

FOOTBALL FRANCE

Ligue 1 says it is 'satisfied' with modest increase as beIN holds its fire

By Kevin McCullagh

Last Friday's French football league rights auction put a large hole in the theory that Al Jazeera-owned pay-television broadcaster beIN Sports is an unstoppable force bent on dominating the local market.

Since the emergence of beIN Sports in 2012, when it acquired Ligue 1 rights in the last auction, rights-holders have been enjoying huge percentage increases in rights fees, as the broadcaster entered bidding wars with dominant local platform Canal Plus.

Uefa Champions League rights increased in value by 98 per cent the last time they were sold. Domestic rights fees for French rugby union's Top 14 increased by 124 per cent in a deal last December.

Ligue 1 was widely expected to have done much better in this auction and the deals raise the question: Why did beIN Sports not compete more aggressively?

In what is a massive seven days for French sports television, beIN Sports

could yet show a more aggressive side by improving its share of Uefa Champions League rights. Bidding for these rights took place this week. But the broadcaster appears to have already missed its biggest opportunity.

Canal Plus cemented its position as the leading pay-television sports broadcaster in the market by securing the most valuable Ligue 1 rights, and increasing its share of live matches at the expense of beIN Sports (see table, page 3).

beIN Sports lost one of the two live match slots per week it holds in the current cycle, although hung on to the other and acquired expanded digital rights.

The French league's chief commercial officer Mathieu Ficot told *TV Sports Markets* this week that it was "satisfied" with the 20-per-cent increase in its rights fees. The league will earn €748.5m

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RUGBY UNION

Clubs the real winners in BT-Sky deal

By Robin Jellis

The sharing deal agreed this month by BT and BSkyB will provide clubs in Europe's two new club competitions, the Rugby Champions Cup and the Challenge Cup, to be launched in 2014-15, with about £39m (€47m/\$65m) per year from the UK media rights, *TV Sports Markets* understands.

This compares with the £15m per season the clubs earn under the current deal in the UK with Sky, covering the

Heineken and Amlin Cups, which expires after the 2013-14 season.

In the new competitions, there will also be fewer competing clubs – 20 in each, as opposed to 24 at present – so each club will earn more than under the current commercial agreements.

Under the UK sharing agreement, BT will pay just over £21m per year, and Sky

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FOOTBALL FRANCE

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(\$1.03bn) per season over the four seasons from 2016-17 to 2019-20, up from €625m per season in the current four-year cycle, from 2012-13 to 2015-16. The deals cover rights for the French top tier, Ligue 1, and second tier, Ligue 2.

Some clubs expressed disappointment that the fee increase was not bigger. "We thought we would see a big battle between beIN Sports and Canal Plus, but it did not happen," Bernard Caiazzo, president of AS Saint-Étienne, told French media. "We do not experience dissatisfaction but no euphoria either. This is okay without being exceptional; many club presidents expected more."

Two schools of thought

There are two broad schools of thought about why beIN Sports kept its powder dry: 1. It is, contrary to what many have

argued, a business which does not want to overspend, and its main target is the Champions League. 2. It was politically expedient.

Theory 1: For some local experts, beIN Sports' approach to the Ligue 1 auction is not out of character. The broadcaster has spent heavily on rights, but not excessively, since entering the market, they say.

There was some expectation when it entered that it would inevitably dominate the market. Its position as part of the Qatari state project to increase the Arab emirate's global political standing by investing in sport meant it had, in theory, virtually unlimited funds and no need to turn a profit. But the Ligue 1 deals add weight to the idea that the broadcaster is happy playing second fiddle to Canal Plus.

beIN Sports would have had to spend extremely heavily to increase its share of Ligue 1 rights. It is already paying a 24-per-cent increase – €186.5m per year compared to €150m per year – across four packages. Canal Plus paid €265m per year and €275m per year for the other two packages.

beIN currently has only 1.8m subscribers compared to Canal Plus's 5m, and is yet to break even. Increased

spending would mean an extended period of heavy losses for the Qatari broadcaster.

Cheaper, although less powerful, subscription-driving properties remain within beIN Sports' grasp, in the Champions League and Europa League.

beIN Sports has the majority of rights for the tournaments in the current cycle, but, crucially, Canal Plus holds rights for the first-choice match each match week. This means Canal Plus dominates coverage of French club Paris Saint-Germain's matches in the Champions League.

Paris Saint-Germain matches are hugely valuable as the club, thanks to financial backing from its Qatari owners, has built one of the strongest teams in Europe and is France's best chance of a Champions League winner.

Theory 2: A dominant share of Ligue 1 rights could transform beIN Sports' business, but it would almost certainly devastate that of Canal Plus. It is questionable how far Al Jazeera would want to damage a major French company, given Qatar's political goals.

beIN Sports would also be in danger of damaging the French cinema industry, a cultural bastion in the country. Canal Plus is a major financial backer of French

Ligue 1's Ficot: The market has spoken, but our momentum is positive

The French football league, the Ligue de Football Professionnel, said this week that that it considered the outcome of last week's auction for the media rights to its top division, Ligue 1, to have been a moderate success, and that it could not have done much better given market conditions.

"We are satisfied," the league's chief commercial officer Mathieu Ficot told *TV Sports Markets*. "We achieved a 20-per cent increase, and we kept our two main clients."

He added: "The market has spoken. The person who sells can decide when and how they sell, but the price at the end of the day remains with the buyer."

The league is understood to have fallen just short – less than five per cent – of a rough target price. This suggests it was expecting to earn about €35m per

season more than it will.

The 20-per-cent increase this time compares to a nine-per-cent decrease in domestic rights revenues in the current cycle.

Before the media rights revenue is divided among the clubs, the league must pay a five-per-cent tax levied by the government to support grassroots sport in France. This amounts to €37.4m per year, meaning a final pot for the clubs of €711.1m per year.

Other industry experts agreed that the league had done as well as it could have. The tender was considered well constructed to extract value from the market, particularly thanks to the introduction of a staggered auction for different packages.

The league effectively ran three separate auctions for Ligue 1 rights –

one for the top package, one for the second and third packages, and one for the remaining packages. This allowed those missing out on the first or second packages to come back strongly for the following packages.

"Our mechanism worked well to extract the maximum from the budgets of the bidders," Ficot said.

Two of the most important goals achieved by the league in the auction, Ficot said, were maintaining two strong players in the French sports pay-television market, and providing long-term financial visibility for clubs ahead of a tough period.

"The French league has suffered from a lack of competition in the past," he said. "I am happier now than I would have been with €50m more per year but just one client left on the road."

