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TV ASIA

ABU left to pick up the scraps as IOC carves out even more markets

By Dan Horlock

For its sales of the Asian media rights to the 2014 and 2016 Olympic Games, the International Olympic Committee is understood to have carved out five more markets than it carved out for its 2010 and 2012 Games deals in the region.

The strategy will further marginalise the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union, the regional consortium. The Games have traditionally been the ABU's most important property.

For 2010-12, the IOC sold the rights directly in China, Macau, Hong Kong, Chinese Taipei, the Philippines, Japan, Korea, Australia and New Zealand. These were the most valuable media markets at that time. The five new markets where the IOC will handle the rights sales in-house are India, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand.

John Barton, the former head of sport at the ABU, who was sacked last week (see box, page 2), told *TV Sports Markets*: "The IOC, like other federations, wants to deal with the larger markets themselves. It is a natural progression and follows the success that [football's world governing body] Fifa has achieved with the sale of its various properties, notably the World Cup."

All five of the additional markets have seen significant growth in their pay-television markets since 2008, when the deals were agreed for the 2010-2012 Games. None of the markets has a particularly strong Olympic heritage, with India performing the best at the 2012 Olympics, ranking 55th with six medals.

It leaves the union with only 17 territories from the 22 for which it held the free-to-air rights in the deal for the 2010-12 Games, worth $10 million (€7.5 million). The 17 are: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Brunei, Bhutan, Cambodia, East Timor, Iran, Laos, Maldives, Mauritius, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka and Vietnam.

The 2010-12 deal represented an increase, in like-for-like terms, of about 40 per cent on what it paid for the 2006-08

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AGENCIES 1

Saran looking beyond Turkey

By Kevin McCullagh and Frank Dunne

The Saran Media agency's acquisition last week of English Premier League rights in Turkey and Eastern Europe was significant for two reasons. First, it confirms the agency's grip on top sports rights in Turkey, Europe's fastest-growing economy, and a market which every company in sports marketing is trying to figure out how to get into. Second, it underlines the company's ambition to take a bigger share of the global sports-rights business.

"Saran Media is expanding its international reach and presence," Selim Usta, the agency's director of sports told *TV Sports Markets*. "Saran has been distributing Turkish sports content internationally for years, but we wanted to enhance our portfolio of premium programming. The Premier League is a

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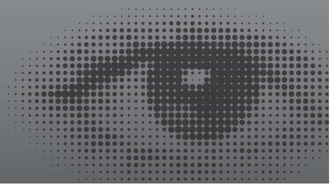

TV ASIA

ABU position weakened by new IOC carve-outs

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Games (*TV Sports Markets* 12:18). For 2006-08, the ABU paid $18.1 million for 24 territories, but over $10.5 million of the fee was for two of the markets carved out in 2010-12 – China (just over $8 million) and Hong Kong (about $2.5 million).

2014-16 sales

The IOC has already concluded deals for the 2014 and 2016 Games and beyond in the most valuable Asian markets. Last year, it signed a deal in Japan with the Japan Consortium worth ¥36 billion (€288 million/$385 million) (*TV Sports Markets* 16:3). It also agreed a deal in China with state broadcaster CCTV worth about $160 million.

In 2011, it signed a deal in Korea with media group SBS covering the Games from 2018 to 2024, worth $160 million. SBS paid $67 million for the Games from 2010 to 2016 (*TV Sports Markets* 15:13).

The IOC is currently in talks with broadcasters in Australia and New Zealand, after which it is expected to open talks with the ABU.

Barton said that after massive growth in the rights values in China – which has increased by a factor of 20 since the $8 million paid for the 2006-08 Games – India could be the next major growth market in the region. However, in the longer term, the growth would depend on the chances of Twenty20 cricket becoming an Olympic sport. Barton estimated that a summer Games featuring the shorter form of the game would mean that the IOC could generate $25 million in rights fees from the Indian market. He added that the sport could be included as soon as the 2020 Games, though other experts familiar with the selection process say that 2024 is a more realistic target.

ABU's core rights

The ABU has yet to finalise contracts for three other major events taking place next year: the 17th edition of the Asian Games in Incheon, South Korea; the 20th edition of the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, the UK; and the Fifa World Cup finals in Brazil.

For the 2010 Asian Games, the ABU paid $1.55 million for both free-to-air and pay-television rights. The deal covered 39 territories but did not include India, China, Korea and Japan. For the 2006 Asian Games, it paid $9.2 million for the same rights covering 43 territories, with Japan accounting for $4.75 million of the fee. Japan has steadily been reducing its financial interest in the Games, from $6 million in 2002 to $2.75 million in 2010.

For the 2010 Commonwealth Games, the ABU paid rights-holder the Fast Track agency $400,000 for both free-to-air and pay-television rights. The deal covered 24 territories. It was 33 per cent up on the deal covering the same territories for the same rights for the 2006 Games, worth $300,000.

For the 2010 World Cup in South Africa, the ABU acquired the rights in nine territories from rights-holder the Football Media Services agency, a joint venture between the Dentsu advertising agency and the Infront Sports & Media agency. FMS is selling the 2014 World Cup rights in Asia, excluding Japan and Thailand. ■

Ousted rights chief Barton opens fire on 'moribund' ABU

John Barton was sacked as head of sport earlier this month by the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union, the regional consortium of broadcasters.

Barton told *TV Sports Markets* that he had been dismissed for failing to bring in rights deals for the union's four main sports properties: the Olympic Games, the Asian Games, the Commonwealth Games and the Fifa World Cup. He strongly defended his track record, however, arguing that the loss of the rights reflected the changing strategies of rights-holders and that in some cases, the ABU had not yet had the opportunity to strike a deal.

"We cannot do deals unless the property owners are willing. It is a bit like selling a car. If you don't want to do a deal at my level then there is no deal," he said.

The ABU's secretary general Javad Mottaghi removed Barton when the sports department was left with no contracts in place for next year's events. The 2014 winter Games starts in February. This is followed by the World Cup in June-July, the Commonwealth Games in July-August, and the Asian Games in September-October.

Barton said that for the 2014-16 Olympic Games, no deal could be done as the International Olympic Committee was still negotiating rights deals in the more lucrative territories of Australia and New Zealand (see separate story). The committee would not handle negotiations with the ABU until after these deals.

He said that for the past 11 years he had used his experience, skill and force of personality to keep the union together and navigate bids when the bigger members were not willing to put up the necessary money.

