

NHL

Protecting the pay-TV model was behind Rogers' record-breaking deal

By Dan Horlock

The C\$5.23bn (€3.7bn/US\$5bn) which Canadian telco Rogers Communications last week agreed to pay for the exclusive rights on all platforms to ice hockey's National Hockey League – the country's biggest-ever sports-rights deal – was largely to protect the company's pay-television business model against the long-term threat posed by the internet.

Most media analysts agreed that the deal made sense in a world where the television audience is fragmenting, more and more consumers are "cutting the cord" – dropping bundled pay-television services for internet-based services like Netflix – and where younger people are increasingly abandoning the TV set altogether for tablets and smartphones.

Top live sport is increasingly seen as the only product that can convince customers to pay for bundled pay-television packages and triple-play services bundling

television content with telephony. With one deal, Rogers has locked down Canada's most important live sports content for the foreseeable future.

Barry Schwartz, vice president of Baskin Financial Services, a company that manages portfolios and owns shares in both of the country's biggest telcos, Rogers and Bell, said: "You can't duplicate live sports and news through Netflix and other mediums. It's an arms race and it's got to be done."

The deal has two added pluses for Rogers: it gives them exclusive content to drive their mobile services and it hurts rival Bell, which operates pay-television operator TSN and French language channel RDS – the incumbent NHL rights-holders. As Schwartz put it, "the deal really differentiates Rogers from Bell as being the go-to name, having the

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REGULATION 1

EPL gets tough with the 'family'

By Frank Dunne

The Premier League's decision last week to limit the live Saturday 3pm matches of two of its international broadcast partners – Fox Sports in Italy and Al Jazeera in the Middle East and North Africa – took the industry by surprise for two reasons.

First, such an aggressive move against two major industry players is highly unusual for top rights-holders. The league has taken such action before but only

against minor broadcasters in small markets.

Italy is a relatively low-value market for the league but Fox's parent company, 21st Century Fox, is one of the most powerful buyers of sport in the world and also parent company to BSkyB, the Premier League's most important broadcaster since 1992. As one industry source put it

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FASTRACK 1

NEWS IN BRIEF

Real and Sevilla set to join Barça in appeal against fines

Spanish La Liga clubs Real Madrid and Sevilla will join the Mediapro agency and Barcelona in appealing the media-rights fines imposed last week by Spain's competition regulator, *TV Sports Markets* understands.

Racing Santander, the fourth club fined, will not appeal. The agency and the clubs were hit with fines totalling close to €15m (\$20.3m).

Mediapro signed four-year deals with the clubs in the current round of agreements, which expire next season – a practice that since 2010 has been outlawed by the Comisión Nacional de la Competencia.

The size of the fines was linked to the value of the media-rights contracts between Mediapro and the clubs. Mediapro was fined €6.5m, Real Madrid €3.9m, Barcelona €3.6m and Sevilla €900,000.

Real Madrid and Barcelona's contracts are each worth €130m per season, rising to €140m in the final year of the contract, the 2014-15 season. Sevilla's contract is worth €32m per season and expires in the same season.

The basis of Mediapro and the clubs' appeals is that the regulator's resolution contradicts Spain's General Broadcasting Act, which permits the signing of contracts for the acquisition of broadcasting rights for up to four seasons. Mediapro cited the same law last year when rival media group Prisa began signing media rights deals with clubs the agency had under contract.

It is understood that third-tier Racing Santander will not appeal its fine. Racing was ordered to pay €30,000. The club is in severe financial difficulties and cannot afford to appoint a lawyer to appeal the decision. One local football expert said that the club owed €9m to the tax office and was struggling to stay afloat. He said it was highly unlikely the fine would ever be paid. ■

NBA settles for one UK home

The National Basketball Association secured a modest increase in the value of its UK rights following a two-year deal with pay-television newcomer BT Sport. The deal is thought to be worth slightly less than \$2m (€1.5m) per year, and covers the 2013-14 and 2014-15 seasons.

This is an increase on its previous deals with pay-television broadcasters ESPN and BSkyB, which combined were worth less than \$1.4m per year. ESPN's deal was close to \$1m per year, while Sky's deal was about \$400,000 per year. The deal was negotiated directly between the NBA and BT. Sky is thought to have been keen to renew its deal.

The NBA is thought to have wanted to agree a deal with just one broadcaster this time. Its main objective was to increase exposure for the league. Under the deal, BT will show up to seven matches per week.

It is thought that BT was keen to have the rights for more than one year in an attempt to develop the sport. BT is eager to market itself as the league's sole UK broadcaster in the long term. BT will be able to provide the NBA with regular broadcast slots. The scheduling of ESPN and Sky had been inconsistent.

The NBA is not a big subscriptions driver in the UK – basketball is very much a niche sport. But BT feels the sport has a decent following, and that it can generate interest in basketball.

One rights expert said that the NBA rights provided BT with "high-quality, late-night live sport," and that it would not clash with any local sport. The NBA is also a prestige sports brand, popular with a younger demographic, and the rights provide a lot of programming at a fairly low price.

Above their intrinsic interest, the NBA rights have also been valuable to Sky because they complement its coverage of American football's NFL by providing additional North American sport content. ■

World Cup bidding war 'unlikely'

New Zealand media were this week reporting a bidding war in the country for the 2015 Rugby World Cup in England and Wales which will push the rights fee up. Local rights experts told *TV Sports Markets*, however, that they expected the value to fall by anything up to five times the previous level.

An increase on the 2011 tournament would be a massive surprise. Broadcasters always pay less for a World Cup played in a different hemisphere. And pay-television operator Sky and the free-to-air syndicate of broadcasters which showed the 2011 edition paid a big premium because the World Cup was hosted in New Zealand.

One rugby expert predicted that the fee would be a "maximum" of \$3m (€2.2m), compared to the \$15m that pay-television broadcaster Sky and the free-to-air syndicate paid for the rights to the 2011 tournament.

"The rights fee for the World Cup is largely set by what the broadcaster can generate from advertising on free-to-air television and \$3m is the top of the market," the expert said.

In 2011, the rights were sold in two separate packages for free-to-air and pay-television. The free-to-air rights were worth about a third of the total.

There was more interest in the free-to-air rights in 2011, with broadcasters TVNZ, Maori TV and TV3 competing for them. All three were members of the free-to-air syndicate that acquired the rights but have since backed away from sport. "All three have taken the view that sport is not a go. It is an awful market for sellers," one industry executive said.

Sky is the favourite to acquire the rights exclusively this time, and to exploit them on its own platforms. Sky owns the free-to-air channel Prime.

