

THE TOP LOCAL SPORTS TALKERS IN AMERICA

They talk for three hours. They talk for four hours. Some talk for more than five hours. It could be morning drive, middays, or afternoon drive. It's every day, five days a week. They are passionate about the sports teams and stars in their cities, although that's not all they talk about every day. While many are successful when they stick strictly to sports, others find great success sprinkling in the news of the day, comedy bits, politics, their knowledge of music (mostly rock), or their personal lives.

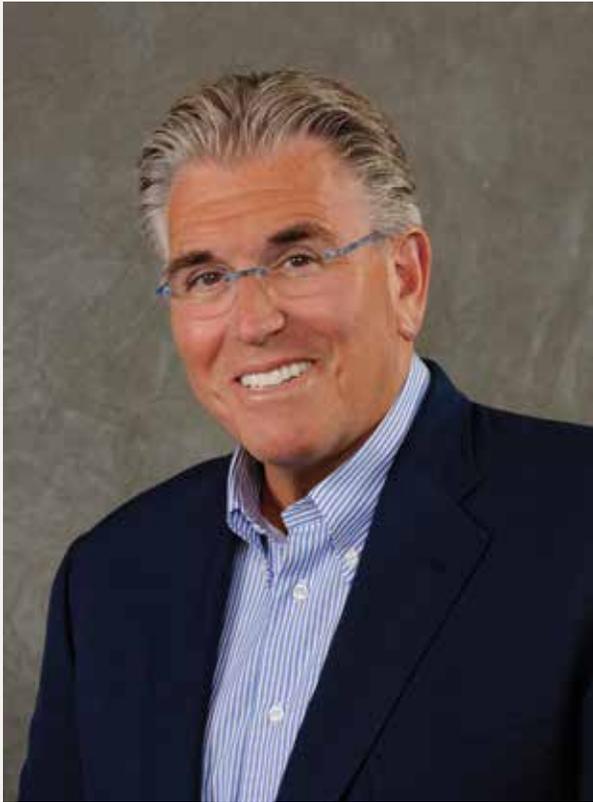
Local professional sports teams love them at times, but can also hate them sometimes for what they say, for how they criticize and try to trip people up during interviews. PDs have to constantly watch the line they've drawn to make sure their talent pushes that line, but never crosses it. Their listeners are glued to the radio, totally involved in the conversation and a real part of the

show. Social media has given fans even more opportunity to have their voices heard on their local sports stations. And opinions on sports are something this male-dominated format is never short of.

We start our process of searching for the Best Local Sports Talkers in America by taking nominations months before the issue goes to print. All of our nominees must be local for this list, not nationally syndicated. Companies, co-workers, peers, even listeners can nominate their favorite host or team. We reach out to the nominees and ask them to answer a few questions. We talk to their program directors. We interview market managers, experts in the sports talk format, and radio executives in specific markets. And, of course, we consider ratings, revenue the host or team has driven to the station, and

how much commitment they have to the local community and charities.

We get lobbied by PDs and managers and at times even bombarded by listeners about who's the best in the country. That makes it all that much more fun. People love lists, and we really enjoy putting this one together every year. Despite the extensive research and interviews we conduct, this is admittedly not an exact science. There's no clear way to determine how or why a successful host in Philadelphia is slightly better than a successful host in San Francisco. But, doing this year after year, we certainly see patterns develop and names that consistently come up that have garnered industry respect. And so we have put all of that data together, mulled over it for weeks, and produced what we believe is the definitive list of The Top Local Sports Talkers in America for 2016.



