

SPORTS NEWS & NOTES

Big Ten Fans Get A Television Network To Call Their Own

(NAPSA)—No matter what your obsession is—whether it's knitting, animation, pets, ethnic cooking or kayaking—chances are you can find a television channel that corresponds to your interest.

Sports programming in particular, with the introduction of channels that feature golf, soccer, hunting and fishing, continues to grow in popularity.

Now, fans of the Big Ten—the oldest and one of the most prestigious Division I college athletic conferences in the country—will join the club. They will have a television network they can call their own.

Called the Big Ten Network, the channel will offer:

- More than 35 conference football games this season
- At least two games aired from each school (at least one of which will be a conference game)
- More than 105 regular season men's basketball games
- More than 55 regular season women's basketball games
- Big Ten championship events
- Archived Big Ten events
- More than 170 NCAA championship sporting events; and
- Coaches' shows.

The channel will also carry more than 600 hours of school-produced programming—approximately 60 hours per institution—dedicated to topics other than sports, covering the most creative, entertaining and interesting features of members' programs, including alumni.



Fans of the oldest and one of the most prestigious Division I college athletic conferences in the country now have a television network dedicated to their interests.

The network is available to all cable and satellite providers across the country. Currently, the network reaches millions of viewers nationwide through DirecTV's Choice package, AT&T's U-verseSM service and more than 80 cable operators in the Midwest on their expanded basic service.

"These universities are part of the fabric of these communities, and so programs airing on the network will have very broad appeal to their fans and followers," said Big Ten Network president Mark Silverman. "And it will enable those fans to see their favorite teams anytime and anywhere. If you live in these eight states and receive 50-60 channels as part of your expanded basic service, the Big Ten Network should be one of them."

Recently, in another first, Big Ten commissioner Jim Delany

announced that the Big Ten Network will become the first national sports network to commit to "event equality" for men's and women's sports on all network-controlled media by the summer of 2010.

"The Big Ten has a long history of supporting gender equity," said Delany, "and this effort demonstrates our continued dedication to women's athletics." He added that the additional television exposure for many sports will be unprecedented and will greatly aid future recruiting efforts for all sports.

Silverman said the network will produce more than 1,000 hours of event and studio programming in state-of-the-art high definition (HD) and will be the most prolific producer of original HD content of any new network in television history. Content will also be made available through the Internet, mobile devices and video on demand.

Founded in 1895, the Big Ten Conference is home to the University of Illinois, Indiana University, the University of Iowa, the University of Michigan, Michigan State University, the University of Minnesota, Northwestern University, Ohio State University, Penn State University, Purdue University and the University of Wisconsin.

The Big Ten Network is a joint venture between subsidiaries of the Big Ten Conference and Fox Cable Networks.

To learn more, visit www.bigtennetwork.com.