

Audience IQ Given TV Lift

By EVE STARR

HOLLYWOOD — STARR REPORT: Mike Nichols and Elaine May, the sparking new comedy team that made such a hit a few months back and will be seen again in the DuPont "Show of the Month," "The Red Mill," April



19, have a theory that the viewing audience has a collective IQ something above that of a 12-year-old child with the measles.

Their approach to comedy, which is reminiscent of Sid Caesar and and Imogene Coca, takes a good deal of audience understanding for granted. Without the understanding, they're dead. And they're not dead.

"We're not exactly highbrow," says Mike, "but on the other hand we're not one-liners like Milton Berle and we don't do a slapstick. I guess you'd call us improvisational. We take a humorous situation and embellish it. The audience must think in order to get the comedy.

"For instance, one of our routines which we recently did on the 'Steve Allen Show,' is about a certain Chicago disk jockey who is a name dropper of the first water and who is interviewing a Hollywood starlet. This was our first national TV appearance and many people thought the routine was too 'inside' or 'tradey,' and that an audience brought up on Westerns wouldn't get it. They got it. The response was just great and we were immediately booked on the 'Perry Como Show.'

It was Fred Coe, the old NBC and "Philco Playhouse" hand, who signed Mike and Elaine for "The Red Mill." Coe is a knowing soul and is not about to ask these two fresh young talents to do something they innately wouldn't want to do. "There'll be no pie tossing," says Mike. "Mr. Coe has taken us on for what we are and has enough faith in us to let us do the kind of thing we do best. We have Robert Alan Arthur as our writer for this show and Delbert Mann for a director. Who could ask for anything better than that?"

Mike, born in Germany, and Elaine, born in Philadelphia, have been working together for the past two and a half years. Mike is 26, Elaine 25. Mike is married to singer Pat Scott; Elaine is still single. The ubiquitous Desi Arnaz, who sees everything and signs most of it, is already hot after them for a TV film series, and every variety show on the air is trying to book them. After starving half to death in a series of second-rate night clubs, this is a very nice feeling indeed.

"But," says Mike, quite seriously, "we were lucky. You may not eat on that tank-town diet, but you sure learn. It's still the only place in the world where you can get the kind of solid experience a comedians needs."

He's right. And I think this young team is going to emerge in another year or two as one of the hottest items in show business. Show business, for a fact, needs a lot more like them.

BUSINESS IS GETTING so complicated these days that you have to form a brand new corporation just to sell something you've already sold once before. Anyway, that's happened to Roy Rogers, who has formed Empire Productions for the chief purpose of selling some 100 "Roy Rogers" half-hour film originally seen on NBC over a period of six years. Roy will also do a few filmed spectaculars next season, probably as once-a-month substitutes for Dinah Shore, and in between times will be kept busy by his frequent personal appearances.

STARDUST: Don't hold your breath waiting for Jackie Gleason to come back to TV. His "The Honeymooners" is doing very well on its reruns on CBS. The network is still paying him a healthy sum every week on its long-term contract.

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++ Television Highlights ++

Thursday Television Highlights

KOIN-TV (Channel 6):

5:30 p.m.—Armchair Theatre—A travelling salesman keeps a blind date for a budy. Leif Erickson, Barbara Britton co-star in "Say Hello to Pamela."

8:30 p.m.—Shower of Stars (Special)—Jack Benny presents an hour of entertainment with the help of Nanette Fabray, John Raitt and Betty Grable.

9:30 p.m.—Playhouse 90—A wealthy eccentric takes the administration of justice into his own hands. Paul Douglas, Agnes Moorehead, Julie Adams, Patty McCormack and Dennis Weaver star in "The Dungeon."

11:10 p.m.—Showtime on Six—"A Family Affair," starring Lionel Barrymore, Mickey Rooney. A judge is forced to restrain a company which has been bringing prosperity to the community.

KGW-TV (Channel 8):

10:00 a.m.—Morning Movie—"Bad Man of Brimstone." Wallace Beery, Dennis O'Keefe. A penniless prizefighter in the 1830's heads West to make his fortune.

12:30 p.m.—Wanda Wanda—Once there was an "Enchanted Black Cat."

