

COLOR TV RECEIVER PROVES SIMPLICITY

Preview of C. B. S. Broadcast Shows Converter Is Easy for Anyone to Operate

By JACK GOULD

A "sneak preview" of a live television program in full color was put on the air yesterday morning by the Columbia Broadcasting System as a preliminary to public demonstrations scheduled to start next Tuesday.

The program was tuned in by this writer on the first converter made accessible to the public since the C. B. S. color system was approved by the Federal Communications Commission on Oct. 11.

Operation of the converter, a device that has been one of the major points of controversy in the dispute over color TV, proved to be simplicity itself, certainly no more difficult than tuning in a black-and-white program.

The images had exceptional color fidelity. More than ten pastel shadings were clearly distinguishable. Switching between black-and-white programs on other stations and the C. B. S. telecast left no doubt of the greater appeal of color transmissions.

Yesterday's program was broadcast over WCBS-TV on Channel 2 between 11 and 11:20 A. M. and consisted of first a color test pattern and then scenes of Patty Painter, the model C. B. S. had used in color tests since 1946.

The converter on which the pictures were seen was manufactured by the Tele-tone Radio Corporation, of which S. W. Gross is president. It was set up at the corporation's plant, 540 West Forty-eighth Street, a little less than a mile from the C. B. S. transmission tower atop the Chrysler Building. At the plant the writer was free to make tuning adjustments without the aid of engineers or technicians.

Converted Separate Unit

Unlike the first unattractive converters publicized immediately after the F. C. C. decision, the device used yesterday was a self-contained unit separate from the receiver itself. All the equipment was out of sight and in a table-model cabinet.

The converter, which was roughly twenty inches square, contained its own picture tube, which was of the seven-inch size, but with magnification it was the equal of a ten-inch screen. At next week's demonstrations a sixteen-inch screen will be on view.

Inside the converter was the much-publicized spinning filter disk the C. B. S. system uses to inject the primary television colors of red, blue and green. The electric motor employed to spin the disk, however, was inaudible unless one pressed an ear directly against the side of the cabinet.

Connection of the converter was not difficult and could be done by anyone capable of removing a tube from the back of a set. The video amplifier tube, one of the small peanut tubes, is removed from the set and in its socket is inserted a plug. On top of the plug is a socket in which the original tube is replaced. Wires from the plug lead directly to the converter, which may be placed above, below or near the receiver.

Tuning in the color program involved the following procedure:

The regular receiving set was tuned to Channel 2, where in black-and-white only meaningless jagged lines were visible. After the sound was adjusted, the converter was switched on. The converter took a few minutes to heat up and then the first signs of color became visible. At about the same time the image itself became distinguishable.

There were two controls on the converter. One was a push-button resembling a door bell, which served to bring the colors into synchronization. At most only two gentle taps were necessary to put the colors in their proper places.

The second was a knob similar to the conventional contrast control, which served to achieve proper balance between colors. Actually, it seemed to work more sim-

ply than the contrast control on a black-and-white receiver because, with many different colors, it was easier for the eye to judge the proper contrast than is often the case with only shadings of black and white.

With those two operations the color program was tuned in.

On the screen the color picture had good stability and did not break up during the fifteen minutes Miss Painter was in front of the cameras.

The model wore a blouse with stripes in green, violet, blue and chartreuse. The chair on which she was sitting had a seat in gold with red border on the top of the back. Her hair had a copper hue that contrasted with the more vivid red of her lipstick. In the background was a green-striped drape and another of deep purple.

As Miss Painter turned her head, the softer reds and whites of her complexion were clearly evident.

The test pattern consisted of four black-and-white wedges with the intervening triangles being filled by the colors of green, red, blue and yellow.

While the test pattern was on, Allan Easton, chief engineer of the Tele-tone product engineering department, turned on all the overhead neon lighting and trained a desk lamp directly onto the screen. The color pattern still was clearly visible.

Personal experimentation with the operation of the converter and the receiver to which it was attached showed no difficulty in switching from a black-and-white program to color and vice-versa. With the converter on, for instance, a viewer first could see black-and-white on the regular receiver screen and then, by flipping the receiver's station selector switch, see color on the screen of

Under the C. B. S. system, a color picture cannot be seen in black-and-white on a present set without an adapter, which also is an integral part of the converter. Yesterday the black-and-white image taken off the color signal had obvious loss of definition compared with present monochrome images but was by no means unusable.

Neither Mr. Gross nor Mr. Easton ventured a guess as to what the retail cost of the Tele-tone converter might be. Previous estimates had placed the figure in the neighborhood of \$140.

Next week's demonstrations, which will offer more elaborate programs than yesterday, will be held at the former Tiffany building, 401 Fifth Avenue, near Thirty-seventh Street. The network said yesterday that it had received more

than 20,000 requests for tickets. The first public demonstration will be on Tuesday, with a press preview on Monday.

Meanwhile, the Emerson Radio and Phonograph Corporation announced that it would support the Radio Corporation of America suit to upset the F. C. C. approval of C. B. S. color. The R. C. A. action comes up Tuesday in Federal court in Chicago. Its system of color television was rejected by the commission.

Speedy Hearing Planned

CHICAGO, Nov. 10 (AP)—Federal Judge Philip L. Sullivan promised today a speedy hearing of the fight against the Federal Communications Commission's approval of Columbia Broadcasting System's color TV.

Arguments at Tuesday's hearing will be limited to three hours for each side, he said, "because of the urgency of the matter and there may well be a decision from the bench after arguments."

Three judges will hear the arguments for a temporary injunction preventing C. B. S. from starting color telecasts Nov. 20 and for setting aside the approval order of the F. C. C.

The judges will be Chief Judge J. Earl Major of the United States Circuit Court of Appeals, Chicago; Judge Walter J. LaBuy of the United States District Court, Chicago, and Judge Sullivan, also a district judge.

The three-judge court will permit an appeal of its ruling directly to the United States Supreme Court, circumventing the United States Circuit Court of Appeals.