1

MIKE FRANCESA

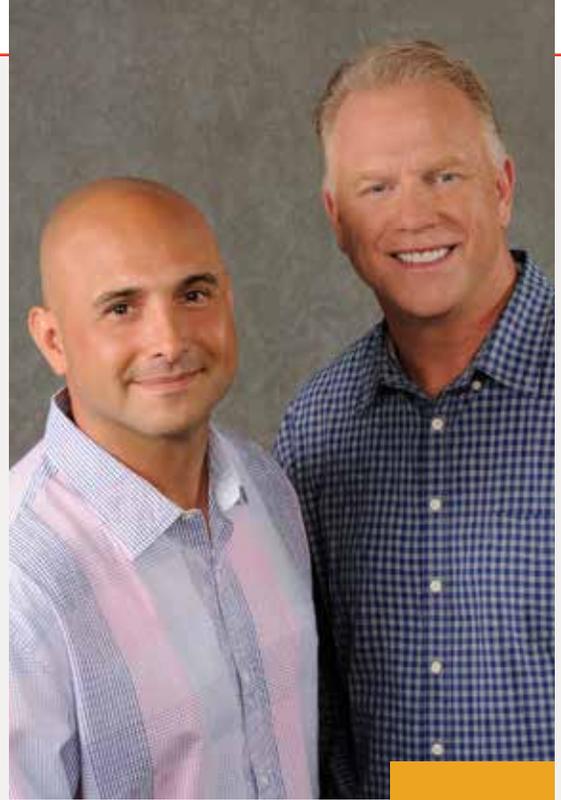
WFAN
New York
CBS Radio
M-F 1-6:30 p.m.; Sunday 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

Mike Francesa continues to dominate sports talk in the number one market in America, hosting a five-and-a-half-hour talk show Monday-Friday, plus three more hours on Sunday during football season. He's a three-time Marconi Award winner, two as a solo host and one as part of *Mike and the Mad Dog*. He's been around since the sports talk format was in its infancy, and has gone through all the format's growing pains. Today he continues to get as much media attention in New York as most of the teams he talks about. Francesa announced he'll be leaving WFAN at the end of 2017, 30 years after starting at the station, where he has been and continues to be a ratings dominator.

Francesa tells *Radio Ink* that a lot has changed since he started out in the '80s. "There is so much competition, you must be able to cut through," he says. "Unless you're a firmly established radio franchise, smart use of all social media is a must. Everybody has information now; it's about an original, finely crafted, entertaining perspective. I see so little attention paid to radio fundamentals. It is now a crowded space, and you must find a clever way to be noticed. To be successful, you have to get to a certain place with the audience. There are numerous routes to that destination, but you have to get there."

Francesa has brought an amazing amount of revenue to WFAN as well as number one ratings in Men 25-54, the bullseye demo for a sports talk station. He is known for asking questions that no one else asks, for giving opinions that make you say, "I never thought of that angle," and for interviewing great guests – coaches, players, management, and non-sports guests when needed (after 9/11, Super Storm Sandy, etc.). He's also raised a ton of money for various charities WFAN has been involved with through the years, including the Tomorrows Children's Fund, CJ Foundation for SIDS, WhyHunger, the Connecticut Sports Foundation, St. Francis Heart Hospital, and the New York City Police and Fire Departments.

Until he leaves his perch at WFAN, it's hard to see anyone pushing Francesa out of the number one position. If he does leave WFAN at the end of 2017, the big question will be, "What will he do next, and where?"



2

BOOMER ESIASON & CRAIG CARTON

WFAN
New York
CBS Radio
6-10 a.m.

Craig Carton and Boomer Esiason

Boomer and Carton had the unenviable task of replacing Don Imus, and did so in an amazing way: by rocketing to a consistent 1 or 2 in WFAN's target demo of Men 25-54. And they've been able to increase billing through the years.

Craig Carton tells *Radio Ink* that to make a sports talk show work the way they have, you have to be all in. "And by that, what we mean is that your life, 24/7, has to be fodder for your show," he says. "People need to care about you and feel connected to you. A host that shares real events and emotions and personal stories has a far better shot of truly connecting with an audience than a host who just shows up for his or her shift, picks a few stories from the paper, and goes home.

"Beyond that, a host needs to know more than just sports, and have a life and interests that have nothing to do with sports. I think we have been really consistent with how we deliver our show each and every day. Our listeners have a certain expectation of what Boomer and Carton will give them every morning, and I'd like to think that we deliver on that."

Boomer and Carton are also very involved and influential in raising money for important causes. Boomer Esiason runs the hugely successful Boomer Esiason Foundation for Cystic Fibrosis and works for the foundation tirelessly, raising millions of dollars. Craig Carton heads his foundation, Tic Toc Stop, to combat Tourette's Syndrome. Both have also been at the forefront of raising money for the families of fallen NYPD officers and money for the Dana and Christopher Reeves Foundation, and even for a local young man who was paralyzed while playing hockey.



3

Fred Toucher and Rich Shertenlieb

TOUCHER & RICH

WBZ-FM (98.5 The Sports Hub)
Boston
CBS Radio
6-10 a.m.

