FOX Sports and Nielsen Study, “The 5th Network,”
Finds Regional Sports Networks Are Most Essential Cable Channels to Sports Fans

Research commissioned from Nielsen highlights fan preference for RSNs

LOS ANGELES – FOX Sports today released the results of “The 5th Network: Regional Sports Network Passion Index,” a Nielsen Media Analytics Primary Research study finding that sports fans rate regional sports networks (RSNs) as their most essential non-broadcast channels.

Custom research by Nielsen commissioned by FOX Sports looked at more than 1,500 pay TV subscribers around the country who identify as sports fans, and found that on average respondents rate their RSNs as the fifth most essential channel in their entire television packages, ranking only behind the four broadcast networks. Respondents ranked RSNs as more essential than all cable channels. In certain geographical regions, sports fans ranked their RSNs as the most essential networks. In St. Louis, which receives FOX Sports Midwest, viewers rated their local RSN as more essential than any other channel, including the broadcast networks. In Detroit, home of FOX Sports Detroit, viewers rank their RSN as the second most essential network.

FOX Sports Regional Networks President Jeff Krolik said: “We have long known that our RSNs are akin to the fifth broadcast network in their markets in terms of ratings, and Nielsen’s research confirms the remarkable importance of these networks to viewers. Local sports are tribal, and RSNs inspire the same loyalty and connection as the hometown teams they bring to fans.”
Findings from Nielsen’s research are supported by the ratings received by RSNs across the country. During the recently-concluded Major League Baseball season, 23 of the 29 U.S.-based MLB teams ranked in the top five of all networks when they played in primetime on their RSNs, and nine of those teams ranked one in all of primetime in their markets.

About FOX Sports

FOX Sports is the umbrella entity representing 21st Century Fox’s wide array of multi-platform US-based sports assets. Built with brands capable of reaching more than 100 million viewers in a single weekend, FOX Sports includes ownership and interests in linear television networks, digital and mobile programming, broadband platforms, multiple web sites, joint-venture businesses and several licensing partnerships. FOX Sports includes the sports television arm of the FOX Broadcasting Company; FS1, FS2; FOX Sports Regional Networks, their affiliated regional web sites and national programming; FOX Soccer Plus; FOX Deportes and FOX College Sports. FOX Sports also encompasses FOX Sports Digital, which includes FOXSports.com, FOX Sports GO, Whatifsports.com and Yardbarker.com. Also included in the Group are FOX’s interests in joint-venture businesses Big Ten Network and BTN 2Go, as well as a licensing agreement that establish the FOX Sports Radio Network.

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