The rights are sold by Rugby World Cup Limited, the tournament organisers and a subsidiary of the International Rugby Board. RWCL is advised by the IMG Media agency. ■

NHL

'Educated gamble' by Rogers is a long-term strategic play

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biggest and boldest live sports suite of any of the cable providers.”

The deal

In the new deal, Rogers will pay the NHL C\$436m per season for 12 seasons, from 2014-15 to 2025-26. The agreement gives Rogers national rights to all NHL games, including the Stanley Cup play-offs and Stanley Cup Final, on all of its platforms in all languages. In addition to its exclusive rights for all play-off and Cup Final games, Rogers has exclusive rights to special events such as future NHL All-Star Games and NHL drafts.

The agreement also guarantees that there will be no further local blackouts. Rogers has three exclusive windows to broadcast any game involving a Canadian team – Wednesday nights, Saturday nights and Sunday nights.

The deal has to be approved by the NHL Board of Governors who are scheduled to meet on December 9-10 in California. The approval is expected to be a formality.

In the current six-year deal, from 2008-09 to 2013-14, rival telco Bell's pay-television broadcaster TSN and public-service broadcaster Canadian Broadcasting Corporation hold the national rights. TSN will broadcast around 150 regular-season games this season. RDS holds the French-language rights. None of the broadcasters have internet or mobile rights.

It is understood that the combined deals are worth more than C\$1bn over the six years, or about C\$175m per season. CBS's deal is thought to be worth the majority of the fee, at around C\$100m per season.

Schwartz said that Rogers was taking a gamble with the size of its payment but that it was an “educated” gamble by the company.

“We don't know how the landscape will lie in 12 years' time. But remember

Rogers is vertically integrated, they own the pipeline to millions of homes in Canada, they own internet, and they are selling triple play. They also own content through Rogers Media,” he said.

He said that the deal gave Rogers Communications the option to spin off Rogers Media as a lucrative standalone business in the future. “The media companies in the US trade at high multiples to earnings. Look at Disney, Viacom, Discovery etc. Those are pure play content providers and they trade at high multiples.”

Rogers Media, the division of the company which controls the Sportsnet networks, radio stations, magazine and websites, is only a small part of the overall business, accounting for 13 per cent of revenue and four per cent of operating profit in 2012.

Return on investment

Rogers will seek to refinance its investment in the NHL in a number of ways. These include sublicensing deals with other operators, higher cable subscriber fees, selling premium NHL packages and increased advertising revenues.

Schwartz said that Rogers' shareholders would have to wait to see a return on their investment. “By having the NHL they'll be able to raise prices over time, prevent churn, command higher advertising rates, and get the cash flow that justifies paying a very large multiple.”

Rogers Media president Keith Pelley told Canadian media that having more games than anyone has had before and having content across all platforms meant that Rogers was in a position to offer advertisers “the most integrated, activated, marketing solution that has ever been given to them.”

Rogers' president of broadcasting, Scott Moore, said that the broadcaster had given the league everything they could afford to offer to secure the rights. It is understood that there was clear daylight between the bids from Rogers and TSN.

Sublicensing deals

Rogers has already signed two sublicensing deals to offset its costs. Its deal for the French-language rights with

French-language broadcaster TVA is understood to be worth C\$1.5bn over the 12 years, or C\$125m per season.

Its other sublicensing deal, with CBC covering four seasons, from 2014-15 to 2017-18, has no rights fee, although Rogers will sell advertising space in the time slot and keep all revenues. CBC will continue to broadcast two Saturday night matches on a non-exclusive basis.

CBC generates about C\$100m per year in advertising revenue from its NHL coverage, a third of its total advertising revenue, according to Wade Rowland, a professor at York University in Toronto and author of a book on the public broadcaster's budget.

CBC president and chief executive, Hubert Lacroix, said that this deal was symptomatic of how the broadcaster planned to continue operating. Lacroix said that the broadcaster would look for partnerships where they could promote their programming without having to spend money and take the risk of being the exclusive broadcaster partner.

Mobile

Using the rights across multiple devices, particularly on mobile, is a central part of Rogers' strategy as it tries to future-proof its business. NHL fans who acquire mobile content directly from the league in the current deal may find that in order to get coverage on their mobile device in the future they will have to subscribe to a wider Rogers package.

The NHL commissioner Gary Bettman said that a key part of the league's focus was finding a partner which would target the younger demographic who consumed content via means other than on television.

Rogers will stream games on the internet, wireless and mobile devices, and satellite radio to Canadian consumers. Rogers will also operate the out-of-market sports packages for television, NHL Center Ice, and online, NHL GameCenter Live, in Canada.

In addition to matches, Rogers will look at a more personal type of coverage, gaining access to the players' personal lives and building a relationship between the stars and the viewers. The coverage would be exploited across all

platforms, including on social media. Bettman said that NHL fans wanted to get a more emotional connection with the sport, which is what Rogers has promised to deliver.

The exclusive, multi-platform approach is something the league had insisted on when tendering the rights. The deal represented the first time that a major North American sport had sold its national rights on an exclusive basis.

Not the end for TSN

Losing the national pay-television rights to the country's most popular sports is a huge blow for TSN. It has had

the rights since the 2002-03 season and has been credited with revolutionising the way the NHL is shown. Innovations included day-long trade deadline and free agent coverage as well as television coverage of the NHL draft and the All-Star Game fantasy draft.

However, the broadcaster still has a large number of regional NHL rights, including: 10 Toronto Maple Leafs games, rising to 26 in 2015, more than 60 Winnipeg Jets games, and 75 per cent of Montreal Canadiens matches.

Its sister-channel RDS also has deals for French-language rights for the Ottawa

Senators and the Montreal Canadiens.

TSN's sports portfolio without the NHL rights, includes: 77 Canadian Football League regular-season and play-off games; men's, women's and junior world ice hockey championships; the national and world curling championships; Major League Soccer; and some NBA basketball games courtesy of its stake in the Toronto Raptors. It also holds the Canadian distribution rights for a package of NFL games, including the Sunday night and Monday night games, all four majors from golf and tennis, and some Premier League matches. ■

EURO 2016

Uefa seals further increases in Hong Kong and Sweden

By Robin Jellis and Dan Horlock

Uefa, football's European governing body, secured rights-fee increases for Euro 2016 in recent deals in Sweden and Hong Kong.

In Sweden, it earned an increase of more than 30 per cent for the rights compared to Euro 2012 in deals with SVT and TV4 last month. It also secured an increase in Hong Kong, although there are conflicting versions of how large the uplift was.

