

# TVSPORTS MARKETS

FRIDAY 8 MARCH 2013 · VOLUME 17 · NUMBER 5

## TV UK

### BT lifted by ESPN deal, but the battle with Sky has only just begun

By Kevin McCullagh

BT's planned sports pay-television service will be strengthened by its acquisition of the UK arm of ESPN, but it is too early to say whether the telecommunications company is strong enough for its battle with rival pay-television platform BSkyB, analysts say.

BT last week agreed to pay about £10 million (€11.5 million/\$15 million) in a deal to take over ESPN's UK pay-television business. Under the deal, the company, which is launching a sports pay-television service this summer, will offer a channel carrying content currently shown by ESPN. The channel will be ESPN-branded and will carry content from two existing channels which it is replacing – the flagship ESPN UK channel and US sports channel ESPN America.

The key assets BT has acquired are:

- access to ESPN's 2.8 million subscriber base
- top football rights, especially the FA Cup, Uefa Europa League and

Scottish Premier League

- a strong set of US sports rights
- ESPN's detailed research into the preferences of UK pay-television subscribers
- ESPN staff with expertise in picking and scheduling Premier League matches.

The £10 million one-off fee gives BT ownership of the ESPN brand and its US sports rights, in a three-year licence. On top of the fee, BT will take over the cost of paying ESPN's fees in its other sports-rights deals.

BT's planned sports pay-television service is designed to boost its triple-play offering, which has been losing market share to Sky. Sky has successfully lured customers away from BT by bundling low-priced internet and telephone services with its market-leading pay-television offering, spearheaded by its sports channels.

BT's counter-attack began with the acquisition last April of Premier League

*Continued on page 3 ►*

## TV FRANCE

### Canal Plus fightback gathers pace

By Robin Jellis

The Fédération Française de Handball, the French handball federation, is the latest rights-holder to benefit from the intense competition between Canal Plus and Al Jazeera in the French pay-television market. The value of its domestic media rights doubled as Canal Plus saw off Al Jazeera to retain the rights for four more years.

The deal underlines the determination of Canal Plus to fight back in the sports-

rights market after losing many of its top rights to the Qatari broadcaster over the last year. It follows two big Canal Plus rights deals signed in the last month – one for exclusive rights to Formula One motor racing, worth between €30 million (\$39.6 million) and €40 million per season, the other for the rights to English football's Premier League, worth €53 million per season.

*Continued on page 7 ►*

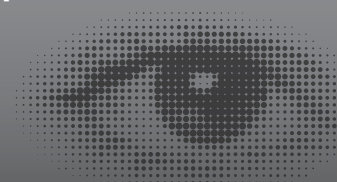
## CONTENTS

- 1,3** BT has got a good deal with the ESPN buy-out but still faces an uphill struggle in battle with Sky
- 1,7** Handball deal is latest sign of Canal Plus fightback against aggressive Al Jazeera
- 2** Fastrack: France v Spain blackout; Time Warner buys more MLS rights; mixed Iberian fortunes
- 4** ESPN America sell-off attracts Eurosport, Setanta and Liberty
- 5** Rai pays less for Giro rights and more for production, but the real money will be made abroad
- 6** Neo explains why it bid big for New Zealand cricket rights
- 7** Silva finds radical solution to impasse in Indonesian market
- 8** F1 ratings flop costly for CCTV
- 9** Sports Clips

Follow us on Twitter

@TVSportsMarkets

Plus the latest edition of  
Watching Brief including  
analysis of Capital One  
Cup television audiences



## Santa Mónica dispute threatens France v Spain

Spain's crucial 2014 Fifa World Cup qualifiers against France and Finland later this month could face a media blackout in the country as the dispute between the national football federation and the Santa Mónica Sports agency deepens.

Last week, the federation, Real Federación Española de Fútbol, cancelled its agreement with Santa Mónica after accusing the agency of breaching its contract by failing to consult it over a deal for domestic media rights signed with commercial broadcaster Mediaset.

Last month, Mediaset acquired the national team rights until June 2014 from the agency in a deal worth about €17 million (\$22 million). Its Telecinco channel broadcast the first game under the new contract against Uruguay on February 6.

The deal includes the qualifier played in France because the federation acquired the rights through a swap with the French federation and added it to the Santa Mónica contract.

After cancelling the agency contract, the federation is close a deal for the same rights with public-service broadcaster TVE for €24.5 million.

Mediaset is threatening to take legal action against the agency should its contract not be upheld. Local experts say that if the matter goes to the courts, it could block the transmission of Spain matches pending an outcome. ■

## Time Warner adds more MLS

US pay-television operator Time Warner Cable's position in the market for regional Major League Soccer rights is strengthening, as rival pay-television operator Fox shifts its focus to the national sports-rights market.

TWC is understood to be close to agreeing a one-season regional deal with Los Angeles-based MLS club Chivas USA for its home matches in

2013. TWC will not pay a rights fee but will cover production costs at around \$40,000 (€30,300) per match. Chivas USA will play 17 regular season home matches this year. The MLS season runs from March until November. Last season, the rights were owned by Fox Sports West, a division of the Fox network.

The deal would mirror TWC's one-season agreement signed last week with FC Dallas for its regional rights. This season, TWC will exploit Dallas' rights on its regional pay-television channel, Sports Channel. It will show 22 of the team's regular-season games live, including 10 home matches. Last season, the rights were owned by Fox Sports Southwest.

A deal with Chivas USA would give TWC the regional rights to three MLS clubs for the 2013 season. In November 2011, TWC agreed the most lucrative regional MLS rights contract in history, a 10-year deal, from 2012 to 2021, with LA Galaxy, worth about \$5.5 million per season.

TWC has established itself as the sports pay-television market leader in southern California. It launched two regional sports channels in October and has acquired premium sports rights in long-term deals. These include rights for: NBA basketball's LA Lakers, in a 20-year deal, from 2012-13 to 2031-32, worth \$3 billion; and MLB baseball's LA Dodgers, in a 25-year deal, from 2014 to 2038, worth about \$7 billion.

These rights were previously owned by Fox and shown on its Fox Sports West channel. Fox has another regional channel in the southern California region – Prime Ticket. Fox's portfolio includes basketball's LA Clippers, baseball's LA Angels of Anaheim and NHL ice hockey's LA Kings. ■

## Mixed Iberian fortunes

There were contrasting fortunes for the English Premier League last month in its latest deals in the Iberian Peninsula. The league enjoyed a big increase in

rights fees in Portugal but made a modest loss in Spain.

Benfica TV, the channel owned by Portuguese Liga club Benfica, acquired the rights in Portugal covering the period 2013-14 to 2015-16 in a deal worth about €2.3 million (\$3 million) per season, up nearly 150 per cent on the current fee of €930,000 per season.

Benfica outbid the incumbent rights-holder, pay-television operator Sport TV, which has a near-monopoly on sports rights in Portugal.

