

# Catholic Review to partner with Web venture DigitalSports.com

As the athletic director at Mercy High School, Mary Ella Marion uses [www.DigitalSports.com](http://www.DigitalSports.com) as a clearinghouse for information about her Magic teams.

The basketball chairperson of the Interscholastic Athletic Association of Maryland, Marion relies on the Web site for schedules and scores of girls' teams from more than 30 schools.

As a coach and administrator seeking to reinforce the positive aspects of the dominant extracurricular activity at the secondary school level, she is drawn to a media platform that offers coverage beyond the elite teams that earn Top 20 rankings in the Baltimore metropolitan area and the state of Maryland.

"As an athletic director, I've got a soccer team playing in the (IAAM) A Conference, a volleyball team in the B Conference and a field hockey team in the C Conference," Marion said. "What I like about DigitalSports.com is that they have articles and information about all our games, not just the teams from the top-shelf leagues."

In less than two years, the DigitalSports brand has become a primary source of information on interscholastic athletics in much of Maryland, one reason The Catholic Review and [www.catholicreview.org](http://www.catholicreview.org) are creating a partnership with the Columbia-based franchise of a company with national aspirations.

DigitalSports.com is designing an exclusive Web link for The Catholic Review's Web site that includes the home pages for 19 Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Baltimore. The Web site and The Catholic Review will share relevant content.

Ed Kelley, who coached football at McDaniel College when it was an National Collegiate Athletic Association Division III power before getting in on the ground floor of the Jiffy-Lube franchise boom in the 1980s, is the co-founder and CEO of DigitalSports.com.

Its local presence began to blossom after the 2007 acquisition of the Maryland

Interscholastic Athletic Association Web site that had been created by Gary Adornato, now the local director of DigitalSports.com.

“What drew me was the purpose-driven aspect of the business,” Kelley said. “Values are a big part of our screening process when we’re making a hire.”

Kelley noted that “every piece of content is moderated” by editors at DigitalSports.com, which produces coverage that ranges from traditional game reporting to videos of contests and interviews.

“We have zero tolerance for negative content,” Kelley said. “We feel that community sports do not deserve the same approach as college and pro.”

In addition to providing a platform for individual schools, DigitalSports.com also operates the Web homes for the IAAM, the MIAA and the Baltimore Catholic League, the boys’ basketball league which has produced names like Juan Dixon, Carmelo Anthony and Rudy Gay, and will have three players in the rotation at the University of Maryland this winter.

“I like the whole concept of DigitalSports.com,” said Jack Degele, the commissioner of the BCL. “It provides internships for high school students, and creates interest in our programs.”

The fact that DigitalSports.com provides athletic programs with a regulated platform is not the only appeal to Paul Triplett, the athletic director at Mount St. Joseph High School, Irvington.

“We post our schedules and track our results there,” Triplett said. “It not only provides coverage of our teams, but it’s interactive. We’re not taking advantage of all that the site offers, but we will.”

Bishop Walsh School in Cumberland and St. Maria Goretti High School in Hagerstown are outside the current geographic scope of DigitalSports.com. With just freshman and sophomores, Cristo Rey Jesuit High School in Baltimore is undergoing a gradual expansion of its athletics program.