

C4-Sports Show Debuts in Vegas

Exhibits and sessions to focus on the future of sports business and production

by Melissa A. Sullivan

LAS VEGAS

C4-Sports, an event management and production company, is holding its first C4-Sports Electronic Media Show July 17-19 in Las Vegas.

The event—designed to bring together all aspects of the sports industry, including content production, distribution, archiving, business and technology—will be held in the South Upper Hall of the Las Vegas Convention Center, complete with exhibitors, attractions and an educational conference featuring seminars with industry experts. Mike “Coach K” Krzyzewski, head basketball coach at Duke University and Brian Bedol, president and CEO of CSTV will keynote the event.

Gene Sanders, general manager of C4-Sports, based in Hunt Valley, Md., said they looked at the mega tradeshows, like NAB and SuperComm, and decided to do an industry-specific show with technology for sports media.

“There are conferences out there that address sports from a talking head standpoint, but nothing out there that talks about sports and the industry of broadcast and next-generation delivery and also has demonstrations,” Sanders said. “Our goal is to just be a resource for the sports industry to show them how the technology

actually works, no matter what your budget—what solutions are available.”

More than 1,000 sports professionals from college media centers and athletic departments to sports teams, and individual sports channels are expected to attend the show. One of the main draws includes an exhibitor floor where approximately 100 companies, including Avid, Sony and Harris will showcase their latest technologies, products and services for the sports broadcasting industry.

Rich Hajdu, vice president of graphics and post sales at Harris said the company will showcase three products—InfoCaster for digital signage; the Inscribe G series, a new live-to-air character generator, which debuted at NAB2006; and the Velocity HD nonlinear editing system.

Hajdu said Harris products have a presence in the major sports markets in Canada, as well as at schools in the United States. He said the show is an opportunity for Harris to help the company understand the market a lot better.

“We think it’s a good venue to showcase our products, which are very cost effective, and range from lower cost

entry level all the way into very high-end professional broadcast solutions. [The event] covers professional broadcasters, but it also covers sports teams and colleges and universities; all the people who might be users of our particular type equipment that we may not get to see,” Hajdu said.

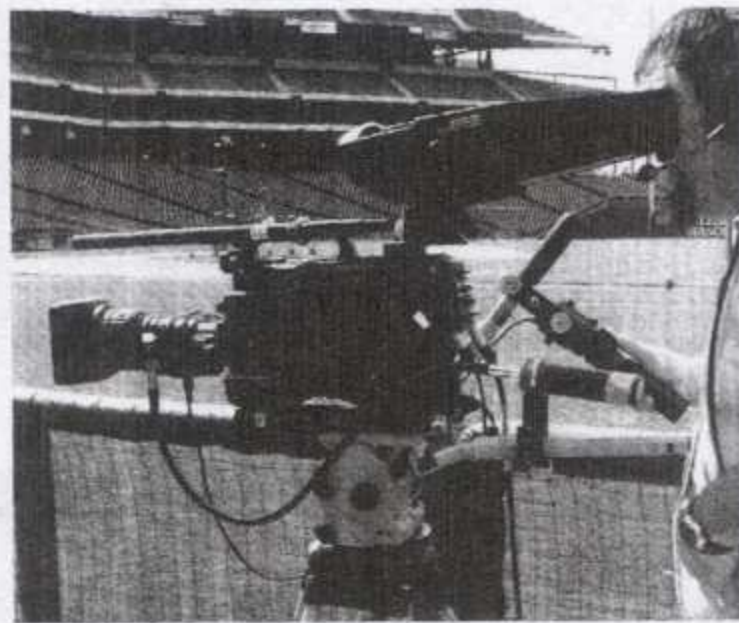
WHAT TO EXPECT

In addition to the exhibits, there will also be Exhibit Hall attractions, including general session speakers,

high-end or advanced seating technology that might have electronics or interactive capabilities as well as the scoreboards, and how is that going to be something that’s going to partner with the broadcaster?”

A CONFERENCE WITHIN

Running concurrently with the exhibit, the Sports Media and Technology Conference, also presented by C4-Sports and produced by Future Media Concepts, will be held



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“Studio One,” a “Digital Media Theater” and “Stadiums/Facilities” showcase.

John Abel, senior vice president of marketing, membership and business development at the USTelecom Association will moderate “Introduction to Content & Delivery Fundamentals,” focusing on alternative delivery mechanisms for sports content.

Abel said the panel will discuss the opportunities for the distribution of content, regardless of what kind of content it is, by things like IPTV, and what happens to the content as you move from say, large HDTV displays, down to much smaller displays like an iPod or handheld device of some sort. And what are the processes that one has to go through to index the content for an interactive experience, which is what IPTV connotes in terms of what it will do.”

“Studio One” will be set up as an actual sports studio, so attendees can see the different types of technology options available. Also on the show floor is the “Digital Media Theater,” where experts from Avid will give 15 to 20 minute “Speed Tips” on how to use its editing technology.

A “Stadiums/Facilities” area will address the design of sports complexes and how to incorporate technology into the new designs.

“It is not just about building walls and concession stands,” Sanders said. “It’s about how are you taking the content into the luxury boxes? How are you making the experience an interactive one with the fans using

July 18 and 19. Designed for professionals involved in the creation, management or delivery of sports media, the more than 25 technical sessions and panel discussions will feature 30 speakers from companies including Microsoft, Dolby and Avid.

Conference sessions will cover a range of subjects, including podcasting, HD post production and encoding for mobile devices. Doug Towey, creative director for CBS Sports, Micha Riss, founder of Flying Machine and Ken Adelson, senior vice president of production operations and planning for NBA Entertainment will keynote the conference.

Adelson will discuss the challenge of preserving content and producing simultaneously, focusing on his work at the NBA to archive content accumulated over the years on different formats and distribute that material on multi-worldwide platforms.

The NBA has a real multipurpose mission. Adelson said to accomplish this, they have to figure out a way to take “hundreds of thousands” of hours of videotape and use digital technology to preserve these key assets.

Adelson, a 25-year industry veteran, said in a lot of ways, there is an informal community within the sports industry; however “a show like this, by formally bringing these groups together, takes it to another level and it helps guide it in a positive direction for bringing the different people in the industry together.”

For more information on registering for the C4-Sports Electronic Media Show, visit www.c4-sports.com. ■