

## Ranger report

A group led by George W. Bush, son of the President, has bought majority control of the Texas Rangers, with Gaylord Broadcasting remaining as minority partner.

Bush and three Texas businessmen bought Eddie Chiles' 58% share of the club for \$46 million. Gaylord, which owns 33% of the club, approved the purchase after failing in its bid to buy the team. Once in 1986, and twice within the past three months Gaylord offered to buy Chiles' portion, but was turned down each time by league owners. Ranger games are carried on Gaylord's KTVT(TV) Dallas-Fort Worth, which is distributed as a regional superstation, a situation that is uncomfortable to league owners and which has doomed Gaylord's purchase each time.

Elsewhere, MLB reached five-year agreements with five teams carried on superstations for additional payments to the league because of their extra reach via cable. The deals begin with the upcoming 1989 season. The two largest payers are believed to be Turner Broadcasting's Atlanta Braves and Tribune Broadcasting's Chicago Cubs, based on their respective reach of 50 million and 25 million homes. Baseball did not release the names of the other three teams, but they are, presumably, the New York Yankees (on Tribune-owned WPIX(TV)), the New York Mets (on MCA-owned WWOR-

TV) and the Rangers.

MLB confirmed that those rights payments, coupled with the money it receives from the Copyright Royalty Tribunal, will average \$30 million for the four years from 1990 to 1993.

## Togetherhness

Telesat and National Cable, two cable operators that have been overbuilding each other in about half of Palm Beach County, Fla., have agreed to combine operations in a joint venture.

The new entity, National Cable Ltd., will be 70% owned, and fully managed, by National, while Telesat will own 30%. Telesat will bring 10,000 subscribers to the operation, while National has 26,000.

The agreement mirrors others Telesat has entered, in which it takes a minority stake in a joint venture with a larger MSO. Talks between Telesat and Colony Communications and Storer for other joint ventures continue.

Harry Cushing, Telesat president, said the company has two new systems ready to launch in Cape Coral and Deltona, Fla., and has filed for franchises in Collier County, and Naples, Fla. Cushing said "nothing could be further from the truth" about reports that Telesat was getting out of the cable business.

Cushing said Telesat has also received some "good offers recently" for some of its SMATV operations, which account for about 30% of the company's

subscribers. The operations are those distant from Telesat's core cable operations, said Cushing, and are "commanding attractive prices."

Don Foster, vice president and general manager of National Cable, said Telesat will be supplying National with subscribers plus headend and cable equipment. Staffs will not be combined, he said, although Telesat staffers will be interviewed for potential openings within National.

All litigation will be dropped pending completion of the deal, which will occur when franchise authorities give their consent.

National's president is J. Leonard Reinsch, former chairman of Cox Communications.

## System ACE nomination

The National Academy of Cable Programming has announced the 159 nominees representing 83 cable systems and 36 MSO's for its 11th annual system ACE award competition. The winners will be honored during the National Cable Television Association's national convention in Dallas on May 23 in a ceremony sponsored by ESPN and Arts & Entertainment.

Suburban Cablevision received eight nominations, followed by Syracuse NewsChannels, with seven. Among MSO's, Continental Cablevision tallied the most, with 21, followed by Cablevision Systems with 17, American Television & Communications with 10 and Maclean Hunter, Newhouse and Cox with 9.

Vying for the overall achievement award in large systems are Cablevision of Norwalk, Conn.; Group W of Chicago; Media General of Fairfax, Va.; Suburban in East Orange, N.J., and Viacom's Long Island system.

## Take a letter

Association of Independent Television Stations President Preston Padden sent two-page letter to FCC Chairman Dennis Patrick urging him to approve GTE request to build experimental fiber optic system capable of transmitting voice and video in Cerritos, Calif. After visit to Cerritos by INTV board members, Padden said, they "concluded that Cerritos project is both unique in concept and modest in scope—a very small purple cow." INTV's support for telco entry in cable is contingent upon telcos being required to carry local broadcasts at no charge to broadcasters and at "minimum base charge" to consumers. Provision of Cable Act of 1984 is principal barrier to telco-cable crossownership.

## On hand

Tele-Communications Inc. again sponsored a VIP reception at the National Conference of Black Mayors in Oakland, Calif., April 5-9. TCI also co-sponsored a dinner during the meeting honoring outstanding black Americans.

### WAES/WROQ (FM)

Charlotte, North Carolina

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**\$8,500,000**

from

**CRB BROADCASTING OF NORTH CAROLINA, INC.**

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