

# SAN ANTONIO BUSINESS JOURNAL

## Sports Business

### **UTSA delivering what city needs now: key wins on a big stage**

With their historic run and national exposure, the Roadrunners can be an economic catalyst for SA



*The Alamodome is home to one of the hottest college football teams in America.*

By W. Scott Bailey — Senior Reporter, San Antonio Business Journal - October 21, 2021

Austin has piled up some important sports wins this year. And as it's drawn new light, San Antonio has endured more shade.

But if a football program still cutting its teeth can change the narrative, the one at UTSA is giving it one heck of a college try.

The timing could not be better.

In May, Austin celebrated the launch of its first major league sports franchise, an MLS expansion side San Antonio long chased. Then it was Austin, not San Antonio, mentioned by national media as a potential landing spot for the NFL Bills should that team leave Buffalo.

San Antonio's pursuit of major teams has been unspectacular.

And while this city has earned some important wins on the corporate front in recent years, they've arguably been overshadowed of late by Austin's billion-dollar Tesla factory score and word from the company earlier this month that the Capital City will get its headquarters too.

Enter the UTSA Roadrunners, a young football program that's created a euphoric vibe across San Antonio and drawn unprecedented national media attention with its record 7-0 start this season.

On Oct. 17, UTSA's so far unbeatable Birds cracked the top 25 college rankings for the first time ever.

UTSA head coach Jeff Traylor is preaching caution and character.

"At some point, hopefully not for a long time, the other team is going to have more points than us," he told reporters after the latest AP and USA Today polls were released.

But for now, people are taking notice of the unpredictable success and what it could mean in the economic arena.

National site selection expert John Boyd, principal for The Boyd Co., a Florida-based firm, said a successful college football program can affect "location branding." With the right exposure in a competitive market, he told me, it can be "a catalyst" for economic development activity.

Boyd said the national media exposure UTSA is receiving is a valuable platform that can help showcase the city.

It appears the American Athletic Conference has taken note. At press time its leadership was reportedly looking to lure six teams from Conference USA — including UTSA — into its league.

Boyd expects others will as well.

It's an enviable perch for the Roadrunners. And a chance now for San Antonio to shine.