

CBS, NBC TIP THEIR FALL HANDS

CBS schedule includes nine news shows; NBC weighs in with eight

By Steve Coe

CBS unveiled its plan for a second consecutive prime time ratings victory in the form of its new fall schedule last Thursday, which features nine new shows and restructuring of four nights. The four new comedies are *Hearts Afire*, *Love and War*, *Bob* and *The Little Woman*. The four new dramas are *The Hat Squad*, *Picket Fences*, *Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman* and *Polish Hill*. Also new to the schedule are *Golden Palace*, a reworking of *Golden Girls*, and *In the Heat of the Night*, both of which were dropped by NBC.

Perhaps responding to criticism that CBS's victory last season was due more to specials and sports than to series strength, Jeff Sagansky, president, CBS Entertainment, predicted another win next year. "I think our course here is we'll continue to grow. We'll win by as large a margin or more next season—even without major sports packages that helped us this year." He hinted that CBS executives would have liked to do even more restructuring of the schedule. "We left three nights intact because we've done enough already."

CBS is using its Monday night powerhouse to launch two new series, debuting the new Linda Bloodworth-Thomason comedy at 8:30 and handing the post-*Murphy Brown* 9:30-10 slot to *Murphy* creator Diane English and her latest project, *Love and War*. It is not clear whether CBS has given English and her Shukovsky/English Productions control of the coveted 9:30 slot, much the way Paramount controls the post-*Cheers* slot or, apparently, Roseanne Arnold the post-*Roseanne* slot on ABC. Making room for the two shows are *Major Dad* and *Designing Women*, which will anchor the network's Friday night lineup.

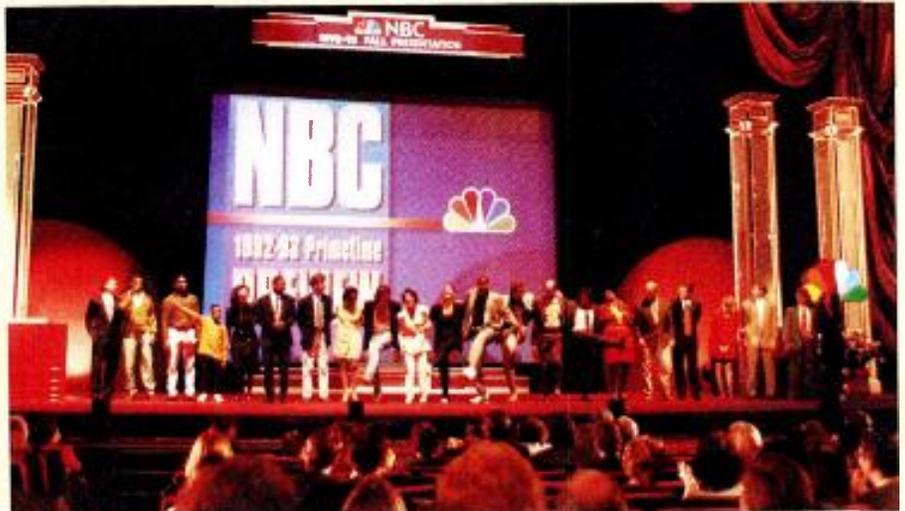
"Our strategy this past season was to grow Monday night before moving anything, and that's exactly what happened. As a result we were able to feed Friday night," said Sagansky.

Tuesday's lineup remains unchanged, with *Rescue: 911* followed by the *CBS Tuesday Movie*. Although it might be assumed network execu-

tives left the night alone because their development wouldn't support programming two more hours, Sagansky said there was no shortage of projects. "Our development was so strong we could have programed an eighth night."

Sagansky said Wednesday night is "up for grabs, particularly for the young demos." He said the slotting of Stephen Cannell's new drama, *The*

Sagansky described Saturday's schedule as "the biggest risk night for us. Saturday night is up for grabs with all three networks introducing new shows there." The night features *Brooklyn Bridge*, moved from Friday, and *The Little Woman*, Carsey/Werner's latest project. The night ends with two female-skewing dramas: *Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman*, starring Jane Seymour, and *Polish Hills* (work-



NBC Entertainment President Warren Littlefield introduces the network's stars and fall prime time lineup in a presentation that was satellite-fed to affiliates last Thursday

Hat Squad, is designed to attract the young male demographic. *In the Heat of the Night* moves from NBC to take over the 9-10 slot providing counter-programming to younger-skewing programming on the other networks. *48 Hours* returns at 10-11.

He called Thursday "another opportunity night," and suggested NBC has declined "precipitously" since its days of complete domination. Combatting the NBC comedies and Fox's mix of comedies and *Beverly Hills, 90210*, CBS is returning *Tops Cops* and *Street Stories* at 8-10 and bringing back *Knots Landing* in the 10-11 slot.

The Friday lineup represents an attempt by the network to serve an audience they believe is being largely ignored: adults. "The ABC lineup is probably no longer as formidable now that *Full House* is no longer there. Adults have been looking for a Friday programming alternative for some time," he said.

ing title), starring Robin Givens.

CBS's stalwart Sunday night returns intact with *60 Minutes* and *Murder, She Wrote* leading into the *CBS Sunday Night Movie*.

NBC introduces five-and-a-half hours of new programming

NBC announced its fall schedule last Monday, and the network's hopes of reclaiming first place appear to rest on a handful of new series in strategic time slots. The lineup consists of eight new series representing five-and-a-half hours of programming.

"I'm anxious to see the new shows because they're key to the network's success on most nights," said Paul Schulman, president, Paul Schulman Company. "Their schedule is definitely for 18-49-year-olds. The lineup is advertiser-friendly, with nothing that could be considered controversial."

NBC had numerous holes to fill after losing five of its veteran performers: *The Cosby Show*, *Golden Girls*,