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BigTeams buys Schedule Star

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BigTeams, a Northern Virginia-based provider of website and software solutions for high school athletic programs, has bought Schedule Star, a scheduling software developer, from Gannett Corp. A \$5 million Series B venture capital funding round, led by previous investors SWaN & Legend Venture Partners and Capital Sports Ventures, facilitated the deal.

Financial terms were not disclosed, but BigTeams executives said there was money left over from the Series B fundraising after closing on the Schedule Star transaction last month.

Schedule Star, founded in 1964, offers products for scheduling activities such as games, practices and team transportation. Media giant Gannett acquired the company in 2007. But in a split announced this past summer, Gannett intends to split itself into two separate corporations, one devoted to broadcasting and digital, and another for its publishing interests. Schedule Star didn't fit neatly into either one, and BigTeams quickly seized the opportunity to acquire the company.

BigTeams will combine its expertise in content creation and dissemination, fundraising and registration with Schedule Star's scheduling functionality.

The history of BigTeams Chief Executive Clay Walker played a significant role in the deal. Before joining BigTeams this past spring, Walker was vice president of sports digital properties for Gannett's USA Today Sports Media Group and part of the team that sold Big Lead Sports to Gannett in 2012.

"This is a great business with a strong legacy and real history in the marketplace," Walker said. "But as a software-as-a-service business, it didn't really have a home in the new Gannett. For us, though, it's an incredible fit. This allows us to have a really well-rounded suite of services for high school athletic directors and the athletes they serve."

BigTeams will maintain the Schedule Star brand name, suburban Pittsburgh headquarters and existing employee base.

The Series B venture capital round follows up on an undisclosed, low-seven-figure Series A round completed last spring. Like that initial investment, this round involves several executives and investors either previously or now involved with Monumental Sports & Entertainment.

"We've been spending a lot of time in the last several months working to help get this deal done, and we think this is an incredible combination bringing these two companies together," said Greg Bibb, Capital Sports Ventures' chief executive.

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