

## CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

# Qatar keeps heat on in Southeast Asia but eases off the gas in France

By Robin Jellis and Frank Dunne

Uefa enjoyed differing levels of success in the sales of its club competition rights in France and Southeast Asia last month. The outcome points to a cooling of the French market but suggests there is still margin for substantial growth in several major Asian territories.

European football's governing body secured an increase of about 33 per cent in the value of its Champions League rights in France in deals with pay-television operators beIN Sports and Canal Plus. This compares to a 98-per cent increase the last time the rights were sold (*TV Sports Markets* 15:23).

The deals follow a lower-than-expected increase in rights fee for the country's top domestic football league, Ligue 1, last month (*TV Sports Markets* 18:7).

One senior agency executive said this week that the rivalry between beIN Sports and Canal Plus, which has

been inflating prices for the last three years, had "probably peaked."

With 1.8m subscribers and an established brand, beIN Sports may feel that it no longer needs to pay strategic, 'battering-ram' fees in France. This is not the case in Asia, where it launched its sports channels in five territories last year in a joint venture with the MP & Silva agency. The channels need the strongest possible content to secure distribution and earn high carriage fees from the main platforms.

The Al Jazeera-owned broadcaster picked up the rights to the Champions League and Europa League in two deals in Asia. In a deal covering Thailand, Laos and Cambodia it paid an increase of over 200 per cent on the current value. In Indonesia its fee gave Uefa a 100-per-cent increase.

*Continued on page 3 ►*

## MOTORSPORT

# IMG accelerates world rallycross plans

By Andy Fry

The IMG agency believes that the recent deals it secured with 30 broadcasters for the newly-launched FIA World Rallycross Championship are a strong indication that the agency's long-term investment in the sport will pay off.

The deals mean that the championship, which is branded World RX, will have an international reach of 816m homes across 108 countries in its inaugural

season, which begins this weekend.

The event is an expansion of the FIA European Rallycross Championship which IMG took over last year (see panel, page 5). The agency distributed the ERC in 40 countries.

Significant deals include new agreements with premium sports channels Fox Sports in Latin America and beIN Sports, which

*Continued on page 5 ►*

## CONTENTS

- 1,3 Cooling French market caps  
Uefa returns but Asia still  
delivering massive increases

---

- Why beIN Sports paid 50% more  
for the Champions League

---

- 1,5 IMG accelerates plans to turn  
rallycross into global series

---

- 2 Fastrack 1: Obstacle for IMG; new  
F1 bidders in Germany; African  
market 'needs different mindset'

---

- 6 ARD/ZDF interest drives value of  
Wimbledon rights in Sky deal

---

- 6 Top 14 benefits from BT v Sky

---

- 7 Friendly event to turn a profit

---

- 8 Fastrack 2: Qualifier values tumble  
in Italy and Spain; Bike Channel  
looks abroad; WME's IMG cuts

---

- 9 Sports Clips

All stories and Sports Clips  
also available online at  
[sportbusiness.com](http://sportbusiness.com)

*SportBusiness*

Follow us on Twitter  
[@TVSportsMarkets](https://twitter.com/TVSportsMarkets)

## FASTRACK 1

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### World Cup could rule IMG out of Euro rugby rights

The IMG Media agency may not be able to bid for international rights to the new European club rugby competitions starting in the 2014-15 season, *TV Sports Markets* understands.

The Rugby Champions Cup and the Rugby Challenge Cup will next season replace the Heineken Cup and the Amlin Challenge Cup (*TV Sports Markets* 18:7).

The global rights, outside the competing nations of England, France, Ireland, Italy, Scotland and Wales, are expected to be sold to an agency. The Pitch International agency holds international rights to both the Heineken Cup and Amlin Cup in a four-year deal, from 2010-11 to 2013-14, worth about €1.6m (\$2.2m) per year.

IMG was expected to challenge Pitch for the rights, but it is understood there is a clause in IMG's contract to market Rugby World Cup rights which precludes them from representing other competitive rugby tournaments, both for media and sponsorship. IMG advises Rugby World Cup Limited, the tournament organisers, on its global media rights sales.

The rights will be sold by the newly-formed governing body for European club rugby, European Professional Club Rugby.

EPCR will issue a tender for the rights in France between May 15 and 20. Pay-television broadcasters beIN Sports and Canal Plus are expected to bid strongly. State broadcaster France Télévisions wants to hold on to at least some rights. At present, France Télévisions and Canal Plus pay a combined €13.25m per year. ■

### ARD/ZDF eyeing up Formula One

German state broadcasters ARD and ZDF are seriously considering a strong bid for free-to-air Formula One rights when they are put on the market in the coming months.

ARD/ZDF's interest stems from its loss of the European qualifying matches

of the German national football team to RTL in July last year (*TV Sports Markets* 17:13).

There is also strong German interest in Formula One due to the performances of drivers Sebastian Vettel and Nico Rosberg. Vettel won the 2013 championship, his fourth consecutive championship win. Rosberg came sixth.

The free-to-air rights in Germany are currently held by commercial broadcaster RTL in a four-year deal, from 2012 to 2015, worth about €40m (\$55.2m) per year.

RTL sublicenses some rights to sports broadcaster Sport1 in a three-year deal, from 2013 to 2015.

There is also a pay-television deal with Sky Deutschland, from 2013 to 2015, covering both Germany and Austria, worth about €30m per year.

The rights are sold by Formula One Management, the championship's commercial rights-holder. ■

### Different mindset needed for Africa

Sports rights-holders are failing to grasp the complexity of the sub-Saharan Africa sports-rights market, according to a new report. As a consequence they are "pursuing bigger and more ambitious margins for their properties," yet failing to maximise the value of their product.

The growth in Africa's sports-rights market reflects the continent's rapidly growing economy, but the assumption that this should automatically feed into big increases in rights fees often leads rights-holders into clashes with local broadcasters.

Themba Ndlwana, one of the authors of *The African Sports TV Market*, said: "We are bullish and optimistic about the progress and growth of the market in the next five to 10 years. But rights-holders need to understand that the African sports TV market is still in its infancy, and there are various drivers that are influencing its development."

The total annual free-to-air sports

programming budget, excluding major one-off events like the Fifa World Cup, the Africa Cup of Nations and the Olympic Games, is still only about \$400m (€290m), of which about \$240m is spent on football. The report predicts that this overall budget will grow to more than \$1bn in the next 15 years.

Ndlwana warned that by pushing for big increases for their properties, rights-holders were deterring many broadcasters from entering the market. "They are either priced out or they know it will be difficult to get a significant return on investment for the property, given the advertising and sponsorship markets."

Most of the sports content distributed into Africa is from Europe, with England's Premier League and the Uefa Champions League the two most popular properties. With the exception of the NBA, North American sports content has very low penetration due to a lack of demand and participation. Local African sports are not widely distributed.

Ndlwana added that increases in the value of football rights would not feed into the value of other properties.

"The popularity of football and demand for football content creates an illusion about the buoyancy and vibrancy of the African market and becomes an unrealistic benchmark for all other sports properties. A different mindset is required for Africa," he said.

The report also suggests that even though rights fees for top sport, especially football, are on the increase, rights-holders are not maximising the value of their content for several reasons. This is because they:

- fail to sell their content to all territories
- don't understand the market or don't have the right insight into market patterns and trends
- don't have credible market research
- don't have local marketing infrastructure to enhance their sales drive. ■

## CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

# Canal Plus-beIN Sports rivalry has 'probably peaked'

Continued from page 1 ►

In both cases, the broadcaster – which acquired the rights directly, with no involvement from MP & Silva – blew the competition out of the water with a massive first-round bid. In both deals, beIN Sports acquired exclusive rights to all matches. It is required to sublicense one match per week plus highlights of both competitions to a free-to-air broadcaster.

All deals cover the three seasons from 2015-16 to 2017-18 and were brokered by the Team Marketing agency, Uefa's sales agent for its club competitions.