In 2016 Toucher and Rich won a Marconi Award for Major Market Personalities of the Year. (They were nominated in the same category in 2014.) The duo have been number one in Men 25-54 in their time slot 19 of the past 22 books, and have been number one with Men 18-49, Monday-Friday, for 22 books in a row.

Rich Shertenlieb tells *Radio Ink* the reason the show is successful is that he and Fred Toucher were friends before they ever did a show. "It's the reason we do a show together," he says. "I believe that the chances of a show succeeding go up exponentially if the people involved could talk for hours on end, even outside working hours. Bottom line, if you can do a show with your friends, do it."

"We were able to carve a niche just because everyone else in radio was treating sports as life-or-death, screaming about mid-season baseball. We're talking about multi-millionaires playing with a ball. You don't need to be outraged about the 48th man on the roster's underperformance. Fred and I found that stuff pretty hysterical, and that kind of formed the tone of the show."

In addition to their outstanding ratings record, Toucher and Rich connect with the local community. They created Cuts for a Cause with the Boston Bruins; each spring, the entire team shave their heads to benefit Tufts Floating Hospital for Children and the Boston Bruins Charities. This event has raised a million dollars over the years.



4

ANGELO CATALDI & THE MORNING TEAM

WIP (94WIP SportsRadio)
Philadelphia
CBS Radio
5:30-10 a.m.

Angelo Cataldi has been on the air for 26 years, all in Philadelphia, and he shows no signs of slowing down. He's still a ratings monster, for a revenue giant (94WIP is the top-billing station in the city). Cataldi sets the tone for fans across the Delaware Valley. In his 26 years at WIP, Cataldi has cemented his place as the voice of sports talk radio in Philadelphia.



5
TIE

Michael Felger and Tony Massarotti

FELGER & MASSAROTTI

WBZ-FM (98.5 The Sports Hub)
Boston
CBS Radio
2-6 p.m.

Felger and Mazz were nominated for Major Market Personalities of the Year by the NAB Marconi Awards in 2015. They're both former sport writers, covering the Boston sports teams since the early '90s. They teamed together on the radio for the first time when CBS launched The Sports Hub in 2009. Felger and Mazz have been number one in their time slot with Men 25-54, Men 18-49, and Men 18-34 every single PPM book for 22 months in a row.

The duo tell *Radio Ink* why Boston sports fans love their content every day. "It's an intense sports market, so we just try to feed that beast. We also tend to challenge the local teams a fair amount, and we're lucky to be in a market that appreciates that brand of commentary. We don't waste their time and aren't afraid to give them a hard opinion. Be honest with your listeners. Don't be afraid to make fun of yourself – that's usually the best stuff."



5
TIE

VALENTI & FOSTER

WXYT-FM
Detroit
CBS Radio
2-6 p.m.

Mike Valenti and Terry Foster

This year WXYT received both a Salute to America Award and a Station of the Year Marconi from the NAB, even as Valenti and Foster continue to dominate the Detroit market and set new standards for ratings. They've ranked number 1 for 28 consecutive months in the all-important Men 25-54 demo, and with Persons 25-54. The duo reach over 1 million listeners a month, and they have more than 193,000 Twitter followers as well as 34,000 Facebook followers.

While much of the Detroit sports media seem to be just cheerleaders, Valenti and Foster are a different breed. They speak the truth about the sports teams, the city, and themselves. Valenti tells *Radio Ink* that listeners respond to the content every day because he's always honest and fair.

"I know my opinions aren't going to sit well amongst the fans," he says. "Since I am not a fan of teams, I don't worry about the players or teams; that allows me to give a unique perspective of what I think went right or wrong. This quality has created a strong bond between the show and its listeners."

Mike Valenti and Terry Foster aren't just the biggest voices in Detroit sports, they are arguably the biggest voices in the Detroit market.



