

Case Study - The Seattle SuperSonics

Video coordinator Walt Rock knew from the minute he laid eyes on the Sportstec range of video analysis equipment that it was the system he wanted and needed to empower the Seattle SuperSonics. Two years later, the SuperSonics reached the NBA play-offs.

"It wouldn't have mattered what other products cost," he said. "This is what I wanted from everything else I saw and I knew how I could integrate it with my coaching staff and how it would work for me to most effectively service that. I love this system and wouldn't use anything else."

Having been in the NBA for 11 years and with the SuperSonics for seven, Rock previously used a digital system which could only take one hour's worth of video on it at a time. There was no capacity to capture a whole game or to break it down and nothing could be saved.

There have been revolutionary changes since those days and there is now a structure in place at the Sonics club where Rock can, with a minimum of fuss, give the coaches the information they want on any given game or player.



"What I enjoy most about the system is the fact that if you log in stuff right the first time around there's nothing better than when a coach comes in and says, 'hey, can you get me this, you take about a minute to click on a couple of things and there it is.' The joy for me comes when the coach says, 'this is unbelievable'," he said.

"I can't believe where we've come, from deck-to-deck," (three years ago). Those were the days of fast forward and rewind to find specifics, now cer-

tain game or player related details a coach wants are a finger touch away.

Rock has a wide-ranging role at the club and over the past two years has become the most efficient and effective user of the new technology. "I use it all the time. I've got to keep the system organised in order for my coaching staff to be able to utilise it," he said.

"Most coaches around the league don't understand the power of the system." For that reason he has been an invaluable resource for the coaches. Since establishing the system into the club's framework, Rock has logged every game live as it is being played by the Sonics.

"I've never really got to utilise the system like I am right now during the playoffs," he said. "This is the first playoffs that we've been in since I've had the system. I've got 125 code buttons that I use to log the games so I'm logging tons of stuff. You wouldn't believe the information I've got."

At playoff time, Rock gathered the year's information, not just Sonic's games but other games and opponents as well. "I knew it would pay off when we got to the playoffs," he said. "I had never done it before but I was trying to figure out how I could combine my data in such a way that it was simple for the coaches."

He put all the information together on one file and made it available to the five coaches, who in turn had to simply click on whatever game or particular aspect they wanted to view. Once it had been made readily available and in a simple form, the head coach was moved enough to say, 'this is unbelievable'. The more the coaches are getting to know about the system, the more they like it and will readily use it. "They just needed to understand how it worked a little better," Rock said.

All teams in the NBA have some form of video analysis and without it, Rock said it would be impossible to keep up. His simple philosophy is, "You can do things because you have technology."