

Georgia Southern University

Digital Commons@Georgia Southern

---

Athletics News

Athletics

---

3-1-2018

## Sun Belt Secures Long-Term Multimedia Contract with ESPN

Georgia Southern University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/athletics-news-online>



Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Georgia Southern University, "Sun Belt Secures Long-Term Multimedia Contract with ESPN" (2018).  
*Athletics News*. 615.

<https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/athletics-news-online/615>

This article is brought to you for free and open access by the Athletics at Digital Commons@Georgia Southern. It has been accepted for inclusion in Athletics News by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@Georgia Southern. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@georgiasouthern.edu).



## Sun Belt Secures Long-Term Multimedia Contract with ESPN

Georgia Southern Athletics to gain national exposure through new deal

Football

Posted: 3/1/2018 5:00:00 PM

**NEW ORLEANS** – The Sun Belt Conference and ESPN announced today a continuation of their relationship that is the most significant and extensive multimedia rights agreement in conference history.

While the Sun Belt's current contract with ESPN runs through the 2019-20 academic year, the two parties have agreed to enhancements within that deal while also securing a long-term agreement through the 2027-28 academic years that grants ESPN exclusive rights for the distribution of all Sun Belt sports with exposure on ESPN linear and digital platforms.

"The continuation of our agreement with ESPN marks one of the most historic announcements since the Sun Belt's founding in 1976," said Sun Belt Conference Commissioner Karl Benson. "This is truly an 'all in' collaboration with ESPN, the Sun Belt, and our member institutions and the volume and accessibility of our games will have a profound impact on the future of the Sun Belt. We have enjoyed a long relationship with ESPN since its founding in 1979 and we look forward to being featured on its newest platform, ESPN+, which promises to revolutionize how audiences view content."

Enhancements to the current contract between ESPN and the Sun Belt include:

- The confirmation that the inaugural Sun Belt Football Championship Game will be played on Saturday, December 1, 2018, on ABC, ESPN or ESPN2, with future championship games also televised on one of these networks.
- The guarantee that all Sun Belt home football games will be available on an ESPN platform for the seventh consecutive year in 2018 and for the duration of the long-term contract with ESPN.
- A continued increase of men's and women's basketball games on ESPN platforms. The number of men's basketball contests available will jump to a minimum of 100 games in 2018-19 and 150 games in the 2019-20 season.

Beginning with the 2020-21 academic year:

- A minimum of 500 events a year will appear on an ESPN platform.
- Every Sun Belt football, men's basketball and women's basketball game will be on an ESPN platform.
- Linear network football games at Sun Belt home venues will expand to a minimum of 10 games a year on a combination of ABC, ESPN, ESPN2 and ESPN3.
- Sun Belt Championship events will be on an ESPN platform each academic year that will give exposure to all conference sports.
- Digital productions will expand to include regular season competition in Sun Belt sports that have received only limited coverage previously.

Georgia Southern Athletics, in conjunction with the Multimedia Digital Center on campus, is already set up to broadcast on ESPN3 thanks to a state-of-the-art broadcast center located in Paulson Stadium. Eagle Athletics is already well positioned to take advantage of this new contract with the equipment and staff already in place.

"On behalf of all Sun Belt Conference Presidents and Chancellors, I welcome the continued relationship between the Sun Belt and ESPN," said Sun Belt Conference and Georgia State University President Dr. Mark Becker. The exposure our institutions receive is a tremendous value to all of our athletics programs and it serves to strengthen them and the conference as a whole."

ESPN will continue to air the Sun Belt Conference Men's Basketball Championship Game - maintaining the longest running relationship in all of college athletics as the Sun Belt is

the lone conference in the NCAA whose men's basketball championship game has been shown live on ESPN every year since the network launched. The Sun Belt Women's Basketball Championship Game will also be available on one of ESPN's linear networks.

"ESPN has a long, mutually beneficial relationship with the Sun Belt, dating back to our foundational years," said ESPN Executive Vice President of Scheduling and Acquisitions Burke Magnus. "We are thrilled to take that relationship to a new level via this new, innovative and exclusive extension, while also deepening our commitment to serving college sports fans. More Sun Belt events and content than ever before will now be available to fans however they choose to consume them in a more personalized and targeted manner."

The Sun Belt and ESPN's announcement comes after the announcement that ESPN+ will be launched in spring 2018. ESPN+ will be ESPN's first-ever multi-sport, direct-to-consumer subscription streaming service. For just \$4.99 a month, subscribers will receive thousands of additional live events, on-demand content and original programming not available on ESPN's linear television or digital networks.

Fans will access ESPN+ as an integrated part of a completely redesigned ESPN App. Already the leading sports app, the new ESPN App will give sports fans an unmatched, one-stop digital sports platform that provides easy, dynamic access to everything ESPN offers, anytime, anywhere across mobile and OTT (over the top) platforms. With a richer, increasingly more personalized experience, the new ESPN App will curate all of ESPN's incredible content into a content experience unique to each fan's individual tastes.

Copyright ©2018 Georgia Southern University