The consortium has experienced challenges similar to those which have been faced by the European Broadcasting Union, the consortium of European public-service broadcasters. The EBU has modernised and streamlined its buying structures. Barton said that he didn't think that the ABU could reinvent itself in a similar way.

"The EBU has focus, an investment in youth, training and clear-sighted objectives. The ABU is moribund. It has a general assembly each year that is a PR spectacle rather than an objective look at Asian broadcasting and its potential." He said it been abandoned in large part by the broadcasters that had founded it: Japanese public-service broadcaster NHK and Australian public-service broadcaster ABC. Neither NHK nor ABC is involved in any sports-rights deals with the ABU.

The ABU had not responded as *TV Sports Markets* went to press. ■

AGENCIES 2

Four ways that IMG owners can cash in investment

By Frank Dunne

Mike Dolan's statement earlier this week that the sale of IMG was a question for its owners Forstmann Little may or may not represent a softening of the IMG chief executive's stance over the last 12 months that the company is not for sale. Either way, speculation about the future ownership of the agency is not going to go away, and will intensify in the coming months.

Late this week, Italian finance paper *Milano Finanza* reported that Forstmann Little, the private equity firm which bought IMG for $750 million (€563 million) in 2004, had already launched the process to find a buyer and that the dossier was circulating among financial institutions in Italy and elsewhere. The paper claimed that Goldman Sachs was handling the sale.

The report follows a story in December in the *Hollywood Reporter* that said some of the funds which underwrote the Forstmann Little acquisition, such as the Boeing airlines and General Electric pension funds, would look to cash in their stake in June, forcing a sale.

Whatever the truth of these reports, the prevailing assumption in the sports-rights industry is that the agency will change hands in the next 12 to 18 months.

IMG's shareholders have four ways to cash in on their investment, only two of which would require an outright sale. These are: sell the company whole; sell its five individual divisions separately; sell a significant stake in the company through an initial public offering; keep hold of the company but cash in some of its value by taking a large dividend.

There are advantages and disadvantages with each option. In each case, recent investments in media rights like those of the Premier League would have a different significance and a different impact on the value.

Outright sale

An outright sale would be the cleanest and least complicated method of disposing of the company. However, its high valuation as a single entity would reduce the number of potential buyers.

Based on an ebitda of $170 million in 2012 and an expected ebitda of $200 million in 2013, estimates of its value range from $1.6 billion to upwards of $2 billion, though without access to the company's full financial picture it is difficult to reliably assess its true value.

Split the company

Selling the company's five divisions – US college sport, media rights and sports production, fashion, athlete representation, and event management – separately would increase the number of potential buyers. It could generate a premium on the value of each division. A buyer will pay more to get exactly what it wants, without having to dispose of the parts it doesn't want.

The risk would be that not all of the divisions would be equally attractive and the premium made on two or three divisions could be lost on the remaining units. In multi-faceted organisations like IMG, a lot of the value can be driven by just one or two divisions. US college sport, for example, is hugely lucrative. The margins in athlete representation, on the other hand, have tightened, as the athletes and individual agents take a greater slice of their commercial deals. Dolan told the SpoBis conference this week that IMG was now less dependent on income from athlete representation than it was "four or five years ago."

Launch an IPO

Selling 30 to 50 per cent of the company via an IPO would enable shareholders to make a healthy return on their initial investment, to maintain control and to continue to benefit from the growth of the company. For a media company with so many blue-chip clients, it would not be difficult to whip up media hype ahead of an IPO to kick the initial share price up.

A downside would be the lack of comparable sales for potential investors to benchmark the company, making valuations tricky. The only major sports marketing company, the nearest "peer" to IMG, which is traded publicly is Lagardère Unlimited, as part of the French conglomerate Lagardère. Lagardère Unlimited's losses are so well publicised in Europe that a listing in the US might make more sense, some experts say.

Draw a dividend

With IMG's growth curve looking so healthy, the shareholders might be persuaded to stick with a winning hand, but cash in a few chips to raise some extra cash. As with an IPO, this would provide a short-term cash boost but leave them with control and further opportunities to cash in down the line. It would be similar to remortgaging a house.

This is thought to be the least likely scenario because it does not fit with the mindset of private equity investors which is to 'flip,' or sell, a company when it is likely to make them the largest possible profit on their investment.

Aggressive

IMG's €1.3 billion bid last summer for the rights to Uefa's European Qualifiers package and the unsold commercial rights to Euro 2016, along with the agency's bids for the rights to the Premier League, have been interpreted by some rival agencies as an attempt to strengthen the portfolio of IMG Media ahead of a sale.

The agency bid strongly for the Premier League rights across the Americas, without success, and in Asia, where it picked up the rights in Vietnam and Japan. In Europe, it is understood to have made a strong bid for package 33, covering 27 markets in Central and Eastern Europe, including key markets such as Russia and Poland. When the league rejected all bids for the package and broke it down into smaller packages, IMG bid for Bulgaria, where it lost out to the Modern Times Group, and the Balkan countries, where it retained the rights it held in the last cycle.

One agency executive said: "IMG is generally considered to be quite conservative on rights bids, certainly not prone to risk. But if it's outbidding an aggressive agency like MP & Silva in some markets then it's taking a more aggressive approach than it has done in recent years."

Another rights expert said that having Premier League rights would help the agency in a sale. "Most of the institutions that would be looking at buying into a company like IMG are based in either London or New York where they would see the Premier League very much as a blue-chip client that's good to have on the books."

IMG already handles television production for the Premier League and a number of services, such as managing its archive, but "to be involved with such a big client right across the value chain would give the agency an additional sheen," he said.

Dolan provided a slightly different perspective on IMG's targeting of European football rights. He said that the more IMG invested in countries like China, India and Turkey, the more it needed to strengthen its imprint in Europe. It was European football expertise that companies in those countries were looking to tap into. ■

TV SPAIN 1

Mediapro says discount for Prisa is 'not on agenda'

By Dan Horlock

Spanish media group Prisa is facing a struggle to renegotiate key domestic football rights deals to reduce its fees. Prisa wants to renegotiate a deal with the Mediapro agency covering the matches of 30 Spanish clubs, and direct deals with 10 other clubs

Prisa feels that it has no choice but to renegotiate the deals, which were signed only last year, due to the worsening economic situation in the country. A source close to Prisa said that the group's pay-television broadcaster Canal Plus was losing subscribers and that it had to "optimise" its contracts with both Mediapro and the clubs. The source accepted that there had also been faults at senior management level.