## BeIN Sports claims victory

In the new deal in France, Canal Plus and beIN Sports will pay a combined fee of about €148m (\$204m) per season. BeIN Sports will pay about €92m per season, and Canal Plus about €56m per season.

The total is up from the €111m per season that the broadcasters pay in the current deals, from 2012-13 to 2014-15. BeIN Sports pays €61m per season and Canal Plus €50m per season.

The main reason for the increase is that beIN Sports was determined to win rights to show matches of Paris Saint-Germain (see box). The fact PSG and Monaco are likely to challenge in the competition in years to come, following large investments from rich owners, has increased interest in the competition.

The new deals give beIN Sports more first-pick matches and better matches in the knock-out stages. Florent Houzot, the broadcaster's editorial director, claimed that beIN Sports were the "big winners" in the tender.

Canal Plus markets itself by saying 'the matches which count are only on Canal Plus.' But this will no longer be the case when the new deal kicks in.

Cyril Linette, Canal Plus's director of sports and acquisitions, rejected the

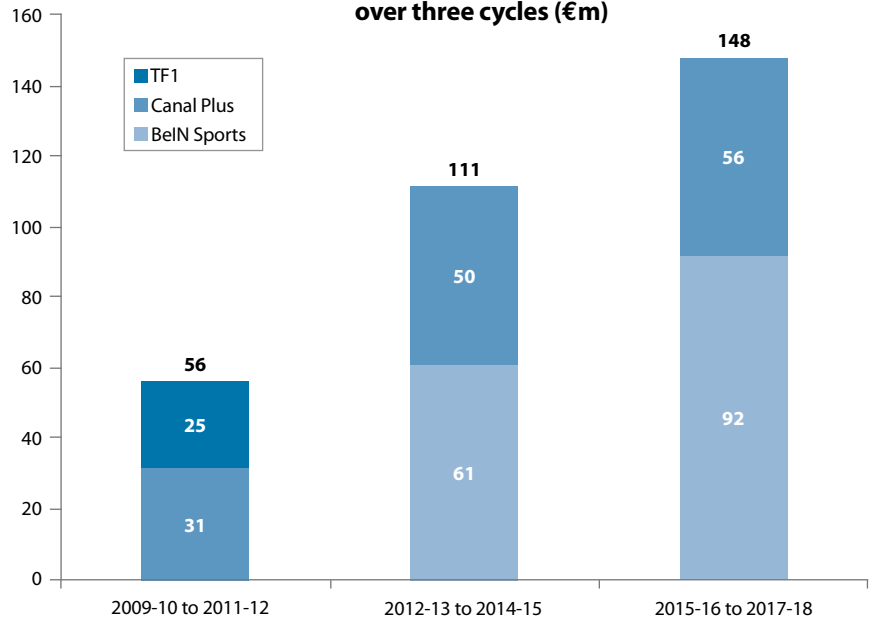
Champions League packages in France, 2015-16 to 2017-18

Package	Content	Winner
1	16 first-choice matches on Tuesdays*	BeIN Sports
2	16 first-choice matches on Wednesdays	Canal Plus
3	All remaining 112 matches	BeIN Sports
4	Highlights on Tuesday evenings	BeIN Sports
5	Highlights on Wednesday evenings	BeIN Sports

Source: TV Sports Markets

\*Package also includes rights to the Champions League final and Super Cup. BeIN Sports also has delayed coverage of the matches Canal Plus will show.

Annual media rights value for the Champions League in France over three cycles (€m)



Source: TV Sports Markets

## Why beIN Sports is paying 50% more

In the new Champions League deal in France, pay-television broadcaster beIN Sports is paying about 50 per cent more for its rights, mainly due to the fact it was determined to show Paris Saint-Germain matches.

Qatari interests pervade the deal. PSG president, Nasser Al-Khelaifi, is the managing director of beIN Sports. PSG is owned by the Qatar Investment Authority, Qatar's sovereign wealth fund. BeIN Sports is owned by Qatari broadcaster Al Jazeera.

In the current Champions League deal, from 2012-13 to 2014-15, beIN Sports' pay-television rival Canal Plus has the right to show 13 exclusive live first-choice matches per year, which is one per week, plus non-exclusive rights to the final. Canal Plus has shown nearly all of PSG's games. BeIN Sports

has rights to 133 live games per year.

The new deals mean that beIN Sports and Canal Plus will share first-choice matches more evenly. BeIN Sports will have the first choice of matches on Tuesdays, and Canal Plus will have the choice on Wednesdays. If there is a third French team in the group stages, beIN Sports will show their matches.

BeIN Sports is likely to have better matches in the knockout stages. If there is only one French team involved, beIN Sports will be able to show their matches, regardless of which day they play. If there are two French teams, the broadcasters will share their matches by day, as in the group stages.

BeIN Sports will show highlights programmes on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Canal Plus will show highlights on Sundays. ■

view that Canal Plus had emerged with the weaker offering. He argued that the outcome reflected differing programming priorities: beIN Sports, as a pure sports channel, needs quantity; Canal Plus's main premium channel, as a generalist, rather than sports channel, wants only really premium content, be it in sport, film or television series.

In response to the emergence of beIN Sports, Canal Plus has increasingly focused on a smaller number of top sports properties, targeting the key games in each competition. BeIN Sports shows whole football competitions, whether the rights are live, delayed, exclusive or non-exclusive.

Canal Plus was aware that pressure from beIN Sports for Champions League rights would be significant, with its rival having lost some Ligue 1 rights, so was happy to renew with slightly fewer rights.

Linette said that Ligue 1 rights were "much more vital" to the broadcaster than those of the Champions League. Canal Plus hung on to the top league matches in deals agreed last month. The deadline for bids for the Champions League came just after the deadline for bids to Ligue 1.

Commercial broadcaster M6 also bid for the Champions League. Its offer, for the second package, was well below the winning Canal Plus offer. It was the only package which went to a second round, with all other packages awarded to beIN Sports after the first round.

### Free-to-air final

The new deals mean that the whole competition, other than the final, will continue to be shown only on pay-television. The final must be shown free-to-air in line with listed-events legislation.

In the current cycle, commercial broadcaster TF1 shows the final through a sublicensing deal with Canal Plus worth €2.5m per year.

In the new cycle, beIN Sports will also have to sublicense the rights to the final to a free-to-air broadcaster. Uefa will not be involved in the process, but has provided a list of "established" broadcasters with whom beIN

Sports must agree a deal, according to a source close to the talks.

TF1 is considered the most likely buyer. It has a good relationship with beIN Sports. TF1 agreed a sublicensing deal with beIN Sports for the rights to the 2014 Fifa World Cup. TF1's advertising arm, TF1 Publicité, also sells advertising space on beIN Sports' channels. The fee for the final is expected to stay steady, or increase only slightly. BeIN Sports will also broadcast the final on a non-exclusive basis.

*"Ligue 1 was much more vital to us than the Champions League"*

*Cyril Linette, Canal Plus*

### Europa League

BeIN Sports and commercial broadcaster W9, owned by M6, renewed rights to the Europa League, Uefa's second-tier club competition, at a small fee increase.

The deals are understood to be worth a combined fee of close to €25m per year in the three years from 2015-16 to 2017-18. The current deals are worth a combined €22m per year from 2012-13 to 2014-15. BeIN Sports pays €16m per year, and W9 pays €6m per year.

The small increase was due to there being limited competition. Canal Plus did not bid.

BeIN Sports will show 205 live games per year, of which 15 will also be shown by W9. This is the same sharing deal as at present.

### Thailand, Laos, Cambodia

In a deal covering Thailand, Laos and Cambodia, beIN Sports is thought to have paid almost \$60m over three years, or just under \$20m per season. This is more than three times the \$6m per season which incumbent rights-holder TrueVisions is paying in the current deal.

One local agency executive described the market as "red hot right now." This is due to the continued growth in pay-television penetration and the emergence of several new digital-

terrestrial operators. Thailand is the dominant market of the three, and Thai companies such as TrueVisions dominate sports broadcasting across the markets.

