

OLYMPIC GAMES

IOC signs off long-term Discovery deal in Europe, but questions raised over exposure

By Robin Jellis

Audiences for the Olympic Games will not fall across Europe following the new long-term deal with the Discovery Communications media group, the International Olympic Committee told *TV Sports Markets* this week.

The €1.3bn (\$1.45bn) deal sees the European Broadcasting Union, the consortium of public-service broadcasters, cut out again. The last time the Games were sold in Europe, the IOC opted for the Sportfive agency ahead of the EBU in a 40-territory deal worth €236m.

In the 2014-16 cycle, EBU members remained principal broadcasters of the Games, either through direct deals in territories carved out of the Sportfive deal, or by buying rights from Sportfive. This

deal is a far bigger blow for them. The number of hours Discovery sublicenses to public-service broadcasters is likely to be fewer than they have previously acquired.

When asked if its audience in Europe would fall, Timo Lumme, the IOC's managing director of television and marketing, said: "I don't see why it should. Look at the underlying shift in broadcast consumption.

"In some markets, like the US, the shift is more marked at this stage. But these trends are spreading to Europe. There is more consumption across digital and video-on-demand. We have to remain current."

Aside from the issue of exposure, the deal throws up a host of questions:

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TENNIS

Wimbledon continues global rights growth

By Callum McCarthy and Robin Jellis

The Wimbledon tennis championships may be steeped in tradition, but the All England Lawn Tennis Club has adopted a forward-thinking and pragmatic sales approach which is reaping dividends.

The AELTC, Wimbledon's tournament organiser and commercial rights-holder, will earn global media rights revenue of about £110m (€155m/\$173m) in 2015.

This places Wimbledon as the most valuable of the four tennis grand slams, ahead of the Australian, French and US Open tournaments. It also represents an increase of about 10 per cent, up from


global media rights revenue of close to £100m in 2014. The catalysts for the increase were lucrative new deals in Asia, where the AELTC has signed three long-term agreements.

A deal with channel syndicator Fox International Channels, covering 20 Asian markets, is worth between \$10m and \$12m per year, while pay-television broadcaster Star pays about \$4m per year for rights in the Indian subcontinent. Both began this year and run for six years until 2020 (*TV Sports Markets* 18:19).

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FASTRACK 1

NEWS IN BRIEF

Gol TV deal plugs gap for MLS in Latin America

Major League Soccer's deal with Gol TV Latin America is a stop-gap to ensure coverage in the region for the remainder of the 2014-15 season. The league will seek a longer and more lucrative deal from next season.

Pay-television broadcaster Gol TV will show two regular-season matches per week. It is thought to be paying less than \$250,000 (€225,000).

No broadcaster made a strong enough offer to encourage the league, and its sales agent IMG Events & Media, to agree a longer-term deal.

The deal covers Latin America and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean territories in which Gol TV operates.

It excludes Brazil, where pay-television broadcaster Globosat agreed a deal in March worth just over \$1m per season over four seasons, from 2015 to 2018 (*TV Sports Markets* 19:7).

Negotiations over the Latin American deal took almost five months to complete. Gol TV began broadcasting on June 20, more than three months after the 2015 MLS season began on March 6.

Gol TV hopes that by proving its credentials this season it can strengthen its hand in future negotiations over a long-term agreement.

Its rights are non-exclusive. Pay-television broadcaster ESPN Latin America holds the rights to one match per week through its parent company, ESPN. ESPN's deal for MLS rights in the US includes international rights to its Sunday 5pm match in any country where it has a wholly-owned, ESPN-branded subsidiary. Gol TV can pick any other match for broadcast.

IMG is the league's global distribution partner over eight seasons, from 2015 to 2022. It replaced the MP & Silva agency, which sold the league's rights between 2009 and 2014.

MP & Silva paid a flat rights fee of about \$2m per season. IMG is paying a

minimum guarantee of between \$6m and \$8m per season, plus a share of revenues above this (*TV Sports Markets* 18:20). ■

Patience may pay off for Star India

Star India's renewal with Indian hockey's governing body highlights the broadcaster's strategy of ground-level investment in minority sports.

Pay-television broadcaster Star and Hockey India's existing deal began in 2013 with the inaugural season of the professional Hockey India League, and runs for three years until 2015.

It is worth about \$1m (€895,000) per year, and also includes home matches of the Indian national hockey team.

The new deal, announced late last month, will also run for three years, from 2016 to 2018. The fee is thought to have increased only fractionally as audiences for the league and the Indian national team have been below Star's expectations.

It is understood the broadcaster has acquired additional rights to stadium sponsorship in the new agreement. Star will continue to handle production for all Hockey India events.

Star was always likely to renew its deal. It has identified hockey as a sport with significant potential.

Its partnership with Hockey India dovetails with its global rights deal for International Hockey Federation events over the eight years from 2015 to 2022.