The club bought the rights to add to its exclusive offering of 18 Benfica home matches per season from the 2013-14 season. In March last year, Benfica rejected a renewal offer from the Olivedesportos agency, worth €111 million over five seasons, or €22.2 million per season, for its rights. The agency is owned by Portuguese businessman Joaquim Oliveira, who co-owns Sport TV.

Benfica TV is currently a basic-tier channel on pay-television operators Meo, Optimus Clix and Cabovisão but is now set to become a premium subscription channel. Subscribers would have to pay up to €10 per month. The channel is now renegotiating its carriage agreements with the platforms.

In Spain, the Multimedia Sport (MMS) agency is thought to have paid about €4.5 million per season for the rights, which would represent a drop of 15 per cent from the current fee of €5.3 million per season.

The incumbent rights-holders, pay-television broadcaster Gol T and Canal Plus, made a joint bid for the rights worth €2.5 million per season. Canal Plus and Gol T have a long-standing non-compete pact on Premier League rights.

MMS is understood not to have any pre-deals in place unlike the last time the agency acquired the rights, for the three-year cycle from 2007-08 to 2009-10. For that deal, it had signed pre-deals with state broadcaster TVE and the Mediapro agency. ■

## TV UK

## BT lifted by ESPN deal, but the game has only begun

*Continued from page 1 ►*

football rights for the 2013-14 to 2015-16 cycle. The acquisition of ESPN continued the process of adding the content and infrastructure required for a service that will stop customers defecting to Sky.

### 'Enough' content

It is unclear whether the deal strengthens BT's offering enough to achieve the goal of bulwarking the triple-play business, analysts say. Most believe BT will need more top sports content. BT appears to think so too. It is understood to be lobbying the Team Marketing agency for an early sale of the next cycle of Uefa Champions League rights in the UK, for 2015-16 to 2017-18. Team sells the global media rights for the tournament. The UK rights are due on the market towards the end of this year.

"The real question is: 'What is enough [content]?'", Claudio Aspesi, an analyst at Bernstein Research, said. "Sky's philosophy is that the only way to compete in premium content is to have absolutely the best content. If it's right, BT will sooner or later face the same issue [as ESPN did] – how do you go from being nice-to-have to being must-have."

A key question for BT will be whether it has a strong enough Premier League rights package. Its 18 first-choice matches per season make it the strongest Premier League package a competitor of Sky's has ever acquired – neither ESPN nor its predecessor Setanta ever managed to win any first-choice matches. But Sky has the bigger volume of matches, with 116 per season, compared to BT's 38 per season.

BT might be prepared to run the sports pay-television operation at a loss, even in the long term, if it provides a big enough boost to the wider internet and telephone business. "BT looks at each customer from the perspective of the three businesses, not just from television," Toby Syfret, an analyst at Ender Analysis, said.

This puts it in a different position than ESPN and Setanta, who had to try to build profitable standalone pay-television businesses.

But there is obviously a limit to how much BT Sport can afford to lose. Rights fees for content acquired so far are well over £300 million per year. Investments in more content and the other infrastructure required for the channels could take the figure to over £400 million per year, Syfret said.

### High-speed internet

The development of the UK market for high-speed internet will be key to the question of how strong a pay-television platform BT needs to build.

Growth is slowing in the UK market for Digital Subscriber Line broadband internet, which is provided via the copper-wire cables that have also traditionally provided telephone services. BT is in the middle of a £2.5 billion project to install a fibre-optic cable network which can supply high speed internet, and is trying to add customers to this more expensive service.

The expected growth in demand for high speed internet presents a powerful opportunity for BT, as it will be more difficult for Sky to compete with BT on this technology.

BT, which is a former state telecommunications company, owns and maintains the DSL and fibre-optic cable network which most UK internet providers, including Sky, use to offer internet to their customers. Competition regulations force BT to let Sky and other internet providers use the DSL network at such a low cost that Sky and the other providers can offer cheaper internet and triple-play services than BT.

But the regulations on the fibre-optic network are less tough on BT, allowing it to charge Sky and other providers more, and increasing how much its competitors have to charge their consumers. Sky is not expected to be able to offer such competitive prices compared to BT for fibre-optic internet and triple play as it did for DSL internet and triple play.

This change in the competitive landscape could have a big bearing on BT's sports pay-television offering. As demand

grows for higher-speed internet, if BT is able to offer it at a more competitive price than Sky, the telecommunications company may not have to rely as heavily on a strong television offering to hold on to its subscribers.

### No precedent

BT is following in the footsteps of some notable failures by European telecommunications companies to break the pay-television market. But the UK company's motives are different from most previous efforts, analysts say.

France Telecom's Orange subsidiary in France and Deutsche Telekom in Germany have, in the past year, withdrawn from the sports pay-television business after being unable to compete with traditional pay-television broadcasters.

Claudio Aspesi said the reason why Orange, Deutsche Telekom and many other telcos around the world entered pay-television was to have other products to sell to customers to offset falling revenues from their core telephone and internet businesses.

"It's a different case to be in BT's shoes, where Sky's plan for the next five years involves growing primarily by taking customers away from you. You have to come up with a response," he said.

About 15 per cent of BT's telephone and internet customers are also Sky customers, according to Sarah Simon, analyst at Berenberg Bank, and are "incredibly vulnerable" to Sky's marketing efforts.

Sky last week became the UK's second-biggest broadband internet provider after BT, by buying Spanish telco Telefónica's O2 broadband business in the UK. With the acquisition, Sky has 4.7 million telephone and internet subscribers. Of these, 3.6 million are on triple-play. BT has 6.6 million telephone and internet customers. BT Vision, its pay-television platform, has 770,000 customers.

### ESPN boost

The most useful rights for BT in ESPN's portfolio are for the FA Cup and Europa League. This is primarily because they are rights for the UK's top sport, with matches involving top Premier League

teams. But rights experts say there are also powerful brand advantages in being associated with the FA Cup. "It's a very good positioning tool in terms of being involved in football at all levels," one rights expert said.

Another expert said this week the FA Cup would be useful for boosting BT Sport's profile in areas of the country that do not have a Premier League team. Over 760 teams compete in the FA Cup every season. Some insiders say BT will be looking to maximise this effect through sponsorship deals with the English Football Association, which runs the competition.

The ESPN deal also gives BT the strongest portfolio of US sport in the market. ESPN has rights for most top US sports with the exception of NFL American football. The ESPN brand, which is being retained, is also recognised as the market leader for US sport.

The US sports rights attract a small but valuable market of expatriate subscribers that are "easy to get and keep hold of," one pay-television expert said this week.

BT is also acquiring data on the popularity of sports in the UK that ESPN has gathered over the last four years.

The ESPN deal also boosts BT Sport's

brand by removing one competitor from the marketplace, experts say. "BT is now 'the other sports provider'... This is simpler and clearer for the consumer," Syfret said.

BT was already starting from a better branding position than ESPN or Setanta, a UK sports rights expert said. "ESPN had to convince everyone they weren't an American sports channel, and Setanta had to tell everyone who they were."