TrueVisions, Thailand's longest-established pay-television platform, is thought to have provided the strongest competition for beIN Sports, in what is said to have been a packed field of bidders, but was still well below its rival.

The company is unlikely to suffer unduly in terms of subscriber numbers, as it carries the beIN Sports channels in the three countries. However, one local media expert said that it had made a grave tactical error in allowing itself to be outflanked by beIN Sports.

"Owning the rights is not just about editorial control and branding. It means not having to be held to ransom by beIN or anyone else. It's okay for third-party channels to have secondary or complementary programming, but platforms don't want beIN, Fox Sports, Eurosport or whoever, to have premium rights which they can use as leverage."


The expert said that by agreeing to carry beIN Sports, TrueVisions had given the Qatari broadcaster "real estate space on their platform – giving them a home and opportunity to go after bigger rights."

To land the rights for the current cycle, TrueVisions had paid a 300-per-cent increase on the previous deal, up from \$1.2m per season, to fend off free-to-air broadcasters Channel 3 and Channel 7 in Thailand and CTN in Cambodia, as well as media group RS. This time, all bids are thought to have been across the three territories.

### Indonesia

BeIN Sports is thought to be paying nearly \$34m, or just over \$11m per season, in the new deal. Its main competition came, as expected, from incumbent rights-holder the SCTV media group.

The deal represents an increase of over 100 per cent. SCTV pays about \$5.3m per season for the rights in the current cycle, a 270-per-cent increase on the \$1.4m that previous rights-holders the MNC media group had been paying.

BeIN Sports is carried in Indonesia on the Orange TV, NexMedia, First Media, Big TV and K Vision platforms. 



## MOTORSPORT

# IMG takes rallycross on to global stage ahead of schedule

Continued from page 1 ►

is showing it in the US and in 25 countries across the Middle East and North Africa. There will also be coverage in sub-Saharan Africa via SuperSport and across Asia on the IMG Media-owned EDGESport action sports channel.

Motorsport experts say that IMG is unlikely to be earning meaningful rights fees during this embryonic phase of the World RX. The agency's rights and production arm, IMG Media, is also thought to be covering production costs estimated to be at least €180,000 (\$248,000) per race.

The priority is to secure wide distribution to build awareness of the event and help drive sponsorship income. The Monster Energy drinks company is headline sponsor of the event.

Broadcasters will show a two-hour Sunday afternoon show that combines highlights and live or delayed coverage. The first hour is an edited highlights segment. In the second hour, broadcasters have the option of showing an event live or on a delayed basis. IMG is also producing a 48-minute highlights programme.

## Motorsport festivals

Martin Anayi, managing director of the championship for IMG Motorsport, told *TV Sports Markets* this week that securing media exposure was only one part of the overall commercial strategy.

"Growing TV revenues is important," he said, "but we're also building two-day motorsports festivals that will include in-venue entertainment like DJs, live music and stunt bike events. This will have marketing appeal to car manufacturers and sponsors."

For the 2014 season, manufacturers Ford, Volkswagen and Peugeot are backing World RX teams. High-profile drivers, such as former Formula One driver Jacques Villeneuve and Petter Solberg, the 2003 World Rally champion, will take part this season.

## World Rallycross Championship

Rallycross is a form of circuit racing in which turbocharged saloon cars compete on mixed surfaces. Devised for television in the 1960s, it fell out of favour in the early 1990s.

The relationship between the existing European event and world event created by IMG and the FIA is complicated.

The FIA European Rallycross Championship has three classes: SuperCar, TouringCar and Super1600. The SuperCar series has been turned into the World Rallycross Championship, but remains a part of the European event. Teams take part in many of the same races but earn points for different championships.

The World RX is a 12-event championship that will visit Argentina, Canada and Turkey as well as nine countries across Western Europe. Of these, five carry ERC points. Teams which want to be in the World RX do not collect ERC points. This makes the ERC like a feeder series for teams not ready to step up to World RX.

In the World RX, each event takes place over two days and includes heats, semi-finals and a final. Races last for only a few laps and typically involve five or six cars.

If successful, World RX could grow to 15 events, with more non-Europe events. The FIA is keen to add events in Asia and Africa.

## Long-term strategy

IMG's relationship with Rallycross began in October 2012, when it created a 10-year joint venture, from 2013 to 2022, with the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile, motorsport's world governing body, to develop and promote the FIA's European Rallycross Championship.

Anayi said that the sport appealed "because it has an action sport feel that engages young audiences." He said that when IMG first became involved, rallycross "did not have much TV awareness but event attendance suggested growth potential."

When IMG came on board, the plan was to develop the European championship into a world event over a period of years. The transition took just one season.

The decision to accelerate the upgrade was taken after the 2013 European Championship attracted bigger-than-expected attendances. "We knew that expanding the series fitted the strategic ambitions of Monster Energy and we were also getting interest from broadcasters via IMG Media. All of this, combined with support from drivers, manufacturers and venues, persuaded us to move faster," he said.

One other possible explanation for IMG's rapid rollout of World RX is that a rival rallycross franchise is building up a head of steam. Launched in 2009, the privately-owned Red Bull Global Rallycross (GRC) is a predominantly US-based racing series. For the 2014

season, GRC will run 10 events in the US. It has signed a multi-year deal with NBC under which nine of the races will be shown either live or delayed. Anayi declined to comment on the rival series. He said: "We are confident in our product and we just concentrate on delivering the World Championship for the FIA."

## Broadcaster reaction

British Eurosport, the UK-oriented version of the pan-European sports broadcaster, signed up for the European event last year and has renewed for the world event in multi-year deal.

The broadcaster's managing director David Kerr said that rallycross was "a sport people can really identify with." Having the series would allow the broadcaster to put together "a block of four-wheeled motorsport that can sustain an audience and encourage some cross-pollination."

Nordic media group Viasat has also signed a long-term deal and will show the series on its dedicated channel Viasat Motor in Sweden. Exceptions may include the Swedish leg of the series, which could be broadcast on Viasat's free-to-air channel TV10.

Erik Stenberg, producer and editor of Viasat Sport, said that the series had potential because of its high-action nature: "I think it can grow as a TV sport with what IMG are doing," he said. He added that the involvement of Swedish drivers such as Audi's Mattias Ekstrom was helping to build interest in the event. ■

## TENNIS

## Free-to-air interest drives Wimbledon value in Germany

By Robin Jellis

Sky Deutschland was forced to increase its rights fee for the Wimbledon tennis championships by around 70 per cent due to strong interest from public-service broadcasters ARD and ZDF.

The pay-television broadcaster's new deal is for five years, from 2014 to 2018, and is worth about €2m (\$2.8m) per year. The previous three-year deal, from 2011 to 2013, was worth €3.5m, or just under €1.2m per year.

The deal covers Germany and Austria, and was brokered by the IMG Media agency on behalf of the All England Lawn Tennis Club, the rights-holder and tournament organiser. As well as television rights, it also includes internet, IPTV and mobile rights.

The increase in rights fee was driven by competition from ARD/ZDF. This was due to a growth in interest in tennis in Germany following Sabine Lisicki's appearance in the 2013 women's final. ARD/ZDF made an offer to acquire

non-exclusive rights to the final last July from Sky, which Sky rejected (*TV Sports Markets* 17:13).

A tender for the new cycle was issued in early June 2013, with a bidding deadline in late June. Initial discussions over a new deal are thought to have been for a three-year term.

The AELTC was not worried that by selling the rights in a long-term deal it was missing out on future value. Few strong German players are coming through the ranks that could push up tennis rights prices. Sky was keen to have the rights over a longer period, and is understood to have been prepared to pay a premium to have the rights on an exclusive basis.

Burkhard Weber, Sky Deutschland's senior vice president for sport, last week described Wimbledon as "a major component of Sky's strategy to offer customers exclusive programming."

The rights are attractive to Sky as they provide many hours of coverage, albeit over a two-week period. Sky will show up to five matches live at any time across multiple channels – matches from centre court and court one, and from three other courts chosen by the broadcaster.