Ligue 1 domestic rights deals

2016-17 to 2019-20			2012-13 to 2015-16			Change in fee
Buyer	Key rights	Fee (€m pa)	Buyer	Key rights	Fee (€m pa)	
Canal Plus	Live rights for three kick-off slots per week, and linear highlights	540	Canal Plus	Live rights for two kick-off slots per week, and linear highlights	430	+26%
			beIN Sports	Live rights for two kick-off slots per week, and linear highlights	150	+24%
beIN Sports	Live rights for one kick-off slot per week, linear highlights and on-demand highlights clips	186.5	Orange	Live and highlights coverage on mobile	25	n/a
			Dailymotion, L'Équipe, YouTube	On-demand highlights clips	2	n/a
Total		726.5			607	+20%

Source: TV Sports Markets

and European cinema, contributing 12.5 per cent of its annual revenue to the industry. In the lead-up to the Ligue 1 sale, Alain Terzian, president of the French film producers union, had said: “Today, the future of French cinema is played out on a football field.”

BeIN Sports would probably have been canny enough to realise this, local sources say, but they do not exclude that the point was made to the broadcaster by senior political or film industry figures.

In a similar vein, beIN Sports has been careful to avoid bidding for sports which have traditionally been shown on free-to-air television, such as the tennis French Open. “They try to avoid being seen as a company that privatises sport [which is] on general public channels,” as one insider put it.

Local television experts this week did not discount the possibility of a non-belligerence pact between the broadcasters to keep the prices of the two properties down, despite what is understood to be a genuinely antagonistic relationship.

Should the Champions League bidding follow the same pattern, other sports rights-holders will start to be concerned. If evidence of a rapprochement was ever to emerge, French competition authorities would no doubt investigate.

On-demand in demand

A new package of cross-platform, on-demand rights attracted interest from four other bidders – Canal Plus, commercial broadcaster TF1, telco Orange, and sports newspaper and broadcaster L'Équipe –

before being secured by beIN Sports.

The package covers near-live highlights rights for all matches. These rights were essentially split between two packages in the current cycle – one for mobile which also covered live rights and is held by Orange, and one for other internet-connected devices which is held non-exclusively by L'Équipe and video-sharing sites YouTube and Dailymotion. TF1 was interested in the rights because it wants to strengthen its online presence.

Some industry experts say the growing penetration of internet-connected television could make the package more valuable. BeIN Sports could in theory develop an application for internet-connected televisions which would offer viewers a stream of near-live

The surprise entry of beIN Sports in the auction for the current cycle averted a catastrophic drop in income for the league. Canal Plus's previous main rival Orange, the telco, had withdrawn from sports pay-television. Prior to beIN Sports' emergence, Canal Plus looked like the league's only buyer.

The league's revenue dropped anyway because – as in last week's sale – beIN Sports only competed for lower value packages, allowing Canal Plus to pick up the top rights at reduced prices.

French clubs are facing a particularly tough couple of seasons due to two factors. First, their media-rights income will drop because payments to clubs in the current deals were frontloaded in the early seasons.

Second, a 75 per cent top rate of income tax introduced in France for those earning over €1m per year will

make it much more expensive for clubs to hire top players.

The deals put the French Ligue roughly in joint third place among the big five European football leagues in terms of domestic media rights income, when comparing those leagues' current deals.

It remains below the English Premier League and the Italian Serie A. It has caught up and is about level with the Spanish Liga, and it remains ahead of the German Bundesliga. However, none of these leagues has yet agreed domestic deals beyond 2017.

“French football will now have the means to fight on almost equal footing with its European competitors because we are almost at Spain, which was my goal,” league president Frédéric Thiriez told the French media.

Ficot said gaps with stronger football and pay-television markets like the UK

and Italy were to be expected, and media rights was only one stream in an improving forecast for French club football revenues.

“Clubs and the league should not be totally dependent on TV rights. You have investors, merchandising, ticketing. For the top clubs, in the Champions League, TV revenues are getting more significant. For other clubs, I think we are competitive with other leagues in Europe.

“The strength of the product has benefited from PSG and Monaco, and will benefit from new stadiums for Euro 2016. The momentum is positive.”

Wealthy owners at the Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) and Monaco clubs have raised the profile of their teams by acquiring foreign star players. Some clubs will benefit from new stadiums built for France's hosting of the Euro 2016 tournament. ■

clips, and which could even alert viewers watching different channels when goals are scored.

Tender simplified

The latest Ligue 1 tender was simplified compared to the current cycle, including by having fewer packages overall and by splitting live first pick matches between just two packages, compared to four. At least two reasons drove the changes.

First, the current cycle tender had been drawn based on the possibility that Canal Plus would be the only bidder. Its previous main rival Orange had withdrawn from pay-television, and beIN Sports had yet to emerge.

To squeeze as much money out of Canal Plus as possible, the league split live rights for top matches across many packages and also made many top matches non-exclusive. This made top matches more affordable for less wealthy newcomers. Canal Plus was forced to bid for a large number of packages in order to defend its dominant position in Ligue 1 broadcasting.

A second reason for the simplification is that a by-product of the complex tender last time was confusion for viewers. The last tender resulted in Canal Plus and beIN Sports both acquiring non-exclusive rights for many top matches.

Blow to Eurosport

Canal Plus snatched live rights for the second pick Ligue 2 match, on Monday nights, plus highlights, from Eurosport, paying €10m per year. Eurosport currently pays about €6m per year.

It is considered a major blow for Eurosport – it has shown Ligue 2 for many years and it is one of its few exclusive live domestic properties.

Some industry insiders were puzzled that Canal Plus had acquired this package in the new cycle, as it appears at odds with the broadcaster's positioning of itself as the home of 'premium' sport.

beIN Sports renewed its exclusive live rights for the remaining nine Ligue 2 matches per week – eight on Friday night and one on Saturday afternoon – plus highlights. It is paying €12m per year, about the same as it pays in the current cycle. ■ [www.uefa.com](#)

FOOTBALL

Nations League talks will now begin in earnest

By Frank Dunne

Uefa will use the rest of the year to thrash out agreements with its member federations regarding the revenue each can expect to earn from the media rights to the new Nations League friendly competition, which is set to launch in 2018.

European football's governing body wants to begin selling the media rights next year. It is widely expected to roll the rights into the contract held by the CAA Eleven agency, Uefa's commercial partner for national team matches, although no agreement – which would have to be agreed by a Uefa executive committee – is yet in place.

Uefa's member federations last week unanimously ratified the centralisation of the commercial rights to national team friendly matches and the tournament format.