1:00 p.m.—Telerama Movie—"The Feminine Touch." Rosalind Russell, Don Ameche. Collecting material for a book on jealousy proves to be an interesting and somewhat ticklish situation.

8:30 p.m.—The Real McCoys—Circumstantial evidence is against Grampa when he gets a parking ticket and Gramp's talent for stretching the

truth boomerangs when he needs witnesses to his honesty.

9:00 p.m.—Pat Boone Show—Teresa Brewer, "Miss Music" is Pat's guest.

10:45 p.m.—"Sterling Metal"—Robert Young, Maureen O'Sullivan. A shiftless racehorse owner marries the daughter of the town's most influential citizen who opposes him, and she finds herself playing second fiddle to her husband's ambitions.

KPTV (Channel 12):

10:00 a.m.—Stage 12—"Ever Since The Day," starring Robert Stack and Edward Arnold. A comedy of a Korean veteran who sees his dream girl only on a ceiling.

12:00 noon—NBC Matinee Theatre (In Color)—"Found Money." A drunk comes into possession of a large amount of stolen money through a series of accidents.

3:00 p.m.—Your Afternoon Theatre—"One Last Fling," starring Alexis Smith and Zachary Scott. Not happy with being just a housewife, complications ensue when she decides she wants her former job back.

9:30 p.m.—Tennessee Ernie Ford—With Songstress Roberta Sherwood.

10:00 p.m.—The Lux Show (In Color)—Spring Byington guests with Rosemary Clooney.

10:30 p.m.—Academy Theatre—"Personal Affair," starring Gene Tierney, Leo Genn, Glynis Johns, and Pamela Brown. A happily married teacher is accused of the murder of a 17-year-old coed who was known to have had a crush on him.

Friday Television Highlights

KOIN-TV (Channel 6):

5:30 p.m.—Armchair Theatre—Susan Morrow stars in "Ward of the Golden Gate." A beautiful girl grows up never suspecting that her mother was a notorious dance-hall operator.

7:30 p.m.—Zane Grey Theatre—Steve Cochran, James Whitmore star in "Debt of Gratitude." An unpopular marshal faces the enmity of townspeople when he tries to take a popular outlaw to stand trial.

8:30 p.m.—Playhouse of Stars—A star's plans for a vacation are rudely interrupted by a beauty contest. Louis Hayward, Alan Mowbray star in "A Contest of Ladies."

9:00 p.m.—Lineup—An amnesia victim with a bloodstained sleeve turns to the San Francisco police for help.

11:10 p.m.—Showtime on Six—"Blue, White and Perfect," starring Lloyd Nolan and Mary Beth Hughes. Mike Shayne battles smugglers and spies over diamonds.

KGW-TV (Channel 8):

10:00 a.m.—Morning Movie—"Cynthia." Elizabeth Taylor, George Murphy. A pampered daughter's rebellion to the soft life opens her parents eyes to her true condition and to their own marriage.

12:30 p.m.—Wanda Wanda—Tiger is astonished!

1:00 p.m.—Telerama Tintype—Presenting an old-time movie in an old-time setting. "Floradora Girl." Marion Davies, Lawrence Gray. Love hits the chorus line.

3:00 p.m.—Susie—A sable coat given Susie by a wealthy admirer brings on an endless train of woes.

7:00 p.m.—Kingdom of the Sea—A scientific cruise in search of marine knowledge of the deep pho-

tographed a mile below the surface of the ocean.

8:30 p.m.—Portland Beavers vs. Sacramento Solons—Baseball direct from Multnomah Stadium in Portland.

10:40 p.m.—"The Pirate"—Judy Garland and Gene Kelly. A lovely girl dreams of a romantic pirate lover and a strolling player hopes he can make her dreams come true.

KPTV (Channel 12):

10:00 a.m.—Stage 12—"For the Love of Kitty," starring Nancy Olson, Bruce Bennett, and Robert Strauss.

12:00 noon—NBC Matinee Theatre (In Color)—"Washington Whispers Murder." A Congressman is murdered at a Washington house party.

3:00 p.m.—Your Afternoon Theatre—"The Jackie Robinson Story," starring Jackie Robinson, Minor Watson, Ruby Dee, and Richard Lane.