The rights in both markets were sold by CAA Eleven, Uefa's sales agent for national team competitions.

Swedish public-service broadcaster SVT and commercial broadcaster TV4 picked up the rights for about €24m (\$32.4m). This is up from about €18m for Euro 2012. The increase was largely driven by competition from multi-territory commercial and pay-television broadcaster Modern Times Group. MTG is thought to have discussed a pan-Nordic bid with Uefa.

Despite the increase, Uefa will earn slightly less per match in the new deal – from about €580,000 per match to about €470,000 – as the number of games has been increased from 31 at Euro 2012 to 51 at Euro 2016.

Uefa had hoped SBS Discovery Media,

which operates free and basic-tier channels across the region, would bid, but the broadcaster is thought to have felt that the European Qualifiers, which SBS has already acquired, provide enough football content.

The deal is the second to have been agreed in the Nordics for Euro 2016, following its deal in Norway with public-service broadcaster NRK and commercial and pay-television broadcaster TV2. The €15m deal provided Uefa with an increase of about 25 per cent compared to Euro 2012 (*TV Sports Markets* 17:16).

The Euro 2012 rights across Denmark, Norway and Sweden were acquired by SVT, TV4 and pay-television platform Canal Digital, which is owned by telco Telenor, in a deal worth around €42m. The rights in both Denmark and Norway were both worth about €12m.

A consortium of seven free-to-air Nordic broadcasters is thought to have had a bid for Euro 2016 and European Qualifiers rejected by Uefa in May (*TV Sports Markets* 17:10). The federation opted to sell its rights market by market as the consortium bid fell below Uefa's valuation.

One local rights expert said that Uefa's strategy had been successful. On the basis of its deals so far for the European Qualifiers and Euro 2016, Uefa was on course to earn more than the consortium had offered, he said.

The Euro 2016 rights are still to be sold in Denmark and Finland. The rights

in Denmark are expected to be won by public-service broadcaster DR and commercial broadcaster TV2.

Hong Kong

Pan-regional pay-television broadcaster beIN Sport secured its first exclusive rights deal in Hong Kong with its acquisition of the Euro 2016 rights.

BeIN Sport paid an increase on the \$8m fee pay-television broadcaster PCCW paid for the 2012 tournament, although the scale of the increase was disputed. Sources close to the governing body said the deal was worth about \$14m, while sources close to the broadcaster said it was worth about \$10m.

BeIN Sport, a joint venture between Al Jazeera and the MP & Silva agency, is in negotiations to distribute its two channels on pay-television platforms i-Cable and PCCW. The joint venture signed a non-exclusive two-year carriage deal in October, from 2013-14 to 2014-15, with commercial broadcaster TVB's pay-television service.

Competition for Euro 2016 rights was limited. Until beIN Sport's entry into the market, with its two channels launching last month, rights fees from pay-television had been stagnant for some time. There was no growth from the previous fee for Euro 2008 while the fee for the premium sports rights property in the country, the English Premier League, dropped by five per cent to about \$65m per season for the three years from 2013-14 to 2015-16. ■

SKIING

EBU deal will boost exposure in US growth market

By Robin Jellis

The Fédération Internationale de Ski, skiing's world governing body, is targeting increased coverage of its Alpine and Nordic World Championship events following this week's deal with the US Ski and Snowboard Association.

The deal was agreed between the USSA and the European Broadcasting Union, the consortium of public-service broadcasters, with final approval from Fis. There was no tender for the rights. The EBU has the global rights to both championships in a deal worth €93.5m (\$126m), covering events in 2015 and 2017.

The USSA will distribute rights in the US. The rights cover television, radio, online and mobile rights for both the 2015 and 2017 events of both championships. The deal is worth between €400,000 and €600,000. This is thought to be an increase of about 20 per cent on NBC's previous deal covering the championships in 2013.

The EBU is thought to be looking to generate between €1.2m and €1.8m for its rights outside Europe. Europe is the main market for Fis events, accounting for more than 95 per cent of the total value of the global EBU deal.

The US is worth up to 35 per cent of the value of the rights ex-Europe, with Japan contributing about 40 per cent and South Korea about 10 per cent. The other markets where the EBU hopes to agree deals are Canada, China, Australia, New Zealand, Argentina and Brazil.

The Infront Sports & Media agency previously sold rights to Fis events outside Europe on behalf of the EBU. It is thought that the EBU chose to sell its rights itself this time because it wanted to have greater control over how the rights were exploited.

The USSA is thought to be close to renewing a deal with US media company NBCUniversal. For the 2013 championships, NBC showed between three and four hours of highlights for

each championship on the NBC Sports Network. In the new deal, NBC will offer up to 15 hours of live coverage of both championships, as well as highlights, on NBC Sports Network. There may also be some coverage on the NBC network. ■

CRICKET

CPL looks to test the market to find real value of T20

By Dan Horlock

The organisers of the Caribbean Premier League expect to significantly increase the value of the tournament's global media rights over the next three years with a greater lead-in time and longer rights duration on offer.

The CPL's chief executive Damien O'Donohoe told *TV Sports Markets* this week: "Last time we went to market late and it was an unproven product. We're now in a completely different position for year two."

For the inaugural 2013 season the Twenty20 cricket league appointed the IMG Media agency to market its distribution and production. The league took a wait-and-see approach by signing a one-tournament deal with the agency. IMG had only a few months to market the rights before the tournament began on July 30. IMG is understood to have secured global rights fees of just over \$500,000 (€370,000).

The agency agreed deals in all the major cricket markets with the exception of the Middle East, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Pakistan. It also failed to secure a pan-Asia deal covering the cricket-loving expat communities in South East Asia.

"It was a difficult job for IMG, who we were very happy with. We would be happy to work with them again but we want to test the market to find the value of these rights," O'Donohoe said.

For the inaugural season, the most valuable deals outside of the Caribbean were with pay-television broadcaster ESPN in the US and the Sony media group in India. The rights fee for the US was on a par with that in the Caribbean,

where the rights were held by ESPN and free-to-air broadcaster Caribbean Media Corporation.

The US is a growth market for the sport. In recent years the International Cricket Council, the Australian Cricket Board and the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) have signed rights deals at huge increases. Pay-television operators ESPN and Willow compete for rights. Digital sports media company Perform entered the market to acquire the ECB rights in April, while pay-television channel Ten Cricket also shows cricket in the region. Cricket is a niche sport in the US but is popular amongst expatriate communities.