As one federation source put it: "We have a road map. The federations will now do their numbers, and Uefa will do theirs. There will be quite considerable debate about the level of compensation for the media rights, the marketing rights and a few other bits and pieces. There might be more tension as talks develop. Right now, everyone is agreed that this is the way forward."

The negotiations are expected to be nowhere near as fraught as those which took place when Uefa centralised the rights to qualifier matches for the Euros and the Fifa World Cup, when it ended up having to pledge somewhere around €1.2bn (\$1.7bn) to its members over four years – a sum few independent experts believe it will earn back from rights sales.

Uefa told *TV Sports Markets* this week that "preliminary information" has been shared with the federations about expected revenues. "The plan is to start sales in the course of 2015, and thus to have all details finalised by then," the governing body said. Uefa said that centralisation would create "a substantial premium" on the current value of the friendlies, which are sold

Nations League format

The Uefa Nations League will comprise four divisions, each divided into four groups, two of which will have three teams and two four teams. Group stage matches will be played between September and November 2018. The winner of each group will play off in June 2020 to decide the overall division winner. The four division winners will qualify for Euro 2022. There will be promotion and relegation between the four divisions.

directly by federations, and that broadcasters had been "very enthusiastic when the concept was presented to them."

Rights values

Media rights values vary hugely for international friendly matches according to the teams involved. For a very top match, such as Germany v England, the first-party rights (in the home team's domestic market) could be worth up to €3m to each federation, second-party rights (in the opponent's market) about the same and third-party rights (in the rest of the world) at least €1m. For matches involving two of the smaller federations, the total media rights value could be in the low hundreds of thousands of euros.

Independent rights experts have different views on the level of premium Uefa could generate by putting the friendlies into a tournament structure, with promotion and relegation between groups. One experienced football rights trader said that having more meaningful matches, a single point of sale, and the possibility to bundle the rights with those of the Euros and the European Qualifiers could push the value up by at least 25 per cent.

Another expert said that most of the additional value would be generated by the matches of the smaller nations. "This will matter for the smaller and mid-ranking nations who have a chance of qualifying for the finals. Suddenly those friendlies become really meaningful games. The big federations tend to play each other anyway and get probably the maximum value from their friendlies. The real value is in the middle tier."

Despite voting for the centralisation and the proposed format, federations have raised some concerns with Uefa. One is the inevitable reduction in the chances of Europe's top nations playing lucrative ties against the top teams from South America, particularly Brazil and Argentina. One federation source said that there would be very few opportunities with the handful of friendly dates not taken up by the Nations League. "Everyone will be clamouring for a match against either Brazil or Argentina, so it will probably go to the highest bidder," he said.

Such matches can often have a double commercial value to federations. In addition to generating large sums of

money, they can be paired up in an international window with a qualifier match against a small nation which might be unattractive to fans and broadcasters. Federations can often leverage the value of the bigger match by, for example, giving priority in ticket sales to fans who buy a ticket for the less attractive match.

One of the areas of contention during the process to centralise the qualifiers into the new European Qualifiers package was the sponsorship rights. In the end, Uefa had to agree a series of carve-outs, so that some federations committed all of their sponsorship rights, some about half, and some none at all. Uefa said this week that such an arrangement would be possible

for the Nations League as well.

One sponsorship expert said that even if the bulk of the sponsorship and marketing rights remained with the federations, Uefa could still expect to earn a substantial amount from centralising the rights to the final competition, which will take place in June 2020.

One area where Uefa will not face any obstacles this time is from agencies which hold federation media rights. For the qualifiers, the governing body had to pay compensation thought to be over €12m to the Kentaro agency, which had been forced to give up several of its federation contracts. No media rights have been sold to agencies beyond 2018. ■

CRICKET

ICC looks to double its money to cement contested overhaul

By Frank Dunne

The International Cricket Council is hoping to at least double its income from media rights in the forthcoming eight-year cycle. Hitting that target has political as well as commercial ramifications.

Doing so will mean the ICC, the sport's world governing body, can increase the amount it pays its member and associate member boards and cement the controversial overhaul of the global game pushed through earlier this year by the boards of England, India and Australia.

The ICC earned \$1.1bn (€797m) for its global media rights in the eight-year period from 2008 to 2015 from pan-Asian broadcaster ESPN Star Sports. Of this, at least \$800m is thought to have been for the rights in India. The broadcaster made a profit of \$100m by sublicensing the rights outside India (*TV Sports Markets* 16:16).

ICC officials have told broadcasters that the body expects to earn between \$2bn and \$2.5bn in the new eight-year cycle, between 2015 and 2023.

The ICC met broadcasters late last month at Lord's Cricket Ground in London, where it unveiled its strategy for the next cycle (see panel).

Several cricket rights experts this week said that the \$2bn-plus figure was ambitious but possible. Hitting it will depend on a number of factors which all appear to be favourable. These are: competition in the Indian broadcast market; a strong Indian national team; aggressive bidding by agencies for, at least, the rights outside India; growth in a number of other key markets; growth in areas such as digital rights, and the rights to women's cricket.

India battle

Since the last rights tender, the joint venture behind ESS has dissolved, with Rupert Murdoch's News Corp buying out Disney's 50-per-cent stake in the broadcaster. Of the two Murdoch companies currently operational in Asia – Fox International Channels and Star Sports – it is Star which is leading the negotiation for the next cycle.

Star is determined to hang on to the property in India at least, where it is one of three must-have properties. The other two are the rights to the Board of Control for Cricket in India, which Star also holds, and the rights to the Indian Premier League, which are held by rival Sony.

Sony, along with rival pay-television operations Ten Sports and Neo Sports, owned by Nimbus Communications, are all expected to bid aggressively.

Growth areas

The UK is expected to deliver the biggest percentage uplift, with pay-television platform BT expected to strongly

ICC media rights, 2015-2023

Events: The ICC's media rights for the eight years from 2015 to 2023 cover six major events: the World Twenty20 in India in 2016 and in Australia in 2020; the Champions Trophy in England in 2016 and in India in 2021; and the Cricket World Cup in England in 2019 and in India in 2023. It also includes the qualifiers for the World T20 and the World Cup, plus the major women's events and U-19 events.

Territories: Bids can be made for the rights on a global basis or for one or more of the following territories: the Indian subcontinent; sub-Saharan Africa, including South Africa; the Middle East and North Africa; Australia; New Zealand; Europe, including the UK; the US, the Caribbean and South America; and Canada.

Platforms: Bids can be made for any kind of broadcast transmission, for digital rights alone, or for both. Bids can also be made for audio rights. The ICC has held back some digital clip rights for exploitation on its own website and mobile applications, and worldwide digital streaming rights which it can sell in any market and for any match which is not exploited by primary rights-holders.