### ESPN brand remains

BT has a three-year licence to use the ESPN brand on what will be its secondary channel, alongside the flagship channel which is expected to carry most of the Premier League and rugby union Premiership content. The brand licence includes provision for a renewal.

The ESPN brand is being retained for several reasons. First, under some of ESPN's existing rights deals, such as that for Major League Baseball, the content can only be carried on an ESPN-branded channel. Second, having an ESPN-branded channel is considered useful by BT because BT Sport, as a fledgling channel, still has a relatively low profile. Another reason the ESPN brand is useful is because it is linked to the US sports

content that the channel will show.

ESPN will not withdraw completely from the UK, whether or not there is a renewal of the brand licence deal with BT. But its focus will in future be on its digital properties. It operates several leading sports websites, including the ESPN Cricinfo cricket website and ESPN FC football website.

### Sky wary of aggressive bid

Regulatory concerns are understood to have meant Sky did not make an aggressive bid for ESPN. The market's leading pay-television operator snapping up a smaller rival could have reinforced regulatory concern about Sky's dominant position in the UK pay-television market.

ESPN was also useful for Sky in a more direct way. The two broadcasters had a deal under which Sky sold ESPN's channel package, and paid ESPN a fee per subscriber. The deal was generating around £120 million per year in revenue for Sky, with profits of between £20 million and £30 million per year.

Analyst Sarah Simon said that Sky appeared to have been trying to save ESPN over the last few months, including offering deals whereby its customers could get ESPN half price. ■

## TV EUROPE

# Suitors lining up to buy profitable ESPN America

By Frank Dunne

Eurosport, Setanta and Liberty Global's Chellomedia are understood to be among a number of potential buyers for ESPN America, the US sports channel which ESPN distributes in Europe.

ESPN's owner Disney is looking to sell off the channel, along with archive channel ESPN Classic, as part of the wider withdrawal of ESPN from Asia and Europe to focus on its core US market (see separate story, page 1).

Both channels have wide distribution in Europe. ESPN America is understood to

turn a small profit, while ESPN Classic is said to fluctuate between breaking even and running at a small loss.

ESPN America is the more attractive of the two channels for potential buyers. It carries top US sport such as NHL ice hockey, NFL American football, MLB baseball and NCAA college sport.

Potential buyers have three options: acquire the channel whole, as BT has just done with ESPN's UK channels; acquire the rights to the most attractive content from ESPN; or wait for Disney to close the channel and then try to acquire the rights directly from the rights-holders.

Rights experts say that a channel with US sport could be a successful business in Europe provided that costs were reduced. One channel syndication executive said: "The problem is not the quantum of revenue. ESPN America has very good carriage deals. The problem is the costs.

ESPN put a lot of resources and broadcast infrastructure into everything that they do. Disney and ESPN aren't in the business of doing small things. A smaller operator, with lower costs, would be happy for it to tick over, making a small profit."

ESPN is thought to have had over 90 staff working across the two channels. In addition to rights fees, the broadcaster spends heavily on studio facilities and on creating a European version of its popular US sports show, SportsCenter. ESPN Classic is a very labour-intensive operation because the entire content is based on taped programming, which requires more people to operate than live content.

Finding a buyer for the whole channel operation or getting someone to take over the rights would be preferable to closing the channel. ESPN is committed to paying rights fees in long-term deals and it is thought that in some of its contracts,

such as that with the NFL, it would be required to pay the value of the remaining years in full if it closed the channel.

A channel sale would also arguably be the best solution for the rights-holders. Before ESPN America existed, they had to sell their European rights on a country-by-country basis. Since ESPN has been buying up the rights on a pan-European basis, they are no longer set up to operate in such a way. One well-placed source said: "The US federations prefer to have a situation where somebody controls all the rights in Europe and they don't have to manage it or hire staff to make sales in Europe."

One complication is that some of the deals, such as that with the MLB, stipulate that the content can only be broadcast on an ESPN-branded channel. However, those close to the situation expect the MLB to take a pragmatic approach to a channel buy-out which involved rebranding. "If the MLB take the rights back, they have to go and sell them again and risk not getting anything like the same money," one insider said.

Operators such as Eurosport, the pan-European cable and satellite channel, and Chellomedia, which operates cable channels across Europe, would have advantages over independent media companies looking to build a new ESPN America-style channel from scratch. Each already has the broadcast infrastructure. The cost of putting up an additional feed across Europe would be marginal. The question is whether it would make more sense to buy the whole channel or cherry pick the most attractive rights. Eurosport already syndicates two sports channels, and would have limited appetite for launching a third, experts say.

Setanta's advantage is that it knows the channel potential well, as a prior owner/operator. ESPN America was created when ESPN bought out the North American Sports Network in 2006. At the time, NASN was owned and operated by Setanta Sports and private equity company Benchmark Capital Europe. The channel was rebranded ESPN America in 2009.

ESPN Classic was born out of ESPN's withdrawal in 2000 from Eurosport, which it owned with French broadcasters TF1 and Canal Plus. As part of the deal in which TF1 and Canal Plus bought out

ESPN's stake, ESPN was guaranteed carriage at lucrative rates on Canal Plus pay-television platforms for a channel that would not be in competition with Eurosport. The archive idea made sense because it didn't compete and enabled ESPN to launch something quickly, using existing rights. It was never intended to be an archive-only channel on a permanent basis but ESPN never got around to moving beyond that.

The possible closure of the archive channel would be far less of a concern for ESPN than the closure of ESPN America, as its rights commitments are far less onerous. Its archive content comes through a rolling deal with IMG Media, which held a three-per-cent stake in the channel from launch until around 2008, for multiple sports, and direct deals with rights-holders such as Fifa and Uefa, football's world and European governing bodies, and the International Olympic Committee. It also has direct deals with Italian Serie A clubs Juventus, AC Milan, Roma and Lazio. It is thought that the deals with the IOC, Fifa and Uefa are close to expiry.

### US rights inflation

ESPN's withdrawal from Asia, where last year it sold its 50-per-cent stake in the pan-Asian pay-television platform ESPN Star Sports to joint-venture partner News Corporation, and now Europe, is being driven by the soaring costs of rights in the US.

The broadcaster has enjoyed a powerful position in the US sports-rights market which it wants to defend, but doing so has become increasingly expensive. Competing with companies like News Corp's Fox, which this week unveiled a new national sports network designed to take on ESPN head to head, and networks like NBCUniversal for the top properties has forced the broadcaster to pay higher rights fees. ESPN has commitments to rights-holders of nearly \$50 billion (€37.9 billion) over the next 15 years.

With revenues from the distribution fees ESPN earns from its affiliate networks around the US (which accounts for 75 per cent of its income) having reached close to saturation point, the profit margin on the \$6 billion-per-year

business is said to have been shrinking in the last five years. Reversing that decline by a few percentage points would bring Disney far greater returns than running a low-profit operation in Europe. ■

## CYCLING

# Rai pays less for Giro rights but RCS still ahead

By Frank Dunne

RCS Sport, the organiser of the Giro d'Italia, is set to earn a big increase in its international rights income which will more than offset a drop in the value of its domestic rights.

