

Programming

THE BUSINESS BEHIND THE SHOW IN BROADCASTING/CABLE

Samples tops at TPE in Cox shuffle

Flanagan moves into consultancy role, Masini forms own company

By Mike Freeman

Completing its acquisition of Los Angeles-based distributor Rysher Entertainment two weeks ago, Cox Enterprises drove in the proverbial "golden spike," installing Rysher's president and founder, Keith Samples, as president and general manager of its Television Program Enterprises syndication division. The move, a subject of speculation for some time *BROADCASTING & CABLE* (Dec. 7, 1992, et seq.), paved the way for Cox to make a series of top-level management moves at TPE and its TeleRep station rep firm.

Under the new management structure, Samples will oversee Rysher's and TPE's programing development, production and sales areas, while the man he replaces, Phil Flanagan, will make the transition to retirement and consultancy for the New York-based distributor by no later than February 1994. (Flanagan, who joined TPE in 1981 as general manager, is credited with leading the growth of TPE into the second-largest barter advertising sales firm in syndication today.)

Al Masini, who founded TeleRep 25 years ago and was the leading creative force behind TPE's long-running syndicated weeklies, *Lifestyles of the Rich & Famous*, *Star Search* and *Runaway with the Rich & Famous*, also formally submitted his resignation to form an independent production company bearing his name, where he will continue producing the above shows in a long-term deal with TPE. Mary Jane Hastings, former vice president/director of operations for TPE, will be joining Al Masini Productions as executive vice president.

Assuming the top spot at TeleRep will be President and General Manager Steve Herson, a 22-year veteran of the New York station rep firm. Her-



Al Masini, Keith Samples and Nick Trigony were all smiles at Cox's announcement of the Rysher purchase at the NATPE convention in San Francisco last January.

son's title remains the same, but he will join Samples in reporting directly to Cox Enterprises' broadcast division president, Nick Trigony.

Although Trigony declined to address the specific financial terms of Cox's buyout of Rysher, competing syndication sources estimated the val-

Bravo gets New Line on films

Bravo has signed a deal with New Line Television giving the cultural cable network access to several independent theatrical films never before seen on television. The deal involves titles from New Line Cinema's specialty division, Fine Line Features, including such features as "My Own Private Idaho," "An Angel at My Table," "Monster in a Box," "Night on Earth," "Waterland," "Hangin' with the Homeboys" and "Glen-garry Glen Ross." About 75% of the titles in the deal will be making their television premiere, according to Robert Friedman, president, New Line Television. The features will be presented as part of a monthly series, *Fine Line Theatre*, hosted by Fine Line President Ira Deutchman. The series, which debuts in September, will also feature interviews with directors and stars of independent films and will update viewers on current Fine Line and other specialty releases.

Bravo has a long tradition in American independent film and already has a weekly showcase, *The Independents*, which airs every Monday night. The network is distributed primarily as a basic cable service and is now available in more than 10 million homes nationally. —RB