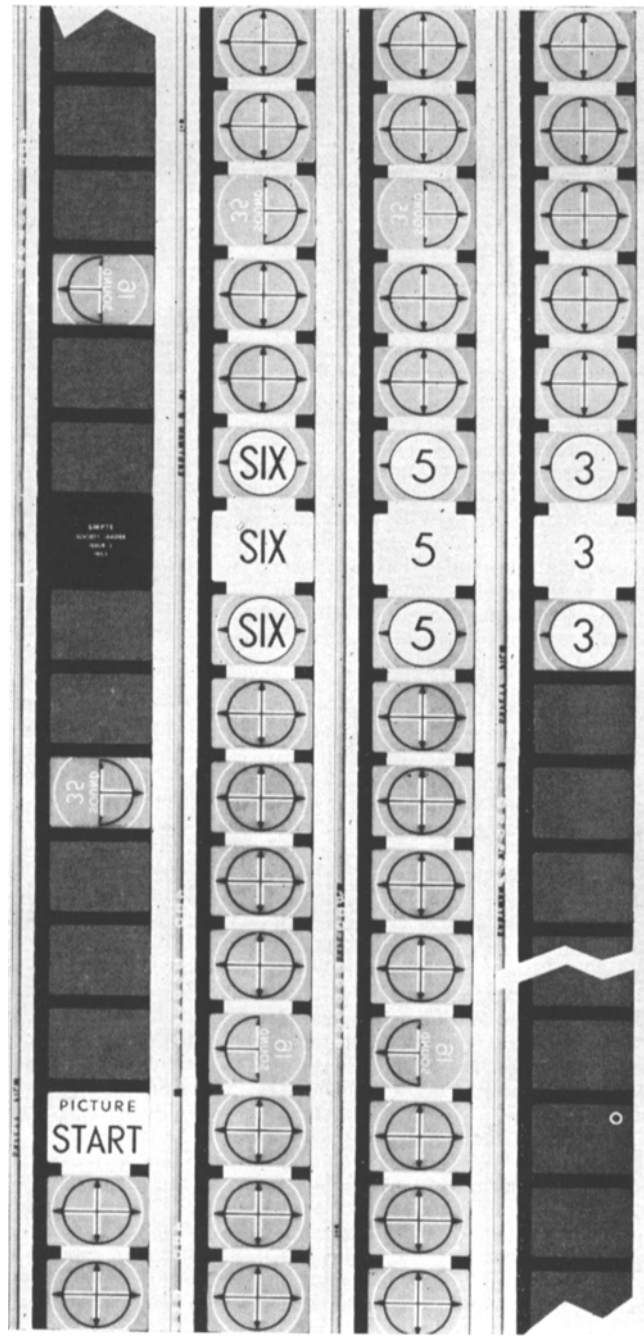
Threading Leaders for TV Films

THE FIRST negative of this leader, made in 1951, had, through a mistake, a rather dense bar running horizontally through the center of the frames which follow No. 3. Although many thousands of prints have been produced since that black bar was eliminated, there are still in use some master positives or dupe negatives of the leader, showing this bar. They should be disposed of and replaced with either 45 to 50 frames of black film (clear in the negative) or with a new leader. The latter is preferable because those trailing frames were intended to have a density of about 1.6 as a concession to improved performance with iconoscope film chains. Black film of high density is less satisfactory for television reproduction.

Since its introduction by the Society early in 1951, the film leader shown here has become a trusted friend of television projectionists in all stations in the United States. It is familiar to all producers of commercial films and to all laboratories. It serves as a threading guide and because the sequence of numbers, as well as the spacing between them, is operationally similar to the familiar "academy" leader previously used on all theatre prints, its essential details comply with American Standard Z22.55-1947, last published in the March 1948 *Journal*.

Fine grain master positives of this leader have long been available from SMPTE headquarters. They come three to a roll in continuous length, $5.00 in 35 mm, $2.00 in 16mm. Dupe negatives of this leader are frequently spliced to the picture printing negative for commercial films so that resulting projection copies have their own leaders attached, or prints from dupe negatives of this leader are spliced to the head ends of assembled rolls of television film to be integrated into live television programs. It is important that the switching cue — the little round circle that appears 40 frames after the No. 3 — not be lost through repeated splicings. If it must be chopped off, some other recognizable cue should be substituted so that the video control engineer or technical director will not find himself without the usual switching cue.