In a new four-year domestic media-rights deal, from 2013 to 2016, Italian state broadcaster Rai is paying RCS, the organiser and commercial rights-holder of the Giro, about the same as in the four-year deal which expired at the end of 2012 – about €8 million (\$10.6 million) per year. However, a far greater proportion of Rai's investment is being earmarked for production, with a correspondingly smaller amount paid as a rights fee.

In the previous deal, Rai paid about €3 million per season on production and the rest in rights fees to RCS. Production costs are considerably higher, possibly double, in the new agreement, as Rai has committed to improve its coverage.

The domestic rights fee drop will be more than made up by an increase in international rights fees under RCS's eight-year deal, from 2013 to 2020, with the IMG Media agency (*TV Sports Markets* 16:12). IMG is paying RCS a minimum guarantee plus a share of revenues.

IMG is achieving wider distribution and higher rights fees for RCS's content, which covers other cycle races as well as the Giro, including the Milan-Sanremo, Il Lombardia, the Tirreno Adriatico, the Strade Bianche and the new Roma Maxima. The combined value of just two of the deals already agreed – with international sports broadcasters Eurosport and Al Jazeera – is understood to be worth more than RCS's total revenues from its global rights in the last cycle.

Under the previous deal, Rai also distributed the international rights for RCS's content. The deal operated on a 50:50 revenue-share basis, with no minimum guarantee for RCS. Rai Trade, Rai's international rights-selling arm, is thought to have generated about €5 million per year from the global rights fees, of which €2.5 million per year was paid to RCS.

The commitment by Rai to improve the television production of the Giro has been vital to IMG securing better distribution. Rai will produce the coverage in high definition and will have a separate race director for the international feed. Rai is also producing highlights, English-language programming and news feeds for the international market.

The negotiations to renew the Rai domestic rights deal, which began last September, are said to have been fraught, especially in the early stages. Rai was unhappy at losing the international rights and resisted some of RCS's demands for improved production. At one stage, the talks nearly collapsed over the production issue.

One source close to the deal said it was "a win-win deal for RCS and Rai, given the extent of the financial crisis and Rai's financial problems."

### New international deals

IMG this week signed a four-year deal for the RCS rights with Eurosport, from 2013 to 2016. The deal is a renewal, but includes major changes since Eurosport's previous deal with Rai Trade.

In the previous deal, Eurosport had absolute exclusivity in just three territories – the UK, France and Switzerland – and pay-television rights only in its other territories. Under the new deal, Eurosport has exclusive rights in 59 countries including the UK, Germany, Norway, Sweden and Poland.

However, France has been carved out completely, with the rights being sold exclusively to Al Jazeera. Free-to-air rights have also been carved out in Spain, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium and Switzerland. IMG has done deals with public-service broadcasters in each country – TV2 in Denmark, NOS in the Netherlands, SRG-SSR in Switzerland and

VRT in Belgium. In Spain, it has agreed deals with four regional channels: TV3 in Catalunya, TVG in Galicia, and TPA Asturias and EITB in the Basque country.

Eurosport is understood to be paying a bigger rights fee than in the last deal, reflecting the improved production quality, plus the inclusion of additional content such as clips, on-demand and streaming rights not covered by the old deal.

IMG's deal with Al Jazeera is also thought to be for four years, from 2013 to 2016. The deal covers rights in the Middle East, France and the US. It will be the first time that the Giro has had live coverage in the Middle East. In the US, the Giro was previously shown on the NBC Universal Sports Network channel.

Increasing exposure for the less well-known races in the RCS portfolio is an important part of IMG's strategy. Last weekend's Strade Bianche race was covered live, as-live or in highlights in 116 countries. Under the previous deal, outside the Eurosport territories, the race had coverage only in Norway, the US, Canada, the Netherlands and Belgium. ■

## CRICKET

# Neo beats Sony and Taj to New Zealand rights

By Dan Horlock

Neo Sports Broadcast paid \$60 million (€45 million) in its seven-season deal last week for the rights in Asia for professional domestic and international cricket matches played in New Zealand.

Its winning bid was well ahead of rival bids. It is thought that incumbent rights-holder Sony, and pan-Indian subcontinent pay-television operators Taj Television and Star all bid less than \$40 million.

The Neo deal begins immediately with coverage of England's tour of New Zealand, and runs until March 2020. Neo, a division of the Nimbus Communications agency, agreed the deal with the Pitch International agency, the exclusive international broadcast and sponsorship agency of Cricket New Zealand, the sport's governing body in New Zealand.

Prasana Krishnan, the chief operating officer of Neo Sports, told TV Sports Markets this week: "We made an offer for the rights and we stuck to that value. We were comfortable with the level of investment and it offers us a great lead into the 2014 Asia Cup."

The Asia Cup is Neo's other major cricket property. It is a One-Day International 50-over cricket tournament, played over a two-week period once every two years. It consists of four teams from the Indian subcontinent: Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Neo will exploit the rights on its Indian subcontinent pay-television channels Neo Prime and Neo Sports, and sublicense the rights to broadcasters in other Asian markets. The majority of the value of the rights is tied up in the Indian market but Krishnan said that there was also value in the other cricket-playing markets in the Indian subcontinent. Sri Lanka and Pakistan will both tour New Zealand twice, and Bangladesh will tour once, over the period. Outside of the Indian subcontinent, Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong and the Philippines are considered among the Asian markets where Neo could earn rights fees.

### Star changes strategy

Star was initially the most competitive of the three other broadcasters in the rights auction but eventually dropped out of the bidding. The broadcaster had been keen to acquire more premium cricket rights to feed its new sports channel, Star Sports 2, which is to launch on March 11.

Star Sports 2 will focus on football and will complement Star's other channels – Star Sports, Star Cricket, Star Cricket HD, ESPN and ESPN HD. The ESPN branding is set to disappear in the next few months as part of the rebrand following News Corp's acquisition of rival media conglomerate Disney's 50-per-cent stake in ESPN Star Sports in November.

Star's interest in the New Zealand rights cooled after the schedule for India's 2014 tour of New Zealand was reduced from three Tests, five ODIs and two Twenty20 matches to two Tests, two ODIs and two Twenty20 matches.

Star is thought to have withdrawn from the bidding process in November after it

completed its three-season deal for the rights to English football's Premier League from next season, which is worth about \$48 million per season.

### Old deal

In the previous five-season deal, from 2008-09 to 2012-13, Sony paid about \$30 million for the New Zealand rights. The value was negotiated down from about \$40 million over the contract period due to changes in the schedule.

