

Arsenio gives it up

Talk show host falls victim to late-night ratings war

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Arsenio Hall is quitting his fading television talk show, which fell victim in ratings and prestige to late-night competitors David Letterman and Jay Leno, sources said Monday.



HALL

Hall has sent a letter to Kerry McCluggage, chairman of Paramount's television group, saying he wants to end "The Arsenio Hall Show," according to a Paramount executive who spoke only on condition of anonymity.

No date for the final show has been determined, the source added. The show debuted Jan. 3, 1989.

Another source close to the nationally syndicated show who also requested anonymity said that Hall planned to quit after the taping of Monday night's show. Telephone calls seeking com-

ment from Paramount, the show's producer, and from Hall were not immediately returned.

Hall's six-year contract was due to expire this December and there had not been any active negotiations with Paramount on renewing the deal, the Paramount executive said.

Paramount was considering pulling the talk show after the May television "sweeps," the Paramount executive said.

Hall was clearly a victim of the late-night wars: his national ratings took a direct hit after Letterman's "Late Show" debuted on CBS last August.

Hall's show no longer seemed hip in comparison to the colorful antics of Letterman and Leno on "The Tonight Show."

And Hollywood's top-ranked stars were no longer making "Arsenio Hall" their first choice on the talk-show circuit.

In January 1993, "Arsenio Hall" posted an average 2.9 rating, according to Nielsen Media Research. A year later, that had dipped 24 percent to 2.2 (with each ratings point representing 942,000 homes).

During that period, the show

was dropped by about 20 of the 184 stations carrying it. In some markets, such as Los Angeles, it was pushed back to a later time slot because of its ratings.

Hall was the replacement host on Fox's "The Late Show" after comedian Joan Rivers left that talk show in the summer of 1987. Even though he proved an instant hit, Hall's 13-week contract was not renewed.

Paramount picked up the ball and launched "The Arsenio Hall Show" against CBS' "The Pat Sajak Show," and Hall quickly trounced the "Wheel of Fortune" emcee.

Hall showcased a variety of young musicians, including up-and-coming rap and rhythm and blues bands. When close friend Magic Johnson announced that he had contracted the AIDS virus, Johnson immediately went on Hall's show to discuss his illness.

As a presidential candidate, Bill Clinton played his saxophone on the show. Hall was criticized recently for inviting Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan.

Hall has appeared in the films "Coming to America" and "Harlem Nights."

Jurors question King's legal fees

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Jurors considering whether to award Rodney King damages for his 1991 police beating asked the judge Monday if they could consider attorneys' fees.

U.S. District Judge John Davies said no. Attorneys said the jurors were obviously concerned about how much of their award would be given to King and how much would go to his lawyers.

Details of King's contingency arrangement with his attorneys is private, but they will be paid a share of any award he receives.

King's lawyers have asked for \$15 million in actual damages and the city has suggested \$800,000 would be appropriate.

The jurors' note came at midmorning on their third full day of deliberations.

"I would assume they're getting pretty close to coming out with a figure," said Deputy City Attorney Don Vincent.

"They probably want to give Rodney King a net figure," said defense attorney Ira Salzman.

Said King's attorney, John Burris: "They're moving along in the right direction. . . . They want to make sure King gets a certain amount."

King's lawsuit is in its first phase, determining how much he should be awarded in compensatory damages.

The city is the sole defendant in the first phase. The city cannot be held liable for punitive damages.

The second phase of the trial will determine punitive damages to be paid by 14 individual defendants including four officers who were charged in King's March 3, 1991, beating and former Police Chief Daryl Gates. Nine other officers who were at the scene are also defendants.

The judge told lawyers Monday to begin gearing up for the second phase and scheduled a conference Tuesday to discuss time estimates and the number of witnesses who will be allowed to testify.

"Time is going to be very short," the judge said.

People in the news

Kathy Ireland stares down shark, escapes unharmed

NEW YORK (AP) — Kathy Ireland is used to people staring at her. A shark, on the other hand, is a different matter.

The swimsuit model says that she was scuba diving at 100 feet in the South Pacific last spring, unarmed and unnoticed by companions, when a shark came at her.

In what she called "the greatest physical challenge of my recent life," she says she held off the killer by staring him down. Another diver eventually shot and killed the shark.

"It was kind of frightening, but it was also exciting," Ireland says in the May-June issue of Fitness magazine. "Maybe I'm sick, but I had no problem diving again. I was upset that the shark got shot."

Roseanne files for divorce after argument with Tom

LOS ANGELES (AP) — TV star Roseanne Arnold filed for divorce today from her husband, Tom, a spokeswoman said.

Papers were filed this morning for Mrs. Arnold, who is out of town, said publicist Jennifer Allen.

The star of the ABC comedy "Roseanne" took the action three days after a shouting match reportedly erupted Friday between the couple on the set of her series. The argument was reported by the trade papers Daily Variety and the Hollywood Reporter.

Tom Arnold is executive producer of "Roseanne" and also stars in his own sitcom, "Tom," on CBS. Allen, of PMK public relations, which also represents Arnold, said they had no comment from him.

The couple were married in January 1990.

According to the Hollywood Reporter, the Arnolds argued over the parameters of a three-way "marriage" to the couple's assistant, Kim Silva. The Arnolds have described the "marriage" as a publicity prank.

Mrs. Arnold fired Silva and changed the locks to the door of the couple's production office, the publications said.

The Hollywood Reporter said Mrs. Arnold also posted a security guard outside to the couple's Brentwood home. Daily Variety said she stationed a guard outside Arnold's office.

"Roseanne" taped the season's final episode on Thursday and the events did not affect taping of a

pilot of "Cherry Street South of Main," a new show produced by the Arnolds, the publications said.

Arnold's series, "Tom," still has four episodes to tape this year. Mrs. Arnold is the show's executive producer, but the Hollywood Reporter said her involvement in the show is minimal.

Mrs. Arnold didn't make a scheduled appearance on a local television news broadcast today. Daily Variety reported that she planned to travel to Europe on vacation.

Toothache forces Tucker to cut performance short

PITTSBURG, Kan. (AP) — A hurtin' tooth took a bite out of Tanya Tucker's concert.

Tucker cut short her Sunday night performance after 30 minutes because of a painful toothache. She apologized to the crowd, got into her tour bus and left Pittsburg.

Several people in the crowd booed. Concert officials did not say whether they'd give refunds.

Robert Haynes, Tucker's tour manager, insisted that Tucker had tried her best to complete the show. "She tried hard," he said. "She doesn't like to disappoint fans at all."

Harding places ad in paper to thank fans for support

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Tonya Harding still has some fans, and she's not letting them go unnoticed.

The fallen figure skater took out a \$480 ad in The Sunday Oregonian sports section with the headline: "Tonya Says Thank You."

"I appreciate the thousands of cards, letters, faxes, gifts and phone calls I have received," the ad reads. "You will always be very special people to me, even if we never met in person."

Harding pleaded guilty last month to hindering prosecution in the Nancy Kerrigan attack and agreed to quit competitive skating. She was fined \$100,000 and put on three years' probation.



HARDING

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