There were packages available for both free-to-air and pay-television. There was a package covering all matches, designed for long-term broadcast partner Sky, and

another for free-to-air coverage of the men's and women's semi-finals and finals.

ARD/ZDF bid to show the finals of the men's and women's tournaments, and also for news and highlights rights. It also made a conditional offer, with an additional rights fee, for coverage of the men's and women's quarter-finals and semi-finals, based on German participation and matches being at suitable times.

ARD/ZDF was not willing to take a financial risk without knowing whether a German player would be playing in these matches, which made Sky the club's preferred broadcast partner.

One insider said that Sky "offered a better broadcast commitment and an improved financial offer," and that the club wanted a "commitment" to the tournament from bidders.

It is thought there was also interest in the free-to-air rights from commercial broadcaster ProSiebenSat.1, although it is not thought to have bid.

Sky has acquired exclusive rights but its contract requires wider coverage of a men's or women's final if there is German participation. Sky would either have to sublicense rights to a free-to-air broadcaster, or unencrypt one of its channels. It is thought that protracted negotiations over the wider coverage requirement delayed the signing of the deal. ■

## RUGBY UNION

## Sky turns the tables on BT with big bid for Top 14 rights

By Robin Jellis

The UK rights to the Top 14, French rugby union's top league, increased in value by more than 350 per cent in last week's deal with pay-television broadcaster BSkyB.

The deal is for five seasons, from 2014-15 to 2018-19, and is worth about €1.4m (\$1.9m) per year.

The rights are currently held by Sky's pay-television rival BT, in a two-year deal covering 2012-13 and 2013-14, worth about £250,000 (€305,000/\$415,000) per year.

Sky's deal was agreed with French pay-television broadcaster Canal Plus on behalf of Top 14 rights-holder Ligue Nationale de Rugby. Canal Plus has global rights following its €71m-per-year deal agreed in January (*TV Sports Markets* 18:2).

The deal marks the first time Sky has taken a rights property away from its rival. It comes after last month's agreement between BT and Sky to share the rights to the new European club rugby competitions which will replace the Heineken Cup and Amlin Cup (*TV Sports Markets* 18:7).

Sky's deal includes 55 live games per season – two per matchday, plus the play-offs and final. It also includes a weekly highlights show.

BT was only able to agree a two-year deal with Canal Plus because the

French broadcaster was unsure whether the LNR would exercise a break clause in its contract. The LNR did end the deal early, but Canal Plus renewed for five seasons.

It is understood that Canal Plus was originally asking for €2m per season for the Top 14 rights in the UK. BT put in a strong offer, but Sky's was higher. BT is understood to have felt that the Top 14 was a good property, but did not drive subscribers.

BT also had issues scheduling some matches. It has rights to Premiership Rugby, English rugby union's top league, from 2013-14 to 2016-17, with matches at similar times.

The rights made sense for Sky, which will show the matches of most non-English teams in next year's top European club rugby competition. Sky also has rights to

the Pro12 rugby union league, from 2014-15 to 2017-18. The Top 14 is also regarded as being one of the best rugby union leagues in the world.

One rugby expert said that the true market value of the Top 14 in the UK was about £500,000 per year, but that strong competition between BT and Sky

had forced the price up.

The rights were previously held by the UK arm of US sports broadcaster ESPN, which held them from 2009-10 to 2011-12 in a deal worth about £140,000 per year. In the 2012-13 season of the current deal, BT sublicensed rights to pay-television broadcaster Premier

Sports, as it had not yet established its pay-television channels. BT launched in August 2013.

The Top 14 rights outside France are expected to be worth between €2.5m and €3m per year in the next cycle, 2014-15 to 2018-19. The UK deal is the first to have been agreed. ■ [www](#)

## FOOTBALL

# RSE Ventures says it will turn a profit on friendly competition

By Frank Dunne

RSE Ventures, the US investment company behind the International Champions Cup friendly club tournament, believes that the competition could turn a profit this year, only its second year in the current format.

Late last month, Relevant Sports, the RSE division which organises the tournament, unveiled multiple broadcast deals (see Sports Clips, page 10). It is expected to announce another raft of deals very shortly.

The competition involves 13 matches played in the US between July 24 and August 4 in a tournament structure, producing an overall winner. The competition is sponsored by Guinness in a long-term deal.

The 2014 competition features eight of Europe's biggest clubs: Real Madrid, Manchester United, Manchester City, Liverpool, AC Milan, Inter Milan, Roma and Olympiacos. Nevertheless, many rights experts are sceptical that a friendly competition could be a commercial success and some argue that the ICC does not have a sustainable long-term business model.

Their case is rooted in basic economics. The costs of securing the top teams is so high – about \$3m (€2.2m) per match for the likes of Real and United, down to \$1m or less for teams like Roma – that they can never be recouped from commercial revenues.

Independent experts consulted this week by *TV Sports Markets* put the value

of the global media rights, outside the US, at about \$1m. Several well-placed US media sources claimed that the competition lost over \$10m last year, its inaugural season.

Arne Rees, chief executive officer of RSE Ventures, declined to comment on the numbers but was bullish about the tournament's prospects.

"I expect to turn a profit this year," he told *TV Sports Markets*. "We know pretty well where we will come in on television and sponsorship. The key variable is selling tickets and we are still nearly four months out."

He said that all the indicators for the series were "very, very positive." There were a number of reasons for this, including:

- the underlying growth in interest in football in the US, which is feeding sponsor interest
- greater familiarity in the US with the top clubs through greater media coverage of the European leagues than in the past
- a maturing of the market for friendly football matches
- the experience of Catalyst Media Group, led by Patrick Murphy, former managing director of sales at Team Marketing, which is handling the media rights sales from 2014 onwards.

Rees pointed to the level of interest in the match between Real and United in Michigan on August 2. All 110,000 tickets were sold within 24 hours when put on sale last month.

"It's unheard of to sell that many tickets that fast," he said. "That interest then feeds into the sponsors. We are able to offer them something that didn't exist before, a larger property with a bit more heft than just a loose connection of friendlies."

Rees said that in discussions with broadcasters, Catalyst was "seeing an

enormous amount of traction that didn't previously exist."

## Revenue streams

Match-day revenues, of which ticket sales account for the largest part, are the main revenue stream for the tournament, but their importance compared to other commercial revenues is diminishing.

Rees said that in 2013, when the global commercial rights were sold by the Pitch International agency, match-day revenue was "very large," while sponsorship and media revenues were "pretty small."

He added: "This year, match-day is still the biggest, but sponsorship and TV have increased. Sponsorship has more than doubled and TV has grown even more." He said that global media-rights income was "considerably higher" than \$1m and was growing.

## Well connected

The International Champions Cup has rich and well-connected backers. RSE Ventures was founded in 2012 by US real estate billionaire Stephen Ross, owner of the Miami Dolphins NFL franchise, and Matt Higgins, who was the press secretary to former New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani.

Rees joined from sports broadcaster ESPN, where he had been vice president of international business development. Prior to that, he had been head of strategic business development at Uefa, where he worked closely with Murphy on the Champions League sales.

Other former Team executives now at Catalyst include its general counsel David Tyler, its director of media Oliver Duss and its head of partnerships Doris Hanselmann. RSE Ventures holds a majority stake in Catalyst. ■

[www](#) For the full interview with Arne Rees, visit our website.

## FASTRACK 2

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Uefa struggles for value in tough Spain and Italy

Difficult advertising markets and budget cuts at state broadcasters appear to have stymied Uefa's chances of securing good deals in Italy and Spain for the European Qualifiers rights.

In Italy, state broadcaster Rai acquired exclusive rights to all of Italy's qualification matches for the 2016 European Championship and 2018 World Cup in a deal understood to be worth about €70m (\$97m), working out at €3.5m per match.

This compares with a fee of about €110m over four years that the broadcaster used to pay the Italian football federation, the Federazione Italiana Giuoco Calcio, for a package of home competitive matches and friendlies, before the qualifiers were centralised by Uefa.

