

Shoot's accent a plus

MONTREAL – Lower ratings in English Canada come as no surprise to Claude Héroux, producer of *Lance et Compte (He Shoots, He Scores)*, a dramatic series about a young hockey player's rise to stardom – the most ambitious and expensive television series ever produced in Quebec.

The success of the 13-part series on Radio-Canada with a quarter-hour average of 2,148,000 viewers (Nov. 11, episode 9) and relative success with CBC's English-language version (1,200,000 viewers for the same episode) has assured the shooting of a second 13-part series to begin Jan. 5 in Switzerland.

For the first series, Héroux had filmed both a French version and an English version, but had dubbed those characters whose French accents were considered too pronounced for an English audience. This time around, Héroux has decided not to dub for English-language consumption and rely strictly on language coaches and the ability of his principal actors to speak the English language.

Héroux's decision was prompted in part by a sudden rise in the ratings for episode 9 which was the first English program broadcast undubbed.

Episode 8 had attracted 770,000 viewers in English Canada.

He told *Cinema Canada* that it did not take long to realize that something was lost in the translation of the series and that English-language viewers were dissatisfied.

"The translation was stilted. We were unable to capture the street-level ambience," says Héroux.

However, Héroux adds that the English-language ratings, averaging just under the 1 million mark for the first nine episodes, look much better when one considers that CTV carries the popular *Moonlighting* (CBS) in the competing 9 p.m. slot on Tuesdays.

"Ratings on the English side are never as high unless you have something like *Anne of Green Gables*," says Héroux.

Suggestions that CBC take a lesson from Radio-Canada and move the series to an 8 p.m. slot do not rest well with Héroux who replies that he would not want to tone down the sometimes gritty, locker-room style of the show for a potentially larger and younger audience.

The second series, budgeted at \$11,500,000, will be aired in January 1988 for 13 weeks. Richard Martin, a veteran di-

Quebec labor troubles near end?

MONTREAL – There is a difference of opinion among the executive members of the Syndicat des techniciennes et des techniciens du cinéma du Québec (STCQ) as to whether a collective agreement is necessary with the Association des producteurs de films et de vidéo du Québec (APFVQ).

François Leclerc, president of the 700-member technicians union, says that although the board is divided on this question as a result of discontinued contract negotiations with the APFVQ, the general membership will decide the outcome in an ongoing referendum.

At presstime, Leclerc told *Cinema Canada* that the results were flowing back to the union office on St. Denis Street and that the union's position

rector at Radio-Canada, will direct the new series written by Réjean Tremblay and Jacques Jacob. Foreign shoots will include locations in Switzerland, Finland and France.

The new series is produced in association with O'Keefe Breweries Ltd, Ultramar, Radio-Canada, CBC, Société-Nationale de Télévision Française (TF-1), Telefilm Canada and La Télévision Suisse Romande (SSR).

would be clear by mid-December on whether or not to accept the producer's final offer.

"If we do not sign an agreement we will negotiate with each producer and stick to a strict code of ethics," says Leclerc, who personally favors using a collective agreement as a means of guaranteed negotiating strength.

Leclerc explains that the referendum question asking whether or not the final offer is acceptable is clear and straight-forward. A preamble outlines the historical facts leading to the referendum and explains the consequences of either an overall yes or no vote.

The union has been without a renewed collective agreement since 1979. A series of negotiations between new executive committees on both sides of the table since the early summer had resulted in an agreement on all but 17 wage positions.

A decision by the STCQ committee to renegotiate all 56 wage positions forced the producers to deliver an ultimatum to either accept a final offer based on an August 1985 wage agreement or to consider

the agreement annulled, said the producers.

Responding to suggestions by the producers that a majority of technicians were in favor of signing the collective agreement prior to the last negotiation meeting on Nov. 10, Leclerc says there was no doubt that a minority of technicians were unsatisfied.

"We only had a minority of positions left to agree upon," says Leclerc, who explains that the wages offered were not compatible with an STCQ wage scale mandate (Oct. 21, 1986).

"I am not against the content of the agreement," says Leclerc who supports the use of a collective agreement but who will vote against accepting the final offer in the referendum.

"The producers have no right to decide what our pay scale will be. This is what I am against and I will vote on principle," says Leclerc.

Louise Baillargeon, executive director of the APFVQ, says that should the results of the referendum favor the producers' final offer, a general assembly could be held as soon as Jan. 5 to determine whether to, once again, recognize the union and sign the agreement.

From usher to V.P., Dillon climbs the ranks

TORONTO – Famous Players Limited has appointed a veteran employee, who started work at the Canadian theatre chain as a part-time movie usher, senior vice-president.

Gerry Dillon was appointed senior vice-president after working in a variety of jobs for Famous Players. He joined the company 41 years ago as a part-time usher at the Imperial theatre in Ottawa.

In 1951, Dillon moved to Toronto to help with the start up of Famous Players' drive-in theatre operations, which as a press release notes, was one of the company's major growth areas at the time.

Later he worked for Theatre Confections Ltd., a subsidiary of Famous Players, as a branch manager, general manager and vice-president.

In 1979 Dillon returned to Famous Players' corporate division as vice-president and general manager.

Walter Senior, chairman of Famous Players, made the announcement of Dillon's appointment in December.



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