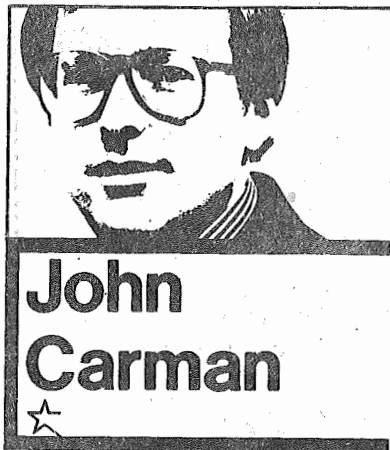


WLOL whistling happy tune over Arbitron ratings



Arbitron phoned the semiannual radio ratings into its Twin Cities clients Thursday morning, provoking the usual ritual of weeping, wailing, shameful regrets and joyous celebration.

At the improbable hour of 10 a.m., or thereabouts, corks flew from inexpensive bottles of domestic champagne over on Davern St. in St. Paul. Celebrants who weren't tied to microphones later adjourned to the Concourse Bar, across the street.

It was a group unaccustomed to riotous war whoops at Arbitron's moment of truth, because WLOL-FM (99.5) customarily rides out the ratings in the middle lane. But suddenly, Arbitron has conferred powerhouse status on the radio station.

For the spring ratings period extending from March 19 to June 9, WLOL-FM didn't just have a good book. It practically accomplished a miracle, better than doubling its ratings and

sputtering into third place in the roster of local radio stations.

The station that used to call itself "almost perfect" jumped from a 4.2 percent share of the audience last fall to a perfect 10 percent share of the audience this spring. WLOL-FM now trails only WCCO-AM (830) and KSTP-FM (94.5), both of which experienced rating declines.

"It's the largest increase that I know of anyone having in this market in one (ratings) book," said a jubilant Doyle Rose, general manager of the station and a man who expressed a hope only two months ago that the spring ratings would save his job for another six months.

Rose attributed the gain to a format change in December. That's when WLOL-FM stopped sounding like a lesser version of KSTP-FM and started broadcasting its FM version of the old top-40 rock radio. The hope was to siphon some of the more excitable listeners away from adult-contemporary KSTP-FM and to pick up others from the harder-driving KQRS-FM (92.5) and KDWB-FM (101.3).

WLOL-FM sweetened its format revision by playing songs in batches of 10 at a time, without commercial interruptions. Rose also persuaded his overlords at the Liggett Broadcast Group to pump more money into promotion. He concentrated on hyping the morning drive-time team of John Hines and Bob Berglund, whose likenesses were splashed on billboards around the Twin Cities.

The early evidence is that the plan was a bigger success than Rose could have imagined. KSTP-FM and the



Staff Photo by Chuck Bjorgen

Doyle Rose, general manager of WLOL-FM, and disk jockey Bob Berglund celebrated their new Arbitron ratings with champagne.

KQRS and KDWB AM-FM combinations lost a total 4.7 share of the audience—most of it from KSTP and KQRS—seemingly accounting for most of WLOL-FM's gain. Hines (rebounding from an ill-fated television experience on "Twin Cities Today") and Berglund tripled the station's morning drive-time ratings.

And Rose was rubbing his hands over the prospect of big increases in WLOL-FM's advertising rates. Arbitron's numbers translate into dollars, and the size of WLOL-FM's ratings jump should mean well over \$1 million to the station.

Other trends in the radio ratings:

■ WCCO-AM, with a 20 percent share of the audience, fell below its 20.2 audience share last spring. Promotion director Jon Quick blamed the ratings on the poor performance of the Minnesota Twins, whose games are broadcast on WCCO-AM.

■ WDGY-AM (1130) held its own against country-music competition from the FM band's KJJO-FM (104). In fact, WDGY-AM rose from a 6.4 share last fall to a healthy 8.5 share.

■ The easy-listening format continued its decline at KEEY-FM (102.1) and WAYL-FM (93.7), with WAYL-FM showing the biggest drop.

■ Jazz station KTWN-FM (107.9) of Anoka remains among the also-rans in the overall ratings, but registered its best audience share (1.6) in memory. Last fall, it averaged only six-tenths of 1 percent of the audience.

The following chart compares shares of the average, quarter-hour audience during the spring rating period to last fall's ratings. A "share" means the percentage of the audience listening to the radio.

	Spring 1982	Fall 1981
WCCO-AM	20.0	22.9
KSTP-FM	12.2	14.8
WLOL-FM	10.0	4.2
WDGY-AM	8.5	6.4

KDWB-FM	6.0	6.6
KQRS-FM	4.6	6.0
WCCO-FM	4.4	4.4
KEEY-FM	4.1	4.2
WAYL-FM	3.2	4.1
KSTP-AM	3.1	3.3
WWTC-AM	2.3	2.5
KJJO-FM	2.0	1.8
KDWB-AM	2.0	1.8
KTWN-FM	1.6	.9
KTCR-FM	1.1	1.6
WMIN-AM	1.0	.9
KRSI-AM	.7	1.0
KLBB-AM	.6	.3
KTCR-AM	.5	---
KQRS-AM	.5	.8