A like-with-like comparison with the new deal is difficult due to differences in the territories covered and the schedule. Sony's deal included the Middle East, which is excluded from Neo's deal. In the old deal, India toured New Zealand once, playing three Tests, five ODIs and two Twenty20 matches. In the new deal, in addition to India's tour in 2014, the country is scheduled to play three Tests, five ODIs and two Twenty20s in New Zealand in 2019. ■

## TV FRANCE

# Canal Plus grabs strategic French handball rights

*Continued from page 1* ▶

In the new handball deal, from 2013-14 until 2016-17, the broadcaster is paying between €1.5 million and €2 million per season. In its previous four-year deal, from 2009-10 to 2012-13, it paid just over €750,000 per season.

The rights are of strategic importance. Handball is increasingly popular in France following the recent successes of the men's national team. After winning the gold medal at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, France became the first nation to defend its title, winning the gold medal again at the London Games last year.

The deal keeps the national side on Canal Plus in the run-up to the 2017 World Men's Handball Championship, which will be held in France. For the 2013 tournament in Spain, all France games were broadcast by Canal Plus. The broadcaster will be hoping to acquire the rights from the International Handball

Federation for the 2015 edition in Qatar, and the home tournament two years later.

Al Jazeera, which wanted the national team rights content for its beIN Sport channels, was the only rival bidder, with Canal Plus tabling a marginally higher offer in the final round of bids.

The federation's marketing manager Cédric Pouthier told *TV Sports Markets*: "It would have been a difficult decision to make if beIN Sport had offered more money than Canal Plus. We have worked with Canal Plus for years now, but we are also working with beIN Sport and have a very constructive relationship – we have a good understanding with both broadcasters."

Al Jazeera holds the rights until the end of the 2012-13 season, in a one-season deal, for the Ligue Féminine de Handball Division 1, the top women's league. The rights, which are sold by the federation, are part of Canal Plus's new deal.

Al Jazeera also holds the rights to the European Handball Federation Champions League, which it acquired in a five-year deal, from 2012-13 to 2016-17, from the MP & Silva agency. The Qatar-based broadcaster had also acquired the rights to handball matches at the 2012 Olympic Games as part of a sublicensing deal with commercial channel TF1, which also covered basketball and tennis.

The new agreement means the federation will no longer have ties with Al Jazeera from next season, as Canal Plus goes about establishing a monopoly over domestic handball.

In addition to the national team rights, Canal Plus also holds: the rights to the Ligue Nationale de Handball Division 1, the top men's division, until 2014-15; the men's and women's Coupe de France, a knockout competition including sides from all five tiers of the sport, until 2013-14; the men's Coupe de la Ligue until 2014-15 and the women's Coupe de la Ligue until 2016-17; and the Trophée des Champions – a men's tournament contested by the league champions, the winners of the two cup competitions, and the next-best placed league team, until 2014-15.

The men's league sells the rights for Division 1, the men's Coupe de la Ligue and the Trophée des Champions. The

federation sells the rights for the national side's games, men's and women's Coupe de France games, as well as the top women's league and women's Coupe de la Ligue matches.

Local rights experts say that Canal Plus has the stronger handball portfolio. The French national team matches are by far the most important content, followed by domestic league games. The Champions League is less popular due to poor performances by French clubs and unfavourable scheduling.

Under the new national team deal, Canal Plus will broadcast between eight and 10 matches per year from both the men's and women's national sides, excluding international tournaments but including the Golden League. This is a tournament between the women's national sides of France, Denmark, Russia and Norway. The 2013 edition will be held in France at the end of the month.

The deal also covers 18 games from the top women's league – 15 regular-season matches, as well as the league semi-finals and final – and the semi-finals and final of the women's Coupe de la Ligue, a knockout competition between the 10 teams in the top women's league. ■

## TV INDONESIA

# Silva channel plan gets off to strong start with First

By Dan Horlock

The MP & Silva agency, in conjunction with CSI Sports, will launch a four-channel sports package in Indonesia fronted by its Premier League rights before the start of next season in August.

The agency is understood to have launched the bouquet of channels after broadcasters refused to meet its asking price for the league rights. In November, MP & Silva paid slightly over \$30 million (€23 million) per season for the rights, from 2013-14 to 2015-16, more than double the \$13.3 million per season paid by pay-television broadcaster ESPN Star Sports in the current deal.

It is understood that the agency has already agreed a three-year, non-exclusive carriage deal for the new channels worth about \$70 million with the Lippo Group, which owns cable pay-television operator First Media. First Media had about 170,000 subscribers at the end of 2010.

The channel package will include two Premier League channels, a third channel, based on other rights held by the agency in Indonesia, and fight sports channel CSI Fight Network.

The third channel will be made up of rights that MP & Silva has been unable to sell in Indonesia. This includes the FA Cup from next season, and the English League Cup and Championship, the second-tier of English football.

MP & Silva paid the English Football Association \$120 million in a six-year deal, from 2012-13 to 2017-18, for FA Cup and England national team rights in Asia, excluding Thailand. It acquired the Football League's rights in Asia, which includes the League Cup and the Championship, from the Pitch International agency in a five-year deal, from 2012-13 to 2016-17.

In addition to these English football rights, the third channel will carry other football content from the agency's portfolio, such as France's Ligue 1, Brazil's Campeonato Série A, North America's Major League Soccer, and selected matches from Italy's Serie A. In July last year, the agency sold free-to-air rights for the Italian Serie A to state broadcaster Televisi Republik Indonesia covering the period 2012-13 to 2014-15, in a deal worth about \$3 million per season.

### Fight sports comeback

The fourth channel will be CSI Fight Network. Local experts say the channel makes the package more attractive for platforms. CSI will benefit by gaining distribution for its channel alongside a premium sports rights property in the Premier League. It is understood that CSI Sports co-chief executive Richard Miele has a good relationship with MP & Silva chief executive Andrea Radrizzani.

Fight sports and WWE wrestling have had a renaissance in Indonesia. The country's largest media group MNC,

recently signed a deal with the WWE wrestling organisation for its programming, showing content late at night on pay-television. The programming has built a strong audience in a short time, according to well-placed sources. In January, MNC agreed a rights deal with mixed martial arts promoter Ultimate Fighting Championship.

Fight sports had struggled for distribution in the country since 2006. In November of that year, the Indonesian Broadcasting Commission, the Komisi Penyiaran Indonesia, campaigned to ban WWE programming following the death of a nine-year-old boy allegedly as a consequence of copying wrestling moves he had watched on television. WWE and fight sports programming was withdrawn by broadcasters, although there was no official ban by the government.

### Pay-TV growth

MP & Silva was forced to pay a high fee for the Premier League rights amidst strong competition from agencies and local broadcasters. It bid aggressively after losing out on the rights in two key territories – Vietnam and Japan – to the IMG Media agency.

The success of the new channel package depends on a small, but growing pay-television market. Indonesia has a population of over 240 million, the fourth largest in the world, and over 42 million television households. Pay-television penetration is extremely low. In 2010, it was about three per cent, about 1.2 million subscribers. However, that number is expected to increase to about six million subscribers by 2016, generating revenues of \$1.3 billion.

