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Circle category: 1Y 2Y 3Y 5N 6N 7N 9E 10L 12B

Headline: From Sports to Silly Pen Write

Subhead: How Social Media Storytelling Helps Athletes Win Awards

When somebody wins the Heisman trophy, they usually thank God, their parents and their coaches. The same goes for any other award in college sports. They never thank the branding and social media teams that helped them get there.

These teams guide athletes throughout their college careers. Sarah Higgins, Penn State's Assistant Athletic Director for Creative Content and Branding, noted this at a press conference.

Her department works in every facet of college athletics, from recruitment to games and beyond. No matter which facet of college athletics she works in, her goal remains the same: to tell the story of Penn State and its athletes. To her, everything tells a story, even scoreboard

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graphics. She noted the UNM value graphics on the Beaver Stadium scoreboard, which appears when a recruit visits, "communicates something. That's telling a story... to the person you're trying to speak to." When anything can tell a story, every detail matters, according to Higgins.

One story Higgins focused on this past season is that of Olu Fasbany, a Penn State offensive tackle. He is projected to be drafted in the first round of the NFL draft. Penn State's social media teams focused on, in Higgins' words, "we really focused on the story of Olu's family. They also wanted to show his student and human sides, so they made a four-minute long feature film. The goal of this production was to make Fasbany more visible, so he could win awards, such as the All-American award.

Making athletes visible is critical to

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Engaging athletes are visible goes beyond football. For example, Higgins mentioned how a hockey player won the Hockey Humanitarian Award and how her team made them visible. "Social content is a very important piece in him getting that award," she said. Her team shared his stories of service, which led him win this award. For this case and many others, social media storytelling helped many Penn State athletes win national awards. Next time a Penn State athlete wins an award, they should thank Sarah Higgins and her team for working with them to tell their story.