Mediapro managing director Gerard Romy told *TV Sports Markets* this week that it was "not on my agenda" to discuss renegotiating its rights-sharing agreement with Prisa, understood to be worth about €235 million ($315 million) per season.

"Prisa strengthened its position in the pay-television market in its deal with us. It overpaid when it took the clubs' contracts. They took a risk and now they are losing subscribers," he said.

The fee Prisa pays Mediapro is for the pay-television rights to 30 first division and second division clubs whose rights are owned by the agency. The deal was part of a rights-sharing agreement which gave Prisa a much stronger position in the Spanish pay-television market. Under the deal, Mediapro agreed to limit the distribution of its pay-television channel Gol T to a single platform, offering it as a standalone premium channel on the digital-terrestrial TDT Premium service.

Prisa agreed to pay the other 10 clubs a total of €265 million per season.

Prisa's total investment of about €530 million per season for the rights, from 2012-13 to 2014-15, an increase of over 75 per cent on the €300 million it paid for a weaker package of rights last season, was implemented to reinvigorate its pay-television subscriber numbers.

From September 2011 to September 2012, Canal Plus's satellite subscriber numbers fell by just under three per cent, from 1.774 million to 1.724 million. Subscriber numbers have dropped at a quicker rate since September, according to well-placed sources, despite the platform enjoying greater exclusivity than before.

With its own 10 clubs, Prisa is said to be discussing three options: paying a reduced rights fee, accepting a smaller package of rights, or deferring rights fee payments.

Last summer, Prisa acquired the rights to five teams for three years, from 2012-13 to 2014-15, in deals worth a total of €137 million per season. Since then, Prisa has also acquired the rights to Real Mallorca in a three-season deal until 2014-15, worth €21 million per season. Mallorca was previously part of the G-30 group of clubs, which has a deal with Mediapro.

Prisa also acquired the rights for Real Sociedad in a three-year deal from 2012-13 to 2014-15, worth about €25 million per season. Previously, the contract had been due to start from the 2013-14 season. There is an ongoing legal case between Mediapro and Real, as Mediapro had a contract with the club until the end of the 2012-13 season.

The deals for the seven clubs came on top of deals agreed previously for three other clubs – Athletic Bilbao, Real Zaragoza and Real Betis – worth a total of €82 million per season until the 2014-15 season.

Prisa also agreed to pay €30 million per season in 'top-up' payments to the G-30 group, currently made up of five small first division clubs and 20 second division clubs. The payment is split 70:30 in favour of the top-tier teams. The five top-tier G-30 teams (Levante, Málaga, Rayo Vallecano, Granada and Valladolid) earn a total of about €20 million each per year.

Turconi quits

Prisa's director general of sports, Stefano Turconi, who was heavily involved in the football rights negotiations, resigned on January 31. Sources close to Prisa say that his departure was for family reasons and was not connected to the acquisitions decisions that have left Prisa looking to renegotiate expensive contracts signed only seven months ago.

The position Turconi occupied at Prisa was created specifically for him and he will not be replaced.

It is understood that Turconi will set up a consultancy in Miami, the US, focusing primarily on the Latin American sports media rights market.

Turconi had previously worked in Miami for the Traffic Sports USA agency and Concacaf, football's governing body in North and Central America and the Caribbean. He had also been vice president of content distribution for the NBA. ■

TV SPAIN 2

Mediapro to wrestle for better Marca TV position

By Dan Horlock

The Mediapro agency this week denied reports that its Marca TV channel was facing closure. Mediapro managing director Gerard Romy said that Marca was "a strong brand and a good channel with a growing audience share."

The agency operates the digital-terrestrial sports channel through an agreement with Italian media group RCS, the majority owner of the channel. The contract expires on June 30 and Mediapro is in negotiations to extend it.

Marca is owned by Unidad Editorial, a joint venture between RCS and Mediapro. Mediapro owns a small stake in the channel. It handles the production, advertising and content. RCS owns the licence as well as the brand name, as part of its ownership of Spain's most popular newspaper, *Marca.*

Romy told *TV Sports Markets* that in addition to extending the contract, Mediapro wanted to strengthen its position within the joint venture.

Romy said this week that should Mediapro fail to agree a new deal with RCS, the agency could look at acquiring another channel frequency where it would exploit the rights it holds. Mediapro is Spain's biggest sports rights agency.

Speculation about the future of Marca TV was linked to reports of the financial problems that RCS is experiencing. Last week, the group said that it would have to make 800 staff redundant and sell 10 of its titles to stem losses.

Marca TV currently shows, among other football, one exclusive live match from the Spanish first division, plus non-exclusive highlights, and two to three live matches from the second division per week. Mediapro's sale this week to state broadcaster TVE of the rights to two live matches from the second division and the highlights to the first and second divisions and the cup helped fuel speculation about the future of the channel. Marca is heavily reliant on Spanish club football coverage and has achieved record viewing figures this season courtesy of its domestic football rights (*TV Sports Markets* 16:20). Marca's main competitor is TVE's sports channel Teledeporte, which will exploit the rights.

Commercial channels Telecinco and Antena 3 have said that they would be interested in acquiring the rights to the first division live match, which would further weaken Marca's offering.

In January, Mediapro sold exclusive rights to five matches for this season's Copa del Rey – excluding Barcelona matches in the round of 16 and the quarter-finals – to commercial broadcaster Mediaset in a deal worth just under €2 million (*TV Sports Markets* 17:2). The earlier rounds were shown on Marca TV and had Mediapro not found a buyer for the later rounds these matches would have also been shown on the channel.

Romy said that the recent deals would not undermine Marca's offering. The first division free-to-air live match rights had only been given to Marca on a temporary basis. He said that Mediapro would sell the rights if it received a reasonable offer but that the game could still be shown on Marca next season. "There has been some speculation regarding prospective bids from Telecinco and Antena 3. But so far no bids have been forthcoming."

He said that for the second division rights, TVE had acquired the last picks for two live matches per week. Marca would continue to show two or three live matches from the second division. These rights exclude the first-pick game, which pay-television broadcaster Canal Plus holds the rights to.

TVE's acquisition of highlights had been expected. Mediapro has now completed deals for the package with all of the main broadcasters. Prior to the deal, TVE had a deal with Mediapro to show highlights on its news programmes.

Mediapro is trying to weather Spain's deep economic recession by putting its content on Marca where it believes it is not getting offered market rate by other broadcasters.

