

## TV SPAIN

# Telefónica deal for Canal Plus could wake dormant sports-rights market

By Robin Jellis

Telco Telefónica's planned acquisition of Prisa's 56-per-cent stake in pay-television operator Canal Plus – if it goes ahead – is expected to provide a shot in the arm for Spain's moribund sports-rights market.

The deal would make Telefónica the dominant pay-television sports broadcaster in Spain, seriously threatening rivals such as Mediapro's Gol TV, a key competitor in the premium sports rights market, and cable-television operator Ono.

The impending sale has already had an impact. Canal Plus went on a spending spree in the last two weeks, agreeing deals for ATP tennis rights and renewing a host of golf properties, ahead of the bid deadline set by seller Prisa. The deals were designed to increase the value of the broadcaster to prospective buyers (see box, page 3).

An aggressive Telefónica would be good news for rights-holders. Rights fees for many properties have stagnated or

fallen in recent years due to the economic crisis and an advertising market crash.

"They are going to go for deals and they will get them because Mediapro won't make foolish or strategic deals," one insider said. "Telefónica/Canal Plus will be the dominant new acquirers of rights in future. Whether that's viable or sustainable over the next five to 10 years will have to be seen."

The telco has already shown its teeth in the rights market this year with the acquisition of the pay-television rights to motorsport's Formula One and motorcycling's MotoGP for its IPTV service Movistar TV (*TV Sports Markets* 18:3).

Local media reports suggest that rival mobile operator Vodafone would bid for Ono, the second-largest pay-television platform in Spain, should Telefónica

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## TV ASIA

# Al Jazeera set to take control in Asia

By Frank Dunne

Al Jazeera is understood to be close to buying the MP & Silva agency's 50-per-cent stake in the joint venture channel operation set up in Asia last year. Some sources claim the deal is already done.

This will give the Qatari broadcaster complete control over the strategic direction of its expansion into Asia, where it will take on other powerful channel syndicators like Fox International Channels

and Discovery Communications, as well as successful niche players like Setanta Sports.

It will allow MP & Silva to return to its core business – an intermediary looking to play buyers off against each other to secure the highest price for its rights. The agency has a huge portfolio of rights in Asia.

The agency's chief executive Peter Hutton alluded to the impending

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## FASTRACK 1

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Renewed Fox interest helps Bundesliga in UK

UK pay-television operator BT Sport was forced to increase its fee for the rights to Germany's Bundesliga from just over €1m (\$1.4m) per season to just under €3m per season to see off competition from rival pay-television operator BSkyB.

The deal is for two seasons, from 2015-16 to 2016-17. The short duration of the contract is thought to be one reason why Sky did not push BT harder. BT was the incumbent rights-holder, having inherited a three-year contract through the acquisition of ESPN's UK operations. The ESPN deal runs from 2012-13 to 2014-15.

Sky's bid was handled by Fox International Channels, the channel syndication arm of 21st Century Fox, which also holds a controlling stake in Sky. Fox has been negotiating with DFL Sports Enterprises, the league's commercial arm, to add a number of European territories to those which it acquired in the \$80m-per-season, 80-market deal signed last October (*TV Sports Markets* 17:19).

In addition to the higher rights fee offered by BT, the DFL is thought to have been swayed by the broadcaster's commitment to live coverage. BT Sport will show 115 live matches per season – 15 games more per season than in the current deal. The broadcaster will also show the annual DFL Supercup match preview shows and highlights.

The league is also thought to have been happy with the level of promotion BT has given it, and to view BT as a good long-term fit, given that the broadcaster will have exclusive rights to the Uefa Champions League from the 2015-16 season.

Sky is understood to have reacted to the loss by picking up the rights to the Dutch league, the Eredivisie, for about £200,000 (€244,000/\$337,000) per season. The deal is thought to be for three seasons, from 2014-15 to 2016-17. It was agreed with Fox International

Channels, which holds the international rights to the league from next season.

The Eredivisie had also been part of ESPN's portfolio but was not taken up by BT because match times clash with its German and Italian football. The league was not broadcast in the UK this season. ■

### Mexico finally set to open up

Mexican industry insiders are hopeful that the market, which has been held in check by the dominance of media group Televisa, is about to be cracked open by long-awaited anti-monopoly regulation.

Televisa has for years dominated the free-to-air and pay-television industries, and has had no serious rivals in the sports-rights market. This month the government will create licences for two new free-to-air broadcasters, one of which is almost certain to be a well-funded and ambitious competitor run by América Móvil, the Latin American telecoms group owned by billionaire Carlos Slim.

Regulation aimed at opening up the pay-television market is also in the pipeline. Televisa has used its ownership of Mexico's main cable and satellite television platforms to stop rivals, including international groups such as ESPN and Fox, building a strong presence in the market.

The moves are part of a long-planned drive by the government to break up the overbearing influence of wealthy individuals and companies on parts of the economy. Target companies such as Televisa have been opposing the regulations for years in Mexico's courts.

The regulations introduced this month were primarily aimed at the mobile telecoms sector, which is dominated by América Móvil, whose move into television is part of its response to the erosion of its power in mobile telecoms. The company is building its television business. It made its first major step into sport last year by acquiring pan-Latin American rights for the 2014 and 2016 Olympics. ■

### Small Uefa increase in Israel

Uefa secured increases of about 10 per cent in the value of its Champions League and Europa League rights in Israel last month.

Incumbent Champions League rights-holder the Sports Channel, a basic-tier and pay-television broadcaster, renewed its rights from 2015-16 to 2017-18 for €3.3m (\$4.6m) per year. This is an increase of over 10 per cent on the previous deal, from 2012-13 to 2014-15, which was worth just under €3m per year.

A lack of competition has been a feature of the Israeli sports-rights market for several years. However, *TV Sports Markets* understands that there was at least one rival offer, which helped push up the fee in the Sports Channel's renewal. It is understood that the rival bidder was not pay-television operator Charlton, the Sports Channel's key rival in the market.

The importance of the rights to the Sports Channel, and Uefa's good relationship with the broadcaster, are also thought to be behind the increase.

The Champions League is one of the most premium sports properties in Israel and is very important to the image of the Sports Channel, one expert said.

The final of the Champions League is understood to be included in the new contract, although in recent years it has been shown by commercial broadcaster Channel 2. Uefa generally makes the final available on free-to-air television.

Charlton, meanwhile, renewed its Europa League rights for three more years, from 2015-16 to 2017-18, for €500,000 per year. This is up from just under €450,000 per year in the previous three-year deal.

Charlton is thought to have faced little competition for the rights. The increase in rights fee was driven by Uefa's good relationship with Charlton, and the broadcaster's desire for high-quality football.

