

Bingham 'brand' preps for TV games

By Christopher Kamrani
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This Saturday night very well could be Dave Peck's favorite headache of his life.

But to the Bingham High School football coach, it's totally welcomed. After all, for the first time in the program's remarkable history, the Miners are being showcased worldwide on the ESPN network.

They kick off their 2013 campaign and march toward Rice-Eccles Stadium on Saturday at home against Bonneville Bees, a 4A program — soon-to-be 5A in 2014 — out of Idaho Falls, Idaho.

The game, which kicks off at 7 p.m., will be broadcast on ESPN.

And Peck, who has guided the Miners to three 5A state titles in his 14 years at the helm, said the impending national exposure is a long time coming.

But it's also an arduous process.

Peck and his staff spent the weeks leading up to the season opener sending detailed bios of each player and information regarding the program to be used during the broadcast. They also participated in interviews and other avenues in preparation for the big start to the season.

"It's a way bigger production than say just playing one of your regular in-state games," he said. "It's a



headache, but the exposure you get for your program, you just couldn't put a dollar amount on it. You're going to have troops in other countries watching it on their iPhones."

The chance to showcase the South Jordan community and the Utah high school football sports realm as a whole is, as Peck said, due to the tremendous teams the Miners fielded in recent seasons.

Bingham's 26-game win streak from 2009 to 2011 enabled the Miners to turn some heads nationally, but it was a game in Cowboys Stadium in Sept. 2009 against Texas powerhouse Trinity that set things in motion for the program.

"Ever since then," Peck said, "we've had a lot of opportunities."

Peck said ESPN has called him twice since the Miners took on Trinity nearly four years ago to be showcased, but the schedules never aligned. When Skyline (Wash.) came to Utah last year to take on Cottonwood for a game on ESPN, Skyline coach Matt Taylor asked Peck if

his team could practice at Bingham.

A representative from ESPN was on hand, and a conversation with Peck once again opened the potential for a broadcast in 2013.

"When they found out we were playing a team from Idaho, they were all over it," Peck said, adding that the deal was finalized this spring. "They've never been able to have a team from Idaho on ESPN."

Fred Armstrong's Bonneville Bees also will have quite the traveling support group. Peck said Armstrong informed him last week the school already sold 500 pre-sold tickets and anticipated that number could eclipse 1,000 sometime this week.

Peck added Bingham will not be pre-selling tickets, saying, "We just feel like we can take care of all that on the day of the game."

Saturday isn't the only time the Miners will be on a national broadcast this preseason.

On Saturday, Sept. 7, Bingham will travel to Highlands Ranch, Colo., to take on Valor Christian (5:30 p.m. kickoff), in a Utah-Colorado doubleheader. Lone Peak will be hosted by Mullen High School at Valor Christian earlier that day.

"Bingham, nationally, has a name out there now," Peck said. "It's a brand name."