CONGRATULATES

**THE BEST
SPORTS
TALKERS**

OF 2016

**ANGELO CATALDI &
THE MORNING TEAM**

SportsRadio 94 WIP
PHILADELPHIA, PA

JOE & EVAN

WFAN
NEW YORK, NY

THE SPORTS JUNKIES

WJFK-FM | 106.7
WASHINGTON, DC

**BOOMER ESIASON
& CRAIG CARTON**

WFAN
NEW YORK, NY

MIKE FRANCESSA

WFSN
NEW YORK, NY

TOUCHER & RICH

WBZ-FM | 98.5
BOSTON, MA

DUKES & BELL

WGZC | 92.9 The Game
ATLANTA, GA

**THE BOERS &
BERNSTEIN SHOW**

WSCR-AM
CHICAGO, IL

VALENTI & FOSTER

WXYZ-FM
DETROIT, MI

**FELGER
& MASSAROTTI**

WBZ-FM | 98.5
BOSTON, MA

**THE MULLY &
HANLEY SHOW**

WSCR-AM
CHICAGO, IL

ZOLAK & BERTRAND

WBZ-FM | 98.5 The
Sports HUB
BOSTON, MA



6

THE MUSERS

KTCK
Dallas
Cumulus
5:30-10 a.m.

George Dunham,
Gordon Keith, and
Craig Miller



7

TOM WADDLE & MARC SILVY

WMVP-AM (ESPN Radio 1000)
Chicago
2-6 p.m.

Marc Silvy and Tom Waddle

8 THE MULLY & HANLEY SHOW

WSCR-AM (The Score)
Chicago
CBS Radio
5-9 a.m.

Mike Mulligan and Brian Hanley

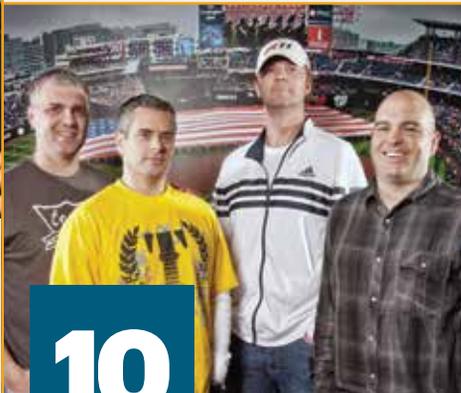


9

BRIAN MURPHY & PAUL McCAFFREY

KNBR
San Francisco
Cumulus
6-10 a.m.

Paul McCaffrey
and Brian Murphy



10

THE SPORTS JUNKIES

WJFK-FM (106.7 The Fan)
CBS Radio
Washington, DC
5-10 a.m.

Eric Bickel, Chad Dukes, John Martin, and Jason Bishop



11

GARY RADNICH & LARRY KRUEGER

KNBR
Cumulus
San Francisco
10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Gary Radnich
and Larry Krueger



12

MIKE MISSANELLI

WPEN (97.5 The Fanatic)
Philadelphia
Beasley
2-6 p.m.

13

TOM TOLBERT & JOHN LUND

KNBR
Cumulus
San Francisco
3-7 p.m.

John Lund and
Tom Tolbert



14

Michael Kay and
Don LaGreca

MICHAEL KAY & DON LA GRECA

WEPN (98.7 FM ESPN)
New York
3-7 p.m.



17

Kirk Minihane
and Gerry
Callahan

KIRK & CALLAHAN SHOW

WEEI/Boston
Entercom
5:30-10 a.m.



15

BOERS & BERNSTEIN

WSCR-AM (The Score)
Chicago
CBS Radio
1-6 p.m.

Terry Boers and Dan Bernstein



16

MITCH LEVY

KJR-AM
Seattle
iHeartMedia
6-10 a.m.





19

DUKES & BELL

WGZC-FM (The Game)
Atlanta
CBS Radio
2-7 p.m.

Mike Bell and
Carl Dukes



20

ZOLAK & BERTRAND

WBZ-FM (98.5 The Sports Hub)
Boston
CBS Radio
10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Scott Zolak (top) and
Marc Bertrand

THE HARDLINE

WTCK-FM (The Ticket)
Dallas
Cumulus Media
3-7 p.m.

18

Mike Rhyner and
Corby Davidson



22

BROCK HUARD & MIKE SALK

KIRO-AM (710 ESPN)
Seattle
Bonneville
6-10 a.m.

21

DAN SILEO

XPRS-AM (The Mighty 1090)
San Diego
6-9 a.m.

Hockey legend Bobby
Orr and Dan Sileo



Mike Salk and Brock Huard

23

JOE BENIGNO & EVAN ROBERTS

WFAN
New York
CBS Radio
10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Evan Roberts and
Joe Benigno



Congratulations to our

SPORTS TALK CHAMPIONS

who make it happen for
listeners every day.