O'Donohoe said that the league would look to capitalise on the market by attracting a franchise owner in the country. "We would be looking for somebody to launch a franchise in Fort Lauderdale [Florida]. It already has a cricket stadium and is only a short trip from the Caribbean. The West Indies play there and have drawn out some good crowds."

The tournament is currently composed of six franchise teams: Antigua Hawksbills, Barbados Tridents, Guyana Amazon Warriors, Jamaica Tallawahs, St Lucia Zouks and the Trinidad Red Steels. It is divided into a round-robin stage and a knockout stage. The 2014 league season is scheduled to take place between July 10 and August 17.

The CPL is broadcast over the same period as English cricket's rebranded T20 competition, T20 Blast. O'Donohoe said that the CPL would not move match times around to avoid any scheduling clashes or to favour other markets.

"The product we have is an evening T20 cricket game and I'm not willing to change the times to suit anybody other than the local market. If you play with that and have games at 10am it affects the core product." He said that the inaugural tournament was a "huge success" and that it would be "very stupid" to change the times to suit anyone other than those in the West Indies.

The CPL last week invited parties to tender for the domestic and international media rights to the series for three seasons, from 2014 to 2016. Bids must be submitted by December 19. The winning bidder must guarantee free-to-air coverage throughout the Caribbean. ■

REGULATION 1

EPL gets tough with Murdoch Italy to protect Murdoch UK

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this week, “there have been similar actions by the league in the past in Greece and Albania but the difference is that here they are going after ‘family’ in Italy and a big licensee in Al Jazeera.”

Second, it is widely known that the problem which gave rise to the dispute – the signals used by Al Jazeera and Fox being picked up in the UK, allowing pubs to show matches which are not otherwise shown in the UK – is an old one.

The league had extensive discussions with Al Jazeera about the problem prior to selling the broadcaster the rights in previous rights cycles. It is thought to have raised the matter again this cycle with the MP & Silva agency, which paid about €300m (\$405m) for the rights before selling them on to Al Jazeera.

In Italy, previous rights-holder Sky Italia – which is also owned by 21st Century Fox – was warned many times by the league that its signal was among those most commonly used by UK pubs. Insiders say that it is inconceivable that

this was not raised with the Pitch International agency, which paid about €36m for the Italian rights in the current cycle, before selling them on to Fox.

The new get-tough policy is understood to be a product of a far clearer regulatory environment following the landmark 2011 European Court of Justice ruling about Premier League broadcasts and, more pertinently, a related ruling in the UK High Court in July (*TV Sports Markets* 17:14).

The ECJ ruling left some grey areas about the extent of the league’s copyright in its match broadcasts. That was cleared up by the High Court ruling, at least as far as the UK is concerned.

One UK rights expert said this week: “Now it is very clear what the league’s copyright covers and that broadcasting a Premier League match in a pub is considered to be a ‘communication to the public’ which requires the league’s authorisation. The whole landscape has changed.”

The action is part of a wider battle to protect the massive investment in the UK of live rights-holders BSkyB and BT Sport, which between them are paying nearly €1.2bn per season for live rights.

This includes a more aggressive approach to prosecuting UK pubs which show Premier League matches without a Sky or BT subscription, and

the successful action in the High Court against UK internet service providers whose customers had access to a website, FirstRow Sports, which was showing live Premier League games without authorisation.

Another rights expert said this week that while the league appeared to be taking a gamble by alienating Al Jazeera, given the lack of competition for its rights in the Middle East, not demonstrating to BT and Sky that it was aggressively protecting their investment would be a far bigger gamble.

In Al Jazeera’s contract, the broadcaster can show all Saturday 3pm kick-offs. Currently it is limited to one. The broadcaster is losing about half the content it paid for and subscribers have been complaining. Fox can show one 3pm kick-off under the terms of its contract and currently cannot show any. Both broadcasters have apologised to their subscribers and said that the decision is out of their hands.

Tripartite meetings were taking place this week between the league, Pitch and Fox in Italy, and with MP & Silva and Al Jazeera in the Middle East. Broadcast experts say that it will be very difficult for the two broadcasters to limit the supply of their signal and smartcards into the UK in a short time frame. ■

REGULATION 2

EC probe unlikely to lead to pan-European deals

By Frank Dunne

The long-running European Commission investigation into the sale of sports and film rights within the European Union is unlikely to lead to rights being sold on a pan-European basis, according to sources familiar with the process.

The investigation was launched after the landmark case between UK publican Karen Murphy and English football’s Premier League.

The commission is said to recognise

that the European media market is not homogenous enough for content producers to be required to sell all content on a pan-European basis.

Any attempt to cut out national broadcasters as potential buyers of important content would undermine the whole European television industry. The commission sees benefits with pan-European distribution in some forms of content, such as Hollywood films, but has no dogmatic commitment to enforcing this for all content.

However, Brussels is said to have concerns about rights-holders requiring buyers to geo-block internet content. This effectively confers a form of absolute territorial exclusivity on the rights-holder that is now illegal with television rights. The Murphy case left the issue of internet

rights unresolved.

Senior competition lawyers say that the commission would also be concerned if there was evidence that broadcasters were withholding their services from EU citizens living in other member states, especially if there was some form of tacit agreement among broadcasters to do so.

The key legal principle established by the Murphy case is that consumers are free to acquire pay-television services from a provider of their choice, anywhere in Europe. This freedom – which the commission cherishes – is only meaningful if consumers can, in practice, buy the relevant set-top boxes and cards.

Fact-finding mission

As part of its investigation, the commission last year carried out a

fact-finding mission into how Europe's television market was operating since the European Court of Justice ruling in the Murphy case in October 2011. It analysed sports-rights contracts, for example, between major rights-holders and broadcasters to ensure their compliance with the law post-Murphy.

Since the ruling, rights-holders have continued to sell their rights in Europe on a territory-by-territory basis. The main difference is that rights are now sold in the local language only and contracts generally do not include clauses which attempt to hermetically seal television transmissions within a national boundary. Internet rights, however, are still sold on an exclusive territorial basis, which the licensee must enforce by geo-blocking.

This results in the situation that, for example, a UK subscriber to BSkyB's

sports channels could begin watching a Premier League match online at the beginning of a train journey from London to Paris, but the signal would be scrambled once he/she passed into French territory.

As one lawyer put it, "you can now, in theory, watch a TV channel of your choice but cannot do the same thing on the internet. A good approach for rights-holders and broadcasters would be to recognise that the logic of the Murphy ruling as it applies to TV ought to apply to the internet."