In addition to domestic football, the channel also shows the Euroleague matches of Spanish basketball team Unicaja Málaga, the Spanish women's football league, cycling's Vuelta a Burgos, WWE wrestling and boxing matches acquired on an ad hoc basis. ■

AGENCIES 3

Santa Mónica to seek rights compensation

By Dan Horlock

The Spanish Grupo Santa Mónica Sports agency is set to seek compensation for the loss of its rights in the final year of its deal with the Real Federación Española de Fútbol, the Spanish football federation.

The agency has a contract with the federation for its rights until the end of 2014. However, under Uefa's centralisation of national team qualifier matches, the CAA Eleven agency will be selling Spain matches from September 1 2014.

Santa Mónica Sports said that so far no broadcasters had enquired about acquiring the federation's rights for the disputed period from September 1 2014 to December 31 2014. It said that the federation and the agency together were analysing the situation to solve potential conflicts and agree necessary compensation.

The loss of the federation's rights is a blow to the agency. The federation deal was its one of its biggest sports-rights contracts, if not its biggest. However, the agency played down the impact of the loss. It said the group was present "in other markets and sports" and that "many situations" regarding the centralisation were still unresolved.

Santa Mónica is also the commercial rights agent for the Argentinian football association, the Asociación del Fútbol Argentino, and is active in the US and Chile. It is owned by Spanish businessman Jesús Samper Vidal. Samper Vidal also owns Spanish second division football club Real Murcia. ■

AGENCIES 1

Saran holds on to booming Turkey and look abroad

Continued from page 1 ►

very attractive property, and we are pleased that we won the tender for the Central Asian, Caucasus and Baltic regions. These are territories, particularly the Central Asian countries, with which we share significant cultural, linguistic and historical ties, and we feel that the region has high growth potential. We have on-going discussions to acquire additional major sports rights for the region."

Saran renewed its rights in Turkey for the next three seasons, paying about €8.3 million per year, up from about €6.5 million per year in the current deal, from 2010-11 to 2012-13. It also paid just under €2 million per season for a single package of rights covering Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

The agency's sports-rights trading business has been mainly focused in Turkey, where it handles the rights to many sports top properties, from the Premier League to Formula One motor racing. In Turkey and neighbouring countries it also sells other content, including Hollywood films and US television series. However, it also sells some sports rights internationally, including the global rights for the Turkey national football team. The agency is also looking at acquisitions in territories beyond Central Asia. It bid unsuccessfully last year for Premier League rights in Mongolia and Vietnam.

Saran Media is part of Saran Holding, a Turkish company which is involved in other areas of business including defence, tourism, radio broadcasting and renewable energy.

Cracking the Turkish nut

The rights in Turkey were awarded after two rounds of bidding. Saran is thought to have faced competition from local

Different ways into growing Turkish market: Perform and IMG

In the last nine months, two of the key players in the sports media industry – the Perform Group and IMG – have made important bridgeheads into the booming Turkish market. They have chosen different paths – Perform through acquisition and IMG through a joint venture.

In June last year, digital media specialists Perform acquired an initial 51-per-cent stake in Mackolik Internet, which operates Turkey's two leading sports websites, Mackolik.com and Sahadan.com. Perform is reported to have paid £14.6 million (€17 million/ $23 million). It will acquire the remaining 49 per cent based on ebitda in 2014 and 2015, with the final payment in 2016.

Perform's joint chief executive, Oliver Slipper, told *TV Sports Markets* the commercial logic behind the deal and the challenges of the market.

"About 60 to 70 per cent of our revenues come from football and Turkey is a football-mad country, with a very passionate fan base. Of the European economies, it's just about as robust as it gets, so it ticks all the macro boxes. It has good infrastructure of broadband and 3G, so very high usage of internet propositions and a real emergence of internet business models," he said.

Slipper said that Turkey was about five years behind other European countries in terms of internet development which meant that there was room for solid growth in internet and mobile advertising revenues in the coming years.

He said that the company had already been making good profits when Perform bought it, but that given the number of people using the sites and the amount of time they were spending on them, advertising income per user was "massively under-indexed," or under-performing, compared to comparable sites in countries like England and Germany. This represented another growth opportunity.

Perform had been operational in Turkey for years before the deal, with distribution of its eplayer video service and the Turkish edition of the goal.com website. But as a foreign company trying to grow organically, it struggled.

"We found monetisation quite difficult as a foreign company coming into the market. It was always difficult to get traction with the media agencies, despite having traction with users. So we decided to grow inorganically through acquisition rather than to throw a lot of bodies out there. It's not like other Western European markets where it's easy to start a business from scratch."

Slipper said that Perform's plan for its Turkish operation was to create good local editorial content around live rights in the company's portfolio and partner with local companies to help them monetise their clip rights. "We don't have an immediate plan to start looking at acquiring local live rights. We are not looking to disrupt what is a fairly tight television and media market," he said.

Slipper said that the company had a good relationship with Turkey's Saran Media agency and plans to build on the relationship. Saran owns one of the biggest bookmakers in Turkey which is the official partner on Mackolik.com.

IMG Worldwide's preferred route into complex growth markets is the joint venture. It followed earlier joint ventures in China, India and Brazil with a deal last May with local conglomerate Doğuş Group, owner of commercial channels Star TV and NTV.

The deal is more about wider sports opportunities, such as event management, stadium development and creating sports academies than it is about media-rights activities, and does not tie Doğuş channels down to acquiring IMG content. IMG Media will have what has been described as "an arm's length relationship" with Doğuş Media Group, to try to identify mutual benefits. ■

broadcasters but little from the major international sports rights agencies.

Agencies such as IMG Media, MP & Silva, and Advisers Media International, which bid for numerous markets in Europe, did not bid in Turkey. Given the enormous growth potential in Turkey, this seems surprising at first glance but reflects the challenge foreign companies face in trying to enter the market.

"Turkey is a hard nut to crack," one agency director said. "It has the most promising and attractive demographics that we have in this part of the world, with a booming economy and a young population. It is also experiencing a transformation process, with people becoming more westernised in their tastes. It represents an opportunity for agencies and rights-holders comparable to the Bric [Brazil, Russia, India and China] countries. But it is much more protective and inward-looking than many other emerging markets."

He said that it was a "very difficult environment to build relationships," for linguistic and cultural reasons, and difficult for outside agencies to build reliable market intelligence. "It is quite closed to the outside world as far as our industry is concerned," he added. 'Western' companies are, however, finding ways into the market (see box, page 6). ■

Digitürk's Super Lig renewal deal probed by regulators

An extension to the biggest sports-rights deal in Turkey, pay-television operator Digitürk's $1.3 billion (€977 million) deal for the rights to the top domestic football league, the Super Lig, is under investigation.

