

run of *Golden Girls*. At 4:30 p.m., *Girls* had been more than doubling the rating and share of *Quiz Kids* at 4 p.m.

*Trump Card* and *Challengers* have also been pulled or downgraded in markets including Hartford, Conn., and St. Louis. At the same time KMOV-TV moved *Quiz Kids*, it also bumped *Trump* from its 6:30 p.m. access slot to late night, replacing it with *Best of Love Connection*. The station has been getting solid numbers from *Connection* as a late fringe program.

At WTIC-TV Hartford, general manager Ed Karlik confirmed the station demoted *Trump* and *Challengers* from access to daytime, replacing the game block at 7-8 p.m. with a strip of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. So far, *Trek* has doubled the rating the two games were getting in access, from a 2 to a 4.

"We had to make a move," said Karlik, who is also president of Chase Broadcasting. "We were high on both shows and the production quality was high, but we couldn't go into the November book without larger ratings."

And it is not just the new game shows that are taking a beating. None of the new first-run strips (excluding cartoons) are working.

"It's mind blowing," said Janeen Bjork, vice president and director of programming at Seltel, the New York-based rep firm. "Viewers are saying no to new programming in larger numbers than we can ever remember. And it's not that they are unaware of these new shows. They are saying no to *Quiz Kids*. It did a 7 share on WXIA Atlanta, and a week later *Feud* did a 15 share in the same time period as a replacement. In Hartford, it wasn't that viewers did not know about *Trump* and *Challengers*. They just didn't want them."

According to a Seltel rundown of Nielsen ratings for all the new strips, for the week ended Sept. 30, none held their lead-in share and all were down from the time-period share a year ago. "I think a lot of the distributors of the new product are reeling, trying to figure out if there is a way to get viewers to give these shows another shot," said Bjork.

James Curtin, vice president of program services, Harrington, Righter and Parsons, New York, agreed with Bjork's assessment. "It is not uncommon to see a 95% failure rate for new first-run shows. But we're looking at nearly a 100% failure rate. You generally expect to find at least one new show getting

sizeable sampling and holding on. We are still waiting for a viable entry to appear."

While it is hard to know with any certainty why viewers are rejecting the entire slate of new first-run strips, Curtin said the syndicators are "delivering the shows they promised. They aren't producing junk. It may be that station managers misread what viewers were looking for."

Bill Carroll, vice president, director of programming, Katz American Television, said part of the problem first-run is having is due to the continued success of returning programs such as *Jeopardy* and *A Current Affair*, and the increasing number of viewing choices in the television marketplace. "The longer the incumbents go unchallenged, the more habit forming they become," he said. "With each season, there are more options to distract viewers from watching the new shows."

While the first-run early returns are bleak, the new crop of off-network shows seem to be faring better. *Golden Girls*, for example, has the best story, delivering about a 15% higher share than both its lead-in and the shows in the time period a year ago. -SM

## NETWORK

Continued from page 35

numbers almost doubled on ABC and NBC. "One of the things we've learned from the sampling of co-promotion deals like ours with K mart or the NBC McMillions is that they work best in getting sampling for a show in a time period where there may only be one entrenched show rather than two entrenched in the time period," said George Schweitzer, senior VP, communications, CBS. He pointed out that in *Lenny's* case at 8 p.m. on Wednesday, the show came in against two established programs, *The Wonder Years* on ABC and *Unsolved Mysteries* on NBC.

While network sources have confirmed CBS's intent to bring *Lenny* back, there has been no such talk about *E.A.R.T.H. Force*, which failed CBS programmers but persistently met the expectations of most critics and other television observers who predicted the hour drama about an environmental action team would be the first of the new season breed to face extinction.

Those two series may get company in the network junkyard from two NBC shows, *Ferris Bueller* and *The Fanelli Boys*, both of which are underperforming in their time periods. "Right now,

when I look up at my [schedule] board, both shows are still up there," said Littlefield last Friday morning when asked if he is considering a move. However, he would not rule out the possibility of change as early as this week when last week's ratings come out on Tuesday, Oct. 9. About *Ferris Bueller*, he said, "Clearly, there's a concern about the drop-off at 8:30 that could hurt our NBC movie at 9 p.m." As for *The Fanelli Boys*, he said the show is in "good shape creatively but we need to market it better. What we don't want to do is panic and say too quickly that it's not working and say goodbye to a *Cheers* or *Family Ties*," he said, referring to two NBC comedies which started slowly and built into powerhouses.

"In the case of *Ferris Bueller*, it may have been by the time the McMillions campaign came out, the jury had already returned its verdict," said John Miller, executive VP, marketing, NBC-TV. He said pre-season airings, part of the "double-pump" strategy, may have pre-empted the sampling potential NBC might have gotten from its co-promotion with McDonald's.

CBS's reshuffling starts on Wednesday with *48 Hours* moving to Wednesday at 8-9 p.m. from Saturdays at 10 p.m., beginning Oct. 24. Also on

Wednesday, *WIOU*, an hour drama from Grant Tinker about a TV newsroom, will make its debut at 10-11 p.m. on Oct. 24 or Oct. 31, depending on the length of the World Series. *48 Hours* replaces *Lenny* and *Doctor, Doctor*, and *WIOU* replaces *Top Cops*.

Thursday is the most reworked night of the week, starting with *Top Cops* at 8 p.m., pared down to a half-hour show. *The Flash* follows at 8:30-9:30 p.m. Moving *The Flash* out of the 8 p.m. time period allows the sci-fi action/adventure series to avoid competing head-to-head with *The Cosby Show* and soon-to-arrive original episodes of *The Simpsons*. Its competition, instead, will be *A Different World* on NBC and *Babes* on Fox. *Doctor, Doctor* follows at 9:30 p.m., and *Knots Landing* remains in the 10-11 p.m. time slot.

Saturday finds the first hour of the evening unchanged with *Family Man* and *The Hogan Family* at 8-9 p.m. *Broken Badges* (9-10 p.m.), replacing *E.A.R.T.H. Force*, is Cannell's latest action series. At 10 p.m. the network has brought back *Wiseguy* replacing *48 Hours*.

In addition, *Sons and Daughters*, starring Lucy Arnaz and Rick Rossovich, set to make its season premiere on Thursday, Oct. 25 at 9-10 p.m., has been shelved for the time being. -SC