Another rights expert said the industry should be taking the lead in opening up the internet, not "always waiting for the next letter to come from Brussels." He added: "It is simply not commercially damaging to allow genuine pay-TV subscribers to access their content wherever they are in Europe. There would

be no impact on rights revenues. The industry is full of conservative people who are obsessed with exclusivity."

The commission views any practices which undermine the universal nature of the internet, and its potential as a single European market, very seriously.

In its 2011 policy document on building a coherent online market in Europe, the commission said: "Internet Europe' is still a patchwork of different laws, rules, standards and practices, often with little or no interoperability. This hinders the development of online services and undermines the confidence of existing or future users on both the supply and the demand side. The Digital Single Market is far from achieving its full potential; the cost of the failure to complete it is expected to be at least 4.1 per cent of GDP between now and 2020, i.e. €500bn or €1,000 per citizen." ■

RUGBY UNION

LNR looks set to improve on big C+ Top 14 offer

By Robin Jellis

The Ligue Nationale de Rugby is well-placed to greatly increase its domestic rights fee for the Top 14 after this week rejecting a vastly improved offer from incumbent rights-holder Canal Plus, local rights experts believe.

The LNR, which operates the Top 14, the top-tier rugby division in France, is hoping to agree a deal worth at least €80m (\$108m) per season, after activating a cancellation clause in its current deal with pay-television broadcaster Canal Plus.

This appears ambitious when set against the average of €31.7m per season which Canal Plus pays in its current five-year deal from 2011-12 to 2015-16. The league turned down an improved offer from Canal Plus which was close to €65m per season. The LNR this week launched a tender for the rights.

One well-placed source said that the league was unlikely to have gone back to market if it had not received strong signals

from the market that it could agree a deal more lucrative than the new Canal Plus offer. In particular, according to one expert, the league must have received a clear indication from the Al Jazeera-owned broadcaster beIN Sport that it planned to bid aggressively for the rights. The level of increase hinges on the league being able to draw beIN Sport into the bidding.

The LNR's cancellation clause ends Canal Plus's contract two seasons early. The league had until December 31 to cancel the contract. Canal Plus will retain its rights until the end of the 2013-14 season.

The new tender will cover the top two French rugby divisions, the Top 14 and the Pro D2, and will run for four seasons, from 2014-15 to 2017-18. The host broadcaster would also have to cover production costs on top of a rights fee. Top 14 matches are thought to cost about €50,000 each to produce.

The Top 14 is a good subscription driver for pay-television. It is the second most important domestic sports property behind the top French football league, Ligue 1. Of Canal Plus's 5m subscribers, about 500,000 are thought to be big rugby fans.

Following the emergence of beIN Sport, Canal Plus is thought to be focusing on retaining key properties. One source said that losing the Top 14 would

undermine the prestige of Canal Plus. The broadcaster is thought to be determined to retain the rights.

The league has two broad options to hit its target. It can try to draw the two broadcasters into a head-to-head battle for exclusive rights to all games, banking on a large exclusivity premium. Or it can try to find a sharing model that would satisfy each broadcaster enough to push up the combined fee. There is not thought to be any interest in the rights from free-to-air broadcasters.

One expert said that one solution would be for Canal Plus to acquire a package of first- or second-pick rights, which would still leave an attractive package for beIN Sport with the volume of the remaining matches. This is how Ligue 1 are split. Uefa Champions League live rights are also shared by the two.

The league will tender mobile rights separately. These rights were included in Canal Plus's deal from 2012-13. They were previously held by telco Orange in a four-year deal, from 2008-09 to 2011-12, for €1.5m per year.

The Pro D2 currently earns €1.1m per year in deals with pan-European sports broadcaster Eurosport, Canal Plus and public-service broadcaster France Télévisions. ■

FASTRACK 2

NEWS IN BRIEF

Beeb secures its place as 'terrestrial home of tennis'

The BBC is thought to be paying just under £100,000 (€120,000/\$162,000) per year to renew its two-year deal for non-exclusive coverage of the ATP World Tour Finals in a deal agreed last month. The deal covers the 2014 and 2015 tournaments.

The fee is similar to that paid by the UK public-service broadcaster in its previous two-year deal, covering 2012 and 2013. Production costs are handled by the ATP.

The BBC was thought to be keen to renew its deal as British number one Andy Murray is highly likely to play in both the 2014 and 2015 tournaments. The tournament is contested by the top eight men's tennis players in the ATP rankings. Murray missed the 2013 tournament through injury.

The tournament does not create the scheduling headaches thrown up by other major tennis tournaments. Matches are the best of three sets rather than the best of five so it is easier to predict when matches will begin and end.

The rights also complement the BBC's rights to the Wimbledon and Queen's Club Championships, positioning the broadcaster as "the terrestrial home of tennis," one expert said. Neither of the UK's main commercial broadcasters, ITV and Channel 4, bid for the rights.

The BBC has broadcast the World Tour Finals since the event was first held at the O2 Arena in London, in 2009. The O2's deal to host the event initially ran from 2009 to 2013, but was later extended until 2015. The broadcaster will show eight matches, one per day, including the opening match, one semi-final and the final.

The rights are non-exclusive as pay-television broadcaster BSkyB holds the rights to all ATP World Tour 500 and World Tour Masters 1000 men's tournaments, as well as the

World Tour Finals, in a five-year deal from 2014 to 2018. The deal is worth about £8m per year.

The ATP carves out a package for free-to-air coverage of the World Tour Finals to ensure greater exposure for its sponsors, especially the event's title sponsor – banking group Barclays, which pays about £4.5m per year in 2014 and 2015. The rights are sold by the ATP's commercial arm, Tennis Properties Limited. ■

Nobody overtaking SRG for F1

Formula One Management, the commercial rights-holder for the motor racing series, earned a small increase last month in a three-year renewal with Swiss public-service broadcaster SRG SSR.

SRG SSR, a long-term broadcaster of Formula One races, agreed a rights fee of slightly less than €3m (\$4m) per year, from 2014 to 2016. The value is thought to have increased only slightly compared to the broadcaster's previous deal, from 2011 to 2013. Its deal from 2008 to 2010 was worth €2.5m per year.

SRG SSR is not thought to have faced any competition for the rights. Switzerland is one of the few markets where the public-service broadcaster is still the dominant free-to-air broadcaster.

The value of the rights is negatively affected by overspill from surrounding territories. German- and Italian-language coverage, on German commercial broadcaster RTL and Italian state broadcaster Rai, is available in Switzerland.

The rights were not tendered. The deal was agreed in direct talks between the broadcaster and FOM.

SRG SSR is thought to have been keen to renew a deal for a sport it has shown since 1969. The broadcaster considers Formula One to be one of the core sports in its rights portfolio.

