



Disorderly screening

THE FOLLOWING REQUEST CAME from long-standing subscriber **Paul Amgwers**, who seeks our help in solving a poser which has baffled scholars and fans alike. Intended for the *FanFare* column, some of the things Paul has to say make for interesting reading—hence my reasons for featuring his words here.

Know the answers to part A? Or have any thoughts on Paul's other observations? Mail your replies to me and I'll remit them to Paul together with my own comments.

I am writing to ask if you or any of your readers can assist me in compiling a list of the true running order of *The New Avengers* episodes as originally screened by Granada—North West in 1976 and 1977.

My diaries and records of the time are not as thorough as I would have liked, so I am wondering if anyone out there can help to plug the gaps. The titles I have appear to follow the same pattern as that shown in your book *The Avengers Anew* but I am yet to be convinced that the remaining episodes conform to that list.

Granada screened the first season on Fridays at 8pm and the second season on Thursdays at 8pm.

| A | First season |
|---------------|-------------------------------|
| 22 Oct '76 | The Eagles' Nest |
| 29 Oct '76 | House of Cards |
| 5 Nov '76 | The Last of the Cybemauts...? |
| 12 Nov '76 | ? |
| 19 Nov '76 | Cat Amongst the Pigeons |
| 26 Nov '76 | Target |
| 3 Dec '76 | ? |
| 10 Dec '76 | ? |
| 17 Dec '76 | ? |
| 24 Dec '76 | no episode shown |
| 31 Dec '76 | no episode shown |
| 7 Jan '77 | Sleeper |
| 14 Jan '77 | ? |
| 21 Jan '77 | ? |
| 28 Jan '77 | Gnaws |
| Second season | |
| 8 Sep '77 | Dead Men are Dangerous |
| 15 Sep '77 | Angels of Death |
| 22 Sep '77 | Medium Rare |
| 29 Sep '77 | The Lion and the Unicorn |
| 6 Oct '77 | Obsession |
| 13 Oct '77 | Trap |
| 20 Oct '77 | no episode shown |
| 27 Oct '77 | K is for Kill Pt. 1 |
| 3 Nov '77 | K is for Kill Pt. 2 |
| 10 Nov '77 | ? |
| 17 Nov '77 | ? |
| 24 Nov '77 | ? |
| 1 Dec '77 | ? |
| 8 Dec '77 | The Gladiators |

The TV Times advertised "Forward Base" for 17 Nov 77 but there was a last minute substitute. "Emily" was advertised for 24 Nov but here again I believe there was a change.

We are forever reading how the ITV networks hampered the success of *The New Avengers* by screening them on different days and in various random order. Perhaps other readers may care to contribute the original listings for other ITV regions, if they should happen to know them. Documented, the dates and episodes shown do make for an interesting comparison.

For instance, I had an aerial trained on HTV West Wales in '76 so I saw two bits of *The New Avengers* each week. The running order for some of the following titles might be in error, but as far as my old records show, HTV's listings worked something like this for Sunday evenings at 7.55pm:

| | First season |
|------------|-------------------------------|
| 17 Oct '76 | The Eagle's Nest |
| 24 Oct '77 | The Midas Touch |
| 31 Oct '77 | Cat Amongst the Pigeons |
| 7 Nov '77 | House of Cards |
| 14 Nov '77 | The Last of the Cybemauts...? |
| 28 Nov '77 | To Catch a Rat |
| 5 Dec '77 | The Three-Handed Game |
| 12 Dec '77 | Sleeper |

- 19 Dec 77 *Dirty by the Dawn*
- 9 Jan 77 *Targit*
- 6 Mar 77 *Gnaws*
- 13 Mar 77 *Paces*
- 20 Mar 77 *no episode shown*
- 27 Mar 77 *The Tale of the Big Why*

One point of interest I can vouch for is that due to a thunder storm, affecting the HTV Moel-y-Pare transmitter on 17 Oct 77, 'The Eagle's Nest' was not actually shown! You can imagine my disappointment, as I had hoped to see this new show five days ahead of the rest of the UK. In fact, if my information is correct, the episode of HTV West Wales didn't get to see 'The Eagle's Nest' until Sunday 5th April 1981.

Much as I would like to have it, I'm afraid I don't have a listing for the second season on HTV but I can confirm that each episode was trimmed by about fifteen seconds on first showing.

Have's book *The Ultimate Avengers* provides us with the production order chronology of *The New Avengers*. Is there any chance we could have the actual dates for the start and finish of the making of each episode?

B - Here are some sundry notes of interest to keep in mind during future screenings of the Avengers, old and new:

Both, 'Forward Base' and 'Emily' carry the credit 'produced by Hugh Marlow and Jim Hanley' (not Marlow and Handley as stated in *The Ultimate Avengers*). 'Complex' carried the Fennell/Clemens credit throughout screenings during the '80s, but the most recent prints now acknowledge Hugh Marlow and Ross McLean as the producers.

