



Sports Feature Story (less than 4 minutes)

The **Sports Feature Story** contest focuses on creating a compelling, human-interest broadcast segment related to sports. This type of story dives deeper into the personal or emotional aspects of sports, such as athlete profiles, overcoming challenges, or special events within the sports community. It should highlight the human side of athletics rather than merely reporting on scores or results.

Key Elements of the Sports Feature Story:

1. Human Interest Focus:

- The **sports feature** is about more than just the game or match—it emphasizes the **human element** behind the sport. The story could profile a particular athlete, coach, team, or an inspiring moment in sports. It may focus on themes like perseverance, teamwork, overcoming adversity, or personal growth through athletics.
- Examples could include a story about an athlete overcoming a severe injury, a coach making a difference in athletes' lives, or a unique story about a sports team's journey.

2. Rich Details and Descriptions:

- The feature should include **rich details** that help viewers understand the emotional or personal journey of the athletes involved. Descriptions of significant moments on and off the field should be vivid and engaging.
- Example: "Every morning before dawn, Michael laces up his running shoes, determined to overcome the injury that nearly ended his career. His determination is as strong as his stride."

3. Strong Narrative Structure:

- Like the general feature story, the **sports feature** should have a clear storytelling arc:
 - **Introduction:** Begin with an engaging hook, perhaps a compelling visual or a poignant moment in the athlete's journey.
 - **Development:** Build the story by introducing key details, such as the athlete's background, the challenge they faced, and the steps they took to overcome it.
 - **Climax:** The most significant or emotional moment in the story, such as a victory, a return to competition, or a personal breakthrough.
 - **Conclusion:** Wrap up the story with a resolution, offering closure or a forward-looking statement about the athlete's future or broader impact on the sports community.

4. Use of Sound Bites and Interviews:

- Interviews with **key individuals** are crucial to the sports feature. This could include the athlete, coach, teammates, or even family members. The sound bites should help illustrate the story's emotional or personal angle, providing insights that add depth.



- Example: A coach might say, “I’ve never seen anyone fight back from an injury like Michael did. His determination inspired the whole team.”
5. **Visual and Audio Synchronization:**
- **B-roll footage** is essential in sports features. This could include action shots of the athlete practicing, competing, or engaging in training sessions. The visuals should match the narration and sound bites, enhancing the story’s emotional impact.
 - **Natural sound** from the sports environment (e.g., the sound of a basketball hitting the court, the crowd cheering, or the sounds of the athlete’s training) helps immerse the viewer in the story.
 - Example: Footage of the athlete practicing after an injury or video of their family cheering from the sidelines.
6. **Focus on the Athlete’s Journey:**
- The story should not just focus on the athlete’s performance, but on their **personal journey**. Highlight how they’ve grown, the challenges they’ve faced, and what drives them to continue. The journey can be physical, mental, or emotional, and should inspire or resonate with the audience.
 - Example: If the story is about an athlete returning from an injury, show footage of their recovery process, their emotional highs and lows, and their eventual return to competition.
7. **Creative Writing Techniques:**
- Like other feature stories, sports features allow for **creative writing**. The writing should be descriptive, using metaphors, similes, or other techniques to make the story engaging.
 - Example: “For Michael, every step on the track feels like a victory—each one a reminder of how far he’s come since the accident.”
8. **Pacing and Time Management:**
- The sports feature must fit within the 4-minute limit, so **pacing** is crucial. The story should not feel rushed, but each section (introduction, development, climax, conclusion) should be given appropriate time. The feature should balance interviews, b-roll, and narration to create a cohesive and well-timed piece.
 - Avoid cramming in too much content. Instead, focus on the most impactful and emotional moments.
9. **Emotional Appeal:**
- The sports feature should evoke emotion—whether it’s inspiration, empathy, excitement, or admiration. The personal journey should resonate with viewers, showing that sports are more than just games—they are about personal triumphs, team bonds, and life lessons.
 - Example: A story about an athlete overcoming an injury could be emotional and uplifting, showing their determination to return to their sport and the support they received from their community.
10. **Strong Visuals and Technical Quality:**
- **Action shots** of the athlete competing or training are essential, but these should be paired with more personal footage, such as moments of reflection, preparation, or time with family and friends.



- The **technical quality** of the visuals should be high, with clear shots, appropriate lighting, and professional camera work. Any graphics (such as lower-thirds to identify interviewees) should be clean and easy to read.

11. Strong Ending:

- The ending should leave the viewer with a sense of closure or inspiration. It might look to the future, reflecting on what's next for the athlete or team, or summarize the lessons learned through their journey.
- Example: "As Michael looks toward his senior season, his focus isn't just on winning—it's on enjoying every moment of the game he fought so hard to play again."

Criteria for Judging:

- **Storytelling and Structure:** How well the story is structured and how effectively it tells a compelling, emotional narrative.
- **Emotional and Human Impact:** The ability to connect with viewers on a personal and emotional level, making the athlete's journey relatable and inspiring.
- **Visual and Audio Quality:** Technical execution, including clear visuals, appropriate sound bites, and well-chosen b-roll.
- **Pacing and Time Management:** Proper pacing within the 4-minute limit, allowing each section of the story to be fully developed without rushing.
- **Engagement and Creativity:** How captivating and creative the story is, and whether it holds the viewer's attention from start to finish.

In summary, the **Sports Feature Story** (less than 4 minutes) contest challenges students to create an emotionally engaging, human-interest piece focused on sports. It emphasizes personal stories, creative storytelling, and high-quality visuals, making the audience connect with the athlete or subject on a deeper level beyond the scoreboard.