

# Sports Day

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## Veteran producer to handle SWC basketball tournament



**CATHY HARASTA**

TV/RADIO

Raycom's production of the SWC Post-Season Classic this weekend — seven games in three days, all live on Channel 11 — ought to be in good hands.

Raycom executive producer Don McGuire, who will preside over the SWC tournament coverage, has four NCAA Basketball Tournament finals under his belt from his days at NBC.

"The hardest thing is the time to fill between the games," McGuire says. "It's like a rain delay in baseball. The game itself is not a problem."

McGuire says he is prepared to fill the half-hours between games. He has 19 1-hour reels of "support material" — which includes features, slow-mos, animations and commercials. That's more than 11 miles of tape.

Merle Harmon has a busy weekend coming up. He will announce five of those 7 tournament games.

### Don McGuire

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

**Don McGuire** is a television sports executive. He was executive producer at Turner Sports' TBS and TNT,<sup>[1]</sup> Raycom Sports, and The Golf Channel.

He has won multiple Emmy awards and was responsible for the startup of Raycom Sports in 1983 and the fast growth of Ted Turner's sports operations from 1987-1995. He served as executive producer at the Golf Channel from 1999-2000 and was senior vice president for programming and production at the Golf Channel when the channel became the exclusive cable outlet for the LPGA and PGA Tour.

### Career

#### ABC Sports

McGuire started his career as an announcer on radio in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He was discovered by Dick Ebersol while Ebersol was at ABC Sports in 1974 and was one of three finalists for ABC's NCAA Football sideline reporter position, eventually given to Jim Lampley and Don Tollefson.

#### NBC Sports and Raycom Sports

McGuire joined NBC Sports in 1978, hired by executive producer Don Ohlmeyer to both produce and be talent on Olympic features for the 1980 Moscow Olympics<sup>[2]</sup> McGuire soon became producer of studio shows for NBC including NCAA basketball and NFL 78 and 79, hosted by Bryant Gumbel McGuire left NBC after that network lost TV rights to the NCAA Basketball Championships<sup>[3]</sup> but was the feature producer in 1979 on the highest-rated college game ever, the Magic Johnson versus Larry Bird championship between Michigan State and Indiana State. McGuire is featured in Seth Davis' new book "When March Went Mad" about the Bird/Johnson game in 1979. He was coordinating producer for the 1979 US Olympic Festival and all the 1980 US Olympic Trials events.

McGuire helped start Raycom Sports in 1983 producing hundreds of college football and basketball games yearly for syndication.

#### Turner Sports

In 1987, he was hired by Robert Wussler to be executive producer of TBS Sports. He was executive producer on the 1992 and 1994 Winter Olympics,<sup>[4]</sup> the 1991 Pan American Games from Havana, Cuba,<sup>[5]</sup> the 1990 World Cup from Italy and the 1994 Goodwill Games from St Petersburg Russia. Under McGuire's operational direction Turner Sports added the NBA, NFL, PGA and Grand Slam Golf. He was senior executive for sports on the launch of TNT and in the launch of SportSouth.

He was the executive who first hired Doug Collins, Hubie Brown, Chuck Daly, Don Sutton, Ernie Johnson, Jr, Magic Johnson and Charles Barkley at TNT.

McGuire consulted to Golf Channel founder Joe Gibbs in 1995 on the launch of that network and subsequently served as executive producer and later senior vice president for programming, production and operations until the network was taken over by Comcast.