Timescale: An invitation to tender will be published in May, with bids required in June. The ICC board will approve the deal or deals by the end of June.

challenge incumbent rights-holder BSKyB for the rights.

BT has been determined to strengthen its cricket portfolio and is understood to have been bitterly disappointed to have lost out on major properties such as the rights to Australian and South African cricket over the last year to Sky. Experts believe that the value could easily double from the \$50m Sky currently pays over the eight-year period.

The US is also expected to be a big growth market. Current rights-holder ESPN is determined to transform the profile of cricket in the US and will be keen to hang onto the rights. The \$25m it paid for the ICC rights from 2012 to 2015 was nine times what internet operator Willow had paid for the rights from 2009 to 2011.

Dubai-based Indian pay-television operator Ten Sports is also expected to be a bidder. It is said to be looking at either buying Willow or launching a channel in the US. A number of other Asian broadcasters are also looking at a US launch. Al Jazeera's beIN Sports is also expected to mount a bid.

Interest in women's cricket has also grown since the rights were last tendered, with the England & Wales Cricket Board, in particular, working hard to develop the women's game. One expert said that there would be real value for the women's World Cup in several markets.

The ICC will accept offers for the digital rights (internet and mobile) either on a global basis or by territory. However, the prevailing view this week was that it would require an enormous bid to convince the ICC to strip them out of the main broadcast deal. The threat of a digital player taking the rights could, however, force broadcasters to put a higher valuation on them to ensure that they maintain their exclusivity.

'No agencies'

One of the interesting questions regarding agency bids is how the relationships between the MP & Silva and Pitch International agencies and Qatari broadcaster Al Jazeera will play out.

The broadcaster is likely to be interested in the rights for, at least, the Middle East, the US, Canada and the Southeast Asian markets where it has

rolled out the beIN Sports channel. It has also been reported to have plans to expand into Australia and Africa.

Its options are to bid directly or to work with an agency. Pitch has a stronger track record than MP & Silva in cricket, through its relationship with the New Zealand board, but is less likely than MP & Silva to put up the kind of minimum guarantee required. The rights outside India are likely to be worth at least \$600m.

When sending out invitations to the Lord's meeting, the ICC said that it was not open to agencies, only broadcasters, but insiders say that once the rights come on the market in May, the ICC is unlikely to reject a big agency bid for the rights outside India. Few cricket rights experts believe that an agency will put up the \$2bn or more needed to land the whole package.

IMG Media's public apology last month to Giles Clarke, the chairman of the ECB, and the chairman of the ICC's finance committee, over a defamation case that the agency brought against him in 2010, which was later dropped, was widely interpreted as a prelude to an IMG bid.

ICC overhaul

In February, the ICC ratified an overhaul of its commercial structure which included a major change to the way that media-rights income is shared, despite major reservations from the boards of South Africa, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

The reforms were driven by Giles Clarke, Wally Edwards, chairman of Cricket Australia, and N. Srinivasan, the chairman of the BCCI until last week when he was ordered to resign by the Indian Supreme Court following the court's ruling in a match-fixing case.

One of the key objectives of the overhaul was to ensure that the amount that India earns from its share of the global ICC media-rights sales reflects the fact that the country provides about 80 per cent of the total media value. The BCCI only received \$52m from the current rights cycle, the same amount as the other nine full ICC members.


The change was crucial in getting the BCCI to commit to taking part in the ICC events for the long term. The two bodies have long had a fractious relationship.

Clarke compared the new revenue-sharing system to that of the International Olympic Committee, which gives due weighting to the US television market when sharing income among its federations.

The flipside of the change, however, was that the other ICC members needed to be reassured that they would not end up worse off than at present. Doubling the total income will ensure that each will earn about \$100m over the eight years.

Test plan scrapped

The planned new World Test Championship, featuring the top four teams in the ICC Test rankings in a knockout tournament, was abandoned completely during the same discussions. It had originally been planned to take place in 2013 but ESS told the ICC that it was not interested in showing it.

A plan to play in it 2017 has also now been dropped due to lack of broadcaster interest. ESS is understood to have told the ICC that the inclusion of the event in the place of a Champions Trophy would devalue the rights package. 

COMMONWEALTH GAMES

CBC deal keeps Glasgow on track to hit revenue target

By Robin Jellis

Last month's deal in Canada with CBC keeps the organisers of the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, Scotland, on course to at least match their target of £100m (€119m/\$167m) from commercial revenue.

The deal with the public-service broadcaster was agreed directly between CBC and Glasgow 2014, the organising committee of the Games.

Glasgow 2014 worked on the deal with Commonwealth Games Canada, the Commonwealth Games association of Canada. There was no tender but all local broadcasters were approached.

The deal will mean the Games will have wide coverage in one of its most important markets.

“Our position for our commercial programme is on target,” Brian Nourse, chief information officer for Glasgow 2014, told TV Sports Markets. “We are confident the target will be reached.”

The £100m target includes media rights, sponsorship, merchandising and ticketing. There is no comparable data for the 2010 Games in Delhi, India, but Glasgow is ahead of where the 2006 Games in Melbourne, Australia, was at the same stage, Nourse said.

The other strong markets for the Games are the UK, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

Australian network Ten acquired rights to the 2014 Games in a deal with the Commonwealth Games Federation for about A\$30m (€19.6m/\$27.3m), the same fee it paid for the 2010 Games (*TV Sports Markets* 12:21).

UK public-service broadcaster the BBC is thought to be paying between £10m and £12m for the 2014 Games. This is four times more than the £2.5m to £3m it paid for 2010. The increase is due to Glasgow hosting the Games.

These are the two most valuable deals for the organising committee, alongside India. One athletics expert said he did not expect other deals for the Games to be particularly lucrative.

“Other than the media-rights deals in Australia and the UK, there is not a huge amount of money in it,” he said. “The Scottish government has sunk a huge amount into the Games and they will want the maximum coverage possible. The amount they are putting in more than dwarfs any income they will get from media-rights sales.”

The source also said the success of the Games will be dependent, to a certain extent, on the number of top athletes, such as Usain Bolt and Mo Farah, which participate.

Fast Track

The Fast Track agency is agreeing television and radio deals for the Games internationally on behalf of Glasgow 2014. The UK, Australia and Canada are excluded from its deal.

The organising committee has final say on all deals, Nourse said. It is thought that Fast Track is paid on a commission

basis for reaching certain targets. It is the third successive Games that Fast Track has sold rights for.