The biggest media group in Indonesia is MNC. It owns free-to-air channels RCTI, MNC TV and Global TV. It also owns 51 per cent of pay-television broadcaster Skyvision, which operates a number of leading pay-television brands of which the largest is satellite broadcaster Indovision.

Indovision dominates the pay-television sector, controlling two-thirds of the market. At the end of 2010, it had just over 800,000 subscribers. MP & Silva will expect to achieve a much bigger fee from Indovision than it did in its deal with Lippo. ■

## FORMULA ONE

# CCTV could pay for ratings flop with loss of rights

By Frank Dunne

Bernie Ecclestone's Formula One Management is understood to be considering dropping Chinese state broadcaster CCTV in favour of deals with regional channels. CCTV has broadcast the championship for the last nine seasons.

FOM is understood to have had concerns over the last three seasons about dwindling audiences in China, a key growth market for the sport and its sponsors. The audience for the sport in China is also one of the most important for sponsors in demographic terms. Over 10 per cent of viewers are under 16, and 25 per cent are under 25, making it one of the youngest audiences for Formula One.

CCTV has a huge sports portfolio and FOM does not believe that Formula One has had the priority in scheduling or the level of promotion and marketing that it merits. FOM's concerns came to a head in the 2012 season with a series of viewing metrics which the sport's commercial rights-holder says in its 2012 season broadcast report "didn't meet expectations."

The cumulative reach of the 2012 championship in China was 48.984 million, down from 74.5 million in 2011. This was largely due to CCTV reducing its number of hours of coverage from 322 in 2011 to 229 last season. The average live race audience for the season was down from four million to 3.8 million, while the highest audience for a single race dropped by over five million to 8.351 million.

The rights in China are held by the organisers of the grand prix in Shanghai but the sales strategy is decided in close collaboration with FOM. Both FOM and the local rights-holders believe that doing multiple deals with regional broadcasters could improve rights fee revenue and exposure. ■



## SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from February 21 to March 6

### TV RIGHTS 1

## Football: Premier League, Chinese Super League, MLS and more

- **Football:** Sports broadcaster Eurosport acquired rights for the Algarve Cup women's national team tournament in a three-year deal, 2013 to 2015, with the organisers of the tournament. The deal covers exclusive rights in all European territories apart from Portugal, the competition's host nation, where Eurosport's rights will be non-exclusive.
- **Football:** The English Premier League agreed deals in Portugal and Ireland for the 2013-14 to 2015-16 period. In Portugal, pay-television channel Benfica TV acquired the rights (page 2). In Ireland, pay-television broadcasters BSkyB and BT acquired rights. Sky acquired five packages of rights, totalling 116 matches per season, while BT acquired two packages of rights, totalling 38 matches.
- **Football:** The IMG Media agency sold two packages of Premier League rights to pay-television broadcaster Canal Plus in Vietnam. Canal Plus secured exclusive live rights for all Sunday matches and all Saturday lunchtime games. The broadcaster will have non-exclusive rights to other Saturday, Monday and midweek matches.
- **Football:** UK public-service broadcaster the BBC renewed its rights for the women's FA Cup final to cover the 2013 match on May 26. BBC2 will show the game live.
- **Football:** Regional Spanish public-service broadcaster Televisión de Galicia acquired rights for the Liga Adelante, the second division of football in Spain, in a deal with the Mediapro agency. TVG will show the first-choice game each match day, with a particular focus on Galician team Luga. The rights will be exploited on the TVG2 channel. The length of the deal was not disclosed.
- **Football:** The Chinese Football Association, the sport's governing body in China, appointed digital media company VisionChina to deliver live coverage of the country's Super League top tier on mobile platforms. The deal will run for five years, from 2013-14 to 2017-18. VisionChina will work with state-owned CCTV and internet company Sina to deliver live coverage of the league to viewers carrying mobile devices on public transport.
- **Football:** US pay-television operator Time Warner Cable acquired regional rights for Major League Soccer matches featuring FC Dallas (page 2).
- **Football:** Pan-regional pay-television broadcaster DirecTV acquired the rights in Latin America for Atlético Madrid's pre-season tour to South America later this year, after striking a deal to arrange and broadcast the Spanish Liga club's three-match trip. The tour will run from the final week of July to the first week of August, with the team playing in three different locations across South America.

### SINCE LAST TIME

- Fox Sports Media Group, a division of media conglomerate News Corporation, will launch its new US nationwide pay-television sports channel, Fox Sports 1, on August 17. The channel replaces motorsport channel Speed. Fox Sports 1 will offer nearly 5,000 hours of live sports event coverage, news and original programming every year. Fox is also launching Fox Sports Live, a rolling sports news service, and Fox Sports Go, a mobile and internet service.
- UK pay-television broadcaster BSkyB is in talks about a deal to become a part-owner in a new global cycling series, according to Bloomberg. Media conglomerate News Corporation, which owns 39.1 per cent of Sky, was reported to be interested in broadcasting the series outside the UK. The plans for the series are being led by Jonathan Price, a former sponsorship manager at football club Manchester United, and Thomas Kurth, a former lobbyist for top European football clubs. Under the plan, cycling teams would get about 50 per cent of the series' revenue.

### FOOTBALL

- Latin America's six leading domestic football leagues registered a significant increase in their media rights revenues in 2012 to break the \$1bn (€760m) barrier for the first time, according to media research company Dataxis. Media rights revenues for clubs in the top divisions in Argentina, Brazil, Chile,

Colombia, Mexico and Peru reached a combined \$1.07bn in 2012, a 56-per-cent increase on the figures in 2011. Brazil's top-tier Campeonato Brasileiro Série A accounted for \$610m of the total.

- Major League Soccer, the top-tier North American league, announced that up to 236 regular-season matches, as well as selected play-off games, will be broadcast through its Direct Kick pay-television subscription package this year. The package will broadcast matches that are not covered by the league's national television partners.

### TV INTERNATIONAL

- Pan-Nordic commercial and pay-television operator Modern Times Group agreed a deal with UK pay-television broadcaster BSkyB for carriage of the Sky Sports News HD rolling news channel. MTG is putting the channel in its Viasat pay-television platforms and channel bundles in the Nordic and Baltic countries. The channel went live in Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland at the end of February on Viasat pay-television platforms, in Viasat channel packages available through third-party pay-television services, and on MTG's online service Viaplay. Sky Sports News HD will be added to Baltic platforms in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania later this year.
- German broadcaster ProSiebenSat.1 will launch a new pay-television sports channel as part of six new channel launches before the end of 2014.

