

BigTeams hires Walker, raises funds for national expansion

BY ERIC FISHER

STAFF WRITER

BigTeams, a Northern Virginia-based provider of website and software solutions for high school athletic programs, has hired industry veteran Clay Walker as its chief executive officer and recently closed a venture capital funding round aimed at fueling a major national expansion.

Walker arrives to the company after two years as vice president of sports digital properties for USA Today Sports Media Group. He stayed on with Gannett after its early 2012 purchase of Big Lead Sports, the digital media company he helped create with former NFL executive Chris Russo. Walker is also a former senior vice president for the NFL Players Association's

marketing and licensing arm, Players Inc.

The BigTeams funding, a Series A round worth an undisclosed, low-seven-figure sum, was led by Capital Sports Ventures, the venture capital fund founded last year by former Monumental Sports & Entertainment executive Greg Bibb and backed by SWaN & Legend Ventures, led by Monumental minority investors Fred Schaufeld and Tony Nader. SWaN participated in the BigTeams funding round as did former Signal Corp. chief executive Roger Mody, and Scott Brickman, former chief executive of property management giant The Brickman Group. Mody and Brickman also are Monumental minority partners.

BigTeams' software products seek to

help automate a variety of functions for high school sports administrators, including scheduling, fundraising, registration, website management, content creation and dissemination. The company, based in Warrenton, Va., has more than 500 client schools in 41 states. But Walker said he saw an opportunity to build significant scale in a segment of the sports industry that to date has been heavily fractured among many smaller outfits.



"High schools are sort of the last great frontier of the industry," Walker said. "There are a lot of players in this space, but nobody's really solved it yet and built

major scale."

Walker will work out of Capital Sports Ventures' office space in Arlington, Va., which has been set up to help accelerate its partner companies. BigTeams represents the first major investment for the 15-month-old Capital Sports Ventures. Walker and Bibb also have worked together as adjunct professors at nearby Georgetown University.

"They're in a growing market, have an offering that's very scalable, deals in participatory sports which is a big interest for us, and is both hyperlocal and national. So it sort of checked off all the boxes for us," Bibb said.

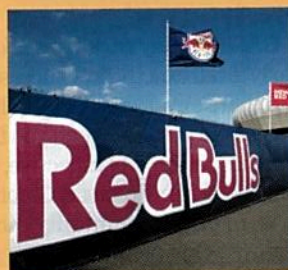
BigTeams founding executives Matt Carson, Jeff Gilbert and Steve Sutherland will remain as majority owners.



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