There are also deals in place with: pay-television broadcaster Sky in New Zealand; pay-television broadcaster Ten Sports in the Indian subcontinent; pay-television broadcaster SuperSport in Sub-Saharan Africa; and regional consortium the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union in Asia Pacific.

The ABU deal is thought to be worth more than \$500,000. Its deal for 2010 was worth \$400,000.

Glasgow 2014 is expected to finalise broadcast deals in the coming months. It is thought that Fast Track is in advanced talks with pan-regional sports broadcaster Eurosport for rights across Europe, excluding the UK.

The agency is also expected to agree a free-to-air deal in South Africa, with public-service broadcaster SABC the likely buyer.

Last November, Canoc, formed of National Olympic Committees and Commonwealth Games Associations in the Caribbean, told *TV Sports Markets* it was in negotiations with Fast Track for 2014 (*TV Sports Markets* 17:21).

The Games will take place from July 23 to August 3. ■

RUGBY UNION

Clubs emerge the winners from lucrative new deals

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about £18m per year, for the three seasons from 2014-15 to 2016-17. The broadcasters will share coverage of both tournaments, with BT getting the slightly better set of rights (see panel, page 8).

The sharing deal came about because both broadcasters believed they had acquired the rights to European rugby's two competitions in separate deals – BT with Premiership Rugby, the English domestic league, and Sky with ERC Ltd, the organiser of the Heineken and Amlin Cups.

Dublin-based ERC Ltd, which was

created in 1995 to be the governing body of European club rugby, is now set to be dissolved. It will be replaced by a new governing body – European Professional Club Rugby, which is likely to be based in Neuchâtel, Switzerland.

EPCR has agreed a six-year deal with the respective national unions of the teams taking part (England, France, Ireland, Italy, Scotland and Wales) to sell commercial rights to both competitions. There has been a slight delay in confirming the deal as technical issues such as match time-slots are agreed upon, but the signing of the agreement is a formality, insiders say. This did not prevent EPCR from agreeing the UK deal.

The creation of EPCR will lead to some major structural changes in European club rugby, including: a change in the splitting of commercial revenues; new competition structures; and a new sponsorship structure.

Both new competitions are expected to start in October this year. This means that EPCR has about six months to agree sponsorship deals, to secure broadcast deals in key territories France and Italy, and to sell international media rights.

The deal between the rival UK pay-television broadcasters means EPCR is well on course to reach a reported target of around £60m in the first season from commercial revenue, including both media and sponsorship. The target is said to be £100m per year after five years.

Power struggle

The dispute between the two broadcasters centred on which organisation had the mandate to sell media rights to European competitions. This, in turn, was linked to a split within the competing nations following a power struggle over the sharing of commercial revenues.

In June 2012, the English and French leagues gave two years' notice of their intention to leave the existing set-up in protest at the structuring of the tournament.

In September 2012, BT announced a four-year deal with Premiership Rugby worth £152m. As well as rights to the domestic league, it included the rights for Premiership teams' matches in European competitions.

This was the first time European rights had been sold by a domestic league. European rights have been sold by the ERC since the inception of the Heineken and Amlin Cups. The top English and French leagues had threatened to break away from the ERC as they wanted better terms for their clubs, principally a greater share of revenues. BT's agreement with Premiership Rugby gave it the rights to any European tournament formed by breakaway clubs.

In the deal, the Premiership rights were worth about £22m per year across four years, from 2013-14 to 2016-17. The European rights were worth about £21.3m per year across three years, from 2014-15 to 2016-17.

At the same time, Sky agreed a four-year deal with the ERC for the rights to the Heineken Cup and Amlin Cup, covering the 2014-15 to 2017-18 seasons, worth about £18m per year. This was a 20-per-cent increase on the £15m-per-year deal, also agreed with the ERC, from 2010-11 to 2013-14.

Both BT and Sky wanted EPCR rights exclusively. Both are paying more than the value of the previous European competitions for only a share of the rights. As one expert put it, both are paying a premium price without getting the premium value of exclusivity.

BT now has the stronger set of rugby rights, certainly for English teams. In addition to having exclusive coverage of the Premiership, it is guaranteed more matches of English teams than Sky in the Rugby Champions Cup, something which is reflected in its higher fee.

When the sharing deal ends, after the 2016-17 season, it is highly unlikely that such a deal will be renewed. It is expected that EPCR will tender the rights and sell to just one buyer.

The sharing deal is a good one for European rugby, as it means that the UK rights are worth almost double what BT would have paid had it shown the rights alone.

Ian Ritchie, chief executive of the Rugby Football Union, the governing body for rugby union in England, is thought to have played a key role as mediator between BT and Sky.

Ritchie is understood to have a good

BT and Sky rugby coverage split

For the new Rugby Champions Cup, BT will have first pick of three matches involving Premiership clubs for each of the six rounds of group stage matches.

Sky will have first pick of three matches not involving Premiership clubs. The remaining games will be divided between the two, using a formula based on the number of games each weekend involving Premiership sides.

The knockout stages will be shared, with each broadcaster showing two quarter-

finals and one semi-final. If only one Premiership team is in the semi-finals, BT will show it. There is a similar agreement for the quarter-finals, whereby Sky cannot show more matches of English clubs than BT. Both will broadcast the final.

The match split for the new Challenge Cup is a mirror image, with Sky getting the same rights in that competition as BT does in the Champions Cup. In the group stage, Sky has first pick of three matches involving English clubs, and so on.

relationship with Sky, which currently holds English RFU rights in a five-year deal, from 2010-11 to 2014-15, worth £85m, or £17m per year (*TV Sports Markets* 12:20). The rights from 2015-16 onwards are expected on the market in the coming months, and are expected to see a fierce battle between BT and the incumbent rights-holder.

France and Italy

The six countries whose clubs compete in the two European club competitions are: England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, France and Italy – the same as those which compete in the Six Nations national team competition. The BT-Sky deal covers England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. EPCR is yet to agree media-rights deals in France and Italy. The EPCR will also agree a deal with an agency covering international rights.

The ERC has four-year deals in France with public-service broadcaster France Télévisions and pay-television broadcaster Canal Plus, from 2010-11 to 2013-14, worth €53m, or €13.25m per year (*TV Sports Markets* 14:18).

The current deal was agreed at a time when both broadcasters faced little competition. Now, France Télévisions is facing budget cuts, while Canal Plus is likely to have strong competition from pay-television rival beIN Sports.

Rugby insiders believe that Canal Plus's big domestic deal for Top 14 rights this January will put them in pole position to win the rights to the EPCR competitions. One source said that because Canal Plus had paid such a huge fee for the Top 14,

money which goes straight to the league, it would probably be the league's preferred broadcaster of European competitions, where revenues are pooled between leagues. Canal Plus will pay €71m per year for the Top 14 rights, from 2014-15 to 2018-19, an increase of almost 125 per cent on the previous deal (*TV Sports Markets* 18:2).