Both deals were brokered by Team Marketing, Uefa's sales agent for its club competitions. Tenders were launched in January, with bids due on February 10. ■

## TV SPAIN

## Telefónica deal for Canal Plus could shake up market

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acquire Prisa's stake in Canal Plus. This could set up a head-to-head battle between two cash-rich telcos for premium sports content. Telefónica generated revenues of €57.1bn (\$74.2bn), and a profit of €4.6bn, in 2013. Vodafone's group revenue in 2013 was £44.4bn (€54.1bn/\$74bn), and adjusted operating profit was £5.5bn.

### Deadline missed

Telefónica currently owns 22 per cent of Canal Plus. Italian media group Mediaset also holds 22 per cent, with Prisa holding the remaining 56 per cent. The proposed deal would give Telefónica 78 per cent of Canal Plus.

The telco had not exercised an option until midnight Wednesday to bid for the stake, but is still considered the favourite to buy it. The fee is expected to be about €800m. Prisa is thought to have been hoping for closer to €1bn but is in a weak negotiating position because of severe financial difficulties – it has debt of about €3bn.

Other interested parties are reported to be Mediaset, either alone or jointly with Telefónica, Qatari pay-television operator Al Jazeera and Fox International Channels.

In the third quarter of 2013, Canal Plus had 1.66m subscribers, Ono had just over 800,000, Telefónica's Movistar had just over 600,000 and Gol TV had just under 250,000. There are around 3.7m pay-television subscribers in Spain. If Telefónica wins the stake in Canal Plus, it would have a total of about 2.3m subscribers, or just over 60 per cent of the market.

The acquisition would have to be cleared by Spain's antitrust authorities and, possibly, the European Commission. Given the number and relative strength of the other pay-television operators in the market it would be surprising if the deal were blocked. Telefónica, as a Spanish

## Canal Plus goes on rights spree ahead of buyout deal

Spanish pay-television operator Canal Plus signed a large number of rights deals in the last few weeks in preparation for media group Prisa's sale of its 56-per-cent stake in the platform.

Late last month it agreed a four-year deal, from 2015 to 2018, for ATP World Tour tennis for about €5.5m (\$7.6m) per year. This is an increase on the €4.8m per year paid in the current deal by Canal Plus and state broadcaster TVE, who shared the rights. TVE is thought to have contributed about €3.5m per year, and Canal Plus the remaining €1.3m per year.

The ATP initially looked to renew with the incumbent rights-holders, but TVE could not commit to the length or value of deal that the association wanted. The ATP eventually tendered the rights, which led to the deal with Canal Plus.

The deal includes all ATP 1000 events apart from the Madrid Open, 12 ATP 500 events, and some ATP 250 tournaments. It also includes pay-television rights to the Barcelona Open.

It is a second successive increase in Spain for the ATP. TVE held the rights for the four years from 2007 to 2010 in a deal worth €3m per year.

The domestic rights to the Madrid Open are sold separately by

tournament organisers. The rights are currently held by commercial broadcaster La Sexta, which pays €1.5m per year from 2011 to 2014. La Sexta has had low audiences for the Open and is unlikely to renew its rights.

Canal Plus also holds rights to the Wimbledon tennis championships in a deal which runs from 2015 to 2017. The deal is worth about €4m per year, a slight increase on the current deal, from 2011 to 2014. It did not show much of the 2013 championship due to Spanish favourite Rafael Nadal being knocked out in the first round.

Were Telefónica to acquire Canal Plus it would have a near-monopoly on tennis rights in Spain. Movistar TV exclusively carries pan-regional sports channel Eurosport, which has rights to the French, US and Australian Opens.

Canal Plus did not face any real competition in agreeing deals for its golf rights, with rights fees remaining steady. It renewed properties sold by the IMG Media agency, including the: British Open, US PGA Championship, US Open, Ryder Cup, European Tour, World Golf Championships, Asian Tour, LPGA Tour and Sunshine Tour. It also renewed rights to the US Masters until 2018 and with the PGA Tour. ■

company, is also said to be the government's preferred buyer.

Telefónica previously tried, and failed, to establish a major pay-television channel in Spain. It acquired Spanish national football team away qualifiers for the 2002 World Cup for its Via Digital pay-television platform. But the telco stepped back from media rights acquisitions when Via Digital merged with Canal Satélite Digital to form Digital Plus in 2003.

### Strategic acquisition

The Canal Plus stake would be a strategic acquisition for Telefónica. It already has its own IPTV platform, Movistar TV, but control of Canal Plus would provide

it with a vastly improved pay-television service, and would boost its triple- and quad-play offers – bundled internet, television, telephone and mobile services. This would help it compete with key rival Vodafone.

The Canal Plus and Movistar brands are likely to be maintained in the short term. In the medium term, industry insiders expect everything would be brought under the Movistar brand.

The telco would face the challenge of merging two operations which currently target different demographics, with Canal Plus catering for higher-spending subscribers. The average revenue per user of Canal Plus is about €40 per month, double that of Movistar. ■

## CRICKET

## Ten sees off Nimbus for Sri Lanka rights but global value falls

By Frank Dunne

Indian pay-television operator Ten Sports faced limited competition in its renewal of the global media and production rights to Sri Lankan cricket. The deal was agreed in principle last summer but only confirmed this month.

As a consequence of the lack of competition, the value of the Sri Lanka Cricket Board's rights looks to have dropped. Like-with-like comparisons for Sri Lanka rights are complicated due to the rights sold bearing little resemblance to the tours that actually take place. Deals are often renegotiated.

The new deal is for seven years, from 2013-14 to 2019-20. It is worth \$75m

(€54.4m), which includes about \$15m of production costs. About \$25m of the remaining \$60m is linked to India's tour in 2017.

The last deal, for the four years from 2009-10 to 2012-13, was worth \$65m and included two Indian tours.

Nimbus Communications, owner of the Neo Sports channel, is thought to have been the only other bidder, and even then not a very aggressive one. Other potential bidders, such as Sony and Star, did not make an offer.

A senior source at one potential bidder said that the company did not bid because it thought Ten was "too deeply entrenched with the board for anyone else to make a successful bid."

Sri Lanka Cricket, the sport's governing body in the country, had originally wanted to extend the contract without going to tender. Ten had a first right of negotiation in its previous deal.