In December, Turkey's competition authority, Rekabet Kurumu, launched an investigation into the extension of the deal between the Türkiye Futbol Federasyonu, the country's football federation, and Digitürk. If found guilty of anti-competitive practices, each could be fined up to 10 per cent of its turnover.

The original deal for live rights to the league, signed in January 2010, was for four years, 2010-11 to 2013-14, and was worth $321 million per season. The authority said that on May 21 2012, the two parties agreed to a two-year extension of the deal, covering the 2015-16 and 2016-17 seasons. The federation did not put the rights out to tender.

The value of the extension is unconfirmed but one local source put it at about $350 million per season. That would represent very good business for the federation but not going to market was still a questionable strategy. By running an open auction last time, the federation was able to generate competition among all the players in the market to more than double its income (*TV Sports Markets* 14:1).

One informed source said that the deal was a "political gesture" from the broadcaster to support Turkish football in an extremely difficult moment.

In the same month the deal was signed, Uefa, European football's governing body, banned Beşiktaş and Bursaspor from this season's Europa League for violating financial fair play rules. Last season, Fenerbahçe was excluded from the Champions League after Uefa asked the Turkish federation to withdraw the club's entry in relation to match-fixing allegations. ■

PREMIER LEAGUE

Fees up but still no sale in Germany and Austria

By Kevin McCullagh

Rights deals agreed by the English Premier League in the last fortnight continued to lead it towards a big fee increase in Europe for the period 2013-14 to 2015-16.

The league secured a huge increase in Russia, where the fee went up by more than 500 per cent. There were also strong increases in territories including Ukraine, Bulgaria, and the Balkans.

However, there were decreases in Spain and Poland, and the league is threatening not to sell the rights in Germany and Austria because it considers the offers it has received too low.

Russia

Pay-television operator NTV Plus won the rights in Russia. The big increase it paid was driven by competition with free-to-air and pay-television broadcaster VGTRK. VGTRK has eaten into NTV's market share over the last three years by putting Premier League coverage on its pay-television channel Sport 1.

VGTRK bought the rights for the current cycle from the Advisers Media International agency in a deal worth about €2.5 million ($3.35 million) per season. AMI had paid the league €1.3 million per season.

NTV Plus was thought to have been concerned it would lose further ground because VGTRK has rights for the 2013 athletics World Championships and 2014 Olympic Games, both of which will be hosted by Russia. NTV Plus is said to have received strong backing in the bidding from its parent company Gazprom Media, part of the state-controlled conglomerate Gazprom.

Spain

The rights in Spain were acquired by the Spain-based Multimedia Sport (MMS) agency in a second round of bidding. It is understood that the agency paid less than the previous rights fee of €5.3 million per season.

The incumbent rights-holders, pay-television broadcasters Gol T and Canal Plus, made an unsuccessful joint bid for the rights, which is understood to have been significantly less than the current rights fee. The tender ruled out joint bids but Canal Plus and Gol T have a long-standing agreement which prevents either broadcaster from bidding for the Premier League rights individually.

MMS previously held Premier League rights, for the 2007-08 to 2009-10 cycle, in a deal worth about €5 million per season. It sold them to state broadcaster TVE. The agency bid unsuccessfully for the rights in the 2010-11 to 2012-13 cycle.

Poland

The Premier League is understood to have taken a fee cut in Poland, where the market has cooled since the rights were last sold.

The auction winner, pay-television broadcaster Canal Plus Cyfrowy, is understood to be paying around €11.7 million per year. The broadcaster pays €13.7 million per year in the current cycle, making Poland the third most valuable European territory for the league, after the Nordic region and France.

Rival pay-television broadcaster Polsat also bid, although not aggressively. Four pay-television broadcasters were competing strongly for sports rights when the Premier League came to market in 2009 for the current cycle. Since then, one has scaled back sports rights acquisitions, two have merged, and the market has settled into equilibrium.

There are now two main competing platforms – NC Plus, a new pay-television brand which is in the process of being established after a merger of former rivals Canal Plus and N, and Polsat.

Bulgaria

The Premier League is understood to have secured a fee increase of around 100 per cent in Bulgaria in a deal with Modern Times Group-owned free-to-air and pay-television broadcaster Nova. It is understood to be paying about €6.3 million per season. It pays €3 million per season in the current deal.

Nova faced strong competition from IMG Media and Central European Media Enterprises, which runs the bTV free-to-air and pay-television channels. The fee was boosted by expectations of strong growth in Bulgarian pay-television over the next three years.

Ukraine

The MP & Silva agency is said to be planning to use the Premier League rights in Ukraine as leverage to get better deals for its other football rights, including the Italian Serie A and the French Ligue 1. It is paying about €2 million per year for the rights, which is a strong increase on what was paid previously. AMI paid €2 million per year in the current cycle for a deal that covered the Ukraine and 14 other territories in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

Turkey and Eastern Europe

The Saran Media agency agreed two deals with the league, one in Turkey and one in a swathe of territories in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (see separate story).

In Turkey, Saran is thought to be paying about €8.3 million per year, up from the €6.1 million per year it pays in the current cycle. In Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the agency outbid the current rights-holder in the region, AMI, to win the rights in a deal understood to be worth at least €1.7 million per year. AMI pays €2 million per year in the current cycle for the same territories plus Ukraine.

In the Balkans, the rights were retained by the IMG Media agency, which is thought to have increased its fee from just over €3 million per season in the current cycle to about €6.3 million per season in the new cycle. The rights cover Serbia, Bosnia, Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Kosovo.

Romania

The MMS agency's surprise acquisition of the rights in Romania allowed the Premier League to get a fee increase in a market where a decrease looked certain. MMS outbid local pay-television operator Digi and free-to-air broadcaster ProTV, although the latter made only a token bid.

The Important Media House agency paid about €5.4 million per season in the current cycle and sold the rights to Digi.

The rights fee was expected to fall because Digi and its main rival Romtelecom have stopped competing for sports rights in the last couple of years. Industry insiders say MMS's acquisition was driven by information that a new player will emerge in the market.

