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NEWS

For immediate release

Ouachita Sports Digital Network airs first broadcasts from new production trailer



By Abby Turner

February 19, 2021

For more information, contact OBU's news bureau at newsbureau@obu.edu or (870) 245-5206

ARKADELPHIA, Ark. – A team of nine Ouachita Baptist University students in the Ouachita Sports Digital Network (OSDN) recorded and produced their first series of broadcasts the weekend of Jan. 23-24 from a new production trailer, providing coverage of Tiger swimming and basketball events to fans after a 10-month pause on Ouachita and overall NCAA Division II athletic events due to COVID-19.

OSDN launched in 2020 in response to growth and interest in the sports media emphasis within Ouachita's communications & media major, and as a way to give students hands-on, immersive experience while still in school. This semester, the OSDN team includes about 30 students who are interested in sports broadcasting.

“We have three or four who want to do play-by-play work, we have some who want to get behind the camera, and we have some who enjoy the directing side of things,” said Chris Babb, instructor of communications and director of Ouachita’s sports media productions. “We try to spread people out to do different jobs, to stretch them and help them learn.”

The new production trailer, made possible by a generous donation to the program, requires more jobs for students interested in various roles and allows the OSDN team to cover more than one Tiger sporting event at a time – an important feature during a busy sports season. Fourteen of Ouachita’s 15 sports teams will participate in intercollegiate competition this semester after many seasons were canceled or delayed over the past year due to the pandemic.

“The equipment in the trailer allows us to do more as far as practice for the students,” Babb said. “It opens up a bunch of different jobs and is more of a true broadcast that they might work on after they graduate.”

For Matthew Branch, a senior communications & media/sports media major from Bauxite, Ark., the new equipment has given OSDN students the opportunity to “focus more on the production itself and have more time to prepare and learn.”

“It makes me feel like we are doing what the pros do, albeit on a smaller scale,” Branch said. “Having the trailer makes it feel real to me, like we are truly a sports network and can put together the best broadcasts in the region, and in the conference.”

“We are thankful our donor sees the potential and the value in what we’re doing,” said Dr. Jeff Root, dean of the School of Humanities and Huckabee School of Education. “They recognized the talent among the students and wanted to be a part of it.”

The trailer “has made it possible for us to enhance the kind and quality of equipment we are working with, and it makes a world of difference with the students,” Root added.

OSDN currently has 63 events scheduled to broadcast and covering almost a dozen Ouachita teams this semester.

“Especially this spring with a lot of sports going and parents who can’t make all of the events to watch their sons and daughters play, the trailer gives us a second set of equipment where we can broadcast simultaneously,” Babb said. “It takes more students, but we’ve got students who are willing to work and value the experience.”



Picture 1 Chris Babb, instructor of communications and director of Ouachita's sports media productions, directs students in their first broadcast the weekend of Jan. 23-24. Photo by Jeff Root.

PHOTOS AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD <https://obu.edu/stories/news/2021/02/ouachita-sports-digital-network-airs-first-broadcasts-new-production-trailer.php>

