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Network ratings put ABC on top

United Press International
NEW YORK — Hundreds of shows, thousands of words and millions of dollars after the 1976-77 television season began last September, a review of the record shows the three networks are running true to form.

The news is in the shift in the ranking among the three networks, with ABC leaping into first place with both feet and CBS and NBC

for second place at the end of the season's 19th week.

With the stunning Nielsen ratings garnered by "Roots," there is no possibility, except in the exotic world of statistical might-beens, that ABC can be dislodged from the top spot. That's news in an industry that has been dominated by CBS for 20 years.

"Roots" was an interesting experiment by Fred Silverman, president

of ABC Television Entertainment, who deserves the Erwin Rommel Award for brilliance in campaign strategy in programming for putting the dramatization on the air in eight successive nights.

The position of "Roots" in occupying top spot in the list of most-watched television programs of all time — and in taking seven of the top 10 places on that list — certainly doesn't hurt the ABC position, but ABC was in first place before the 12-hour dramatization of Alex Haley's best seller ever hit the screen.

A look at the offerings and the ratings shows who has been doing what to whom, and when. ABC has been the master of kidvid in prime time, with "Happy Days," "Laverne & Shirley," "Charlie's Angels" and the bionic shows among their top offerings.

NBC announced that it would be going for event television this season, and that's exactly what it has

done. "Cone With The Wind," an NBC Big Event, had held the record for the most-watched show until "Roots" came along. NBC also was the network that gave us "Sybil," "Beauty and the Beast," "The Man In The Iron Mask," "Captain and the Kings" and the interesting if disappointing "Disappearance of Aimee," along with other dramas of varying competence. It also was the network that flopped instead of flew with an updated, downgraded "Peter Pan," but then nobody bats a thousand.

While the other networks were doing what came naturally for them, CBS also was doing its thing — situation comedy. From highbrow critics to just plain people, the country's favorite comedy program on television is "MASH."

While the general audience digs "One Day At A Time," the critics still applaud Mary Tyler Moore and "All In The Family," and there are a score of other half-hour comedies

that succeed in varying degrees. This might give CBS its headache — the fact that some of its most trusted comedies are getting rusty with age and no matter how good the gag they are beginning to sag. This is the last season for Tyler Moore, whose ratings slipped but not enough for cancellation. The star is understandably ready to try something new.

Bob Newhart, who has announced this season will be his last. Reviewing what has transpired on the screen so far this season, suddenly struck by a telephone directory of names. Perry Como, Bob Hope, Mac Davis, John Denver, Olivia Newton-John, Barry Manilow, Steve Lacy and Eydie Gorme, Elton John, Johnny Cash, Bing Crosby, Burns and Shirley MacLaine among those with one or more specials.

Paper airplane skill pays off in contest

All that expertise you developed for making paper airplanes during the study-halls of an academic career may now pay off.

The student chapter of the Texas Society of Professional Engineers at Texas A&M University is offering three \$10 prizes to the winners of the Great First Annual Paper Airplane Flying contest here Feb. 24.

It will help celebrate the 26th National Engineers Week, Feb. 20-26. If you think you can come up with

a better design, there are three categories in which to win the \$10 top prize, said chapter president David James, a senior in civil engineering at A&M.

The categories will be time in flight, distance and accuracy and imagination and appearance," James said. "Materials will be limited to paper, glue and tape; no metal, plastic or wood. The craft must have a wing or wings (no balls of paper), weigh no more than 20 grams (equal to about six sheets of standard size paper) and have no dimension more than 36 centimeters (about 14 inches)."

The contest will be held on the ground floor of Zachry Engineering Center at 5:15 p.m. For more information, James can be contacted at 693-2759 or David Reed at 693-2649.

Sailing club gets 28-foot sailboat

The Fort Phantom Yacht Club of Abilene donated a 28-foot, wooden, 3,000-pound sailboat to the Texas A&M University Sailing Club last weekend.

It is the largest sailboat the club has, said Mike Kosa, a club member and senior at A&M.

"The boat is equipped with a cabin and deckspace for 20 people,"

said Pete O'Connell, another senior club member.

It is not a new sailboat. Plans were purchased from Mechanics Illustrated in 1956 and carpenters were then hired to build the craft.

The Sea Scouts of the Abilene club sailed the boat until they purchased a new one, donating the old boat to the sailing club.

The club will repaint the boat and make minor repairs.

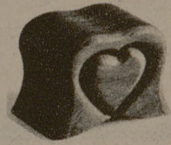
"We'll have it in the water in a couple of weeks," O'Connell said.

The club uses Lake Somerville for boating activities. The boat acquired boat will be moored at Overlook Marina on Somerville Lake.

The club presently has 21 members for use by its 16 members.

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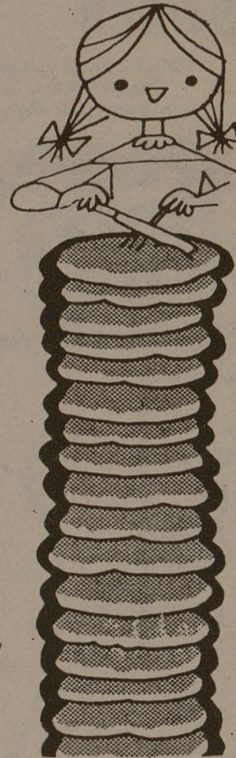
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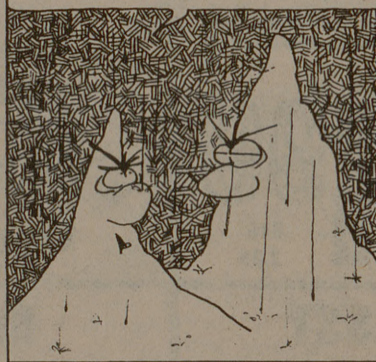
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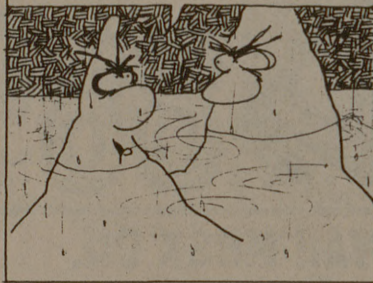
HEY, WAKE UP, STUPID. IT'S RAINING.



IT'S NOT RAIN. IT'S A NEW SPRINKLER SYSTEM.



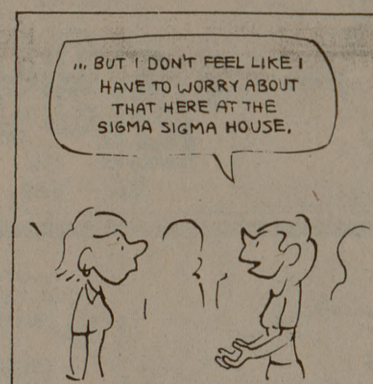
GAD, YOU REALLY ARE STUPID. WE'RE IN THE BOTTOM OF A CAVE! IT'LL FILL UP! WE'LL BOTH DROWN!



YOU'RE HALF RIGHT.



downstown



THE MSC RADIO COMMITTEE will begin Radio Theory and Morse Code classes for the Novice Amateur Radio License on 10 February 1977 in Rm. 402, Rudder Tower at 6:30 p.m. Bring a pencil and paper. For information call Terry Allison 693-1562. Regular Committee Meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. same place.

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