The Heineken and Amlin Cup rights in Italy are held by pay-television broadcaster Sky Italia in a deal worth about €500,000 per year. The deal was set to run until the end of the 2014-15 season, meaning a new deal will have to be agreed with EPCR.

The ERC also has highlights deals in Ireland with Irish-language broadcaster TG4, from 2011-12 to 2013-14, and in Wales with Welsh-language broadcaster S4C, from 2009-10 to 2013-14. It is not yet clear whether these deals will be renewed for the new competitions.

International rights

All media rights outside the territories with competing teams are held by the Pitch International agency, in a deal worth about €1.6m per year, from 2010-11 to 2013-14. It is thought that Pitch earned about €2m per year from these rights, giving it a profit of about €400,000. The most valuable territory for these rights is understood to be South Africa.

Strong competition for the rights is expected from the IMG Media agency. The MP & Silva agency is unlikely to compete with Pitch, with whom it enjoys a close relationship. www.

SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from March 27 to April 9

MEDIA RIGHTS 1

Action sports, American football, archery, badminton, boxing and more

- **Action Sports:** The Discovery Networks Asia-Pacific division of US media and entertainment company Discovery Communications acquired rights for events operated by the Red Bull Media House media company.
- **American Football:** US pay-television broadcaster ESPN acquired rights for the Gator Bowl annual US college game in a six-year deal, from 2015 to 2020. ESPN agreed the deal with Gator Bowl Sports, the game's operator.
- **Archery:** Korean commercial broadcaster SBS signed a four-year extension, from 2014 to 2017, to its rights deal for events operated by the World Archery governing body.
- **Badminton:** UK pay-television broadcaster BSkyB acquired rights for the National Badminton League, a new competition launched by the Badminton England governing body.
- **Badminton:** Indian sports and entertainment pay-television channel Sony Six acquired exclusive rights for the 2014 India Open from April 2-6.
- **Biathlon:** The European Broadcasting Union, the consortium of public-service broadcasters, finalised a four-season extension, running from 2014-15 to 2017-18, to a rights deal with the International Biathlon Union. The two parties had entered exclusive talks last June. The multi-platform deal covers all World Cups and World Championships, and other IBU events.
- **Boxing:** British Eurosport, the UK division of pan-regional broadcaster Eurosport, acquired exclusive rights to heavyweight champion Wladimir Klitschko's world title defence against Alex Leapai on April 26.
- **Cricket:** UK pay-television broadcaster BSkyB acquired live rights for the One-Day International match between Scotland and England on May 9.
- **Cricket:** Pay-television broadcaster One World Sports acquired rights in North America for all England national team home matches over four years, from 2014 to 2017. One World Sports acquired the rights in a deal with digital sports media company Perform, which acquired the rights for North America and the Caribbean from the England & Wales Cricket Board. The deal includes television, online and mobile platforms.

SINCE LAST TIME

- The Australian Subscription Television and Radio Association (Astra) pay-television body submitted a new anti-siphoning proposal to the federal government. Astra proposed a loosening of the anti-siphoning legislation what reserves some sports events exclusively for free-to-air broadcasters. It proposed that pay-television broadcasters should be allowed to provide simultaneous coverage with free-to-air broadcasters of certain events.
- The 2014 Fifa World Cup is set to remain exclusively on pay-television in Thailand after the country's Central Administrative Court ruled that the regulatory National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission must exclude the football tournament's final from its 'must carry' list of sporting events. The case had been filed by RS International, which argued that it was not obligated to share coverage with free-to-air broadcasters as it had acquired rights for the tournament prior to the introduction of the 'must carry' rule. The regulator will submit an appeal to Thailand's Supreme Administrative Court.
- The Constantin Medien media company, which operates the Team Marketing agency, reported a fall in sales and profit in 2013. Constantin Medien generated group sales of €458.3m (\$667m) in 2013, a 12-per-cent drop on the previous year's figure of €520.5m, but above expectations of €430-450m. Profit from overall operations was €8.3m in comparison with €21.6m the previous year. Constantin Medien's sports division achieved sales of €147.4m, a drop of nine per cent, and a loss of €2.8m for 2013, down from a profit of €4.9m in 2012.
- Australian sports media industry veteran Ian Frykberg passed away at the age of 68. Frykberg served as head of current affairs and sport

at Australian commercial broadcaster Nine before moving to London in the early 1990s to help establish UK pay-television broadcaster BSkyB, where he became head of sport. Frykberg, a former rugby union player with a combative negotiating style, was widely regarded as the 'king' of the Australian sports rights market.

MEDIA INTERNATIONAL

- Management services company Stealth SME acquired several media and sports management groups to form Stealth Sports, a new agency in the US. Stealth acquired Dutt Sports Services, the Sloan Sports Group, LifeSports Management, the Crimson Marketing Group, Envision Sports Agency and Cenergy. The agency will provide media production and distribution services through its Stealth Media House division.
- ACC Digital Network, the official digital video network of US college sport's Atlantic Coast Conference, agreed a carriage deal with online retailer and technology company Amazon's new Fire TV streaming service.
- WatchESPN, the live streaming application of US pay-television sports broadcaster ESPN, agreed a carriage deal with Amazon's Fire TV service.
- UK pay-television broadcaster BSkyB may have to pay a 40-per-cent increase in its fee for the next cycle of live rights to the English Premier League, according to investment bank Morgan Stanley. The bank said that the anticipated increase in the fee, from £760m (€916m/\$1.264bn) per year to £1064m per year, is £190m per year more than its previous forecast and would be necessary for Sky to retain its current five packages. The bank expects the rights for the three seasons, from 2016-17 to 2018-19, to be put on the market in early 2015.

SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from March 27 to April 9**MEDIA RIGHTS 2****Ligue 1, Copa Libertadores, Copa Sudamericana, Gaelic sports and more**

- **Football:** The Saran Media agency renewed a rights deal for Turkey national team home friendly matches. The deal with the Turkish Football Federation will run for four years, from 2014-15 to 2017-18. Saran Media's rights cover exclusive first-party rights and exclusive third-party rights. The federation retained second-party rights, which it offers to opposition federations when arranging friendlies. Saran will also organise and market the team's tour of the US this year.
- **Football:** Canal Plus acquired rights in France for the two main packages of the next cycle of domestic rights for Ligue 1, the country's top division, while rival pay-television broadcaster beIN Sports acquired the other four packages. Canal Plus and beIN Sports also acquired a package each for rights to the second-tier Ligue 2 (page 1).
- **Football:** The MP & Silva agency acquired rights for the Latin American Copa Libertadores, Copa Sudamericana and Copa do Brazil club tournaments. The rights for the Copa Libertadores and Copa Sudamericana cover five years, from 2014 to 2018. The rights for the Copa do Brazil covering four years, from 2015 to 2018. The 2014 Copa Libertadores rights cover Hong Kong, Indonesia, Macau, Myanmar, New Zealand, South Korea and Vietnam. The rights for the 2014 Copa Sudamericana cover the same territories plus Japan. The rights for all three tournaments, from 2015 to 2018, cover all territories in the Asia-Pacific region apart from China, where MP & Silva already has English-language rights. The deals were struck with the Traffic Sports agency, and brokered by the FSA Media agency.
- **Football:** Spanish pay-television broadcaster Gol T acquired rights for the Copa Libertadores, Copa Sudamericana and Copa do Brazil for four years, from 2015 to 2018. Gol T will show 48 matches per year from the Copa Libertadores, 44 games from the Copa Sudamericana and 38 matches from the Copa do Brasil. Gol T struck the deal with Traffic Sports.
- **Football:** US pay-television broadcaster One World Sports agreed a rights deal with the New York Cosmos North American Soccer League club.
- **Gaelic Sports:** Irish public-service broadcaster RTÉ, pay-television broadcasters BSkyB and Setanta Sports, and Irish-language free-to-air broadcaster TG4 were awarded rights in Ireland for Gaelic Athletic Association hurling and Gaelic football tournaments in three-year deals, covering 2014-15 to 2016-17. RTÉ retained live rights to 31 games per year, including the All-Ireland finals and semi-finals in both sports, the All-Ireland hurling quarter-finals, and two of the four All-Ireland football quarter-finals. RTÉ also acquired rights to all six provincial championship finals. Sky acquired exclusive rights to 14 All-Ireland championship games, including two football quarter-finals and four provincial games. TG4 acquired rights to Sunday afternoon National Football League matches, the All-Ireland Minor finals, and other junior tournaments. TG4 will show 62 games live and 22 matches delayed per year. Setanta retained rights for Saturday evening league games. The association also agreed a deal with RTÉ to launch a global streaming platform to show live coverage of all televised games on a paid-for basis.
- **Gaelic Sports:** BSkyB, pay-television sports channel Premier Sports and regional public-service broadcaster BBC Northern Ireland acquired rights in the UK to GAA competitions for the three years from 2014-15 to 2016-17. Sky will show 20 All-Ireland championship matches per year exclusively live, including the hurling and football semi-finals and finals. Premier Sports, whose rights cover Great Britain only, will show 26 championship games and 30 National Football League matches per year. BBC NI will show Ulster championship games.
- **Gaelic Sports:** Commercial broadcaster Seven acquired rights in Australia to 45 live games per year from the GAA Gaelic football and hurling championships in a one-season deal.
- UK telecommunications company BT is to make its BT Sport pay-television channels available via an application on Google's Chromecast internet-connected television device, according to the *Financial Times*. The channels will only be available via Chromecast to BT broadband customers. A launch date was not confirmed.
- Italian media group Mediaset secured a €700m (\$966m) loan from three banks to help cover its expenditure on football rights, according to *Il Sole 24 Ore*. Mediaset was granted the loan by the Intesa Sanpaolo, UniCredit and BNL-BNP Paribas institutions.
- The Telecom Italia telecommunications company in Italy struck a deal for its Cubovision video-on-demand service to carry the Sky Sport F1 pay-television channel, which shows coverage of the Formula One motor-racing world championship. Subscribers to Tim, Telecom Italia's mobile service, will be able to watch nine grands prix live and nine races on a delayed basis this year. The service is available to subscribers until November 23 for an activation fee of €9 (\$12) plus a monthly fee of €6.
- Swedish commercial and pay-television broadcaster TV4 agreed a three-year extension to its deal with production company Onside TV, from 2014-15 to 2016-17. The company will produce coverage of about 350 football matches per year for TV4, including all Sweden national team friendly games plus the top-tier Allsvenskan, second-tier Superettan and the women's top-tier Damallsvenskan. The deal is worth between SKR40m (€4.5m/\$6.2m) and SKR50m per year.
- Finnish pay-television sports broadcaster UrhoTV suspended operations, including its channel and online streaming service Urho Play, due to "critical" financial difficulties, according to chief operating officer Markku Korhonen.

MEDIA RIGHTS NEGOTIATIONS

- Fifa, world football's governing body, opened an invitation to tender for rights in the UK to the 2018 and 2022 World Cups in Russia and Qatar. The rights cover television, IPTV, internet and mobile

SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from March 27 to April 9

MEDIA RIGHTS 3

Golf, horse racing, ice hockey, judo, mixed martial arts and more

- **Golf:** Pay-television broadcaster Fox Sports Asia extended a rights deal for the US Masters for three years, from 2014 to 2016. Fox Sports will continue to broadcast live coverage and highlights of the event in 18 countries across Asia. Viewers in Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore will also have access to on-demand content via online authenticated platform Fox Sports Play and the Fox Sports Play application on their mobile device.
- **Golf:** Australian commercial broadcaster Seven acquired rights for the Australian PGA Championship. The multi-year deal starts with the 2014 event from December 11-14.
- **Golf:** One World Sports renewed a rights deal for tournaments on the OneAsia tour with the World Sport Group agency. The deal includes live coverage and highlights of 10 events in 2014 and covers all media platforms.
- **Horse racing:** US pay-television broadcaster TVG struck a multi-year rights deal with the Hong Kong Jockey Club. TVG will show live coverage of at least 83 race days per year from the Happy Valley and Sha Tin racecourses, with most of the races taking place on Wednesdays and Sundays.
- **Ice Hockey:** KHL HD TV, the pay-television channel operated by the Kontinental Hockey League, acquired rights in Russia and all countries in the Commonwealth of Independent States for the 2014 Swedish Hockey League. KHL HD TV will show live coverage of every game during the league finals from April 14-27. The agreement includes television, mobile and online rights. The deal was brokered by the IEC in Sports agency.
- **Judo:** French digital-terrestrial-television channel L'Equipe 21 acquired rights for the 2014 European Judo Championships in Montpellier, France. L'Equipe 21 will broadcast live coverage and highlights of the event from April 24-27
- **Mixed Martial Arts:** UK promoter Bamma struck a rights deal with ESPN3, the online streaming service of US pay-television sports broadcaster ESPN. The length of the deal, which began on April 5, was not disclosed.
- **Motorcycling:** BBC Northern Ireland extended a rights deal for the North West 200 event for five years, from 2015 to 2019. The BBC Sport NI website will provide live coverage of all practice sessions and races from May 15-17, while television highlights programmes will be shown around the May 15 and May 17 races.
- **Parasport:** Pan-regional pay-television broadcaster DirecTV acquired rights for the inaugural Para-South American Games in Argentina, the Caribbean, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela. DirecTV exploited the rights on a dedicated channel on its direct-to-home platform.

platforms. Following a question and answer period running until April 4-25, initial submissions to Fifa are due by April 28. Negotiations with preferred bidders will open on April 29.

