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ACC granted live streaming rights

BY MICHAEL SMITH

STAFF WRITER

Raycom Sports, which owns the live streaming video rights to ACC events, has loaned the rights for regular-season Olympic sports to the schools for the 2009-10 season.

While the new arrangement significantly depletes the programming for ACC Select, the league's live streaming feature, it will retain the rights to all ACC championship events.

ACC schools previously had been without any live streaming options for their official Web sites because all of that content went to ACC Select. But now that they have ownership of those rights, there's no guarantee the schools will immediately start streaming live video on their sites. In fact, most won't because of the manpower and the expense to produce the content for live streaming.

It was only in the last few weeks that ACC schools learned that they'd have this capability and most say they're still evaluating whether to stream Olympic sports live and if so, how much.

"We have a few options we're looking at to see which avenue is the best way to distribute these events," said Chris Alston, North Carolina State's assistant athletic director for marketing, promotions and Web. The Wolfpack offer Pack Pass on their site, GoPack.com, which features video interviews, highlights and other programming, and will likely become the home for any live events.

"It's great because we certainly want to push as much video out there as possible," Alston said. "It's important to the fans to get that content out there. But all of this has happened so recently, we're still evaluating if it should be a free model, a pay model, what the rate card should look like, all of that."

Raycom's rights for ACC Select are part of the TV contract that extends through the 2010-11 season. The loan to the schools is good for one year and will be re-evaluated at some point next year, according to Ken Haines, president



Virginia already has an in-house crew for lacrosse games.

and CEO of Raycom Sports.

"It is a way the schools may be able to generate some more revenue through their own sites," Haines said in an e-mail. "It is for just this season to see how it works out for the schools. But ACC Select is still alive and is the home for all the conference championship events."

In the past, the schools received a stipend from Raycom, which paid for most or all of the production costs and included equipment so that schools could produce the events for ACC Select. Now that the events are back in the hands of the schools, the stipend has dried up and the schools must now figure out how to pay for the production if they want to stream the games live.

Some schools, like Virginia, have an eight-person in-house production crew that already covers the games for video boards at football, basketball, baseball and soccer/lacrosse venues. Others, like N.C. State, have outsourced those duties in the past, using the stipend to pay for it.

Like N.C. State, Virginia is evaluating its live stream options, according to Jim Daves, assistant athletic director for the school, but no decisions have been made.

The school runs VirginiaSportsTV.com off of its main site, VirginiaSports.com, and offers exclusive, behind-the-scenes content. Daves said Virginia produced ACC Select content with its in-house crew, as well as some hired hands.