Gary Radnich & Larry Krueger



"Gary & Larry"
680 KNBR, The Sports Leader
San Francisco, CA

Tom Tolbert



"Tom Tolbert & John Lund"
680 KNBR, The Sports Leader
San Francisco, CA

Heath Cline



"Game Time"
107.5 The Game, WNKT-FM
Columbia, SC

**George Dunham, Craig Miller
and Gordon Keith**



"The Musers"
The Ticket, Sportsradio 1310 AM & 96.7 FM
Dallas, TX

Brian Murphy & Paul McCaffrey



"Murph & Mac"
680 KNBR, The Sports Leader
San Francisco, CA

Mike Rhyner & Corby Davidson



"Hardline"
The Ticket, Sportsradio 1310 AM & 96.7 FM
Dallas, TX

"In baseball and in business, there are three types of people. Those who make it happen, those who watch it happen, and those who wonder what happened." ~ *Tommy Lasorda*



24

CHUCK OLIVER & MARK CHERNOFF

WCNN-AM (The Fan)
Atlanta
3-7 p.m.

Chuck Oliver and Mike Chernoff



DAVE MAHLER

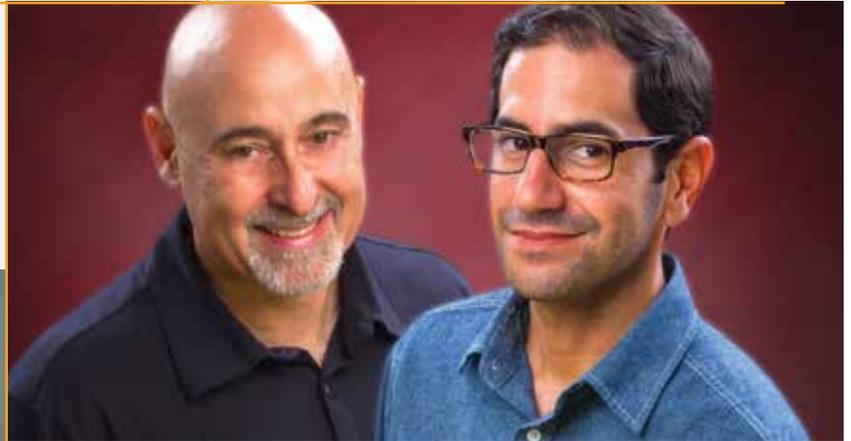
25

KJR-AM
Seattle
iHeartMedia
3-7 p.m.

26

BERNIE MIKLASZ

WXOS (101 ESPN)
St. Louis
Hubbard
7-10 a.m.



27

ADAM & JOE

WCMC-FM (99.9 The Fan)
Raleigh
Capitol Broadcasting
3-7 p.m.

Adam Gold and Joe Ovies

**CONGRATULATIONS TO
BERNIE MIKLASZ**

Honored as one of the **BEST Sports
Radio Talk Show Hosts in the Nation**





28 **GARY SHARP & DAMON BENNING**

KOZN-AM (The Zone)
Omaha
NRG Media
7-11 a.m.

Gary Sharp and Damon Benning

29 **SCHOPP & THE BULLDOG**

WGR-AM
Buffalo
Entercom
3-7 p.m.

Chris "The Bulldog"
Parker and Mike
Schopp



30

SCOTT KAPLAN & BILLY RAY SMITH

XPRS-AM (Mighty 1090)
San Diego
Broadcast Company of the Americas
3-6 p.m.

Billy Ray
Smith
and Scott
Kaplan

31 **JOHN CANZANO**

KXTG (760 The Game)
Portland, OR
Alpha Media
12-3 p.m.



Congratulations To Some of the Best LOCAL Sports Talkers in America!



Gary Sharp

Damon Benning



Nick Bahe



32

**MATT
MOSCONA**

WNXX-FM
Baton Rouge
Guaranty Media
3-6 p.m.

33

**HEATH
CLINE**

WNKT-FM (1075 The Game)
Columbia, SC
Cumulus
4-7 p.m.



34

**NICK
BAHE**

KOZN-AM (The Zone)
Omaha
NRG Media
11 a.m.-2 p.m.



35

**DARIN
PRITCHETT**

WSBT-FM
South Bend, IN
Midwest Family Broadcasting
5-7 p.m.



AFR

After Further Review

with Matt Moscona

Congratulations

Matt!