Motorsport is one of the top five sports in Switzerland, behind winter

sport, ice hockey, football and tennis. Local interest is primarily because of the Sauber team, which is based in Zurich, and was founded by Swiss businessman Peter Sauber. There is also some interest in Swiss-born driver Romain Grosjean, although he races under the French flag.

SRG SSR has rights to all races, qualifying and practice sessions. The deal is thought to include an option where SRG SSR can show practice sessions in a geo-blocked online stream, a new element to the deal.

SRG SSR will broadcast coverage in four languages, on four different channels: SRF, German-language; RTS, French-language; RSI, Italian-language; and RTR, Romansch-language. ■

OneAsia cancellation is bad timing

The unexpected cancellation of Asian golf tour OneAsia's season-ending Tour Championship in China next month after failing to secure enough top players could be damaging ahead of new contract talks, experts say.

The tour operator's biggest media rights deal is with pan-Asia pay-television broadcaster ESPN Star Sports, now Star in India and Fox Sports in the rest of Asia. The five-year deal, from 2010 to 2014, expires at the end of next season.

"This is bad press for the Tour as they will be coming to the market in the new year. A broadcaster needs to be able to rely on a rights-holder to comply with its schedule so that it can plan around it," one local expert said.

It is thought that financial losses will be minimal, with current sponsorship and broadcast deals unaffected. OneAsia could have lost about \$300,000 (€222,000) in upfront staging costs for the Tour Championship.

The OneAsia Tour was created in 2009 by the China Golf Association, the Korea Golf Association, the Korean PGA and the Australian PGA. The World Sport Group agency distributes and manages the Tour's rights. ■

SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from November 21 to December 4

MEDIA RIGHTS 1

Football: Euro 2016, Champions League, Fifa Club World Cup and more

- **Football:** Pay-television broadcaster beIN Sport Asia acquired rights in Hong Kong for Uefa Euro 2016. The agreement includes all matches across all platforms. BeIN Sport, which is a joint venture between Al Jazeera and the MP & Silva agency, launched two new channels in Hong Kong in November – the football-dedicated beIN Sport 1 and the multi-sport channel beIN Sport 2, in a carriage deal with commercial broadcaster TVB's pay-television service (page 4).
- **Football:** UK commercial broadcaster ITV acquired highlights of the Uefa Champions League and Europa League for three years, from 2015-16 to 2017-18. It will show Champions League highlights on Wednesday nights and Europa League highlights on Thursday nights. It will also show highlights of the finals of both competitions and the annual Uefa Super Cup match. The rights cover television, online and mobile platforms.
- **Football:** UK pay-television broadcaster BT Sport and newspaper group News UK acquired non-exclusive rights for on-demand online and mobile clips covering the Uefa Champions League and Europa League. The deals will run for three seasons, from 2015-16 to 2017-18, and cover all matches in both competitions.
- **Football:** Pan-regional sports broadcaster Eurosport announced a two-year extension, covering the 2015-16 and 2016-17 seasons, to its rights for the German Bundesliga across 22 European territories. The agreement, with DFL Sports Enterprises, the league's commercial arm, renews Eurosport's exclusive television and digital rights, including sublicensing rights, for all matches from the top-tier Bundesliga and second-tier Bundesliga 2. The agreement covers: Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Iceland, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Norway, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Sweden.
- **Football:** Pay-television channel Go!TV acquired rights in North and South America, excluding Brazil, for the Swiss Super League. The deal will run for three years, from 2013-14 to 2015-16, and includes live coverage of one game per week.
- **Football:** German public-service broadcaster ARD acquired rights for the 2013 Fifa Club World Cup. German club Bayern Munich is playing in the tournament, which will be hosted in Morocco.
- **Football:** The Saran Media agency acquired rights in Turkey for the 2013 and 2014 Fifa Club World Cup, in a deal with the Dentsu agency. Saran acquired television, internet and mobile rights to all eight matches in each tournament. The tournament is being hosted by Morocco in both years.
- **Football:** Australian pay-television broadcaster Fox Sports acquired live rights to all eight matches from the 2013 Fifa Club World Cup.
- **Football:** Sports betting media company Sportradar acquired rights for the Turkish Kupasi cup competition in a deal with the Saran Media agency. The rights will be exploited on Sportradar's Betradar Retail Live Channel, which is available via internet-connected platforms to betting companies worldwide. The deal, which started immediately, will run for the remainder of the 2013-14 season.

SINCE LAST TIME

- Italy's RCS MediaGroup, the organiser and commercial rights-holder of the Giro d'Italia cycle race, sacked two executives from its RCS Sport division following an internal investigation into suspect financial transactions. The sacked officials are chief executive Giacomo Catano and chief operating officer Michele Acquarone. The pair, along with external relations director Matteo Pastore, had been suspended pending the investigation. Mauro Vegni is expected to replace Acquarone as director of the Giro, while Paolo Bellino, the general secretary of the Italian athletics federation, is the favourite to replace Catano.
- BSkyB chief executive Jeremy Darroch said the UK pay-television broadcaster is keen to strike a wholesale sports channel carriage deal with telecoms company BT, which owns rival pay-television service BT Sport. According to *The Guardian*, Sky is prepared to allow BT to offer the Sky Sports 1 and 2 channels via BT's YouView set-top box. In return Sky wants to sell the BT Sport channels to its own pay-television customers. BT Sport is currently available via the Sky satellite platform, but customers have to order directly from BT – Sky is not able to bundle the service with its own channels.

MEDIA INTERNATIONAL

- Horse racing pay-television channel Racing UK launched a 'TV anywhere' service, enabling viewers in the UK and Ireland to watch live horse racing on computer and mobile devices as well as television for the same price as a traditional subscription to the pay-television channel via the BSkyB platform. Existing Sky viewers will have the option of selecting two additional viewing devices for no extra cost, while customers on other platforms can upgrade to receive the new service.
- Mixed martial arts event promoter the Ultimate Fighting Championship will launch an internet-based channel in the US in early January. The channel will feature live and on-demand programming, including more than a dozen live fight cards per year, beginning with the UFC Fight Night 34 event on January 4 in Singapore, and other UFC programming. The channel will "replace and enhance" the UFC's current digital platform, UFC.tv, the promoter said.
- South Korean IPTV pay-television operator Spo TV agreed a deal to carry MUTV, the channel operated by English Premier League football club Manchester United. The deal will run for three years, from 2013-14 to 2015-16.

SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from November 21 to December 4**MEDIA RIGHTS 2****Basketball, boxing, ice hockey, motorsport, Olympics and more**

- **American Football:** US Spanish-language pay-television broadcaster Fox Deportes acquired rights for the NFL. The deal starts immediately and runs until the end of the 2014-15 season. It includes live coverage of play-off matches and the 2013-14 Super Bowl championship game, plus a weekly 30-minute magazine show and news segments. Fox Deportes will be the first ever US Spanish-language broadcaster to cover the Super Bowl.
- **Basketball:** Pay-television broadcaster BT Sport acquired rights in the UK and Republic of Ireland for the NBA in a two-year deal for 2013-14 and 2014-15. The agreement includes live coverage of up to 200 games per season via the BT Sport 1, BT Sport 2 and ESPN channels plus the BT Sport website. The coverage includes the play-offs, conference finals and season-ending finals plus the all-star game and magazine shows (page 2).
- **Basketball:** Sportal, a division of digital sports media company Perform, will launch an Australian website dedicated to the NBA after striking a multi-year deal with the North American basketball league. The website will provide localised NBA editorial and video content, live coverage of one game per week during the regular season, and up to four play-off games for free, plus highlights and interviews.
- **Boxing:** Spanish-language US broadcaster Univision acquired rights for coverage of the USA Knockouts team's fights in the 2013-14 season of the World Series of Boxing.
- **Climbing:** The Synca Creations agency struck a deal with the International Federation of Sport Climbing to distribute rights in Japan for the governing body's 2014 World Championships and World Cup series.
- **Ice Hockey:** The NHL struck a 12-year media rights deal, from 2014-15 to 2025-26, with Canadian telecommunications company Rogers Communications, worth C\$5.23bn (€3.7bn/\$5bn) (page 1).
- **Motorsport:** Swiss public-service broadcaster SRG SSR extended its rights for the Formula One championship for three years, from 2014 to 2016. SRG SSR agreed the deal with Formula One Management, the championship's operator. The coverage will be on the broadcaster's German-language channel SRF, French-language channel RTS, Italian-language channel RSI and Romansch-language channel RTR (page 8).
- **Motorsport:** Japanese commercial and pay-television broadcaster TV Asahi acquired rights for the Formula E Championship electric car series. The multi-year deal will include free-to-air and pay-television coverage on TV Asahi's national channel and its network of regional channels. The agreement includes live coverage of all races plus practice and qualifying sessions. TV Asahi agreed the deal directly with series promoter Formula E Holdings, which runs the series along with the FIA, motorsport's world governing body.
- **Netball:** The Sportfive agency struck a deal with Netball Singapore for the global distribution and host production rights for the governing body's 2013 Nations Cup national team competition.
- **Olympic Games:** América Móvil, the Mexican telecommunications company owned by billionaire Carlos Slim, agreed sublicensing deals for rights to the 2014 Winter Olympics with 26 regional television networks in Mexico. América Móvil is also showing the 2014 Games, in Sochi, Russia, on its Claro Sports pay-television channel and the UnoTV website.
- **Olympic Games:** Czech commercial and pay-television broadcaster Nova agreed a rights-sharing deal involving the 2014 Winter Olympics with public-service broadcaster Czech TV. Nova will make the Olympic ice hockey tournament in Sochi, Russia, available to Czech TV in exchange for rights for a number of popular Czech films.
- Pan-European sports broadcaster Eurosport agreed a multi-year carriage deal with Russian IPTV operator Beeline TV. Beeline TV will carry the broadcaster's high-definition channels.
- Telecoms group Telefónica agreed a deal in Spain to carry pan-regional sports broadcaster Eurosport on its IPTV platform Movistar TV. The deal is for four years, from 2014 to 2017. The deal gives the platform coverage of French Open tennis. Movistar TV will carry French Open programming shown on the Eurosport and Eurosport 2 channels, including via its internet and mobile platform Go.
- French news agency AFP agreed a partnership with Chinese media company Hupu Sports Media to launch a Chinese-language sports service that will offer video content to online and mobile platforms.
- Canadian media company Anthem Media will launch a new television channel dedicated to fantasy sports, the FNTSY Sports Network, in the US and Canada in March 2014. The channel is currently pursuing carriage deals with pay-television operators.
- Pay-television sports broadcaster SuperSport, which operates in sub-Saharan Africa, launched a new 24-hour cricket channel, which will run until April 6, concluding with the World Twenty20 competition in Bangladesh.

MEDIA RIGHTS NEGOTIATIONS

- The International Handball Federation confirmed it had received a bid from Qatari pay-television operator Al Jazeera, and four other bidders, for the next cycle of global rights to its World Championships, covering 2014 to 2017. The rights being sold cover the 2015 and 2017 men's World Championships, in Qatar and France respectively, plus the 2015 and 2017 women's events, in Denmark and Germany respectively, as well as some youth and junior tournaments. German handball news service Handball

SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from November 21 to December 4

MEDIA RIGHTS 3

Paralympics, Southeast Asian Games, skiing, tennis and more

- **Paralympics:** The Canadian Paralympic Committee acquired the media rights for the 2014 winter Games in Sochi, and the 2016 summer Games in Rio de Janeiro. The committee will secure more than 65 hours of broadcast coverage and up to 350 hours of digital coverage via deals with a consortium including public-service broadcaster CBC, pay-television broadcaster Sportsnet, internet company Yahoo Canada Sports and Accessible Media, which specialises in media for the blind, visually impaired, deaf and hearing impaired. Digital sports video news agency SendtoNews will distribute news highlights to Canadian media platforms.
- **Skiing:** The US Ski and Snowboard Association acquired US media rights for the 2015 and 2017 Alpine and Nordic Ski World Championships, in a deal with the European Broadcasting Union (page 5). In a deal agreed at the same time, the US body appointed Eurovision Production Coordination, the production division of the EBU, to produce coverage of two Fis World Cup events in Vail/Beaver Creek, which will be test events for the 2015 World Championship. EPC is also the
- host broadcaster of the 2015 and 2017 World Championships.
- **Southeast Asian Games:** Malaysian commercial broadcaster TV3 acquired rights for highlights of the 2013 Southeast Asian Games. TV3 will broadcast a one-hour highlights programme two times per day focusing on Malaysian athletes competing in football, athletics, aquatics and sepak takraw. TV3's sister channel TV9 will show live coverage of every Malaysia national football team group stage match at the event. TV3 will take over live coverage of the football tournament from the knockout stages.
- **Tennis:** Pan-regional sports broadcaster Eurosport renewed and expanded a rights deal for the French Open grand slam tournament for eight years, from 2014 until 2021. The first year of the deal was a renegotiation of an existing three-year deal, from 2012 to 2014. The deal grants Eurosport exclusive live pay-television rights across Europe, and fully exclusive media rights in 13 markets. Eurosport will have fully exclusive rights in Denmark, Hungary, Israel, Norway, Poland, Portugal,
- Romania, Russia, Sweden, Spain, Turkey and Ukraine from 2014, and Italy from 2015. The agreement excludes the event's home market, France. Eurosport acquired the rights from the MP & Silva agency, which acted on behalf of the Fédération Française de Tennis, the tournament organiser.
- **Tennis:** Australian commercial broadcaster Seven Network struck a deal to broadcast the 2013-14 Hopman Cup national team tournament. Seven will broadcast the tournament on its digital-terrestrial channel 7mate, with the option of marquee matches being shown live on its main channel.
- **Various:** UK pay-television broadcaster BT Sport agreed a content partnership with sports video news agency SNTV. SNTV, which is owned by the IMG agency and the Associated Press news agency, will provide BT Sport with high-definition video news content for integration across the broadcaster's programming. The content will include footage of training and press conferences, breaking news and coverage of football, cricket and rugby union developments.

