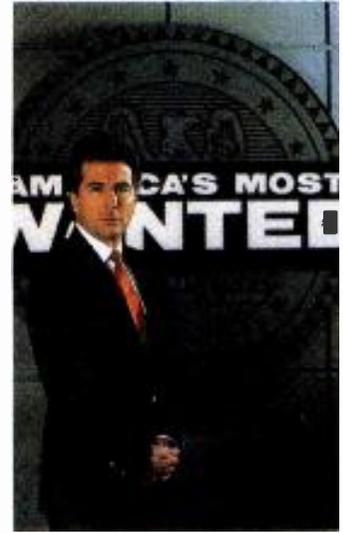
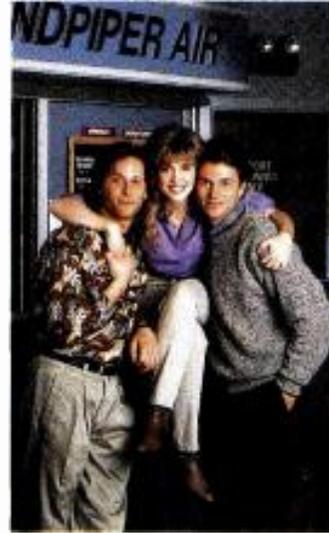


TOP OF THE WEEK



o r: ABC's 'Who's the Boss?' will return but could be in later time slot; CBS's 'Murphy Brown' will likely remain in current position; NBC's 'Wings' is expected to return in coveted 9:30-10 time period; Fox's 'America's Most Wanted' is considered its sole Friday night returnee

LINING UP THE PRIME TIME PROSPECTS

Network watchers speculate on which new programs will be added, which old shows will return as ABC, CBS, NBC and Fox prepare to unveil fall schedules

With the networks expected to begin announcing their fall schedules today (May 20), starting with NBC, network executives are scrambling to come to some last-minute decisions on whether to schedule some development projects or renew series for the 1991-92 schedule. Although decisions will be made almost until the announcements are made, each network has specific needs that will be addressed and development projects considered front-runners.

■ According to Ted Harbert, prime time executive vice president, NBC Entertainment, in a recent interview with BROADCASTING, two of ABC's chief needs for the fall are 10 p.m. shows for Tuesday and Wednesday, and improved performance in the Saturday 9-11 slot. "We have to look very closely at Tuesday and Wednesday time periods, and see if there's anything in our development that might be able to deliver the kinds of numbers that an *L.A. Law* delivers to NBC on Thursday night. Having a hit show at 10 p.m. can make quite a bit of difference, not only to our affili-

ates, who would love it and deserve it, but to the ratings of the network," said Harbert.

thirtysomething (Tuesday, 10 p.m.), considered on the fence in terms of its chances for renewal, may become a casualty as a result of ABC's need to schedule a show with broader appeal on Tuesday night, according to Betsy Frank, senior vice president, director, television information and new media, Saatchi & Saatchi. "My guess is that it is gone," she said. "It proved to be a show of very narrow appeal that couldn't transcend that narrowness."

Two development projects ABC is expected to use in either 10 p.m. slot are *Civil Wars* from Steven Bochco Productions and *Silver Fox* starring James Coburn.

Overall, ABC is expected to schedule approximately six hours of new programming for the fall. According to Paul Schulman, president, The Paul Schulman Co., ABC expects to have 11 hours of returning shows in their current time slots. Those shows are *Life Goes On*, *America's Funniest Home Videos*,

America's Funniest People and *The ABC Sunday Night Movie* on Sunday and *MacGyver* and *Monday Night Football* on Monday. Two development projects, *The Human Target* and *Young Indiana Jones*, are thought to be ordered as backups to *MacGyver* at 8 p.m. if the show falters. On Tuesday night, Schulman suggested *Roseanne* and *Coach* will definitely return in their 9 and 9:30 p.m. slots, respectively. He also said *Doogie Howser, M.D.* will remain at 9 p.m. Wednesday and *Primetime Live* will return to its Thursday, 10 p.m. slot. On Friday, *Full House* and *20/20* return, while Saturday is wide open.

Five other shows that will return but possibly not in their current time slots are *Who's the Boss?*, *Family Matters* (which may be moved from Friday to either Tuesday or Wednesday at 8), *The Wonder Years*, *Perfect Strangers* and *Growing Pains*. The last may be held off the fall schedule for use as a back-up as the network did last season with *Head of the Class*.

Shows on the bubble include *thirtysomething*, *Father Dowling*, *The*