Cornell University Raises its Game Streaming Live Sports with Telestream Wirecast

Wirecast systems help deliver HD-quality live streams of Big Red home games to the Ivy League Digital Network, ESPN3, and Facebook Live

Nevada City, California, 14 February 2018 – The streaming media revolution has thrust the nation's top college athletics departments into the role of full-fledged college sports broadcast networks. Using Telestream Wirecast live streaming production software, the athletics department at Cornell University is able to meet the challenge, delivering HD-quality live streams of Big Red home games to ESPN3, Facebook Live and the Ivy League Digital Network, a 9-channel Internet sportscasting service that broadcasts Ivy League games.

With the cost-efficiency of streaming, Cornell Athletics are able to give their loyal Big Red fans events like field hockey and soccer, which are often overlooked by major sports networks seeking to draw bigger audiences for their advertisers. Cornell also delivers Big Red games directly to their alumni and other fans that are passionate about following their teams through Facebook Live.

Cornell's athletics department faces the daunting task of live streaming 21 of its 37 NCAA Division I sports, which amounts to hundreds of games annually. On busy game days, Cornell Athletics often sends multiple video crews across the campus to cover six or seven simultaneous events, including football, basketball, ice hockey, soccer, volleyball, wresting and field hockey.

Unlike ad-supported TV or cable sports networks, Cornell's broadcast operation runs on a tight budget, and relies largely on crews comprised of about 30 student volunteers. Despite these limitations, using Wirecast, they are able to deliver a 720/60p HD product, encoded using H.264 compression, with production standards that meet or exceed their fans' expectations.

"Before Wirecast, we had been using conventional video fly-packs, which are a group of discreet video products packed into a portable road case. These components needed to be set-up and integrated on-site before they could be used in a unified live production workflow. Unlike the fly-packs, Wirecast software integrates the essential video production tools and functionality of all those disparate boxes into a single solution," explains John Lukach, Director of Multimedia, Production and Web Communications for the Athletics Department at Cornell University.

Aside from the laptops equipped with the Wirecast software, Cornell's athletics department now also uses Wirecast Gear, a turnkey solution designed to make live streaming with Wirecast software faster and easier. It does this by pre-loading Wirecast—along with qualified external third-party devices, like video capture cards built for the rigors of live streaming—onto a Windows 10 Pro appliance.

With its four HD-SDI and/or HDMI inputs, Wirecast Gear makes it easier for webcasters to get right to the business of streaming media. They only need to plug their cameras into the back of the appliance, and they can live stream media to virtually any online platform. Wirecast Gear and the PC-based Wirecast system both use the same Wirecast software, with the same user interface.

"While Wirecast software streamlined our production process considerably, compared to our fly packs, the set-up could still be somewhat complex for our non-technical crew members. This past summer, I came across Wirecast Gear, and immediately recognized that this was something we needed to add to our production arsenal. Once we got approval from our purchasing department, we bought a new top of the line Wirecast Gear, and it has since become our preferred system for live production streaming," said Lukach.

Wirecast Gear is now regularly deployed to a variety of on-campus venues to cover a wide variety of Cornell Big Red sports.

"When you factor in that Wirecast Gear is a compact, self-contained device that's ready to go in streaming situations, this greatly reduces the time and energy that must be devoted to packing up the gear, moving it and setting it up on site," he added.

To move to the soccer, field hockey and wrestling venues, Wirecast Gear is packed into its specially designed travel case, which has room to store a 19-inch monitor and two or three cameras. And once on-site, it can be set up in minutes since it's fully configured for live streaming. A second travel case is used to transport the audio equipment, including a PV6 6-input audio mixer, microphones, announcers' headsets and more. This audio equipment feeds the 6-input audio mixer via XLR connections, while the mixer itself interfaces with Wirecast Gear via USB.

In many cases, instant replay footage is ISO-recorded by one of the production cameras, and put onto the Wirecast timeline where it's ready to go into the live show. In addition to the four camera inputs on Wirecast Gear, additional media assets, such as live graphics from Cornell's specially designed branding library, can be brought into the live production over network device interface (NDI).

"Our reliance on Wirecast Gear is only going to grow, especially as we migrate to remote video over IP production. It's extremely important to us that Wirecast Gear supports our future NDI-based roadmap. Its all-in-one design streamlines our training, set-up and operations, saving us a tremendous amount of time. With the ability to bring in four cameras, and enhance the video with real-time graphics, text, effects, and other professional touches, Wirecast Gear has dramatically elevated our production standards, making our Big Red live games that much more appealing to our valued fans."

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About Telestream

Telestream provides world-class live and on-demand digital video tools and workflow solutions that allow consumers and businesses to transform video on the desktop and across the enterprise. Many of the world's most demanding media and entertainment companies as well as a growing number of users in a broad range of business environments, rely on Telestream products to streamline operations, reach broader audiences, generate more revenue from and ensure the quality of their media. Telestream products span the entire digital media lifecycle, including video capture and ingest; live and on-demand encoding and transcoding; captioning; playback and inspection, delivery, and live streaming; automation and orchestration; with its iQ product line, Telestream enables the monitoring and management of quality service and experience over any network.

Telestream corporate headquarters are located in Nevada City, California. The company is privately held. For more information, visit www.telestream.net

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