Extra Emma

'K is for Kill' (part one) is memorable for containing a couple of clips of Emma Peel, but from where did they originate? Dave's books tell us that it was unused film footage, whilst Cornell, Day and Topping in their *The Avengers Dossier* say: 'Footage of Diana Rigg from *The Winged Avenger* and *'From Venus With Love'* was used.' My verdict: The scenes come from *'The Winged Avenger'* and *'The Hidden Tiger'*, respectively. Logie suggests that Diana Rigg must have visited the studios at Pinewood to do the voice-over for the telephone scenes. It's a wonder she didn't consent to do the filmed inserts in person and take a credit as guest star. I also doubt that the scenes with Steed telephoning Emma - complete with the Bentley in the background - are 'unused' '60s footage. Patrick Macnee stands with his back to the camera throughout, obviously to hide the passing of age. I am of the opinion that these scenes were shot for 'K is for Kill' in 1977.²

The book *The Avengers Dossier* uncovers several, previously uncredited members of *The New Avengers* cast. For example, in *'The Eagle's Nest'* we find: Sammie Winmill as 'Molly'; Maggy Maxwell as 'Dowager' and Raymond Mason as 'man with suitcase'. 'Molly' is probably the young woman seen polishing glasses behind the bar of the inn; glimpsed moments before Steed's imminent arrival on the island. The 'man with suitcase' is likely to be the henchman seen rifling

Steed's belongings. I thought I knew 'The Eagle's Nest' inside-out, but I'm not sure where the 'Dowager' fits in!

Another noncredit, that persists, is Analka Dubinska as 'pretty girl' in 'Gnaws'. Other than Purdey no other female appears in that episode!

Matty years ago I saw a photo of Purdey fighting a bald headed man with a droopy moustache, in what looked like a quarry for a background. Purdey's clothing and the balding, moustacheed man suggested a scene from 'Hostage.' Yet, the implied location doesn't appear in the finished episode. Could it be that scenes were shot and then later edited out, perhaps to prevent over-running?

Another (possible) alteration to the script during filming is to be found in 'Paces'. Having put pay to the villain wielding a bow and arrow, Purdey finds on his person a piece of card. Watch carefully as she removes it from his pocket. As the light shines on the card we can see through it and for a split second it becomes evident that she is actually holding a photograph of herself. Then the camera

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takes a different close-up angle and the photo has mysteriously changed to a card reading 'Mission for the Dressed and Needy.' This change of prop could indicate a radical turn-around in the storyline. In fact, according to *The Avengers Dossier*, Brian Clemens commenced writing the script, hit writers block half way through and handed the story over to Dennis Spooner to complete.

New Alternatives?

Perhaps if the facts could be laid bare we might find that there were all kinds of alternative ideas in preparation for *The New Avengers*. With the Canadian episodes, for instance, there was press talk about a Toronto Star delivery van with 'human characteristics' and locations such as Niagara Falls providing the scenery. Of course neither of these elements came to pass.⁴

Last minute script changes were definitely in evidence during the Rigg and Thorson seasons. According to the credits, Penelope Keith plays 'Nanny Brown' in 'Something Nasty in the Nursery'. Has anyone ever spotted her in this episode? No doubt the same cutting room fate befell actor David Lodge, (remember him as the policeman in 'Epic'). He was credited as 'Maskel' in the episode 'Fog', yet he is nowhere to be seen!⁵

Finally a cut of the most unkind kind, concerning 'Fog'. We were led to believe that Lamiere had rejuvenated the prints 100% intact. The C4 print however, has a cut of about 20 seconds, during the final scene between Steed and the dying 'President' (Nigel Green). Is this sequence now lost forever or were Channel 4 solely responsible for the cut?

I hope the above is of some use to you, and my quest to learn the facts about the Granada schedules will be forthcoming.

I wish you and your team success with all future issues of *Stay Tuned*. It's a favourite magazine of mine.

Dave Says...

1. I'm working on this. Have been for quite some time. Trouble is, MRJ's production records are spread thinly between two locations and a're the twain shall meet. I do have some production dates. To make you privy to these until I locate unquestionable details for all 26 episodes would only serve to complicate matters.
2. The footage of Diana Rigg may well have originated from existing footage (shot for the episodes mentioned by Cornell, Day & Topping - or indeed, your suggestions). Twenty years-plus down the line, I guess we'll never know the answer. Logie is all very well but - Diana Rigg did NOT visit the studio to do the voice-over for the telephone scenes (at least, her name does not appear on any production info I've laid eyes on - as it MUST have done had she condescended to do the dialogue). An impressionist, perhaps? Someone who captured Rigg's voice to a T. It's a possibility - but I can't give you a definitive answer. As for Steed and the Bentley: Yes, indeed. The material was filmed in the Seventies.
3. The names listed in *The Avengers Dossier* are (I suggest) the result of some keen-eyed observation on the authors' part. 'The Dowager' character remains a mystery.
4. The pic is almost certainly from 'Hostage' and was no doubt edited from the episode for the reason you give.
5. The Niagara Falls sequence WAS scripted. But permission to film this was (I understand) refused by the authorities. (Shame, really. They might have asked the Canadian director to double for Gambit when he took the plunge over the Falls - thereby saving us from further misery!)
6. Fact. Penelope Keith did two days work on the episode (as a nanny). David Lodge visited the studio on three occasions during the filming of 'Fog'. Both sequences were left on the cutting room floor.
7. Certainly the master-elements processed by Lamiere were (are) 100% intact, as governed by the original negatives. So, yes. Channel 4 might well have trimmed this for reasons best known to themselves.