Uefa still has a package of third-party matches – those not involving Italy – left to sell. The current rivalry between pay-television operators Sky Italia and Mediaset Premium could help push that value up. But independent local experts say they would be surprised if the value topped €10m across the four years, leaving Uefa a long way short of the €100m-plus it guaranteed the FIGC when centralising the rights.

In Spain, state broadcaster TVE is thought to be close to a deal for Spanish qualification matches worth about €35m over the four years, working out at just €1.75m per match. The market value of the first-party rights to top qualification matches in Spain prior to the centralisation was about €3m.

Telefónica's IPTV pay-television platform Movistar TV is understood to be paying a further €7m across four years for the matches not involving Spain. The €42m total is thought to be well below what Uefa guaranteed the Spanish association, the Real Federación Española de Fútbol.

All deals for the qualifiers are brokered by the CAA Eleven

agency, Uefa's sales agent for national team matches. ■

### Bike Channel's big ambitions

The Bike Channel, the Italian channel which describes itself as the first channel in the world dedicated entirely to cycling, is hoping to launch across a number of markets in Europe, including the UK and Germany, on the back of its success so far in Italy.

The channel was launched in February 2013 by Filippo Ubaldini, the former head of Discovery Networks in Italy. It had originally planned to focus on news, features and documentary programming but better-than-expected audiences convinced Ubaldini that it would make more sense to invest in live content.

In the last few months, the channel has acquired a range of high-level properties, including: the Tour de Suisse, the Tour de Romandie, the Tour of Flanders and other events, from the IMG Media agency; the Tour of Britain, from the MP & Silva agency; Australia's Tour Down Under, directly from the event organisers; and a series of secondary events from France's Amaury Sport Organisation. Most of the deals are for three years, beginning in 2014. Cycling rights experts put the total investment in rights at between about €150,000 (\$207,000) and €200,000 per year.

When the channel was first launched it was carried as a premium standalone channel on the Sky Italia pay-television platform at €10 per month. However, poor sales convinced Ubaldini to switch to an advertising-funded model last September.

The channel has an exclusive carriage deal with Sky which expires next year. At that point, Ubaldini will have to decide whether, following the switch to an ad-funded model, it would make sense to seek non-exclusive agreements with both Sky and its rival, Mediaset Premium. Sky pays no carriage fee for the channel but has provided the Bike

Channel with an advantageous position on its electronic programme guide, between Fox Sports 2 and the Sky 3D channel. Sky has also provided airtime on its sport channels to cross-promote the Bike Channel. ■

### IMG Media to escape worst cuts

IMG Media's ability to compete in an increasingly aggressive sports-rights market appears set to emerge unscathed from the cost-cutting exercise planned by the agency's new owners, talent agency William Morris Endeavor and venture capitalists Silver Lake Partners. However, the division will not be completely immune to cuts, according to a February lender presentation obtained by *TV Sports Markets*.

The \$151m (€109m) of targeted savings following the WME/SLP acquisition of the agency come across 11 separate activities, including \$15m from "optimizing production costs" in IMG Media and IMG College, the US college sport division.

The biggest cuts are to come from "sourcing & procurement" (\$27m), from "rationalizing" personnel costs and other corporate expenses (\$25m) and from restructuring event production and management (\$20m).

At the same time, the new owners have an aggressive target for increasing ebitda margin: from 12.4 per cent to 22 per cent.

The document reveals that IMG Media had ebitda of \$81m last year on earnings of \$448m.

SLP will be the largest single shareholder in the new merged company, with 50 per cent. WME will have 47 per cent. Mubadala, an investment arm of the Abu Dhabi state, will have three per cent. The acquisition was funded with \$2.35bn of debt and \$1.483bn of equity.

The document says the transaction includes an IMG equity value of \$1.674bn and existing IMG debt of \$701m. The enterprise value of the new merged company was put at \$3.5bn. ■



## SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from April 10 to April 30

### MEDIA RIGHTS 1

## Football: World Cup, Africa Cup of Nations, Champions League and more

- **Football:** Canal Plus Afrique, the African arm of French pay-television broadcaster Canal Plus, acquired rights for the 2014 Fifa World Cup. The deal includes live coverage, highlights and magazine programmes.
- **Football:** The Saran Media agency acquired exclusive rights for the 2014 Fifa World Cup in the central Asian territories of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The deal covers satellite, cable, terrestrial and mobile platforms and includes all 64 matches from the tournament in Brazil plus the 2014 U-20 Women's World Cup in Canada.
- **Football:** State broadcaster Rai acquired rights in Italy for the national team's European qualifying matches for the Uefa Euro 2016 and 2018 Fifa World Cup tournaments in a deal with the CAA Eleven agency. Under the four-year deal, from 2014-15 to 2017-18, Rai will show all Italy qualifiers live on its flagship channel, Rai Uno, as well as a highlights programme covering other qualifying matches in Europe on the same night on its Rai Sport channel (page 8).
- **Football:** Movistar TV, the IPTV platform of telecommunications company Telefónica, acquired rights in Spain, excluding Spain matches, to European qualifiers for Uefa Euro 2016 and the 2018 Fifa World Cup. Movistar TV, which agreed the deal with CAA Eleven, will broadcast live coverage of up to six qualifiers per kick-off slot as well as highlights on each match day (page 8).
- **Football:** Moroccan public-service broadcaster SNRT acquired rights for the 2015 Africa Cup of Nations national team tournament, which will be staged in the country. SNRT will broadcast all 32 games across its free-to-air channels.
- **Football:** French pay-television broadcasters beIN Sports and Canal Plus retained rights for the Uefa Champions League for three years, from 2015-16 to 2017-18 (page 1).
- **Football:** Pay-television broadcaster beIN Sports and commercial broadcaster M6 retained rights in France for the Uefa Europa League for three seasons, from 2015-16 to 2017-18 (page 1).

### SINCE LAST TIME

- The European Commission approved a deal for US media and entertainment company Discovery Communications to acquire a controlling stake in pan-regional sports broadcaster Eurosport. "The parties only have moderate market shares on the markets for the acquisition of TV rights, wholesale TV channels and TV advertising, where their activities overlap," the commission said. Discovery first acquired a 20-per-cent stake in Eurosport as part of a strategic partnership drawn up in December 2012 and secured an option to increase its shareholding to 51 per cent on or after December 21, 2014. This was accelerated to November 2013.
- Comcast said that the Sochi winter Olympic Games generated more than \$1.1bn (€797m) in revenue for the US media company, with its NBCUniversal division's coverage of the Games making a significant contribution to a first quarter net income rise of 30 per cent to \$1.87bn.
- UK media regulator Ofcom will review regulations that force pay-television broadcaster BSkyB to make its Sky Sports channels available through rival providers. In 2010, Ofcom completed its review of the pay-television market and inserted a wholesale must-offer obligation into licences held by Sky, requiring it to offer to wholesale Sky Sports 1 and 2 to other retailers. At that time Ofcom said that it would carry out a review of the wholesale must-offer in 2013, but the process was delayed by appeals to the Competition Appeal Tribunal and the Court of Appeal.
- A study into sports media rights commissioned by the European Commission found that the copyright case between English football's Premier League and UK publican Karen Murphy had changed little in the way that rights are marketed. The report by the Asser Institute and the University of Amsterdam added that

the provisions adopted by the league following the case had left consumers in Europe, outside the UK, worse off than they were before by reducing the number of matches available for broadcast and eliminating English-language commentary.

### FOOTBALL

- The Infront Sports & Media agency's contract as media adviser to Italian football's Serie A was approved. Of the 20 top-flight clubs, 16 voted in favour. Napoli president Aurelio De Laurentiis stormed out before the vote was taken in protest at the way some last-minute modifications were made to Infront's contract. Roma and Torino abstained and Catania was not represented. The approval paves the way for the league to bring its rights to market for the three seasons from 2015-16 to 2017-18.
- Media rights income will be distributed by the German Bundesliga to football clubs in the country's top two divisions based on their performances in previous seasons rather than the current campaign, from the 2014-15 season. The board of the DFL, the German football league, said that the change would allow clubs to plan budgets in advance rather than wait until the end of the season to find out what amount they will receive. The split of income will be based on a team's performances over the previous five seasons.
- Football's global governing body Fifa denied reports that German public-service broadcaster ZDF's coverage of the 2014 World Cup would be available to viewers in the Middle East and North Africa. Reports suggested that ZDF, which has rights in Germany alongside fellow public-service broadcaster ARD, had elected to broadcast the competition on an unencrypted satellite signal, potentially providing customers of the Eutelsat Hot Bird satellite television operator access to its coverage. Fifa said that ZDF's coverage would only be available in Germany.