In February 2013, the country's sports minister, Mahindananda Aluthgamage,

Ten Sports' Sri Lanka cricket deals			
Period	Duration (years)	Value (\$m)	Territories
2014-20	7	75	Global
2009-13	4	65	Global
2005-08	4	40	Global <sup>1</sup>

Source: TV Sports Markets Footnote: <sup>1</sup>Original fee of \$50m reduced due to schedule changes

Ten Sports' other major cricket deals				
Board	Duration (years)	Period	Value (\$m)	Territories
South Africa	8	2012-20	175	Asia and the Middle East
Zimbabwe	8	2012-19	20	Global
West Indies	7	2013-19	65	Global <sup>1</sup>

Source: TV Sports Markets Footnote: <sup>1</sup>Ten pays a further \$35m in production costs

ruled that the rights had to be put out to tender. The governing body subsequently launched two tenders, one for all television, internet and mobile broadcasts of the team's home matches, and a separate tender for production, with a bid deadline of March 16.

The deal means that Ten has successfully renewed its four main cricket board deals in the last two years. It also holds the rights to cricket in South Africa, Zimbabwe, and the West Indies (see table). ■

## HANDBALL

## French league latest winner from beIN Sports v Canal Plus

By Robin Jellis

Pay-television broadcaster beIN Sports this week comfortably beat off competition from incumbent rights-holder Canal Plus to take the rights to the top-tier French handball league.

The league, the Ligue Nationale de Handball, more than trebled the value of its media rights in a five-year deal with the Qatari-owned broadcaster, which runs from 2014-15 to 2018-19.

The deal is worth €4m (\$5.5m) per year, up 230 per cent on the €1.2m per year paid by Canal Plus in the current deal, from 2011-12 to 2014-15. The rival offer from Canal Plus was worth an average of €3m per year across five years.

Both the league and Canal Plus had the option to end the contract one year early. The league has taken this option. The league did not issue a tender. It held talks

with both pay-television broadcasters.

"These were the only two we spoke to because they are the ones who could help us reach our TV rights objective," Etienne Capon, the league's director general, told *TV Sports Markets*.

On top of the rights fee beIN Sports will also cover production costs, which Capon estimated at between €35,000 and €40,000 per match.

The league was advised by the Cornerplay agency which is run by Stéphane Dor and Jean-Guillaume Welgryn, former executives at the Ligue de Football Professionnel.

Capon said the value had increased mainly due to the competition between beIN Sports and Canal Plus. He also pointed to the emergence of Paris-Saint Germain, which won last year's domestic title, the success of Nantes, which was runner-up in the 2012-13 EHF Cup, and the strong French national team as increasing interest in handball.

The league had no qualms in rejecting the bid from Canal Plus as it feels that the deal with beIN Sports will help it reach its objective of becoming the best league in the world, Capon said. The

German handball league is recognised by handball experts as the best domestic league in the world. The German Bundesliga's media rights are worth around €3.5m per year.

The increased exposure on offer from beIN Sports was also attractive, Capon said. BeIN Sports will show two live matches per week and a weekly magazine programme. In the current deal Canal Plus shows one live match per week. The deal also includes rights to the Coupe de la Ligue and the Trophée des Champions.

Canal Plus has a sublicensing agreement with public-service broadcaster France Télévisions for between six and 12 matches per year worth about €100,000 per year. It shows matches on regional channel France 3. BeIN Sports will not agree a sublicensing deal in the new contract.

The new deal also includes international rights, the same as in the current deal with Canal Plus. BeIN Sports will show matches in territories where it has a channel, and will sell the rights on in others. It will aim to get a rights fee from broadcasters in strong handball territories such as the Nordics.

## BeIN Sports diversifies

The domestic league rights are of strategic importance to beIN Sports. It is trying to diversify its sport offering from its main football content.

It already has handball rights to the European Handball Federation Champions League until 2016-17, and will show the handball World Championships in 2015 and 2017 following Al Jazeera's deal with the

International Handball Federation in December (*TV Sports Markets* 18:1)

The loss of the rights is a blow to Canal Plus which had a stranglehold over handball rights in France. Last February it agreed a deal with the French handball federation for national team games and some domestic events for four years, from 2013-14 to 2016-17, for between €1.5m and €2m per year (*TV Sports Markets* 17:5)

However, it is thought that Canal Plus generated low audiences for league matches, and it has bigger fights with beIN Sports on the horizon. The LNH deal comes in the wake of tenders being issued for two of the most important sports rights properties in France: French football's Ligue 1 and the Uefa Champions League. ■

[www.](#) For the full interview with Etienne Capon visit our website.

## TV ASIA

# Al Jazeera to take control as channel battle heats up

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separation last week while speaking on a *TV Sports Markets* panel at the Sportel trade fair in Shanghai. He said that Al Jazeera's expansion in the region would "now be taken forward by the beIN Sports team." He added that it had "probably seemed strange" that an agency should commit itself to a relationship with a single buyer.

The two companies launched premium sports channels in five markets and has the following distribution:

- Indonesia (Orange TV, NexMedia, First Media)
- Hong Kong (TVBVN)
- the Philippines (SkyCable)
- Thailand (TrueVisions)
- Chinese Taipei (under negotiation).

In the short to medium term, target markets for Al Jazeera are thought to include Australia, where the company has been linked with a takeover of Setanta Sports, and Singapore, among others (*TV Sports Markets* 17:19).

The joint venture was a marriage of convenience. Creating channels helped the agency out of a sticky situation in several markets where it had paid high fees for rights and was struggling to recoup them from local operators. It provided Al Jazeera with a ready-made bridgehead into a strategically important region.

One view of the deal is that the agency's role was always to be an "incubator" of

the channels, providing content from its portfolio and considerable local market knowledge, and stepping back once carriage agreements were in place.

Other sources suggest there never was a master plan: the deal was opportunistic and solved a short-term problem, but the long-term implications of hitching an agency exclusively to one buyer in such an important region had never been thought through.

Until just a few weeks before the joint venture was agreed, the agency was planning to launch the channels under its own brand.

Something similar happened in Italy, where MP & Silva and the Pitch International agency acquired the rights to a number of top football properties but failed to secure acceptable deals with broadcasters. The two agencies tried, and failed, to convince Al Jazeera to launch a channel based on the rights, then planned to launch their own channel. They eventually sold the rights to Fox International Channels, which used them to launch Fox Sports in Italy (*TV Sports Markets* 17:12).

## Channels drive boom

BeIN Sports is expected to expand rapidly in the booming Asian market, where rights prices are being driven up by the expansion of big channel syndicators, local pay-television platforms looking to protect core properties, and agencies looking for a strategic foothold.

Major international sports properties, such as the top European football leagues and Formula One motor racing, are certain to benefit, but second-tier content and bigger local sports in individual territories are also expected to enjoy

increased revenue.

Underlying factors driving the market are continued economic growth in the region, albeit at a lower level than before the financial crisis of 2008, and year-on-year increases in pay-television penetration. These factors have been drawing new players into the market.

As one rights-trader put it this week, "there is a real frenzy at the moment, with some crazy fees being paid – it is likely to be at least five years before the Asian market finds a balance and a pecking order emerges. Some people will lose a lot of money by speculating on rights."

