

# TV 'BOGEYMAN'

## NCAA Seeks Protective Policy

By GEORGE VOIGHT

NATIONAL Collegiate Athletic Assn., in a convention which closed Jan. 9 at San Francisco's Hotel St. Francis, took a cautious and apprehensive look at what some members regard as its latest and most fearful bogeyman: Telecasting.

The "bogeyman" was described in a report presented by Jamison Swarts, athletic director of the U. of Pennsylvania; and most delegates found the description sufficiently frightening to agree that unless some unified protective policy toward TV was adopted they were "threatened with disaster."

At the same time, and only a block away at the San Francisco Press Club, a convention of the American Colleges Public Relations Assn. (ACPRA) was being told that, because of public demand and similar pressures, college sports are going to be telecast whether the colleges like it or not and they might as well face that fact.

Authority for the statement was Hal Deal, advertising executive of Tidewater-Associated Oil Co., which for 23 years has sponsored radio broadcasts of virtually every important football game in the West.

### 'To Your Own Interest'

"It is to your own interest," Mr. Deal advised the college representatives, "to get everything you can on television, every minor sport as well as major sport, every school activity the TV stations will take even if you have to turn the rights over free."

The report on TV presented to NCAA delegates by Jamison Swarts was based on a survey conducted last season in the New York-Philadelphia-Boston area, where the highest percentage of TV sets in the nation are located.

Mr. Swarts said the survey proves that football attendance definitely suffers as a result of television, particularly attendance at smaller school games within TV range of big school games.

TV "might well prove fatal" to these smaller schools, he said.

It was found, he said, that 80% of all TV set owners were football fans and that 50% of them preferred to watch a game on their TV sets rather than attend the actual game.

The findings of the survey disprove two major contentions of TV network officials, he said, that TV would increase, not decrease, football attendance and that current prices for TV rights are too high.

As a matter of fact, he said, present rates are not high enough to compensate for loss of attendance at games and the resulting loss of cash at the box office.

The report concluded with a recommendation that schools adopt, as an interim protective measure until more facts on the subject are

known, three major restrictions on telecasting of sports events:

1—TV contracts should be made on a one-year basis only.

2—Radio and TV rights should be sold separately.

3—Filming of games for either newsreel or telecasting should be limited to three minutes of action.

A minority opinion was perhaps summed up by Tom Harmon, former All-American from Michigan now sports director of KFI and KFI-TV Los Angeles.

This opinion—identical, incidentally, to that voiced by Hal Deal at the ACPRA convention—held in brief:

TV would not prove a complete substitute for presence at a game itself even though many fans might at first stay home because of the novelty of telecasting; that while some fans undoubtedly will develop into permanent TV fans, many others, introduced by TV to sports events for the first time, will become active, participating fans at the games; and that a satisfactory

working agreement can and must be reached with TV as soon as possible.

Representatives of two leading universities—Fritz Crisler of the U. of Michigan, and Father John Murphy of Notre Dame—said their home games were telecast last season with no loss of attendance at the games.

Further, Mr. Crisler said, even if Michigan wanted to discontinue the telecasts after the 1949 season, "I am afraid we would find it extremely difficult because of public protest."

### Public Pressure for TV

Other delegates likewise conceded public pressure might force colleges to telecast their games despite their own antipathy to the idea.

With few exceptions, regional conferences around the country have been awaiting the NCAA report for direction.

This is true, for example, of the Pacific Coast Conference, even



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## KNBH (TV)

## New NBC Outlet Is Sixth TV Station in L. A.

KNBH, Hollywood television outlet of NBC, made its debut last night (January 16). This marks the city's sixth operating station with only KECA-TV to come.

Two of the programs were nationally sponsored, namely Disney Hats underwriting the *NBC Review of the News* and the kinescoped *Philco Television Playhouse*. Four other advertisers bought spots including BVD, Chevrolet Dealers, Bulova and Eastern-Columbia (department store).

KNBH went on the air with two hours of test pattern and music and launched its programming at 7 p.m. with a film called *Review of 1948*. This was followed by the Pickard Family in a quarter hour of folk songs. Program is expected to be syndicated via kinescope in other cities. Next came a film version of *One Man's Family* produced by Carlton Morse who also handles production on the radio program of the same name.

Charles R. Denny, network executive vice president, and Mayor Fletcher Bowron followed with dedications. Following was an all-star lineup of performers with Bill Goodwin as m.c., plus Art Linkletter, Hal Peary, Abe Burrows and Eddie Bracken among the performers. After this hour of stars came *Philco Television Playhouse* version of "Ramshackle Inn." Sign-off came at 10:40 with *Review of the News*.

KNBH operates on Channel 4 (66-72 mc). Equipment tests were begun last September and program tests got under way in November. The station will operate on a Sunday through Thursday schedule.

though some PCC teams had their games telecast last season and already have sold TV rights for the 1949 season.

Only one important school represented at the ACPRA convention's TV discussion—West Point—has completely accepted the new medium.

Lieut. Col. W. G. Proctor, the Academy's delegate, said West Point has, from the first, been interested in getting all its sports activities telecast.

"Our attitude in large part is due to our special position," he said. "We feel the people want our games telecast and therefore we are obligated to do so. As a result, price always has been our secondary interest in selling TV rights."

He said he did not know what effect TV has had on attendance at games but did not believe the gate had suffered seriously.

On the other hand, the U. of Utah's delegate to the convention said, "In view of the high prices for TV rights being quoted all over the country, we felt we should get every last dollar for our games."

The school sold rights to the local TV station for \$500 per game for both football and basketball games during the coming season—23 games in all, he said.

He said when the contract was signed the station said there were no more than 200 TV sets in the area. There now are about 1,000 in the area, he said, but the station still has found no sponsor for the games—which, he said, was no concern of the University.

### 'Backward,' Says Deal

In his talk to the delegates, Hal Deal called such an attitude "backward," and said such prices were "ridiculous."

He said that advertisers would not pay such large sums to contact such limited audiences.

He said that the U. of Southern California and U. of California at Los Angeles jointly sold TV rights to KLAC-TV in Los Angeles for \$75,000 for 13 home games.

KLAC, he said, admitted it paid the price for "prestige" reasons and resold the rights to the Philco Corp. at a "very sizeable" loss.

He said Tidewater-Associated, because of its long association with western football teams, was given first chance to buy TV rights from the two schools.

"But we weren't even talking in the same money bracket," he said. "There were only 67,500 TV sets in the LA area at that time and we wouldn't consider paying such a price to reach that size audience."

In defending TV in relation to its box-office effect on college sports, Mr. Deal said that TV will stimulate interest in sports, and thereby increase attendance, "more than anything in past sports history."

He said the objections now confronting TV are exactly the same

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