Time reported that Al Jazeera's offer was worth CHF100m (€81m/\$110m). The IHF refused to comment on the value. The current deal, with the Ufa Sports agency, is worth about €33m (\$44.6m), or CHF41m, between 2010 and 2013.

- Public-service broadcaster France Télévisions is close to agreeing an extension to its rights deal for the French Open tennis tournament. France Télévisions is set to agree terms with the Fédération Française de Tennis, the governing body of tennis in France, for the next five editions, from 2014 to 2018, of the grand slam tournament at Roland Garros in Paris.
- The Mediapro agency will open the auction for the next cycle of Spanish rights to the Formula One motor racing championship on Monday, December 9. The rights will cover two seasons, 2014 and 2015.
- German public-service broadcaster ZDF and pay-television broadcaster Sky Deutschland tabled bids for the rights to the Uefa Champions League for three seasons, from 2015-16 to 2017-18. They are the incumbent broadcasters. Public-service broadcaster ARD said it would not bid for financial reasons. It last month suggested that it was considering a bid, even though this would have controversially put it into competition with sister public-service broadcaster ZDF. The rights were put on the market by Uefa, football's European governing body, last month.
- The CAA Eleven agency launched a tender for the media rights in the Middle East and North Africa to European qualifiers for the Uefa Euro 2016 and 2018 Fifa World Cup national team football tournaments. Bids must be submitted by December 11.
- New Twenty20 cricket competition the Caribbean Premier League issued an invitation to tender for its domestic and international media rights for three seasons, from 2014 to 2016. The winning bidder must guarantee free-to-air coverage throughout the Caribbean. Bids must be submitted by December 19 (page 5).
- Estonian public-service broadcaster ERR is looking to sublicense its rights to the 2014 Fifa World Cup after electing to focus its resources on next year's Winter Olympics. The broadcaster faces budget cuts after it had a request for €800,000 (\$1.1m) in additional funding for 2014 turned down by the Estonian government in September.
- Cricket Australia streamed live coverage of a match between the national governing body's Chairman's XI team and the England national team on November 29-30. The coverage was available to

SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from November 21 to December 4

viewers in Australia via the Cricket Australia and Tourism Northern Territory websites.

ALSO SINCE LAST TIME

- Sports betting media company Sportradar acquired US-based live sports data provider SportsData.
- Mexican commercial broadcaster TV Azteca completed a takeover of Atlas, a football club that competes in Liga MX, the top division in Mexico, in a deal worth about \$50m (€37m).
- The Schmidt Media agency extended a deal to produce interviews and other programming for the DOSB, the German Olympic Committee, for German public-service broadcasters ARD and ZDF. The agreement runs until the 2016 summer Olympic Games.
- Richard Freudenstein, the chief executive of Australian pay-television operator Foxtel, called on the government to alter the current anti-siphoning regulations, which state that certain sporting events of national interest must be broadcast on free-to-air television. Freudenstein said that the rules provide free-to-air broadcasters with an unfair advantage when bidding for rights. He called for “a simpler, fairer anti-siphoning system,” but conceded that it would be “politically difficult” to abolish the rules.
- Asian pay-television broadcaster Ten Sports expects to generate Rs1.2bn (€14m/\$19m) from advertising around its coverage of the India-South Africa cricket series currently underway. The series, which began on December 5 and runs to December 26, features two Test matches and three one-day internationals. Ten has sold 90 per cent of the advertising inventory around it.
- Canadian telecoms company Rogers Communications agreed a deal for the naming rights for the new arena of Canadian NHL team the Edmonton Oilers, a week after agreeing a major NHL media rights deal (page 1). The arena, which will be completed in 2016, will be called Rogers Place.

- The West Indies Cricket Board appealed to Caribbean broadcasters to acquire rights for the New Zealand-West Indies Test, one day international and Twenty20 series currently underway in New Zealand. Many fans in the Caribbean are unable to watch the series because broadcasters have not secured the rights.

INDUSTRY MOVES

- German media group Constantin Medien expanded the management teams of its German sports broadcaster Sport1 and its Constantin Sport Marketing division. Olaf Schröder, the editor-in-chief and programme director of Sport1, will serve as Sport1’s managing director with editorial responsibility across all platforms. Robin Seckler, the director of digital at Sport1, will be the managing director of Sport1’s digital activities. Matthias Kirschenhofer will become managing director of entertainment at Constantin Sport Marketing.
- Fox International Channels, the international broadcast subsidiary of 21st Century Fox, appointed Kelly Butler as senior vice-president of its Fox Sports pay-television brand in Europe and Africa. Butler previously served as chief executive of sub-Saharan pay-television sports broadcaster Setanta Africa. FIC acquired Setanta Africa in a deal finalised last month. FIC also appointed Helena Choe to the newly-created position of vice-president of syndication for the Middle East and Asia-Pacific region.
- The Kentaro agency appointed Greg Davies as its new head of club business and digital media. Davies previously co-founded technology company En Linea, the developer of websites such as Fifa.com, ManUtd.com and FCBarcelona.com, before becoming a founding member of the IMG agency’s interactive division, TWI Interactive.
- Tomas Franzén, the chief executive of Swedish cable-television operator Com Hem, was appointed as the chief executive of media company Bonnier, succeeding Jonas Bonnier in the role. Bonnier owns several sports broadcasters in the Nordics, including Sweden’s TV4 Group, and pan-regional pay-television brand C More Entertainment.

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