- The CAA Eleven agency launched an invitation to tender for the rights in Singapore to European qualifiers for the Uefa Euro 2016 and 2018 Fifa World Cup national team football tournaments, along with Euro 2016 itself. Bids must be submitted by May 9.
- US media and entertainment company Discovery Communications, which fast-tracked a deal earlier this year to acquire a controlling stake in pan-European sports broadcaster Eurosport, has held talks with potential partners over possible joint bids for premium sports rights, according to chief executive David Zaslav.
- French pay-television broadcasters beIN Sports and Canal Plus and commercial broadcaster M6 entered bids for the rights to the Uefa Champions League and Europa League football competitions for three years, from 2015-16 to 2017-18.
- The Oceania Football Confederation is in negotiations with broadcasters in Samoa, American Samoa, Fiji and New Zealand for rights to the OFC Champions League club tournament.
- Public-service broadcaster RTÉ, pay-television broadcaster Setanta Sports and commercial broadcaster TV3 remain in contention for rights in Ireland for the 2015 Rugby World Cup, according to the *Irish Times*.
- German public-service broadcaster ARD is coming under pressure from regional public-service broadcasters to opt against renewing a rights deal with the Sauerland boxing agency, according to the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung*. The current deal, worth €13m (\$18m) per year, will expire at the end of 2014.
- Polish pay-television broadcaster NC Plus ruled out the possibility of sublicensing rights to another broadcaster for the 2014-15 season of the Ekstraklasa, Poland's top football league, in a bid to halt a decline in subscribers. In the current 2013-14 season, NC Plus sublicenses some rights to pay-television broadcaster Polsat and pan-European broadcaster Eurosport. The league had tried to encourage a deal between NC Plus and Polsat.

ALSO SINCE LAST TIME

- Aiba, boxing's global governing body, struck a deal with Rightster for the online video distribution and marketing company to stream live coverage of the World Series of Boxing for five years, from 2014 to 2018. The series will be shown via the AIBAboxingTV.com digital streaming service, with Rightster also managing Aiba's three channels on video-sharing website YouTube.
- Fifa, football's world governing body, extended a partnership with Japanese electronics manufacturer Sony to produce three matches during the 2014 World Cup with 4K broadcast technology, including one match from the round of 16, one quarter-final and the final. Sony will also produce the official World Cup film in 4K, which offers picture quality that is four times sharper than high definition. Niclas Ericson, director of Fifa's television division, said Fifa was also working on 8K production for the World Cup.

SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from March 27 to April 9**MEDIA RIGHTS 4****The Boat Race, World Club 7s, Austrian skiing and Wimbledon tennis**

- **Rowing:** UK public-service broadcaster the BBC extended a rights deal for the annual Boat Race between the universities of Cambridge and Oxford in the UK. The deal will run for seven years, from 2015 to 2021. The agreement includes coverage of the women's race as well as the men's race. The BBC struck the deal with the Boat Race Company, which operates the event.
 - **Rugby Union:** The RDA Television and IEC in Sports agencies secured a deal to jointly market the global rights, excluding the UK, for the World Club 7s competition. The agreement with Premiership Rugby, the organiser of the seven-a-side tournament, covers the 2014 edition on August 16-17, with an option to extend the deal.
 - **Skiing:** The European Broadcasting Union, the consortium of public-service broadcasters, extended a rights deal with the Austrian Ski Federation for the International Skiing Federation's World Cup events that are held in the country. The deal will run for three years, from 2014-15 to 2016-17, and will cover more than 30 World Cup races in Austria every year plus the rights to the two Austrian events of the Alpine Ski World Cup, Ski Jumping World Cup and ski jumping's Four Hills Tournament.
 - **Tennis:** German pay-television broadcaster Sky Deutschland agreed a five-year extension, from 2014 to 2018, to its rights deal for the Wimbledon championships. Sky will continue to show the tournament live and exclusively in Germany and Austria. The deal includes internet, IPTV and mobile rights.
 - Japanese electronics company Panasonic will use the 2020 summer Olympic Games in Tokyo to trial 8K broadcasts, which offer picture quality that is 16 times sharper than high definition.
 - The International World Games Association launched an online channel through its official website, which will show a number of its member sports federations' events.
 - The International Paralympic Committee streamed live English-language coverage of the 2014 IPC Powerlifting World Championships, from April 5-11 in Dubai, via its official website and YouTube channel.
 - The MP & Silva agency opened a new office in Brussels to service its contract as the worldwide media adviser to the Belgian Pro League, the top division of football in the country. MP & Silva has a six-year rights deal with the league, from 2014-15 to 2019-20.
- for all editions of the Olympics. • UK telco BT appointed former BSkyB executive Delia Bushell as its new managing director of pay-television broadcaster BT Sport. • Manuel Lopez retired after two years as chief executive officer of the German division of digital sports media company Perform. Thomas Chabin, Dirk Ifsen and Haruka Gruber will be responsible for the German division's marketing, content distribution and editorial content. • Jan Koeppen was named president of Europe and Africa for Fox International Channels, the broadcast subsidiary of media company 21st Century Fox. Koeppen will succeed Jesus Perezagua, who will stand down from the post on April 30. • The Constantin Medien media company, which operates the Team Marketing agency, German sports broadcaster Sport1 and the Constantin Sport Marketing business, proposed Dieter Hahn as the new chairman of its supervisory board, succeeding Fred Kogel. Kogel will resign from the role at the end of Constantin's 2014 ordinary annual general meeting in order to become the company's chief operating officer on October 1. • Sports media and technology company Supponor appointed Roger Hall, currently managing director of pay-television broadcaster beIN Sports for the Middle East and Africa, as its new chief executive. Hall will join Supponor at the start of May.

INDUSTRY MOVES

- International Olympic Committee president Thomas Bach appointed Dick Pound as the new chairman of the board of Olympic Broadcasting Services, which serves as host broadcaster

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