

Charlotte firms team up on Southern sports show

Awards program will reach 35 million cable households across region

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Next month, a newly created Southern sports awards show will debut on several regional cable networks with a combined distribution of 35 million households — and two Charlotte companies to thank for its creation.

Edge Marketing Inc. and JP Sports have formed a partnership to produce the show and sell all advertising. The aptly named *Southern Sports Awards* will be taped Nov. 30 in Atlanta and begin airing on the regional networks — Fox Sports Net South, Fox Sports Net Southwest, Comcast Mid-Atlantic and Sun South — in December.

CBS Sports anchor Tim Brando, former Atlantic Coast Conference and NBA standout John Salley and political strategist James Carville will host the show. Musical guests include Clint Black, Charlie Daniels and hip-hop up-and-comer Young Jeezy. Among the corporate backers: BellSouth Corp., Pontiac and Yamaha.

"Part of our mission is to tell stories better about this part of the country, and this show does that," says Jeff Genthner, Fox Sports Net South general manager. "It's fun, it's earthy and it gets to the heart of what people in this region love about sports."

Mike Burg, Edge Marketing founder, says the awards show could develop into a franchise in future years, with spin-off DVDs, books and related TV shows. He anticipates a slight financial loss this year. Such properties typically need three years before they pay dividends, he says, though a break-even performance is an outside possibility in 2005.

JP Sports syndicates ACC and Southeastern Conference football and basket-

ball games. The alliance between Edge Marketing and JP Sports has provided cross-promotional opportunities for the awards show in recent weeks. In addition, a series of three 30-minute vignette preview shows on Southern sports culture — airing this month on the regional sports networks — began this month.

Edge Marketing producer Marc Bookmiller, who developed much of the content for the awards program, emphasized local and regional talent in creating the show. In addition to tapping JP Sports,

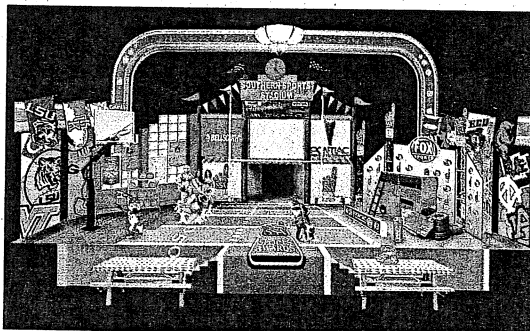


photo illustration EDGE MARKETING INC.

The show will be taped at The Tabernacle performance hall in Atlanta, using this set design.

QUICKINFO

SOUTHERN SPORTS AWARDS

What is it: A TV production by Charlotte-based JP Sports and Edge Marketing that honors prominent Southern sports figures

When: Taped Nov. 30, broadcast begins in December

Where: Atlanta

Broadcast: Across South on Fox Sports regional networks and other regional sports networks

which is selling all ad inventory. Charlotte-based Fuse created show graphics, and the stage and set were designed by Jim Gloster. The two-hour show will be pared from a live, three-hour format taped at The Tabernacle, a converted church in downtown Atlanta. Honorees attending include Florida State University football coach Bobby Bowden, NASCAR legend Richard Petty and retired UNC Chapel Hill basketball coach Dean Smith.

"This is smart because creating your own programming saves a ton of money," says Terry Hanson, a broadcasting industry consultant and former Turner Sports executive. "Mike Burg has displayed a knowledge of the marketplace that puts him in front of the competition."

Awards shows are familiar for Burg and his company. Credits include the *Teen Choice Awards* on Fox and a number of music-related specials. Burg worked at JP Sports before starting his own company during the mid-1990s.

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