Fox Sports, which is owned by Fox International Channels, is the dominant third-party sports channel in the region. Parent company 21st Century Fox adopted the brand after the break up last year of ESPN Star Sports, the company's joint venture with Disney. Since the split, FIC has been aggressive in adding both major international sports properties, such as the German Bundesliga, French Open tennis and the PGA Golf Championship, and has also targeted rights of high value in individual territories, such as its deal with the Philippines Basketball Association.

In the medium to long term, the level of rights inflation will depend on a number of factors, including:

- Al Jazeera's ambitions in Asia beyond the five markets where it has already launched
- Discovery Communications' long-term plans for the positioning of Eurosport
- the desire, or ability, of local platforms to compete to retain the content which drives their businesses
- the determination of niche sports channels to hold on to their key content.

## Eurosport's new frontier

Asia is “the new frontier” for Eurosport, according to Gushi Sethi, the senior vice president, affiliate sales and marketing for the company in the Asia-Pacific region.

“In Europe we are very well distributed, we are in 133m homes. There is room for growth but it is limited, the market is somewhat saturated. Asia represents the bigger opportunity right now,” she said.

Eurosport's main sports channels are currently available in 12m households across 16 countries in Asia. Major exceptions include China, India and Japan. Its news channel is distributed in China and Japan, as well as 10 other markets, however, reaching 5.5m households.

Sethi said that it was too soon to determine the impact that Discovery's takeover of the channel will have. The US media group accelerated its buyout by increasing its stake in the broadcaster to 51 per cent in January. At present, the Eurosport, Eurosport HD and Eurosport News channels are not distributed as part of Discovery's channel bouquet.

Eurosport's business model in Asia is different to that in Europe, as the operator currently does not sell advertising around its content, though it is exploring the possibility of doing so. The plan is to first build a broad customer base.

Roughly 65 to 70 per cent of Eurosport's content comes through rights deals which also cover Europe. The rest are deals agreed specially for the Asian feed.

Its main sports are: cycling, for which it holds 25 UCI World Tour events; winter sports; club rugby, such as the Heinenen Cup and France's Top 14; motorsports such as the World Touring Car Championship, which is managed by Eurosport Events; and tennis, including the US Open and some ATP and WTA events.

Sethi said that the content was “unique yet complementary” to local platforms. Until now the broadcaster has not been in direct competition with other channel syndicators for rights, she said.

“FIC and beIN Sports are focusing on big ticket events like football, which has never been our focus in the region. And so far there has not been a big tug of war with Setanta. But the overall effect of increased competition is inflation in rights costs which affects everyone.”

## Niche channels threatened

The spending power of global players like Fox, Al Jazeera and Discovery raises a question about the ability of niche channels, such as rugby-focused Setanta Asia and US-oriented channel All Sports Network, to stay in the market.

Hutton said that channels which were “heavily dependent on one or two contracts” would be at risk as the major channel operators widened their search for attractive content.

Conor Woods, the managing director for Setanta Sports, Asia-Pacific, said that

there was still an opportunity for smaller operators to establish a niche by offering a quality product. The broadcaster has invested heavily in high definition and digital services.

The channel is available in 16 markets in Asia, where it carries rugby, such as Super Rugby, the Rugby Championship, the NPC, the Currie Cup, the English Premiership, the Pro12, international Tests, and rugby league including the National Rugby League and the State Of Origin.

It has a separate feed in Australia, with a broader portfolio, which has broadcast major events like Euro 2012 exclusively. It also has additional rugby content, such as the Six Nations and Heinenen Cup.

In total across Asia-Pacific it is in 42m homes. It is mostly distributed in the basic tiers or sports tiers of pay-television operators. The main exceptions are Hong Kong, Indonesia, the Philippines and Australia, where it is an *à la carte* premium channel. In India, Setanta distributes programming blocks on the Sony Six sports and entertainment channel.

Woods said that the most significant trends in Asia now were “localisation and diversification.” Both had been led by the rocketing cost of European football rights, especially the English Premier League. “This is causing content providers to look for alternatives in local sports or other alternatives to football, where they can invest in long-term growth and greater ownership,” he said. ■

## TENNIS

# Exclusivity for Eurosport key to French Open deal

By Robin Jellis

The French tennis federation last week secured a 13-per-cent increase for its domestic media rights, with Eurosport trebling its investment compared to the previous cycle.

The Fédération Française de Tennis agreed a five-year deal, from 2014 to 2018, worth €17.5m (\$24.4m) per year with public-service broadcaster France

Télévisions. Eurosport France, in a pre-agreed deal, then sublicensed rights from France Télévisions for about €4.5m per year.

In the previous four-year deal, from 2010 to 2013, France Télévisions paid €15.5m per year. Eurosport sublicensed rights for €1.5m per year.

Eurosport is investing more because it is being granted greater exclusivity. It will have exclusive television rights from 11am to 3pm for the first nine days of the tournament for each of the next five years.

In the previous deal, Eurosport's rights covered television only, but it now has rights to the whole tournament on television, internet and mobile, as well as a window of exclusivity. France

Télévisions will provide coverage online, on mobile and on tablets from 11am to 3pm, but not on television.

Jean-Thierry Augustin, chief executive of Eurosport, told *TV Sports Markets* this week: “What we have done in France is in line with what we have done internationally – we are trying to reinforce our exclusivity for our pillar sports.”

One of the reasons the exclusive morning slot is attractive, Augustin said, is because if a match involving a top player was stopped because of bad light or bad weather, it will be played the following morning.

Matches in the morning slot are currently shown by France Télévisions' France 4 channel, which gets ratings of

between 400,000 and 500,000. “I think we will get at least the same and we could get even more,” Augustin said. Matches will be shown on its Eurosport 1 and Eurosport 2 channels.

The increased spending is not coming from Discovery Communications, Augustin said. In January, Discovery increased its ownership stake in Eurosport to 51 per cent, from 20 per cent. TF1 will remain an 80-per-cent stakeholder in Eurosport France until at least the end of 2014 however, so it was “business as usual.”

Eurosport also holds rights to the French Open across Europe in a separate deal, excluding France, with the MP & Silva agency, until 2021 worth about €20m per year (*TV Sports Markets* 17:19). The broadcaster has a mixture of exclusive and non-exclusive rights across the territories covered by this deal, depending on where MP & Silva has sold rights to free-to-air broadcasters. Eurosport’s exclusive windows include Spain in 2014 and Italy in 2015.

Eurosport also has rights to the Australian and US Open tournaments until 2016 and 2017, respectively.

When negotiating carriage deals or selling advertising, Eurosport’s grand slam tennis rights are of vital importance. Augustin said, however, that Eurosport was not reliant on tennis rights, pointing to its German Bundesliga deal across 22 European territories, its deal in Romania for English Premier League football, and its cycling and winter sports portfolio.

