

ABC's Information Network has regained lead as **top-rated radio network** among persons 12 years of age and older, according to fall 1984 RADAR 30 (Vol. 2) report released last week by Statistical Research Inc., Westfield, N.J. Network registered average audience estimate of 1,566,000 listeners per commercial, Monday through Friday, 6 a.m. to midnight. Climbing from fourth place to second with 1,527,000 listeners is **RKO One**. (Network was just sold to New York-based United Stations [see "Top of the Week"].) **ABC Entertainment** dropped from first place in spring report to third at 1,489,000. Next is **ABC Contemporary** at 1,330,000 followed by **NBC Radio Network** with 1,314,000. **ABC Information** also finished in top spot among persons 18 and older, posting 1,525,000 listeners.

Two new prime time series join ABC Thursday schedule, beginning March 21. First is **Wildside**, "Western action-adventure series with the accent on fun," will air at 8-9 p.m. (Walt Disney Productions). Second, **Eye to Eye**, "heartwarming character comedy laced with suspense," stars Charles Durning and Stephanie Faracy and is from Warner Bros. TV. It will air 9-10 p.m. **ABC Thursday Night Movie** will have last broadcast March 14.

ABC's first **United States Football League** contest of the 1985 season, played Sunday, Feb. 24 (2:30 p.m.-6 p.m.) between Birmingham Stallions and New Jersey Generals, scored 7.7/18, **beating CBS's average 6.4/15 for Sports Sunday and golf match** in same period, as well as **NBC's 3.8/9 for NCAA basketball**. ABC's first game rating was down, however, from first game covered last year which averaged 8.0/19. Decline in part by network on fact that clearance this year for first game was down to 85% coverage of U.S. television homes, compared to 93% coverage year ago.

Quarter-inch videotape will be at top of agenda for scheduled Tuesday (March 5) afternoon meeting between senior officials of **Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers and Julius Barnathan, ABC Broadcasting Operations and Engineering president**. Barnathan raised stir at society with statements that SMPTE officials with "vested interests" had "derailed" attempts to standardize on newsgathering format and suggestions that his network would move standardization efforts elsewhere (BROADCASTING, Feb. 25). "My frustrations are real," Barnathan told BROADCASTING last Friday, "but this satisfies me that SMPTE is not trying to derail the standard. I believe that they're trying to get it back on track."



Chief engineer. Carl E. Smith (center), recipient of 1985 Engineering Achievement Award from National Association of Broadcasters, joined NAB Engineering Vice President Tom Keller (left) and chairman of the U.S. Advanced Television Systems Committee, E. William Henry (right) at press conference last Wednesday formally announcing the award. Smith, founder of Cleveland Institute of Electronics and president of Smith Electronics consulting firm in Cleveland, has been involved over past half-century in developments for AM directional antennas and FM/TV circular polarization. Award will be presented at April 16 engineering luncheon during NAB annual convention, with Henry giving keynote speech.

Actions speak louder than words." Tentative meeting, hurriedly arranged last Friday (March 1) morning, will include other interested parties, according to Dick Streeter of CBS/Broadcast Group currently SMPTE's engineering vice president. "We will examine how to proceed and achieve a standard, if possible," he said. "A lot of positive things can come out of this." Topics under consideration were not made public, but likely subject will be whether to lower user benchmark requiring third generation quarter-inch to match quality of first generation three-quarter-inch U-matic, current newsgathering format standard.

ESPN's coverage of highly publicized **St. John's-Georgetown basketball game** last Wednesday (which Georgetown won by score of 85-69) averaged 8.0 rating and 12 share in its universe of 35.7 million basic cable subscribers. A.C. Nielsen confirmed last week that **game delivered biggest audience, 2.9 million, for any cable-originated network program to date**. Contest broke ratings record on network set in March of 1983 when St. John's played Georgia in NCAA regional semi-final basketball match, which drew 7.3 rating.

Cable News Network has asked Supreme Court to review decision barring cable network from electronic coverage of Westmoreland CBS trial. According to CNN, trial judge had found that coverage wouldn't have interfered, and might have even enhanced conduct of trial. But judge, according to CNN, felt compelled to deny permission for coverage because of 1968 ethics rule for federal judges. CNN argued that was violation of First Amendment rights of public and media, but Court of Appeals in New York upheld trial judge's decision. According to CNN attorney, cable network believes important trials should be open for coverage as long as that coverage doesn't interfere with conduct of trial.

Seagram Co., major hard-liquor distiller based in New York, hopes to launch \$10-million television advertising campaign in spring aimed at getting message to viewers that potency of typical mixed drink, with one-and-quarter ounces of 80-proof liquor, contains more alcohol than 12-ounce can of beer or five-ounce glass of wine. Liquor industry has self-imposed ban on advertising of distilled spirits per se, which Seagram defines as "product advertising." Company doesn't believe its proposed campaign, described as **"consumer education campaign,"** falls within ban. Seagram said last week Warwick Advertising in New York has been given assignment to develop campaign. Meanwhile, **Seagram officials met with ABC and NBC executives** last week about proposal, but neither network would comment on specifics. ABC spokesman said no decision had been made on whether such campaign would be accepted. CBS spokesman said meeting had not been scheduled with Seagram officials as of last Friday, although one rumor had last week that "CBS told them not to come" because proposal simply would not be accepted. All three networks have ban against advertising liquor products. Some last week were questioning timing of Seagram's proposal, in light of all hoopla concerning beer and wine advertising. But source at liquor company said executives there felt campaign proposal was "long overdue."

Citing First Amendment, **federal circuit court in Los Angeles** last week ruled that **municipality cannot limit "by means of an auction process" number of cable systems that may serve its residents** to one as long as "utility facilities" and public rights-of-ways are "physically capable of accommodating" construction of others. Ruling stemmed from 1983 lawsuit in which **Preferred Communications** charged city of Los Angeles violated, among other things, its First Amendment rights by refusing to allow it to build and operate cable system in section of city without going through competitive franchise process or "auction process," as court calls it. Federal district court dismissed suit and Preferred appealed to ninth circuit, which heard oral arguments last December. Court's ruling also discussed Cable Communications Policy Act, national cable regulatory bill that went into effect last December. "To the extent that... [the law] authorizes the government to protect its interests in regulating disruption of public resources through a system of permits or franchises... it passes muster... here. But we cannot