**SPORTS CLIPS:** News from TVSM Daily from April 10 to April 30**MEDIA RIGHTS 2****Football: Champions League, Europa League, club friendlies and more**

- **Football:** Pay-television broadcaster beIN Sports acquired rights in Indonesia, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia for the Uefa Champions League and Europa League for three seasons, from 2015-16 to 2017-18. BeIN Sports will show two live Champions League games per match night and one live Europa League fixture per kick-off slot plus highlights of both tournaments on the beIN Sports 1 and beIN Sports 2 channels in Indonesia. In Thailand, Laos and Cambodia, beIN Sports will broadcast the Champions League and Europa League on the beIN Sports 1 channel. Coverage will include two live games per match week for both competitions plus highlights (page 1).
- **Football:** German sports broadcaster Sport1 acquired rights for five national team friendly games ahead of the 2014 Fifa World Cup football tournament. Sport1 acquired rights for Russia v Slovakia and Spain v Bolivia on May 26, the Netherlands v Ghana on May 27 and the Netherlands v Wales on June 4 in a deal with the IMG Media agency. Sport1 also acquired rights for the Portugal v Greece game on May 31. The matches will be shown live on free-to-air television.
- **Football:** Relevant Sports, which operates the International Champions Cup, agreed rights deals with various broadcasters for the 2014 edition of the pre-season tournament. Deals were agreed with the StarTimes media group in sub-Saharan Africa, free-to-air channel Indosiar and pay-television broadcaster Nexmedia in Indonesia, pay-television broadcaster Rogers Sportsnet in Canada, pay-television broadcaster Nova in Greece, Portuguese pay-television channel Sport TV, pay-television broadcaster Charlton in Israel, pay-television broadcaster Arena Sport in Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia, Montenegro, Macedonia and Slovenia, pay-television broadcaster SuperSport in Albania and Kosovo, and Icelandic media group 365 Media (page 7).
- **Football:** Pay-television broadcaster SuperSport, which operates in sub-Saharan Africa, acquired rights for tournaments operated by the Council of East and Central Africa Football Associations in a four-year deal, from 2014 to 2017. The agreement covers the Cecafa Challenge Cup national team tournament and the Kagame Cup club competition.
- US media company NBCUniversal will broadcast live coverage of all 10 matches of the final day of the 2013-14 English Premier League football season. Coverage of matches on May 11 will be spread across the NBC, Bravo, NBCSN, Syfy, USA, Esquire Network, E! and CNBC English-language channels plus the Spanish-language Telemundo and mun2 channels. CNBC will also broadcast a pre-game show and NBC will broadcast a post-game programme that will be simulcast on NBCSN.
- English Premier League football club Arsenal launched an official channel on video-sharing website YouTube.
- A lawsuit filed by the Mediapro agency against Spanish top-tier Liga football club Osasuna for alleged breach of contract relating to a rights deal was dismissed by the Court of First Instance in Pamplona. The court ruled that Osasuna's decision to curtail a rights deal with Mediapro and sign a new agreement with rival Prisa in 2012 did not contravene competition law. The court also dismissed a counter-claim by Osasuna against Mediapro in which the club was seeking a payment of €1.4m (\$1.9m) concerning its rights for the 2011-12 season.
- Cypriot First Division football clubs Apoel and Ermis Aradippou filed court applications against pay-television broadcaster Lumiere Television over unpaid media rights fees. The broadcaster owes about €300,000 (\$414,000) to Apoel and €231,000 to Ermis.
- ESPN will show the game during the Wild Card Play-off Weekend in January 2015. The game will be simulcast on channels in the primary markets of participating teams. Viewers will also be able to access coverage via the WatchESPN live streaming service.
- Canadian public-service broadcaster CBC will no longer bid for the rights to professional sports events as it seeks to cut C\$130m (€86m/\$118m) from its budget this year.
- Eurovision, the production company operated by the European Broadcasting Union consortium of public-service broadcasters, is to launch a new application that will deliver live action, replays and highlights of sports properties that have forged partnerships with the EBU. The Eurovision Sports Live app will be free to download, although some of the content might be pay-per-view in the future. The app will be accessible via mobile and tablet devices, and will be available through the AirPlay and Apple TV internet-connected television services.
- Qatari pay-television broadcaster Al Jazeera is closing in on a deal to take a stake in the Mediaset Premium pay-television service of Italian media group Mediaset. A deal would greatly strengthen the platform ahead of the tender for the domestic media rights for the Serie A top-tier football division from the 2015-16 season, which is expected to take place in May. Due diligence is expected to begin on May 10 following months of talks. French pay-television broadcaster Canal Plus is also interested in acquiring a stake. Lega Serie A, which operates Serie A, is likely to delay the tender until Mediaset Premium's ownership situation has been clarified.
- Multinational cable and telecommunications company Altice secured complete control of French pay-television operator Ma Chaine Sport and the Kombat Sport pay-television channel.

**MEDIA INTERNATIONAL**

- US pay-television sports broadcaster ESPN exercised an option to broadcast its first NFL Wild Card Play-off game during the American football league's 2014-15 season as part of a new eight-year rights extension that will run until 2021-22.

## SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from April 10 to April 30

### MEDIA RIGHTS 3

## Air sport, athletics, basketball, boxing, ECB and IPL cricket and golf

- **Air Sport:** Indian sports and entertainment pay-television channel Sony Six acquired rights for live coverage of the Red Bull Air Race World Championship. The length of the deal was not disclosed.
- **Athletics:** The TV Media Sport agency will distribute rights covering the International Association of Athletics Federations' World Athletics Series across sub-Saharan Africa for four years, from 2014-15 to 2017-18. The deal, which includes the 2015 and 2017 World Championships, was struck with Eurovision, the production company operated by the European Broadcasting Union consortium of public-service broadcasters, the IAAF's media rights partner in Europe and Africa.
- **Basketball:** German sports broadcaster Sport1 acquired rights for the 2014 World Cup in a deal with Fiba, the sport's global governing body. Sport1 will broadcast at least 18 games live on free-to-air television plus online and mobile platforms.
- **Basketball:** The Canadian division of pay-television broadcaster beIN Sports acquired rights for the Canadian NBL club competition. The deal will run for three years, from 2014-15 to 2016-17. BeIN Sports Canada will show games in primetime slots on Thursdays and Saturdays plus coverage of the play-offs and other events, including the All Star Weekend.
- **Boxing:** US pay-television sports broadcaster ESPN acquired rights for heavyweight champion Wladimir Klitschko's defence of his WBA, WBO and IBF world titles against Alex Leapai on April 26 in a deal with the IMG agency.
- **Cricket:** The England and Wales Cricket Board struck a two-year deal, from 2014 to 2015, with newspaper publishing group News UK. Subscribers to News UK's newspapers – *The Sun*, *The Times* and *The Sunday Times* – will be able to access near-live video clips of England international matches via PC, smartphone and tablet devices. Subscribers will also be able to access UK pay-television broadcaster BSkyB's coverage of the domestic county championship.
- **Cricket:** Indian media company nexGTV acquired live mobile streaming rights for the 2014 Indian Premier League Twenty20 tournament in a sublicensing deal with Times Internet, the online and mobile arm of Indian publishing company Times Group. The deal included repeats of matches and highlights on its video-on-demand service.
- **Golf:** UK pay-television broadcaster BSkyB and public-service broadcaster the BBC extended rights deals for the US Masters in multi-year agreements beginning in 2015. Sky will continue to show live coverage of all four days of the tournament. The BBC will show live coverage of the Saturday and Sunday action plus highlights of the Thursday and Friday action.
- **Golf:** Dutch pay-television broadcaster Sport1 acquired rights for events on the European Tour plus the Ryder Cup, US Open, Open Championship and PGA Championship tournaments in deals that will run for three years, from 2014 to 2016.