## Second time lucky

The deal comes after protracted negotiations between the federation, France Télévisions and Eurosport, following an unsuccessful tender launched in September last year.

The federation had created three packages in an attempt to generate competition. The tender was issued to 10 interested parties, but the federation received weak bids from France Télévisions, worth about €12m per year, and Eurosport, worth about €2m per year.

Pay-television broadcasters beIN Sports and Canal Plus wanted more exclusivity. The tournament is not considered a subscription-driver for

pay-television as it only lasts for two weeks.

Commercial broadcasters M6 and TF1 did not bid because they consider live tennis difficult to schedule. France Télévisions has several channels on which it can show the tournament.

The deal with France Télévisions and Eurosport was agreed in direct talks. The federation also signs sublicensing deals agreed by France Télévisions.

The two broadcasters have a good relationship and occasionally agree joint deals. In January, they renewed rights to French football’s league cup (*TV Sports Markets* 18:3).

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**“We are trying to reinforce our exclusivity for our pillar sports.”**

*Jean-Thierry Augustin,  
chief executive, Eurosport*

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The new deal is a good result for the federation. It has managed to increase its rights fee, despite little competition, and has guaranteed wide exposure with the majority of the tournament broadcast live on France Télévisions. Eurosport, which will show the whole tournament, is available in about 12m French households.

The federation had, however, been hoping for a greater fee increase – closer to double the previous rights fee. It earns the least from media rights of the four tennis grand slams, and has to finance a renovation of stadium facilities which is estimated to cost €340m.

The increased length of the deal, from four to five years, was so it would run until the improvements are completed in 2018. The federation wanted financial security in this period.

The free-to-air coverage is important for the event’s sponsors. Bank BNP Paribas pays about €11.5m per year for the top sponsorship position. Sponsorship generates about €51m per year.

“Free-to-air coverage is key for us to create value for our sponsors,” Michel Grach, the federation’s director of media and sponsorship, told *TV Sports*

*Markets*. “It is important to get the maximum free-to-air coverage of our event in France.”

The finals of the men’s and women’s competitions are listed events and must be shown by a free-to-air broadcaster.

The deal is good news for France Télévisions. It has renewed one of its core sports properties when under strict budget restrictions and will be paying about the same as in the previous deal. Its net outlay per year after sublicensing deals has increased by only €1m, from €12m to €13m.

In its previous deal, France Télévisions recouped €3.5m per year of the €15.5m per year it paid from sublicensing deals, leaving it with a net outlay of €12m per year. It received about €2m per year from now-defunct pay-television broadcaster Orange Sport, plus €1.5m from Eurosport. Orange had a separate deal for mobile rights, directly with the federation, worth €1m per year.

In the new deal, France Télévisions has recouped €4.5m of €17.5m.

France Télévisions and Eurosport will also have highlights rights. France Télévisions will show a 10-minute highlights magazine daily between 8pm and 8.30pm. The federation will also show highlights on its website.

## International deals

The federation generates about €57m per year from its domestic and international media-rights deals.

Its deal with MP & Silva for rights across Europe, outside France, runs until 2021 and is worth about €22m per year. Eurosport has rights across all of Europe, but rights in a number of territories are non-exclusive – notably the UK, where MP & Silva has a deal with commercial broadcaster ITV. This is because MP & Silva has to provide the federation with certain guarantees of free-to-air coverage.

The rights in Asia are worth about \$5m per year. Most of this comes from a deal with Fox International Channels, from 2014 to 2018, which is worth about \$4m per year and covers 20 territories. Rights in China, India and Thailand have been carved out. ■

[www.](#) For the full interview with Jean-Thierry Augustin visit our website.

## FASTRACK 2

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### RTM increases cash fee to secure Fifa World Cup

Malaysian public-service broadcaster RTM moved from a cash-plus-airtime deal to a cash-only deal to renew its rights for the Fifa World Cup in a deal last week for the 2014 tournament.

The total value of RTM's deal, just over \$6.5m (€4.7m), is close to the value of its deal for the 2010 World Cup.

Malaysia's communications and multimedia minister Ahmad Shabery Cheek said this week that the entire rights fee cost would be covered by advertising and sponsorship sales.

RTM's rights cover 35 of the 64 matches at the tournament. The broadcaster is thought to have faced competition from commercial broadcaster TV3.

The 2010 and 2014 World Cup rights in Malaysia were sold by the M-League Marketing and Esprit Media agencies, working in partnership.

RTM holds the World Cup 2014 rights non-exclusively along with pay-television broadcaster Astro, as it did for 2010. Astro has rights for all 64 matches of this year's tournament. ■

### F1 value slows in troubled Greece

The value of free-to-air Formula One rights in Greece has dipped in the latest deal, covering the 2014 season, as commercial broadcaster Alpha picked up rights dropped by public-service broadcaster Nerit.

Alpha is paying less than the €1.425m (\$1.95m) paid by the public-service broadcaster in 2013. A source close to the deal said that the decrease was modest.

Alpha acquired the rights from the Asset Ogilvy agency, which also sold them last year and has them until the end of 2015.

Alpha is paying a cash fee. Nerit and its predecessor ERT paid only €125,000 per year in cash, with the remaining €1.3m per year in advertising airtime. Asset Ogilvy is an advertising agency as well as a content rights agency and so is

able to monetise the airtime.

The public-service broadcaster's deal was originally for two years, 2013 and 2014, but was cut short at the end of last year. ERT was shut and relaunched as a leaner business last year as part of government economic austerity measures. Asset Ogilvy had little option but to accept a demand from Nerit for an early end to the Formula One deal.

ERT sublicensed two races last year to Alpha in the period that the public-service broadcaster was shut down.

Nerit wanted to acquire the rights again, but could not beat Alpha's offer. Alpha was only interested in a one-year deal due to the economic situation.

Greece's other commercial broadcasters are not thought to have been interested. Antenna has enough sport already, with the rights to Uefa Europa League football. Mega is experiencing financial difficulties.

Alpha has experience in monetising Formula One coverage, which gave it an advantage over the other commercial operators. Alpha was rights-holder for Formula One rights in Greece for many years before losing them to Antenna in 2009. Experts say that Alpha could generate between €50,000 and €70,000 in advertising revenue from each Formula One race programme it shows.

Alpha will show all races live except for some races in Asia and Australia which will be shown delayed in the afternoon. Each race programme will also include half an hour of highlights of qualifying sessions, and half an hour of build-up coverage. ■

### News UK adds top rugby to roster

News UK is thought to have paid a rights fee of just under £200,000 (€244,000/\$337,000) per season for the exclusive clips rights to English rugby union's Premiership Rugby. The deal began last month and runs to June 2017.