One potential source of new competition for Digi and Romtelecom is entrepreneur Árpád Pászkány, owner of two small regional television channels, Transilvania Live and Look TV. There were rumours this week that Pászkány had started talks with MMS about the rights. Pászkány is the owner of the CFR Cluj football team, which has won the Romanian league three times in the last five seasons. ■

Premier League European rights deals 2010-16 (€m over three years)

	2013-14 to 2015-16		2010-11 to 2012-13	
Territory	**Buyer**	**Fee**	**Buyer**	**Fee**
France	Canal Plus	162	Canal Plus	81
Norway	TV2	75	Medge Consulting	n/a[1]
Sweden	Modern Times Group	65	Medge Consulting	n/a[1]
Denmark	Modern Times Group, SBS (2 deals)	40	Medge Consulting	n/a[1]
Italy	Pitch International	36	Sky Italia	30.5
Poland	Canal Plus Cyfrowy/ NC Plus	35	Canal Plus Cyfrowy	41
Belgium	Telenet	28	Telenet	7.8
Netherlands	MP & Silva	25	Sport1	10
Turkey	Saran Media	25	Saran Media	18.4
Greece	OTE	24	Nova	25
Balkan region[2]	IMG Media	19	IMG Media	10
Bulgaria	Nova	19	Diema/Nova	9
Hungary	Digi	10	Important Media House	8.75
Ukraine	MP & Silva	6	Advisers Media International	n/a[1]
Czech Republic, Slovakia	Advisers Media International	6	Important Media House	8.5
Baltics, Eastern Europe, Central Asia[3]	Saran Media	5	Advisers Media International	n/a[1]

Source: *TV Sports Markets*

Footnotes: [1]*Rights packages not comparable. In 2010-13, Medge Consulting acquired Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden in a single package worth €120m; and AMI acquired Ukraine and the Baltic and Central Asian territories in a single package worth €6m.* [2]*Bosnia, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia*

[3]*Armenia, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan*

Russia, Spain and Romania are excluded because the exact value of the deals was unconfirmed at the time of writing

SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from February 7 to February 20

TV RIGHTS 1

Football: Premier League, FA Cup, Concacaf, Major League Soccer and more

- **Football:** The Fox Soccer pay-television channel, operated by US network Fox, acquired rights for five competitions run by Concacaf, the sport's governing body in North and Central America and the Caribbean. Fox Soccer will broadcast Concacaf's 2013 Men's U-17 and U-20 Championships, the 2014 Women's U-17 and U-20 Championships, and the qualifying competition for the 2015 Women's Fifa World Cup.
- **Football:** The IMG Media agency was appointed by the Jordan Football Association to sell the international broadcast rights to the national team's games. The two-year deal started immediately and will run until the next edition of the Asian Cup national team competition in January 2015.
- **Football:** Commercial and pay-television broadcaster Modern Times Group acquired rights in Sweden for England's home international matches and English club competitions the FA Cup, League Cup and Championship. The deal covering England matches and the FA Cup will run for five-and-a-half years until the end of the 2017-18 season. The deal for the League Cup and the Championship – the second division of football in England – will run for four-and-a-half years until the end of 2016-17. Both deals were struck with the Pitch International agency.
- **Football:** The English Premier League awarded rights to broadcasters in several territories for the three seasons from 2013-14 to 2015-16 (page 7).
- **Football:** Spanish state broadcaster TVE acquired domestic football rights for its digital-terrestrial sports channel Teledeporte (page 4).
- **Football:** US Spanish-language regional cable-television broadcaster Mega TV acquired local rights for games featuring Major League Soccer franchise Houston Dynamo. Mega TV, which is operated by media company Spanish Broadcasting System, will broadcast seven away games during the 2013 season, plus pre- and post-game shows and highlights. The length of the deal was not disclosed. Mega TV's coverage will be simulcast on regional cable-television broadcaster Comcast SportsNet Houston, which has rights to Dynamo's home and away games in a three-year deal from 2013 to 2015.

SINCE LAST TIME

- The global audience for Formula One dipped in 2012, according to a study by Formula One Management, which runs the motor-racing championship. A drop of 34 per cent in China, from 74.5 million viewers in 2011 to 48.89 million in 2012, was responsible for the overall decrease, the report said. Brazil was the biggest market for Formula One with a total of 85.55 million people watching in 2012 – up by nearly 10 per cent on 2011. In the UK the total audience fell from 32 million to 28.58 million.
- The Polish football league, the Ekstraklasa, applied for a licence to launch a television channel in Poland. The league is considering launching a channel to show its matches if rights fee offers from local broadcasters for the 2014-15 to 2016-17 seasons do not meet its expectations.
- Spanish Liga football club Atlético Madrid was ordered by the country's Court of First Instance to pay Mediapro €9.88m ($13.24m) for breaching a media rights contract with the agency to sign a new agreement, from 2012-13 to 2014-15, with the Prisa media group. Atlético will appeal the court decision.

TV INTERNATIONAL

- Media conglomerate News Corporation will unveil its new US national sports channels to advertisers in early March. Meanwhile, News Corp said an increase in sports programming costs contributed to a 26-per-cent rise in expenses for its cable network programming division in the three months to December 31, 2012. Chief operating officer Chase Carey said that News Corp plans to make $200m (€149m) of savings at Italian pay-television broadcaster Sky Italia over the next two to three years by "not renewing some agreements and modifying others."
- US media and technology corporation Comcast agreed a $16.7bn (€12.5bn) deal to acquire the remaining 49-per-cent stake in media company NBCUniversal and complete a buy-out five years ahead of schedule. NBCU's extensive sports-rights portfolio includes NFL American football, NHL ice hockey and the Olympic Games. Comcast believes that it would have had to pay substantially more for conglomerate General Electric's remaining 49-per-cent stake in NBCU if it had waited until 2018 – the year earmarked for the buy-out when Comcast acquired a majority stake in NBCU in 2011.
- The sale of Neo Broadcast America, which runs the pay-television channel Neo Cricket, by the Nimbus Communications agency to North American cricket pay-television broadcaster Willow TV was confirmed. The deal was reported exclusively by *TV Sports Markets* earlier this month. Prasana Krishnan, chief operating officer of Nimbus's broadcast division, said the sale was part of his company's decision to focus on the Indian subcontinent.
- A trial started in a US district court over a claim by US pay-television provider Dish Network that pay-television sports broadcaster ESPN breached a carriage contract by offering better deals to rival distributors. Dish claimed it is owed more than $152m (€114m) by ESPN and alleged that the broadcaster breached a clause in its 2005 agreement that required ESPN to offer the same terms as it did to competitors.
- Italian pay-television broadcaster Sky Italia launched a dedicated Formula One motor-racing channel. Sky Sport F1 HD will

SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from February 7 to February 20

TV RIGHTS 2

Baseball, basketball, boxing, cycling, endurance racing and golf

- **Baseball:** Asia-focused sports broadcaster One World Sports acquired North American rights for games featuring the Yomiuri Giants, Japan's most popular and successful team, in a sublicensing deal with Japanese commercial broadcaster Nippon Television Network Corporation. The deal will run for the duration of the 2013 season. The rights cover television and internet platforms.

