COMPATIBLE COLOR APPROVED FOR TV

F.C.C. Reverses Itself—Signal Receivable on Present Sets in Black and White

By JACK GOULD

A system of color television that can be received in black and white on the 27,000,000 existing sets was approved last night by the Federal Communications Commission in Washington.

Within an hour after the announcement the Columbia Broadcasting System was on the air with a special variety show in color. Minutes later the National Broadcasting Company offered a presentation from its color studio.

Regular transmission of commercial programs in color, however, will not begin for approximately forty days. The F.C.C. approval becomes effective thirty days after its publication in the Federal Register, the Government bulletin. Publication is expected next week.

Officials of C.B.S. and N.B.C. said they planned to rotate "color premières" of their major night programs in the next few months.

Manufacturers immediately planned to tool up for the production of color receivers within perhaps six to nine months. Initial sets, with a fourteen-inch screen, will cost from $700 to $1,000.

The total volume of color sets to be expected during 1954 has been variously estimated from a "trickle" of units to perhaps a hundred thousand.

The F.C.C. action came as a severe blow to television retailers, whose trade organizations had asked the commission to hold off...