

1984, and NBC \$75 million.

CBS Radio signed a new five-year agreement with Major League Baseball last December, covering the years 1985 through 1989 and valued at between \$31 and \$32 million. This year, the final one in its present contract, CBS will pay close to \$3 million for its baseball rights.

The USA Network closed out the final year of a two-year agreement in 1983, and, due to the terms agreed upon in the new broadcast network pacts, no national basic cable pact is allowable through 1989.

Baseball's interest in cable for game carriage continues to grow regionally, however, as seven more teams begin participation in regional pay networks this season, including three allied with the new Sports Time cable service owned by Multimedia, Anheuser-Busch and Tele-Communications Inc. The Sports Time teams are the Cincinnati Reds, Kansas City Royals, and St. Louis Cardinals. The World Series champion Baltimore Orioles also moved into the cable ranks with its alliance with Home Team Sports, the Group W pay channel covering the Washington/Baltimore market. The Boston Red Sox, Detroit Tigers and Milwaukee Brewers are also launching cable projects this year.

At this stage only seven teams remain without a pay television deal, and two of them have been trying for some time—the Seattle Mariners, which are still negotiating with Group W Satellite Communications (at this point for a September start date), and the Cleveland Indians. The Indians had a deal with a local group but the service has never gone on the air. Other teams without a regional pay-TV deal are the Atlanta Braves and Chicago Cubs, both carried by superstations, and the San Francisco Giants, Oakland A's and the Montreal Expos.

For most of the teams now involved in cable, said Brian Burns, director of broadcasting, Major League Baseball, cable is still a "calculated risk." The questions of how cable exposure affects attendance at the gate, and whether any erosion can be offset by pay television revenues, he said, remain unanswered.

NBC will televise 32 regular-season games this year (including four double-headers and two prime time games) beginning Saturday, April 7, at 1:30 p.m. Vin Scully and Joe Garagiola will again be the announcing team for the primary game. NBC also has the World Series this year, scheduled to begin Tuesday, Oct. 9.

The average price of a 30-second spot during the regular season will be approximately \$35,000. Rates for the World Series have not yet been set, but a network spokesman said they "will be in the \$250,000 range," which compares to the \$210,000 that ABC asked last year.

NBC baseball is practically sold out in the second quarter, while the third quarter is about 75% sold. Major clients this year include Miller Beer (Backer & Spielvogel), Ford Motor Co. (J. Walter Thompson), Gillette (BBDO) and American Cyanamid (Dancer Fitzgerald Sample).

ABC will carry 11 regular-season games this season, three fewer than last year, beginning June 4 with its first Monday night base-

ball contest. ABC will also carry the All-Star Game this year (July 10), as well as the American League and National League playoff series (best of five), scheduled to start on Oct. 2. Monday night games will cost about \$70,000 per 30 in June and \$65,000 in July. Two Friday-night contests in July are priced at about \$60,000. Prime time league playoff 30's are priced at \$130,000, weekend day spots at \$65,000 and weekday spots at \$25,000.

Among the ABC sponsors this year are Chevrolet (Campbell-Ewald), Anheuser-Busch (D'Arcy MacManus Masius) and Stroh's (BBDO).

A team-by-team breakdown follows:

### Baltimore Orioles

In the second year of a four-year contract and for the sixth straight year, WFBR(AM) will cover all the action of the world champion Orioles. Harry Shriver, WFBR vice president and general manager, said the station in mid-February was close to a sellout, with just one 60-second and a handful of 30-second in-game spots left. Among top sponsors are Chevrolet, Kelly Springfield Tire, Gulf, Miller Brewing and Maryland National Bank. New this season is Mash's (meat and food products). WFBR's announcing team will again be Jon Miller and Tom Marr. Shriver said the station has been whetting Oriole fans' appetites with occasional "cold winter night" replays of last season, along with plans to continue its *Stan the Fan* call-in show, which was introduced in 1983. WMAR-TV will be going into the second year of its two-year rights contract with the Orioles and will telecast 52 games. Last year's agreement with Super TV for over-the-air STV games in the Baltimore-Washington area has been terminated. However, Group W Satellite Communications's Home Team Sports has contracted to carry 55 home and 25 road games of the Orioles on a network of cable systems in six states with a total subscriber count of 1.9 million. Home Team Sports debuts with the start of the season.

### Boston Red Sox

The New England Sports Network, a joint venture of the Boston Red Sox, Bruins hockey team and Storer Communications Inc., announced less than two weeks ago it will launch a satellite-delivered pay-cable service reaching all six New England states with at least 150 live sporting events plus other, sports-related programming, during its first year, which will begin April 4. The service, which will include advertising sold both by the network and local cable operators as well as charge subscribers a fee reported to be between \$7.50 and \$10 per month, depending on the system, will present 90 Red Sox games its first year as well as 40 Bruins games and 40 repeats of Sunday afternoon Red Sox and Bruins games broadcast originally on WSBK-TV Boston, holder of the local broadcast TV rights to both teams. WSBK-TV will broadcast 70 Red Sox

games this year, down from the 103 it broadcast in 1983.

Because WSBK-TV has fewer games to sell this year, advertising rates for the station's coverage have increased about 15% to 20%, according to Stuart Tauber, general sales manager at the station. Major sponsors for this year's coverage are Anheuser-Busch, Toyota, Kendal Oil and Gulf Oil.

WPLM(AM) Plymouth, Mass., will again originate coverage of Red Sox games—181 regular and exhibition games—to a network of 75 stations in the New England area and two in Florida. According to station owner and president, John T. Campbell, major sponsors this year are Anheuser-Busch, Ford and PeopleExpress.

### Cleveland Indians

WWWE(AM) continues as Indians radio rights holder and will cover the 162 regular season games plus 12 exhibitions. The rights contract runs through 1985. Herb Score and Nev Chandler will handle booth chores. David George, who coordinates WWWE's Indians network, reported solid sales activity, despite expanded in-game availabilities. Anheuser-Busch and Stihl (chain saws) top the list of WWWE's baseball advertisers. WUAB-TV's vice president and general manager, Jack Moffitt, said the independent will telecast 50 road games in the second year of its three-year rights contract. Joe Tait and Reggie Rucker, former pro football star, will announce. Moffitt said sales were going "fairly well" and prospects in general are "brighter than last year." Anheuser-Busch, McDonald's and Burger King top the national sponsor list. A decision pends on whether Indians games will again be carried on a regional cable-sports channel. Options to those rights are held by the owners of the local basketball Cavaliers who also own the Minnesota hockey North Stars and the Richfield (Ohio) Coliseum.

### Detroit Tigers

"Your Season Pass" is the marketing slogan being used to convince Detroit-area cable subscribers to pay \$10 per month for a new, regional sports network that will present Detroit Tigers baseball, Pistons basketball, Red Wings hockey, amateur boxing events and University of Michigan and Michigan State University, basketball and possibly football on a network that will cablecast 365 days a year, starting April 17. The new network, Pro Am Sports Systems (PASS), will cablecast 80 Tigers games, (64 home, 16 away), while local TV rights holder, WDIV(TV) will broadcast 50 games this year (including pre-season) down from 52 regular and five pre-season games last year.

At launch, PASS expects to have between one-quarter and one-half of the more than one million cable subscribers in its marketing area, which includes northern Ohio and northern Indiana as well as Michigan, according to William J. Wischman, executive