

MSG Scores Highest Regular Season Ratings Ever With Past Two Knicks Games

Friday's 7.32 Nielsen Household Rating and Monday Night's 7.34 Preliminary Nielsen Household Rating Set All-Time Highs for Any Regular Season Game on MSG

Friday's Telecast was the Third-Highest Rated Program in New York During Primetime

Both Telecasts were the Highest-Rated Events on MSG Since Game 6 of the 2000 Eastern Conference Semifinals (7.85 HH)

Knicks' Average Household Rating Up 138% in the Seven Games on MSG that Jeremy Lin Has Started (does not include Monday night's game)



NEW YORK, Feb. 22, 2012 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- The last two Knicks telecasts — Friday, February 17 vs. the Hornets and Monday, February 20 vs. the Nets — are the highest-rated regular season events on MSG since the network began tracking household ratings at the start of the 1988-89 NBA season. Friday night's telecast scored a 7.32 Nielsen household rating (540,788 households) and was then topped Monday night when the telecast garnered a 7.34 preliminary Nielsen household rating (542,265 households). The P2+ rating, which measures the number of viewers over the age of two, registered a 3.83 (747,627 total viewers) on Friday night and a preliminary 4.01 (782,764 total viewers) Monday night.

NOTE: Monday night's ratings will not be finalized by Nielsen until later today.

The two telecasts peaked with quarter-hour high ratings of 10.02 HH (740,259 households) and 5.22 P2+ (1,018,959 total viewers) between 10:15 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. on Friday night, and 9.02 preliminary HH (666,380 households) and 4.80 preliminary P2+ (936,974 total viewers) between 9:45 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. Monday night.

In the New York market on Friday night during primetime (7:00 p.m. — 11:00 p.m.), only ABC's "20/20" (7.87 HH) and CBS's "Blue Bloods" (7.33) beat the Knicks telecast on MSG. Both Friday and Monday night's telecasts outperformed the average rating of every local network broadcast during their time periods. Friday night's game between 8:00 p.m. and 10:45 p.m. topped ABC (6.43 HH), CBS (6.14 HH), NBC (3.20 HH) and FOX (1.68 HH), while Monday night's game between 7:30 p.m. and 10:15 p.m. preliminarily beat out NBC (7.06 HH), ABC (5.40 HH), CBS (6.56 HH) and FOX (3.19 HH).

"This is a basketball town and the Knicks' recent performance, combined with Jeremy Lin's compelling story, has created unparalleled demand for these games," said Michael Bair, president, MSG Media. "With the Rangers in first place and the Giants coming off a Super Bowl win, this is a golden time for New York sports fans."

Both telecasts topped the previous regular season high of a 6.78 household rating, which occurred 17 years ago with Michael Jordan's famous "Double Nickel" game on March 28, 1995 when Jordan scored 55 points in his return to Madison Square Garden after his first NBA retirement. Including playoff games, this weekend's two telecasts were the highest-rated events on MSG since Game 6 of the 2000 Eastern Conference Semifinals when the Knicks defeated the Heat 72-70 at Madison Square Garden (7.85 HH). The highest-rated event ever on MSG was Game 7 of the 1994 Stanley Cup Finals, which delivered a 16.18 household rating.

Through the seven games (not including Monday night) on MSG in which Lin has been the starting point guard, the Knicks' average household rating has increased 138% (4.30 HH; 317,676 households) compared to the previous 20 games (1.81 HH; 133,719 households). With Lin in the starting lineup, the team has scored household ratings of 7.32 HH (February 17 vs. New Orleans), 5.78 HH (February 15 vs. Sacramento), 4.66 HH (February 14 at Toronto), 4.17 HH (February 11 at Minnesota), 3.05 HH (February 10 vs. Los Angeles), 2.41 HH (February 8 at Washington), and 2.68 HH (February 6 vs. Utah).

Lin's presence in the starting lineup has also spurred a 82% increase in the average season-to-date household rating compared to the first 27 games on MSG Network last season (2.46 HH vs. 1.35 HH; 181,740 households vs. 101,457 households). The seven games in which Lin has started also represents a 75% increase over the average season-to-date household rating (4.30 HH vs. 2.46 HH; 317,676 households vs. 181,740 households).

The Knicks face the Atlanta Hawks tonight at Madison Square Garden for a 7:30 p.m. matchup on MSG. Coverage starts at 7:00 p.m. with "Visa Knicks Game Night" and continues immediately after the game with the "Ford Knicks Post-Game Show."

As the exclusive local television home of the New York Knicks, New York Rangers, Buffalo Sabres, New York Islanders, New Jersey Devils, New York Liberty and New York Red Bulls, MSG Networks telecasts nearly 700 live professional games per year. MSG Networks also telecasts 150 live college basketball games and 50 live college football games from top national conferences (SEC, Pac 12, Big 12), as well as other award-winning original programming. MSG Networks has won 63 New York Emmy Awards over the last four years, more than any New York station or network.

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The MSG Network logo is available at <http://www.globenewswire.com/newsroom/prs/?pkgid=8084>

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