6:30 p.m.—Decoy—"Dressed for the Kill," starring Beverly Garland.

7:00 p.m.—Cavalcade of Sports—with heavyweights Alex Miteff of Argentina and Willi Besmanoff of Germany in a 10-round bout.

8:00 p.m.—Shirley Temple's Storybook—"The Land of Green Ginger," starring Kuldip Singh, Sue England, Joey Faye and Jack Albertson. A musical fantasy of the adventures of the son of Aladdin.

9:00 p.m.—"M" Squad—"Fight," starring Lee Marvin. Promising contender in the middleweight division is weakened by fear when he survives three apparent attempts on his life.

9:30 p.m.—The Thin Man—"The Delinquent," starring Phyllis Kirk and Peter Lawford.

10:00 p.m.—Movie 12—"Crime School," starring Humphrey Bogart and the Dead End Kids.

Saturday Television Highlights

KOIN-TV (Channel 6):

10:55 a.m.—Game of the Week—Milwaukee's Braves meet the Philadelphia Phillies.

1:30 p.m.—Young People's Concert (Special)—With Leonard Bernstein. Topic: "What Makes Music Symphonic?"

4:00 p.m.—Compass—"The Three Brothers." Life in present day Indonesia through three boys.

5:00 p.m.—All Star Golf—Billy Casper meets Paul Harney in final game of series.

6:30 p.m.—Du Pont Show of the Month (Special)—"The Red Mill." Victor Herbert's musical hit, updated. Donald O'Connor, Shirley Jones, Elaine Stritch, Mich Nichols and Elaine May co-star. Harpo Marx and Evelyn Rudie narrate.

8:00 p.m.—High Adventure (In Color, Special)—Lowell Thomas, his crew and 200 native spear-men, hunt for big game in the northeast corner of India.

9:30 p.m.—Death Valley Days—"The Lady With the Silk Umbrella." Intrigue accompanies California's admittance to the Union.

10:05 p.m.—Showtime on Six—"Between Two Worlds," starring John Garfield, Paul Henreid, Faye Emerson, and Eleanor Parker. A ship's crew and passengers voyage into the mysterious and unknown.

KGW-TV (Channel 8):

12:30 p.m.—Telaventure Tales—Story Lady enchants the children with tales from the best literature.

5:00 p.m.—Country Music Jubilee—Tabby West, popular Los Angeles songstress is the guest of Red Foley.

9:00 p.m.—Lawrence Welk—Popular musical hour

featuring the Music Masters.

10:00 p.m.—Mike Wallace Interview—Guest is Gamal Abdel Nasser, President of the United Arab Republic (Interview filmed in Cairo).

11:00 p.m.—"The Search"—Montgomery Clift, Aline MacMahon. A young refugee is befriended by an American GI whose plans to take him back to America are upset by the re-appearance of the boy's long-lost mother.

KPTV (Channel 12):

10:30 a.m.—NBC Major League Baseball—Cleveland Indians vs. Detroit Tigers.

1:30 p.m.—Big Western—"Law West of Tombstone," starring Harry Carey, Tim Holt, and Evelyn Brent.

4:00 p.m.—True Story—"If the Shoe Fits." A girl's fiancé is murdered and her previous suitor is blamed.

6:30 p.m.—Public Defender—"The Deep Ditch." A handy man with an electric rock drill is held for attempted murder.

7:00 p.m.—Damon Runyan Theatre—"The Lace-work Kid," starring Steve Brodie and Gladys Holland.

8:00 p.m.—Perry Como Show (In Color)—Perry's guests include Shirley Booth, George Sanders and Marge and Gower Champion.

9:00 p.m.—Polly Bergen—With Bob Hope.

9:30 p.m.—Tararag Point—"Heroes Never Grow Up," starring Dane Clark, Alex Nicol and Barbara Turner.

10:30 p.m.—Your Hit Parade (In Color)—

11:00 p.m.—Academy Theatre—"Damsel in Distress," starring Fred Astaire, George Burns, Gracie Allen, Joan Fontaine, Ray Noble, and Reginald Gardner.

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