Altice, which previously had a 68-per-cent stake in MCS and a 65-per-cent shareholding in fight sports broadcaster Kombat Sport, now has complete ownership. Altice paid €12m (\$16.6m) for Kombat Sport and €23m for MCS.

- UK telecommunications company BT will continue to make its BT Sport pay-television channels available for free to its broadband customers for another year, covering the 2014-15 football season. BT Sport is now available in 5m homes, with 3m of those taking the service directly from BT, either via satellite, BT TV or the BT Sport application, with the remaining viewers receiving the service via wholesale deals.
- Video-sharing website Dailymotion struck a deal to carry official club video footage of London Wasps, which competes in Premiership Rugby, English rugby union's top league.
- Russian state broadcaster VGTRK opted against acquiring rights for the heavyweight boxing clash between Ukrainian world champion Wladimir Klitschko and Australia's Alex Leapai on April 26. The VGTRK-owned Rossiya-2 sports channel normally shows Klitschko's fights. Klitschko is the younger brother of former world champion Vitali Klitschko, who has political ambitions in Ukraine.
- Pay-television broadcaster beIN Sports expanded a carriage deal with cable-television provider SkyCable in the Philippines. Following October's launch of the beIN Sports 2 and beIN

Sports 3 Premier League channels on SkyCable, the new deal includes all of the beIN Sports channels.

- The Al Jazeera America division of Qatari pay-television broadcaster Al Jazeera has closed its sports unit.

### MEDIA RIGHTS NEGOTIATIONS

- The Pro League and the MP & Silva agency launched a rights tender for the top division of Belgian football for three seasons, from 2014-15 to 2016-17, following approval by the Belgian competition authorities. The tender will close on May 15. There will be six weekly kick-off times, with one match played on Friday evenings at 8.30pm, and one game scheduled for broadcast at 6pm and three at 8pm on Saturdays. On Sundays, games will be broadcast at 2.30pm, 6pm and 8pm. Six packages will be available, with certain lots offered on both an exclusive and non-exclusive basis, as well as for all platforms. Lots three to six will be offered separately for the French-speaking and the Dutch-speaking parts of the country. Package One includes five live matches per week, a preview show and magazine, highlights of all matches and delayed coverage of all matches in Package Two. Package Two includes three live matches per week, a preview show and magazine, highlights of all matches and delayed coverage of all matches in Package One. All matches will be allocated in a balanced way between the two packages.



**SPORTS CLIPS:** News from TVSM Daily from April 10 to April 30**MEDIA RIGHTS 4****Handball, ice hockey, lacrosse, MotoGP, Superbikes and more**

- **Handball:** Tunisian pay-television broadcaster Hannibal TV acquired rights for the country's top-tier National A league in a deal with FTHB, the sport's governing body in the country.
  - **Ice Hockey:** Digital sports media service SlovakSport.TV acquired exclusive rights in Slovakia and Czech Republic for the inaugural season of the Champions Hockey League European club tournament. SlovakSport.TV struck the deal with the Infront Sports & Media agency. The deal includes live, delayed and highlights rights and covers terrestrial, cable, broadband, internet and mobile platforms.
  - **Lacrosse:** US competition Major League Lacrosse extended a regional rights deal with pay-television broadcaster MSG Networks for the 2014 season. MSG Networks will show 18 regular-season matches on its MSG Plus channel.
  - **Motorcycling:** Eurosport France, the French division of pan-regional broadcaster Eurosport, extended an exclusive rights deal for MotoGP for three years, from 2015 to 2017, in an agreement with Dorna Sports, the series' commercial rights-holder. Eurosport France will broadcast all practice, qualifying and race sessions from the series' three world championship classes live on the Eurosport and Eurosport 2 channels.
  - **Motorcycling:** Australian commercial broadcaster Ten and pay-television broadcaster Fox Sports agreed two-year extensions, from 2015 to 2016, to rights deals for MotoGP with Dorna Sports. Ten will broadcast all MotoGP class races live on its free-to-air channel One and will simulcast coverage on the TenPlay online platform.
  - **Motorcycling:** Dorna WSBK, the commercial rights-holder of the Superbike World Championship, agreed a five-year rights deal, from 2014 to 2018, with the MP & Silva agency, covering all territories in Latin America and the Caribbean, excluding Brazil. The multi-platform rights cover all classes of the championship – Superbike, Supersport and Superstock.
  - **Motorcycling:** UK commercial broadcaster ITV extended a rights deal for the British Superbike Championship for five years, from 2014 to 2018, in an agreement with MotorSport Vision, the series' rights-holder. ITV will continue to produce a weekly one-hour highlights programme covering all 12 rounds of the championship, to be broadcast on digital television channel ITV4 on Wednesday nights. Coverage will also be available via the ITV Player video-on-demand service.
  - **Motorcycling:** South African digital entertainment company Discover Digital acquired rights for the SuperGP Champions Trophy national series. Discover Digital struck the deal with GAS Sports, the series' promoter. Discover Digital plans to launch a new IPTV service later this year.
- Package Three includes evening magazines each match day and live rights to the Belgian Super Cup. Package Four includes exclusive rights to a Monday evening magazine show. Package Five includes up to 10 near-live clips per match – running for 20 seconds each and expiring 60 minutes after each game – from all matches via internet and mobile platforms. Package Six covers delayed clips of all matches via internet and mobile on an on-demand basis. It includes a maximum of three clips of three minutes each per match, and up to 30 clips per matchday. MP & Silva, the Pro League's worldwide media adviser, said that three "international broadcasters" were in contention for the Pro League rights. The tender also offers the opportunity to bid for the Pro League Channel.
- German public-service broadcaster ARD said that it would not renew its rights deal with the Sauerland boxing agency "in its current form." The current deal, worth €13m (\$18m) per year, expires at the end of 2014. The broadcaster said that the decision had been made due to a squeeze in its sports-rights budget but added that negotiations about "a new format" would take place during the summer.
  - German pay-television broadcaster Sky Deutschland and commercial broadcaster ProSiebenSat.1 are interested in acquiring rights for MotoGP from the start of the 2015 campaign in a deal with Dorna Sports, the motorcycling series' commercial rights-holder. Dorna is expected to strike a deal with a pay-television and a free-to-air broadcaster.
  - Commercial broadcaster Seven was the only Australian broadcaster to lodge an expression of interest in a package of rights for the next three Olympic Games. The International Olympic Committee originally wanted about A\$230m (€156m/\$215m) for the three Games, but Nine is unlikely to bid and commercial rival Ten is reluctant to meet such an asking price.
  - Ten chief executive Hamish McLennan said that the Australian commercial broadcaster is keen to regain rights to the Australian Football League, the top division of Aussie rules in the country. The AFL's five-year deals with commercial broadcaster Seven, pay-television operator Foxtel and telecommunications company Telstra expire after the 2016 season, with talks over the next cycle of rights expected to intensify later this year.
  - The Bangladesh Cricket Board launched a sales process for its worldwide media rights spanning six years, from 2014-15 to 2019-20. The rights cover between 25 and 30 Test matches, 40-45 One Day Internationals and 10-15 Twenty20 Internationals. The board will hold an open rights auction on May 12.
  - The BBL, which operates the Basketball Bundesliga top tier in Germany, launched a rights sales process for the two seasons from 2014-15 to 2015-16. The deal also includes the BBL Cup, the Champions Cup and the season-ending Top Four competition. Bids were due in by May 2.
  - A tender for the rights in France for the new European club rugby union competitions will be launched in the middle of



## SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from April 10 to April 30

### MEDIA RIGHTS 5

## GT series, rallycross, rugby union, snooker, ATP tennis and more

- **Motorsport:** SRO Motorsports, promoter of the GT series, agreed rights deals for the 2014 season with pan-regional sports broadcaster Eurosport, UK pay-television broadcaster BT Sport, German commercial broadcaster RTL, Italian state broadcaster Rai and Brazilian commercial broadcaster Rede Bandeirantes.
- **Motorsport:** The IMG Motorsport division of the IMG agency agreed deals for the new World Rallycross Championship with more than 30 broadcasters ahead of the motorsport series' debut season. All media partners will show extended highlights of each event with at least 25 broadcasters showing the championship live or on a delayed basis (page 1).
- **Multi-sport:** South Korean commercial broadcaster KBS struck a deal to become the host broadcaster of the 2015 Summer Universiade event in an agreement with the Gwangju Organising Committee.
- **Rugby Union:** BT Sport and BSkyB struck a four-year deal, from 2014-15 to 2017-18, to share the rights in the UK to the new Rugby Champions Cup and Rugby Challenge Cup club competitions. BT and Sky will share coverage of the pool matches and show two quarter-finals each, one semi-final each and the final.
- **Rugby Union:** Sky acquired rights in the UK for the top-tier Top 14 in France in a five-year deal, from 2014-15 to 2018-19, with French broadcaster Canal Plus on behalf of the Ligue Nationale de Rugby. Sky will show live coverage of 55 games per season and a weekly highlights programme. Coverage will also be available via mobile and tablet devices via the broadcaster's Sky Go video-on-demand service and the Sky Sports iPad application (page 6).
- **Rugby Union:** Commercial broadcaster TV3 acquired rights in Ireland for the 2015 Rugby World Cup in a deal with Rugby World Cup Limited, which operates the tournament. The deal includes live coverage of 48 matches and highlights on television, online and mobile platforms.
- **Snooker:** ITV extended a rights deal in the UK with promoter Matchroom Sport for the second edition of the Champion of Champions tournament later this year.
- **Tennis:** Polish pay-television operator Polsat extended a rights deal for the ATP World Tour, the leading men's professional circuit, in a three-year deal, from 2014 to 2016. Polsat will broadcast nine Masters 1000 tournaments, the season-ending World Tour Finals and 11 ATP 500 tournaments. The Polsat Sport channel will show coverage of all matches featuring Polish players Jerzy Janowicz, Łukasz Kubot and Michał Przysiężny.

May, according to Paul Goze, president of the Ligue Nationale de Rugby, which operates the domestic top-tier Top 14 competition. The tender will be launched by European Professional Club Rugby, the body responsible for organising and managing the new tournaments. Bids will be due in by early June.

### ALSO SINCE LAST TIME

- The International Hockey Federation (FIH), hockey's global governing body, expects its 2014 World Cup to be shown in more than 80 countries. The FIH expects the tournament in The Hague, the Netherlands, to reach 368m viewers via television and generate 1.25m views through its live streaming coverage on video-sharing website YouTube.
- The Badminton Asia Confederation's new distribution partnership with the MP & Silva agency resulted in an 80-per-cent year-on-year increase in the number of broadcasters covering its showpiece Badminton Asia Championships event. The 2014 tournament from April 22-27 in Gimcheon, South Korea, secured the largest number of broadcast deals in its history, with the event shown in 14 major badminton markets.
- North American basketball league the NBA agreed a digital partnership with Argentinian sports newspaper *Olé* to offer online video content. The newspaper will launch the first-ever NBA website designed specifically for fans in Argentina, [NBA.com/Argentina](http://NBA.com/Argentina), which will feature daily news, interviews, statistics and editorial coverage plus links to social media platforms.
- Digital media company Global Gaming Network agreed a partnership with action sports programme producer Planet X TV to form a new company that will provide fantasy sports programming for pay-television, internet and mobile platforms. Amped Fantasy Productions will develop, produce, acquire and distribute the programming.
- The International Table Tennis Federation will enhance its content on video-sharing website YouTube after securing sponsorship deals with three companies. The [YouTube.com/ITTFchannel](http://YouTube.com/ITTFchannel) has grown significantly over the past 12 months and now has nearly 50,000 subscribers. Table tennis brands Stiga, DHS and Nittaku have agreed to sponsor the Daily Review, Top 10 and Monthly PongCast segments on the ITTF channel until the end of 2014.
- Irish public-service broadcaster RTÉ will promote its new subscription-based online streaming service GAAGO through a sponsorship deal with the Gaelic Athletic Association. GAAGO will serve as a sponsor of the association's All Ireland Senior Football Championship. GAAGO will offer live and on-demand coverage of the association's Gaelic football and hurling competitions during the 2014 championships. The Gaelic Athletic Association also defended its decision earlier this month to sell a rights package for four seasons of its Gaelic football and hurling tournaments, from 2014 to 2017, to pay-television broadcaster BSkyB by citing the opportunity to reach Irish expatriate audiences.
- The Infront Sports & Media agency and International Olympic Committee hailed the success of the sub-Saharan broadcast strategy put in place for the 2014 Sochi winter Games, adding that the initiative would be repeated for the 2014 Youth Olympic Games in Nanjing, China. In a collaborative approach, led by Infront and

## SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from April 10 to April 30

supported by the French-based agency TV Media Sport, coverage of Sochi 2014 reached 43 territories in the region. The deal between the IOC and Infront covered free-to-air television, non-exclusive internet and mobile rights.

- The NFL has no intention of shifting exclusively to a pay-television model in the future, according to Brian Rolapp, the chief operating officer of the NFL Media division. Rolapp is succeeding Steve Bornstein as the top media executive at the NFL and president of league-owned pay-television channel NFL Network.
- The 2014-15 Volvo Ocean Race will provide 24-hour television coverage from the competing yachts for the first time, according to

the sailing series' chief executive Knut Frostad. All five yachts will be fitted with five fixed camera points.

- Formula One chief executive Bernie Ecclestone said that the motorsport series was developing a new online application that will offer a combination of free-to-view and paid-for video content.
- Pay-television broadcaster SuperSport, which operates in sub-Saharan Africa, launched a seventh high-definition channel, SSHD7.
- Philipp Geiss stepped down as the director of sport at German commercial broadcaster ProSiebenSat.1 after more than 22 years at the company.

Sports  
Sponsorship  
INSIDER

Essential data insight news and analysis for  
sports sponsorships professionals



Unique business insight, news and analysis  
across the whole sports sponsorship industry

Don't miss out on a thing

Take a test drive today!

Contact us on t: 020 7954 3515 or e: [infoteam@sportbusiness.com](mailto:infoteam@sportbusiness.com)  
Part of the SportBusiness Group

### EDITORIAL

Editor Frank Dunne  
[@frankdunneTVSM](mailto:@frankdunneTVSM)

Reporter Robin Jellis  
[@robinjellis](mailto:@robinjellis)

Contributor Kevin McCullagh  
[@kevinmccullagh](mailto:@kevinmccullagh)

Telephone +44 (0) 20 7954 3506  
Fax +44 (0) 20 7954 3511  
Email [tvsm@tvsportsmarkets.com](mailto:tvsm@tvsportsmarkets.com)

### DESIGN & PRODUCTION

Designer Stewart Henson

### SALES & COMMERCIAL

Telephone +44 (0) 20 7954 3483  
Email [sales@tvsportsmarkets.com](mailto:sales@tvsportsmarkets.com)

Paul Santos Head of Sales & Commercial  
[paul.santos@sportbusiness.com](mailto:paul.santos@sportbusiness.com)

David Hunt Senior Account Manager  
[david.hunt@sportbusiness.com](mailto:david.hunt@sportbusiness.com)

### TV Sports Markets

Registered Office:  
St Mark's House, Shepherdess Walk, London, N1 7BQ  
© TV Sports Markets Ltd 2014.  
Printed by Rapidity, Citybridge House,  
235-245 Goswell Road, London EC1V 7JD



SportBusiness

### Important Terms and Conditions

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

For full terms and conditions of use, please visit: <http://www.sportbusiness.com/terms-and-conditions-0>