- **Basketball:** Euroleague Basketball, which governs the sport's top European club competition, struck a rights deal with IMG Media that will allow games from the tournament to be shown on Sport 24, the international ships and aircraft channel operated by the agency. Sport 24 will show three Euroleague games per week, starting immediately and running until May.

- **Boxing:** UK pay-television broadcaster BoxNation acquired live rights for the middleweight world title fight between Martin Murray and Sergio Martinez on April 27 and the welterweight world title fight between Matthew Hatton and Chris Van Heerden on March 2. BoxNation struck the deals with Hatton Promotions, the promotional company that represents British fighters Murray and Hatton.

- **Boxing:** Mayweather Promotions, the promotional agency that represents boxer Floyd Mayweather Junior, agreed a rights deal with Showtime and the US pay-per-view broadcaster's parent company, the CBS network. Showtime will broadcast six Mayweather fights over the space of two-and-a-half years, starting with a bout against Robert Guerrero on May 4.

- **Boxing:** US pay-television broadcaster WealthTV acquired live rights for the International Boxing Federation's middleweight title elimination fight between Sam Soliman and Felix Sturm, on Thursday, February 14.

- **Cycling:** BBC Worldwide, the commercial arm of UK public-service broadcaster the BBC, secured international rights for live coverage of the new RideLondon Classic mass participation event. The deal will run for five years, from 2013 to 2017.

- **Cycling:** Danish commercial broadcaster TV2 acquired rights for the Giro d'Italia. The deal covers at least the next three editions of the event, from 2013 to 2015. TV2 struck the deal with the IMG Media agency, which sells the rights to the race on a worldwide basis under an eight-year agreement, from 2013 to 2020, with RCS Sport, the event organiser.

- **Cycling:** Japanese public-service broadcaster NHK agreed a two-year extension, for 2013 and 2014, for its exclusive rights to Union Cycliste Internationale events. NHK's rights include live coverage, highlights and magazine shows covering the Road World Championships, Track Cycling World Championships and the Track Cycling World Cup Classics in Japan.

- **Endurance Racing:** UK commercial broadcaster Channel 4 acquired rights for the XtremeStorm athlete endurance challenge, which will take place in April in Southport, the UK. Channel 4 struck the deal with Dream Team TV, which was appointed by Unique Treble, the marketing company behind the event, to produce and distribute worldwide coverage.

- **Golf:** Chinese internet operator Sina will stream live coverage of 12 US PGA Tour tournaments per year under an extension to its partnership with the Tour. The deal will run for three years, from 2013 to 2015. Sina will stream coverage on Sina.com and affiliate online platforms.

- **Golf:** Canadian telecommunications company Shaw Communications agreed a five-year rights deal, from 2013-14 to 2017-18, with the US PGA Tour. Shaw's pay-television broadcaster, Global, will show 26 weekends of US PGA Tour competitions per year, as well as coverage of the Presidents Cup team competition in 2015 and 2017. Global will also broadcast a weekly magazine.

broadcast live all 19 races during the 2013 season, 10 of which will be exclusively live. The channel will offer nine race viewing options, including three on-board cameras and a pit lane feed. Sky Italia also said that the test event in Barcelona from February 28 to March 3 would be broadcast live on its 3D channel.

TV RIGHTS NEGOTIATIONS

- UK telecommunications company BT is in talks with ESPN about acquiring the pay-television sports broadcaster's football rights. BT is interested in ESPN's rights to the German Bundesliga, the English FA Cup and the Uefa Europa League competitions. All of the deals run beyond the end of the current 2012-13 season. The rights would be worth a collective total of about £20m (€23.6m/$31.6m) per year, according to the *Financial Times*.

- Sri Lanka Cricket, the sport's governing body in the country, launched tenders for the worldwide audiovisual rights to the Sri Lanka national team's home matches, and the production contract for the coverage. Both of the deals will run for seven years, from 2013-14 to 2019-20. Bids for both tenders must be submitted by March 16. Earlier this month, the country's sports minister, Mahindananda Aluthgamage, turned down a request from Sri Lanka Cricket to extend a worldwide rights deal with Asian pay-television broadcaster Ten Sports without carrying out a tender process. Ten Sports had an exclusive negotiating window for a renewal under the terms of the broadcaster's existing four-year agreement, from 2009-10 to 2012-13.

- The Chicago Cubs Major League Baseball franchise is set to decide against renewing a long-running partnership with local broadcast rights-holder WGN-TV and has explored the possibility of launching

SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from February 7 to February 20