**SPORTS CLIPS:** News from TVSM Daily from February 21 to March 6**TV RIGHTS 2****Athletics, basketball, cricket, cycling, handball, motorsport and more**

- **Athletics:** Italian commercial broadcaster La7 acquired live, delayed and highlights rights for the 2013 Milan City Marathon on April 7, in a deal with RCS Sport, the event organiser.
  - **Baseball:** US regional broadcaster Fox Sports South and its sister channel SportSouth acquired exclusive regional rights for Major League Baseball team the Atlanta Braves' games in a deal running until at least the end of the 2013 season. Fox Sports South will show a total of 72 games per season while SportSouth will show 80 games per season.
  - **Basketball:** German free-to-air financial news broadcaster Deutsches Anleger Fernsehen acquired rights for a weekly, 15-minute Euroleague magazine programme on Mondays, focused on German team Brose Baskets.
  - **Basketball:** Canadian pay-television channel The Score acquired live rights for Canadian Interuniversity Sport's men's and women's championships. The channel will show live coverage of the 2013 men's semi-finals and final, and women's final.
  - **Bodyboarding:** The IMG Media agency was appointed by the International Bodyboarding Association to distribute worldwide media rights to the World Tour series. The deal covers at least the 2013 series.
  - **Boxing:** US pay-television broadcaster HBO acquired delayed rights for the professional debut of Chinese two-time Olympic gold medal-winner Zou Shiming against Mexican flyweight Eleazar Valenzuela in Macau on April 6. HBO struck the deal with Top Rank, the promoter of the fight. Coverage will include two other bouts on the same bill. It will be shown on the HBO 2 channel.
  - **Cricket:** Pay-television broadcaster Neo Sports Broadcast acquired rights in Asia for cricket in New Zealand between 2013-14 and 2019-20 (page 6).
  - **Cycling:** Italian state broadcaster Rai renewed domestic rights for the Giro d'Italia and other races for four years, from 2013 to 2016 (page 5).
  - **Cycling:** IMG Media agreed deals for the Giro d'Italia and other Italian races in territories including Europe, the US and the Middle East in four-year deals, from 2013 to 2016 (page 5).
  - **Handball:** French pay-television broadcaster Canal Plus retained rights for French handball federation competitions in a four-season deal, from 2013-14 to 2016-17 (page 1).
  - **Motorcycling:** US pay-television broadcaster beIN Sport acquired rights for the 2013 Superbike World Championship, in a deal with the Infront Sports & Media agency. BeIN Sport will show every race live on television and internet, including every race from the Supersport developmental series.
  - **Motorsport:** Italian state broadcaster Rai acquired Formula One rights in a sublicensing deal with pay-television broadcaster Sky Italia covering the five years from 2013 to 2017. Rai will show nine grands prix live per year and the other 10 races on a three-hour delay on free-to-air television. It will show live coverage of the Italian grand prix at Monza as well as the races in China, Canada, Hungary, Spain, Singapore, Japan, the US and Brazil.
  - **Motorsport:** German commercial broadcaster RTL acquired rights for the FIA GT Series and the Blancpain Endurance Series in deals with promoter SRO Motorsports Group, covering at least the 2013 season. Coverage will be on the main RTL channel and pay-television sister channel RTL Nitro.
  - **Motorsport:** Pay-television broadcaster Sky New Zealand acquired rights for the V8 Supercars series in a five-year deal, from 2013 to 2017. Sky will provide delayed free-to-air coverage of the ITM400 Auckland, a round of the series staged in New Zealand.
  - **Motorsport:** Canadian pay-television broadcaster Rogers Sportsnet acquired rights to the IndyCar series in a five-year deal, 2013 to 2017. Sportsnet will show at least 16 races per season live, including the Indianapolis 500, on television, internet and mobile. The deal includes live coverage of the Indy Lights developmental series. Canadian French-language pay-television channel TVS Sport has sublicensed rights to simulcast Sportsnet's coverage.
- 
- US pay-television sports broadcaster ESPN was ordered to pay Dish Network, the pay-television platform, \$4.86m (€3.68m) by a federal court. The court decided that ESPN breached a 2005 licensing agreement by allowing other pay-television platforms to pay lower rates for Spanish-language sports channel ESPN Deportes, without offering the same rates to Dish. The court dismissed a host of other claims by Dish that ESPN had given better deals to rival platforms. Dish had been claiming a total of \$152m in the legal action.
  - US pay-television operator Cablevision Systems will begin charging subscribers an additional \$2.98 (€2.26) per month from April 1 to cover increasing costs associated with sports programming. Only those customers who subscribe to the most basic package of channels, which exclude sports, will be exempt from the charge.
  - The Argentinian government announced plans to launch a new free-to-air television channel dedicated to sport. The high-definition channel, DeporTV, will be available nationwide. It will show sports news, magazine programmes, documentaries, interviews and internally-produced series.
  - The Comité Olímpico Dominicano, the national Olympic committee in the Dominican Republic, agreed a deal with state broadcaster CERTV to launch a new free-to-air sports television

## SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from February 21 to March 6

### TV RIGHTS 3

## Paralympics, rugby league, surfing, tennis, US college sport and more

- **Paralympic Games:** The European Broadcasting Union acquired rights for the 2014 winter Paralympic Games in Sochi, and the 2016 summer Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, including test events and other para-sport events, in a deal with the International Paralympic Committee, the world governing body of para-sport. The deal covers all EBU territories, excluding Russia for the 2014 Games, and the UK for both the 2014 and 2016 Games. EBU subsidiary Eurovision will provide production services for the coverage. Twenty-seven of the EBU's members have so far committed to showing the 2016 Paralympics.
- **Rugby League:** UK pay-television broadcaster Premier Sports acquired rights for Australia's National Rugby League in a five-year deal, from 2013 to 2017. Premier Sports will show at least six games live per week, and two more matches per week on a delayed basis. The agreement includes live rights to every game from the NRL playoffs, as well as the All-Star game, the annual Test match between Australia and New Zealand, the State of Origin series between Queensland and New South Wales, and the NRL Grand Final.
- **Surfing:** Pay-television broadcaster Globosat acquired exclusive media and sponsorship rights in Brazil for the Association of Surfing Professionals' World Surfing Awards in a deal with the MP & Silva agency. Globosat's action and adventure channel, Off, provided live coverage of the event, which took place on February 28 in Gold Coast City, Australia.
- **Tennis:** Belarusian public-service broadcaster TVR acquired rights for six tournaments operated by the Women's Tennis Association, which runs the professional women's tour. TVR will provide live coverage of one quarter-final, one semi-final and the final from WTA events in Indian Wells, Miami, Charleston, Stuttgart, Madrid and Rome between March and May. The rights will be exploited on free-to-air channel Belarus 2.
- **US College Sport:** The Big East conference struck a rights deal with incumbent rights-holder ESPN, the US pay-television broadcaster. The ESPN deal will run for seven years, from 2013-14 to 2019-20, and is worth a total of \$130m (€99m), or \$18.6m per year. The agreement includes seven years of coverage of Big East men's basketball, from 2013-14 to 2019-20, and six years of coverage of American football, from 2014-15 to 2019-20.
- **US College Sport:** US pay-television broadcaster ESPN acquired rights for the Big South conference in a seven-year deal, from 2013 to 2019. ESPN will show an average of 62 Big South events per year. The men's basketball championship game will continue to be broadcast on either the main ESPN channel or ESPN2, while the ESPN3 college sports channel will show six events per year. The ESPN3 online streaming platform will also show at least 50 events per year. The Wasserman Media Group advised the conference during its negotiations.
- **Various:** Digital sports video news agency SendtoNews agreed rights deals with the Nascar motor-racing series and Rugby Canada, rugby union's governing body in Canada. SendtoNews will distribute coverage of Nascar races and Rugby Canada events, including highlights and other content, to thousands of member news outlets worldwide via its News Partnership Network. The lengths of the multi-year deals were not disclosed.

channel. The channel will provide coverage of domestic and international sporting events and will be operated by the national Olympic committee. A launch date was not confirmed.

