National Conference of Black Lawyers last week he supports establishment of affirmative action guidelines to increase



Front seat to victory. Viewers were treated to a thrilling moment in the Daytona 500 mile stock-car race on Feb. 21 when CBS-TV carried live the finish of the event, as seen through the front window of the car in which winner Cale Yarborough was driving. CBS had installed Racecam camera equipment and an audio device in the back of Yarborough's auto (plus another in Tim Richmond's LeMans) and conducted interviews with him 54 times during the four-hour telecast, only during a "yellow flag" (periods when cars slow down during accidents). CBS said the telecast earned "rave reviews" in newspapers throughout the country and scored an 8.7 rating and a 26.0 share. Figures on the estimated total audience were not available.

minority ownership in telecommunications. Packwood also spoke about need for expanding full First Amendment protections to electronic media. He said there is growing need for Congress to address issue before it becomes Supreme Court issue. Senator talked about number of communications issues including multiple broadcast ownership limits, which he said, he would leave to normal antitrust laws. "The day for need of seven-seven-seven rule is gone," he said. Packwood will be luncheon speaker at CBS's affiliates government relations committee meeting in Washington today.

Turns out that TV stations in 30 markets, none of them in top 10, were unanimous in supplying their 1981 revenues figures to Broadcasters Industry Revenue Reporting Committee. That means market figures for only those 30 will be compiled. Totals will be reported back to stations involved, but feeling among committee members at meeting last week was that market figures should not be made public lest they be used for projections that couldn't possibly be accurate. For whatever its worth, virtually all stations in those 30 markets reported sizable revenue increases in 1981 over 1980. Accounting firm report to committee, formed and financed by four leading broadcasting trade associations to take up slack left by FCC's departure from financial data collection, showed no real change from earlier broadcast estimates: Only 64.3% of TV stations and 34.5% of radio stations bothered to send in data (BROADCASTING, Dec. 13, 1982). Committee decided not to go out of business, but will try another tack for 1982 figures: working with numerous market groups that compile their own data through independent accounting firms.

Representative Barney Frank (D-Mass.) last week called congressional cable rate setting "a terrible idea." He told New England chapter of Women in Cable that cable industry faces dilemma because it hasn't figured out what to do when Copyright Royalty Tribunal sets rates it doesn't like. One-time appeal to Congress to set rates seems reasonable, he said, but he cannot see Congress continuing to determine rates. Frank defended measure he is co-sponsoring (BROADCASTING, Feb. 14), to repeal must-carry rules but make cable