The newspaper publisher is thought to have also supplied UK rights-holder BT Sport with value-in-kind services, such as promotions and advertising, worth twice that amount as part of the

deal. The rights were held by BT as part of its wider deal for the league's rights.

The deal followed News's deal last year for non-exclusive clip rights to the Uefa Champions League and Europa League, worth just over £1m per season. It also holds clip rights for the Premier League, the Scottish Premiership and the FA Cup. ■

### Caribbean league looks for uplift

Cricket's Caribbean Premier League is hopeful that this season it can comfortably exceed global media rights income of about \$600,000 (€435,000) earned in its inaugural season, in 2013.

In addition to agreeing a rights distribution deal earlier than it did last time, the Twenty20 league has also made schedule changes which will make the matches more attractive to broadcasters in key markets like the UK and South Africa.

The league this month agreed a deal with the MP & Silva agency to distribute its rights in the Indian subcontinent and the Middle East.

The league will sell the rights directly in other territories. It will be advised on direct sales by the Future Media Services consultancy, which is run by Karl Bistany, the former president of the Octagon CSI agency.

The deal with MP & Silva is nominally for one season but it is understood that the agency has the scope to do deals for up to three seasons, subject to the approval of the league.

The IMG Media agency renewed its deal to handle production of the series on what are understood to be improved terms for the league. In 2013, IMG also handled rights distribution and was thought to be initially interested in renewing both, before settling on the production contract.

Other parties that had talks with the league included digital specialist the Perform Group and RDA Communications, run by media rights consultant Richard Dennis.

The 2014 league is scheduled to take place between July 12 and August 17. ■



# SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from February 27 to March 12

## MEDIA RIGHTS 1

### Football: World Cup, Bundesliga, Major League Soccer and more

- **Football:** French pay-television broadcaster beIN Sports acquired rights to the 2014 Fifa World Cup in a sublicensing deal with commercial broadcaster TF1. BeIN Sports will show all 64 matches live, including 36 on an exclusive basis, plus a daily magazine show and other programming. The coverage will be shown across the beIN Sports 1, beIN Sports 2 and beIN Sports Max channels as well as digital platforms. The value of the deal is €50m (\$69m) according to *Le Figaro*.
- **Football:** Singaporean telco SingTel acquired rights for the 2014 World Cup in a deal with Fifa, football's world governing body, which was brokered by the Football Media Services agency. SingTel must share coverage with pay-television broadcaster StarHub under the government's cross-carriage rule. The rights include live and on-demand coverage of all 64 matches across all media platforms. SingTel will make the opening match, both semi-finals and the final available on free-to-air platforms. SingTel mioTV IPTV customers can watch the tournament for free if they extend their subscriptions to certain football packages for 24 months. Customers who do not extend their subscriptions will be charged S\$105 (€60/\$83), with non-subscribers charged S\$112.
- **Football:** Malaysian state broadcaster RTM acquired exclusive rights for the 2014 Fifa World Cup. RTM will broadcast 36 matches, with 24 of the games being shown live and 11 being broadcast on a delayed basis. The coverage will be available on RTM's free-to-air terrestrial channels (page 8).
- **Football:** UK pay-television broadcaster BT Sport extended a rights deal for the German Bundesliga for two years, from 2015-16 to 2016-17 (page 2).
- **Football:** North American Major League Soccer franchise the New York Red Bulls agreed a multi-year extension to its regional rights deal with MSG Networks, the pay-television channel owned by New York sports venue Madison Square Garden. MSG Networks will produce and show 22 of the team's 34 regular-season games in 2014, including pre-game and post-game coverage.
- **Football:** Major League Soccer's FC Dallas struck one-year extensions to its local rights deals with cable-television operator Time Warner Cable Sports and TXA21, a channel owned by the CBS network. Time Warner Cable Sports will broadcast 24 regular-season games. TXA21 will show six regular-season games.
- **Football:** Pay-television broadcaster SuperSport acquired rights in South Africa for the national team's friendly match against Brazil on March 5. The agreement was struck with the South African Football Association.
- **Football:** Scottish newspaper the *Daily Record* acquired live streaming rights for the Poland v Scotland international friendly match on March 5. Coverage of the game was provided free of charge via DailyRecord.co.uk, the paper's website. The deal was with the IEC in Sports agency, which was selling the rights on behalf of the Polish football association.

## SINCE LAST TIME

- Canal Plus will seek €293m (\$404m) in compensation from rival French pay-television broadcaster beIN Sports in a lawsuit submitted to the country's Tribunal de Commerce business court. Canal Plus, which has accused beIN Sports of unfair competition practices and has been preparing its case for more than a year, claims that it has lost 187,000 subscriptions as a result of beIN Sports' launch in France. BeIN Sports is preparing a counter-claim for €66m in damages against Canal Plus, saying that its rival's criticism has damaged beIN Sports' reputation.
- Perform Group joint chief executive Oliver Slipper said that the digital sports media company was keen to rebuild trust in 2014 after announcing "disappointing" full-year results for 2013. Turnover in the 12 months through to December 31 increased by 37 per cent to £208.1m (€254m/\$250m), but statutory profit before tax fell by 75 per cent to £16.3m and ebitda slipped by three per cent to £36.4m.
- North America's National Basketball Association is exploring the possibility of scheduling games in the early morning to reach primetime television audiences in China, Michael Wandell, NBA China's vice-president of marketing partnerships, told an industry panel hosted by *TV Sports Markets* at Sportel in Shanghai last week.

## FOOTBALL

- Twitter struck a deal with the Mediapro agency and the Liga de Fútbol Profesional to allow action from the top Spanish football division to be shown on the social networking website. The coverage will be available through the @LaLiga handle via the Amplify tool, which allows tweets to be accompanied by videos in real time. The clips will include player interviews and other content before and after games as well as action during matches.
- English Premier League football club Liverpool launched a new multi-platform, subscription-based video-on-demand service, LFCTV Go, to replace its LFC TV Online platform. LFCTV Go subscribers will be provided with exclusive interviews, news and coverage of the latest games plus online access to LFC TV, the club's in-house pay-television channel.
- Danish club Brøndby said it would exit the Danish Superligaen's collective media rights agreement when it expires in July 2015, and is looking to sell rights for its home matches separately from the league. The club wanted the league to change its rights revenue distribution system. "We have tried in vain to promote the view that the distribution of income in the next TV deal must be more based on who is strongest amongst viewers," Brøndby chairman Aldo Petersen said. Brøndby received the sixth-biggest rights payment last season, representing eight per cent of the revenue distributed.

## SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from February 27 to March 12

### MEDIA RIGHTS 2

## Action sports, archery, baseball, basketball, golf, gymnastics and more

- **Action Sports:** Outdoor Channel, the pan-Asian sports broadcaster, struck a multi-year deal with ESPN to show the X Games series, which is operated by the international sports broadcaster. The deal includes events in Austin and Aspen in the US and covers Brunei, Cambodia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, India, Korea, Laos, Malaysia, the Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Pakistan, Palau, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Thailand, Chinese Taipei and Vietnam.
- **Action Sports:** French channel MCS Extrême, operated by pay-television operator Ma Chaîne Sport, acquired rights for the X Games and Red Bull Air Race series. The X Games deal was agreed with ESPN and will run for three years, from 2014 to 2016. The Red Bull Air Race deal, struck with the operators of the air racing event, will cover all eight events this year.
- **Action Sports:** German pay-television news channel N-tv acquired rights for the 2014 Red Bull Air Race series. N-tv will show 90-minute highlights shows following all eight events.
- **Archery:** Pan-regional sports broadcaster Eurosport acquired rights for the Archery World Cup and World Archery Championships. The three-year deal, which will run from 2014 to 2016, was agreed with the World Archery governing body. The deal includes live coverage, highlights and promotional programming.
- **Baseball:** Digital media content distributor Elta acquired rights in Chinese Taipei for the Chinese Professional Baseball League. Elta will show live coverage of 150 games this year. The deal includes the Taiwan Series end-of-season championship. Elta paid NT\$20m (€474,000/\$654,000) for the rights in a deal with the MP & Silva agency. The agency is in talks with other broadcasters in Chinese Taipei for the tournament's remaining rights.
- **Basketball:** NBA China awarded rights to IPTV platform LeTV in China. LeTV will show five NBA games on a live basis every week through to the second round of the play-offs and an additional 20 games live on Saturdays and Sundays, plus live coverage of one conference final series and All-Star events. The deal includes highlights and support programming.
- **Basketball:** The Saran Media agency acquired rights in Georgia for the NBA in a multi-year deal. Saran acquired rights for Georgian-language coverage of at least six regular-season games per week, All-Star events, up to 40 play-off games and the finals plus pre-season and regular-season games in Europe and NBA Action, the league's weekly magazine programme.
- **Cricket:** The MP & Silva agency will distribute rights for the Caribbean Premier League Twenty20 tournament in several territories, including the Indian subcontinent. According to the Television Post website, the agency also struck an agreement with Asian pay-television broadcaster Ten Sports to distribute rights for West Indies and Sri Lanka national team cricket matches to broadcasters in the US (page 8).
- **Golf:** UK pay-television broadcaster BSkyB renewed an exclusive rights deal with the Ladies Professional Golf Association. The deal will run for two years, until 2016. Sky will broadcast live coverage of the Kraft Nabisco Championship, LPGA Championship and the Evian Championship in the US, plus at least four other LPGA Tour events.
- **Gymnastics:** USA Gymnastics awarded rights to NBC Sports Group, part of US media company NBCUniversal, and pay-television broadcaster Universal Sports Network. The deals will run until the end of 2016 and cover television and digital rights. NBC Sports will continue to cover USA Gymnastics' two annual premier events – the AT&T American Cup and P&G Championships – along with the World Artistic Gymnastics Championships, Pacific Rim Gymnastics Championships and Nastia Liukin Cup. NBC Sports Live Extra will stream the events via the TV Everywhere authentication service.
- **Handball:** French pay-television broadcaster beIN Sports acquired rights for the Ligue Nationale de Handball, France's top domestic league. The deal will run for five years, from 2014-15 to 2018-19 (page 4).

### MEDIA INTERNATIONAL

- Pay-television provider Dish Network renewed a multi-year deal to carry channels operated by the Walt Disney media company, including sports channel ESPN. Dish will also offer the Longhorn Network and the SEC ESPN Network college sports channels, the ESPNNews and ESPNU channels, the ESPN Goal Line and ESPN Buzzer Beater services and ESPN Classic, which will be reintroduced as a video-on-demand channel.
- Media company 21st Century Fox increased its stake in US regional pay-television sports broadcaster Yes Network, which offers exclusive live local coverage of the MLB's New York Yankees and the NBA's Brooklyn Nets, from 49 per cent to 80 per cent. The remaining 20 per cent will be controlled by the Yankees.
- Real-time highlights of basketball games from the Big East US college sports conference in 2014 will be distributed to social media platforms and national website publishers under a deal with the WSC Sports Technologies media company. WSC will post highlights through the Big East's two accounts on social networking website Twitter as well as video-sharing website YouTube, the BigEast.com website and the CBS network's All-Access online video player. The highlights will also be shown via the SendtoNews network of news publishers.
- The Prime Entertainment Group agency was appointed by Ma Chaîne Sport to handle sales of the French pay-television operator's library of sports programming.
- Cypriot pay-television broadcaster Lumiere Television and the Cyprus Telecommunications Authority, CyTA, will jointly launch a new sports channel. The channel, which will replace Lumiere's LTV

## SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from February 27 to March 12

### MEDIA RIGHTS 3

## Horse racing, ice hockey, motorsport, rugby union, taekwondo and more

- **Horse Racing:** The NBC Sports Group renewed an exclusive rights deal in the US for the Kentucky Derby and Kentucky Oaks with Churchill Downs, the operator of the events. The extension will run for 10 years, from 2016 to 2025, and covers all media platforms.
- **Ice Hockey:** Swedish public-service broadcaster SVT acquired rights for the Champions Hockey League. The deal will run for three years, from 2014-15 to 2016-17. SVT will produce and broadcast all games staged in Sweden. The agreement, which covers all platforms and includes sublicensing rights, was brokered by Infront Sports & Media, the league's exclusive commercial partner.
- **Motorsport:** Pay-television broadcaster beIN Sports acquired exclusive television and online rights for the Formula One world championship in the Middle East and North Africa. The six-year agreement will run from 2014 to 2019. Every race will be shown live with options for Arabic and English commentary.
- **Motorsport:** Greek commercial broadcaster Alpha acquired free-to-air rights for the 2014 Formula One campaign (page 8).
- **Motorsport:** Outdoor Channel acquired rights in Southeast Asia for the IndyCar series in a syndication deal with ESPN. Outdoor Channel will show and co-promote the series in Brunei, Cambodia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, India, Korea, Laos, Malaysia, the Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Pakistan, Palau, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Thailand, Chinese Taipei and Vietnam.
- **Multi-sport:** UK public-service broadcaster the BBC became a broadcast partner of the new Invictus Games, which will take place in London from September 10-14. The BBC will show live coverage and highlights of the event, which will feature wounded, injured and sick UK Armed Forces personnel.
- **Netball:** Australian free-to-air channel NITV, which is operated by public-service broadcaster SBS, acquired rights for the ANZ Championship, the top division in Australia and New Zealand. NITV will broadcast one game per week on a delayed basis on Tuesday evenings.
- **Paralympic Games:** Brazilian media group Globo acquired rights for the 2014 winter Games in Sochi, Russia, in a sublicensing deal with the Brazilian Paralympic Committee, which had acquired the rights from the International Paralympic Committee. Globo will show 35 hours of live and pre-recorded coverage via pay-television channel SporTV.
- **Rugby Union:** Premiership Rugby, which operates the top division in England, struck a rights deal with News UK for the newspaper publishing group's online titles access to post-match clips from matches. The deal will run for 28 months, until June 2017. News UK will make video highlights available for subscribers to online content from *The Sun*, *The Times* and *The Sunday Times* (page 8).
- **Rugby Union:** Pay-television operator BSkyB acquired exclusive rights in the UK and Ireland for this year's Women's World Cup and Junior World Championship. Sky will show live coverage of the pool stage games, semi-finals and finals of both tournaments. Sky agreed the deal with the International Rugby Board global governing body.
- **Skateboarding:** The Fox Sports division of US media company 21st Century Fox agreed a global multi-year rights deal with Street League Skateboarding. US pay-television channel Fox Sports 1 will show live coverage of every event in 2014.
- **Taekwondo:** The Spring Media agency struck a deal with the World Taekwondo Federation to distribute rights for the governing body's events. Spring Media will distribute rights on a global basis for the World Taekwondo Grand Prix series and final, the 2014 World Junior Championships and the 2015 World Taekwondo Championships. The deal will run until 2016.

Sports Channel 2 on the Cytavision pay-television platform, will show coverage of the top football divisions in England, Spain and Germany and will initially be available for no extra charge.

- The New Zealand division of electronics manufacturer Samsung agreed a deal with Coliseum Sports Media, the rights-holder for the English Premier League in the country, to offer customers access to the football division. The deal, which is exclusive on internet-connected televisions in the country, will run until 2016.

### MEDIA RIGHTS NEGOTIATIONS

- The CAA Eleven agency launched invitations to tender for the rights in several countries to European Qualifiers for football's Uefa Euro 2016 and 2018 Fifa World Cup tournaments, plus Euro 2016 itself. Sales processes for the rights to the European Qualifiers were opened in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Sales processes for Euro 2016 rights were launched in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Bids must be in by April 2.
- Uefa, football's European governing body, launched rights sales processes in France and Poland for the Champions League and Europa League for three seasons from 2015-16 to 2017-18. Bids for the platform-neutral rights in Poland and France must be submitted by April 2 and April 7, respectively.
- The Ligue de Football Professionnel, the French football league, launched a domestic rights sales process for Ligue 1 and Ligue 2, the top two divisions in the country. The rights will run for four years, from 2016-17 to 2019-20. The league has shifted kick-off times from 2pm to 3pm on Sunday afternoons in order to enhance "international visibility" and will fix Friday and Sunday evening games to an 8.45pm start. Bids for the six packages of rights must be submitted between April 2 and 4.
- Pay-television broadcaster SuperSport, which operates in sub-Saharan Africa, and public-service broadcaster Botswana Television,

**SPORTS CLIPS:** News from TVSM Daily from February 27 to March 12**MEDIA RIGHTS 4****French Open and ATP tennis, US college sport, USA and WWE wrestling**

- **Tennis:** French public-service broadcaster France Télévisions renewed a rights deal for the French Open grand slam and sublicensed rights to the Eurosport France division of international sports broadcaster Eurosport (page 6).
- **Tennis:** Pay-television operator Canal Plus acquired rights in Spain for events on the men's ATP World Tour. The deal will run for four years, from 2015 to 2018. Canal Plus will show all Masters 1000 tournaments and 12 ATP 500 events, 11 of which will be shown on an exclusive basis, plus some third-tier ATP 250 tournaments. The deal excludes the Madrid Masters event, but includes the season-ending ATP World Tour Finals (page 1).
- **US College Sport:** US agency Learfield Sports will distribute the multimedia rights of the athletics division of Temple University for 10 years, from 2014-15 to 2023-24.
- **Wrestling:** US sports broadcaster Universal Sports Network agreed a multi-year rights deal with the USA Wrestling organisation. Universal Sports secured exclusive rights for the Freestyle World Cup, US Open, US World Team Trials and other news and highlights programming.
- **Wrestling:** German commercial broadcaster Tele 5 acquired rights for the WWE organisation's Monday Night Raw programme. Tele 5 will broadcast the show on Thursday evenings, starting on April 10.

are set to acquire rights for the Africa Youth Games multi-sport event, according to the *Botswana Gazette*.

- The UCI, cycling's global governing body, remains in "positive discussions" with various broadcasters after having awarded rights for the 2014 Women's Road World Cup to several companies, including UK public-service broadcaster the BBC, Italian state broadcaster Rai, Dutch public-service broadcaster NOS and French pay-television broadcaster Canal Plus.

connected televisions. SNTV, a joint venture between the Associated Press news agency and IMG Media agency, will provide coverage from major sporting events such as football's Uefa Champions League and Fifa World Cup.

- The International Rugby Board, rugby union's global governing body, will stream live coverage of the 2015 World Cup qualifier between Georgia and Romania for free via the website [RugbyWorldCup.com](http://RugbyWorldCup.com) on a global basis on March 15.

**ALSO SINCE LAST TIME**

- Subscribers to Major League Baseball's online streaming service, MLB.TV, will be able to access live coverage of the World Series and the All-Star Game for the first time this year. MLB.TV subscribers will also be able to stream live coverage of games shown in the Fox network's Saturday national broadcast window.
- Pan-European sports broadcaster Eurosport agreed a deal with snooker star Ronnie O'Sullivan to launch a new magazine programme, *The Ronnie O'Sullivan Show*. The programme will include tournament previews, interviews and snooker technique advice.
- Sports video news agency SNTV will provide content for a new video-on-demand sports news application on Samsung's internet-

**INDUSTRY MOVES**

- Philipp Hasenbein, the managing director of the German division of Sportfive, became head of European football at the agency's parent company, Lagardère Unlimited. • The Infront Sports & Media agency appointed Winston Zheng as the new managing director of its Infront China division, replacing Ma Guoli, who becomes chairman of the Infront China board. • Jammie Chen has been promoted to lead the MP & Silva agency's operations in Chinese Taipei. He will oversee the distribution of the CPBL, the country's top baseball league. • Peter Daire and Sean McAuliffe left the Football Association to establish a sports-rights agency, Sport Collective. McAuliffe was the FA's global head of business development. Daire was head of group sponsorship.

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