- The WWE wrestling entertainment organisation announced plans to launch a new television channel by 2015. Vince McMahon, WWE's chairman and chief executive, said that the organisation can "achieve a significant increase in earnings based on launching a WWE network in the US and international markets."

### TV RIGHTS NEGOTIATIONS

- Spanish public-service broadcaster TVE is in talks with the Mediapro agency about acquiring rights for one live free-to-air match per week from the Spanish Liga, the top domestic football league. TVE is expected to pay between €4m (\$5.3m) and €6m for the remaining weeks of the 2012-13 season and €13m for the full 2013-14 campaign.
- Don Garber, the commissioner of North American football league Major League Soccer, said he wanted the next cycle of domestic rights to "give us more promotion and perhaps give us a schedule that works a bit better for us and our fans." The league's three-year rights deals with pay-television broadcaster ESPN, network and pay-television broadcaster NBC Universal and Spanish-language broadcaster Univision expire at the end of the 2014 season.
- The CAA Eleven agency put the free-to-air rights to the women's Uefa Euro 2013 championship out to tender in France. Pan-European sports broadcaster Eurosport already holds pay-television rights to the event across Europe. The tournament takes place in Sweden from July 10-28. Bids had to be in by March 5.
- Nascar chairman Brian France is aiming to agree extensions to the US motorsport series' deals with domestic pay-television rights partners ESPN and TNT by late summer 2013.
- The Big East US college sport conference is close to renewing a domestic rights deal with the CBS network for 2013-14 onwards. The deal covers rights for the conference's men's basketball championship. The new deal is expected to be worth about \$2m (€1.5m) per year.

**SPORTS CLIPS:** News from TVSM Daily from February 21 to March 6

- Hamish McLennan, the new chief executive of the Australian Ten network, said that the commercial broadcaster would bid for the next cycle of domestic rights to Australian cricket and the Australian Open tennis grand slam tournament.
- The Instituto de Radio y Televisión, Cuba's public-service broadcaster, is interested in acquiring rights for Major League Baseball, according to the Cafefuerte news website.
- European Athletics, the governing body of athletics in Europe, streamed coverage of the 2013 European Athletics Indoor Championships in Gothenburg via a dedicated website created by digital media company Digotel. The website showed live coverage and highlights of the championships, which took place from March 1-3.

**ALSO SINCE LAST TIME**

- The Irish Rugby Football Union, the governing body of rugby union in Ireland, defended new rights deals for autumn international matches that will result in fans in Northern Ireland not being able to see free-to-air coverage of the games. In January, the IRFU struck rights deals for four years, from 2014 to 2017, with the Republic of Ireland's public-service broadcaster RTÉ, and pay-television broadcaster BSkyB for the UK including Northern Ireland. RTÉ's channels can usually be viewed on free-to-air terrestrial television in Northern Ireland, but as part of the new deals the channels will be blocked in the territory during the matches. The governing body said that it had to "strike the balance" between ensuring availability to viewers whilst funding the development of the sport.
- Digital sports media company Perform acquired Voetbalzone.nl for €2m (\$2.6m), with a further payment of up to €10.5m subject to the performance of the Dutch football news website over the next three years. Perform also announced adjusted ebitda of £37.5m (€43.1m/\$56.9m) for 2012, up 103 per cent from £18.5m in 2011. Turnover increased 47 per cent year-on-year, from £103.2m to £151.6m.
- UK public-service broadcaster the BBC will show about 40 extra hours of Formula One coverage on its main channels during the upcoming 2013 season by broadcasting live coverage of practice sessions for the nine grands prix that it is showing live. The coverage will be on the BBC2 channel.
- The International Cricket Council, the sport's global governing body, will stream live coverage of 16 matches from the remaining three rounds of the Cricket World Cup qualifying competition, starting this month, via its official website.
- Spanish Liga club Real Madrid has claimed €6m (\$8m) in damages from Spanish regional broadcaster TV3, according to Spanish newspaper AS, because the club's players were portrayed as hyenas hunting Barcelona star midfielder Lionel Messi in a programme broadcast on the channel. The director and host of the programme, Xavier Valls, apologised and said that the hyenas metaphor was unfortunate.

**INDUSTRY MOVES**

- Sunil Manocha was appointed as the chief operating officer of the Nimbus Sport division of the Nimbus Communications agency. Manocha succeeds Yannick Colaco, who was appointed as the managing director of the National Basketball Association's operations in India.
- Mark Buckman, the chief marketing officer at Telstra, was given the extra responsibility of leading the Australian telecommunications company's digital media and IPTV division. Buckman succeeded JB Rousselot, who stood down as Telstra's executive director of media after 10 years in the role.
- The Sportfive agency appointed Ben Taverner as the new sales director of its French division. Taverner was previously sales director of Italian Serie A football club Juventus in 2009. He also previously worked at the IMG Media agency.

**EDITORIAL**

Editor	Frank Dunne @frankdunneTVSM
Digital News Editor	Kevin McCullagh @kevinmccullagh
Reporter	Dan Horlock @DanHorlock
Reporter	Robin Jellis @robinjellis
Telephone	+44 (0) 20 7954 3506
Fax	+44 (0) 20 7954 3511
Email	tvsm@tvsportsmarkets.com

**DESIGN & PRODUCTION**

Designer	Stewart Henson
Production Assistant	Carianne Whitworth
Email	carianne@tvsportsmarkets.com

**SALES & COMMERCIAL**

Telephone	+44 (0) 20 7954 3483
Fax	+44 (0) 20 7954 3511
Email	sales@tvsportsmarkets.com
Paul Santos	Head of Sales & Commercial
Email	paul.santos@tvsportsmarkets.com

**TV Sports Markets**

Registered Office 33-41 Dallington Street, EC1V 0BB  
 © TV Sports Markets Ltd.  
 Printed by Printflow, Citybridge House,  
 235-245 Goswell Road, London EC1V 7JD

**Important Terms and Conditions**

All rights in this newsletter are reserved. No part of this newsletter may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of TV Sports Markets.

For more information, contact Paul Santos by email on paul.santos@tvsportsmarkets.com