

Raycom a year older and a radio division larger

Raycom Sports, which started out with two people and has grown into a \$40 million operation, celebrates its 10th anniversary this week. Raycom syndicates various sports packages.

And, as part of its expansion, Raycom last week moved into radio with the creation of the Raycom Radio Division, under the direction of Rick Shaw. The division will handle the 50-station University of Illinois football and basketball networks, as well as the 40-station Purdue sports network.

"This division really has unlimited potential," said Shaw, who was associated with the Kentucky sports network for 20 years. "We're interested in adding other college networks, of course, but we're also considering professional football and basketball and other sports in the future."

Shaw said there won't be any changes on the Illini radio network this year, with WLS-AM (890) still the Chicago outlet, and Dick Martin and Stan Wallace doing football and Jim Turpin and Loren Tate on basketball.

"We're keeping an office in Champaign," Shaw said, "as well as one in West Lafayette."

Like all great things, Raycom began out of necessity. With no one scheduled to telecast the Great Alaska Shootout in 1979, Rick Ray and his future wife, Dee, negotiated to beam the basketball tournament back to North Carolina. The rest, as they say, is history.

Raycom moved into the Big 10 when it took over Rasmussen Communications in the middle of last year. Raycom eventually landed exclusive rights to all non-network conference basketball games through 1995.



**Steve
Nidetz**

On TV/radio sports