TV RIGHTS 3

Ice hockey, judo, MMA, motorsport, Paralympics, snooker, tennis and more

- **Ice Hockey:** Canadian pay-television broadcaster Rogers Sportsnet acquired regional rights for games featuring the Vancouver Canucks NHL team. The extension will run for 10 years, from 2013-14 to 2022-23, and will comprise live television, online and mobile coverage of up to 60 regular-season games per season.
- **Judo:** The International Judo Federation awarded media rights to pay-television broadcaster beIN Sport in France and Esporte Interativo, the Brazilian free-to-air sports broadcaster. Both deals will run for four years, from 2013 to 2016. The deal with beIN Sport covers all four of the federation's annual Grand Slam tournaments plus the World Championships. Esporte Interativo extended its deal for television, internet and mobile coverage of all preliminary and final rounds of the governing body's events.
- **Mixed Martial Arts:** US pay-television broadcaster AXS TV acquired rights for events staged by the Resurrection Fighting Alliance. The deal between the broadcaster and the series will start immediately and run until at least the end of 2013, and will include live coverage of up to 10 events.
- **Motorsport:** French pay-television broadcaster Canal Plus acquired domestic rights for the Formula One championship. The deal will run for three years, from 2013 to 2015. Canal Plus will pay €29m ($38.9m) per year, down from the €31m per year paid by commercial broadcaster TF1 in the previous cycle, which ended in 2012.
- **Motorsport:** Pay-television broadcaster Viasat acquired live rights in the Nordic region for the European Rallycross championship. The deal will run for at least one year, until the end of the 2013 season. Viasat acquired the rights from IMG Motorsports, a division of the IMG Media agency. Viasat will show exclusive coverage of the Finnish, Norwegian and Swedish rounds of the championship, plus races in Loheac, France and Estering, Germany.
- **Motorsport:** UK pay-television broadcaster ESPN acquired rights for IndyCar races from the 2013 season, according to pay-television broadcaster BSkyB, the previous rights-holder. Sky announced this on its Facebook page.
- **Motorsport:** Cable-television broadcaster Kabel Eins retained live rights for the ADAC GT Masters series in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. The deal will run for two years, for 2013 and 2014.
- **Paralympic Games:** Commercial broadcaster Channel 4 was awarded the UK television rights to the Sochi 2014 and Rio 2016 Paralympic Games. The agreement, covering rights on all media platforms, marked the first time the International Paralympic Committee global governing body had signed a two-Games deal with a broadcaster. Under the deal, Channel 4 will show other international para-sport events in the lead-up to Rio 2016.
- **Snooker:** UK commercial broadcaster ITV acquired rights for the World Open snooker tournament, which will start on February 25 in Haikou, China. The rights will be exploited on digital channel ITV4. ITV struck the deal with World Snooker, the governing body which operates the tournament. ITV4 will show non-exclusive live coverage of the tournament from 6.10am to 3pm every day through to the final on March 3. Sports broadcaster British Eurosport also has rights for the event.
- **Tennis:** The Sportfive International agency extended a deal with the Fédération Française de Tennis for the distribution of media rights in Asia to the French Open tennis tournament at Roland Garros. The deal will run for five years, from 2013 to 2017.
- **Weightlifting:** The European Broadcasting Union, the consortium of public-service broadcasters, renewed its pan-European rights deal with the European Weightlifting Federation. The agreement covers four editions of the European Weightlifting Championships, in 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016.
- **Wrestling:** German sports broadcaster Sport1 acquired domestic rights for the TNA Wrestling entertainment series. The length of the deal was not disclosed.

its own television channel. The Cubs' current deal with pay-television broadcaster WGN-TV will expire at the end of the 2014 season.

- US pay-television sports broadcaster ESPN was given the chance to match an offer from rival sports broadcaster NBC Sports for the rights to the Big East college sports conference. ESPN, the current rights-holder, was asked by the conference whether it could meet the current offer on the table, which is understood to be worth at least $20m (€14.9m) per year.
- Australian broadcasters believe the International Olympic Committee may postpone the sales process for rights to the 2014 winter Olympic Games in Sochi and the 2016 summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro due to a lack of interest from broadcasters. The IOC had hoped to sell the rights by the end of February, and was surprised by the low interest, according to *The Australian*.

ALSO SINCE LAST TIME

- Russian pay-television broadcaster NTV Plus agreed a four-year deal, from 2013 to 2016, to produce the World Cup Series and the Senior World Championships of the Union International de Pentathlon Moderne, the international modern pentathlon union. NTV Plus will produce live coverage of the individual final days and mixed relay finals from six events per year for international television distribution, plus a live webcast of each event, a television magazine show and news edits.

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- International Paralympic Committee president Philip Craven told the Associated Press news agency that the global governing body has been in talks with US broadcasters about increasing coverage of future editions of the Paralympic Games, including the 2014 winter Games in Sochi and the 2016 summer Games in Rio de Janeiro. Craven said that meetings had taken place "with a view to things being put right, definitely by Rio, if not by Sochi" after the NBC network broadcast only five-and-a-half hours of highlights covering the London 2012 Paralympic Games.
- Singapore telecommunications company SingTel was fined S$180,000 (€108,000/$145,000) by the country's media regulator, the Media Development Authority, for service disruptions during its live coverage of the final day of the 2012-13 English Premier League football season. The regulator said problems suffered by 115,000 subscribers to SingTel's mioTV pay-television service on May 13 were caused by viewers switching between simultaneous live coverage of 10 matches. The watchdog said SingTel had provided compensation to affected mioTV subscribers through subscription rebates amounting to about S$5m, and had also taken action to prevent a recurrence.
- MTN Satellite Communications, which provides a worldwide television service for airlines and shipping lines, agreed a deal with IMG Media for the agency's aircraft and ships channel Sport 24 to be made available on non-passenger vessels including commercial, oil and gas ships, and yachts.
- Eclat, which owns IPTV broadcaster Spo TV, struck a deal with YouTube to allow the South Korean sports marketing company to show live sports action via a dedicated page on the video-sharing website. The dedicated Spo TV page will show live coverage of South Korean domestic baseball, football and basketball as well as international football matches. The coverage will be available on demand and for free.
- The Australian Football League, the Australian Rules football championship, selected online video distribution and marketing company Rightster as its partner in the launch of a web television service for the league's fans outside Australia and New Zealand. AFLTV will provide access to live and on-demand AFL games.
- Digital sports video news agency SendtoNews agreed a multi-year deal with the Ladies Professional Golf Association, the leading professional tour in women's golf. SendtoNews will distribute nightly tournament highlights and other video content among its network of partner news services.
- Cricket Australia, the governing body of cricket in Australia, is considering inserting a clause in its next domestic rights deal that will ban rights-holders from carrying in-broadcast betting advertising, according to chief executive James Sutherland.
- The 32 clubs of the Chilean professional football league earned $118m (€88m) from media rights in the three seasons from 2010 to 2012, more than what they had earned in the previous 13 years, 1997 to 2009, according to news website Cooperativa.cl. The revenues were generated by football channel Canal del Fútbol, which is majority-owned by the Chilean football federation, the Asociación Nacional de Fútbol, which owns 80 per cent. GTV, which is owned by businessman Jorge Claro, owns 20 per cent.

INDUSTRY MOVES

- Italian pay-television operator Sky Italia overhauled its Sky Sports channels and advertising division. Matteo Mammì, head of sports-rights acquisitions, is now also in charge of scheduling and programming. Marco Pistoni, previously responsible for sports channel programming, moved into an advisory role. Separate editorial departments for live sports content and sports news were combined into one department under Massimo Corcione while production and operations will be run by Riccardo Botta. Fabio Guadagnini moved from editorial to head a newly-created motorsports department, while former head of sport Giovanni Bruno, along with Vincenzo Flores, will be responsible for preparations for the 2013 Confederations Cup, the 2014 winter Olympic Games and the 2014 Fifa World Cup.
- North American basketball league the NBA appointed Yannick Colaco as its new managing director of operations in India. Colaco previously served as the chief operating officer at the Nimbus Sport division of the Nimbus Communications agency.

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