The partnership is an illustration of Star's two-pronged rights strategy. On one hand it invests heavily in cricket. Star holds the rights to two of the three key Indian properties: national team home matches and International Cricket Council events (*TV Sports Markets* 16:7; 18:19).

On the other, it has identified smaller sports and taken control of their development at an early stage.

In addition to hockey, Star has a 74-per-cent stake in Pro Kabaddi League operator Marshal Sports, and is part-owner of the Indian Super League

franchise football tournament (*TV Sports Markets* 17:20). ■

Cyprus proves tricky for Uefa

Cyprus's weakened economy has caused a decline in the value of Uefa's club football competitions for a second successive cycle.

Uefa this week renewed deals with telco CyTA and public-service broadcaster CyBC for the 2015-16 to 2017-18 cycle, for a total value of about €2.6m (\$2.9m) per season.

The deal with CyTA provides the vast majority of the total value, 80 per cent of which is for the Champions League. The deals were brokered by Team Marketing, Uefa's exclusive sales agent for its club competitions.

CyBC acquired free-to-air rights for the first-pick Europa League match each week. CyTA acquired all remaining Europa League rights and all rights to the Champions League.

CyTA faced competition from pay-television broadcasters Cablenet and PrimeTel, but was a clear winner after two rounds of bidding.

It will show coverage on CyTAvision, its IPTV service. The deal requires at least one Champions League match per week to be shown free-to-air, which CyTA must sublicense.

The combined value of the new deals is a decrease of about 26 per cent on the 2012-13 to 2014-15 cycle, in which Uefa earned €3.5m per season – €2.8m from the Champions League and €700,000 from the Europa League.

In the preceding 2009-10 to 2011-12 cycle, the rights were worth a combined €4.6m per season in deals with CyTA, CyBC and commercial broadcaster Sigma. The value was split €3.3m to €1.3m between the Champions League and the Europa League.

Sigma had first-pick Champions League matches on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. It renewed the deal for the 2012-15 cycle but struggled to meet its payments. From 2013-14, CyTA took over Sigma's rights. ■

OLYMPIC GAMES

Questions raised after long-term IOC deal with Discovery

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- Why did the IOC agree a pan-European deal with a pay-television operator?
- Why did Discovery make a play for the rights, and how will it fare financially?
- How will Discovery go about sublicensing rights in Europe?
- What will happen to the coverage of Olympic sports between the Games?
- What are the IOC's plans for its yet-to-launch Olympic channel?
- How, if at all, will the relationship between Discovery/Eurosport and the EBU change as a result of this deal?

Pan-European deal

A pan-European deal with a pay-television operator is a first for the IOC. The committee notably turned down a \$2bn offer for the rights to the three Games from 2004 to 2008 from 21st Century Fox, then known as News Corp. The rights were instead awarded to the EBU, although its offer was much lower (*TV Sports Markets* 14:13).

Lumme said: "On the media side, what will help keep the Olympics relevant, front-of-mind and appealing to people is that it's presented in an exciting, innovative and relevant way on media platforms which they see as being attractive, especially when shown by a credible broadcaster."

He added that Discovery was felt to be the right partner due to its "vision for extended coverage on multiple platforms", and that it would engage young people on digital platforms while maintaining a "crucial footprint on existing platforms".

EBU members have reacted negatively to the news. Jan de Jong, chief executive of Dutch public-service broadcaster and EBU member NOS, criticised the award of the rights to Discovery last week, saying: "The IOC has in the past expressed that the Olympics must be seen by as many people as possible. That policy seems to have been abandoned. They have chosen the money."

Discovery's pan-European Olympic deal

Discovery's deal covers four Olympic Games: the 2018 winter Games in Pyeongchang, South Korea; the 2020 summer Games in Tokyo, Japan; and the Games in 2022 and 2024.

The deal covers 50 European territories – only Russia is excluded. The rights in France and the UK have already been sold in 2018 and 2020. Discovery will only have rights in these territories for 2022 and 2024.

In France, public-service broadcaster France Télévisions is paying an average of €85.5m per two-Games cycle from 2014-2020 (*TV Sports Markets* 15:13).

In the UK, state broadcaster the BBC has rights over the same four Games, paying about £60m (€85m/\$95m) for 2014-16 and about £70m for 2018-20 (*TV Sports Markets* 16:14).

Discovery did not include Russia as it did not make business sense. Rights-holders have struggled to get what they feel is market value for their rights in Russia in recent times, with the rouble having depreciated significantly against the dollar and euro.

The €80m paid by the Panorama consortium for rights in Russia to the 2014-16 Games was inflated due to the hosting of the 2014 Games in Sochi, and was at least double the €35m to €40m paid by state broadcaster

Channel One for 2010-12 (*TV Sports Markets* 16:16).

Informed insiders say a realistic value for the Russian rights from 2018-24 would be about €80m, or €40m per two-Games cycle. The negotiations are expected to be handled directly by IOC president Thomas Bach and Russian president Vladimir Putin.

In total, the 2010-2016 period brought in just over €1.45bn. Even accounting for deals in France and the UK, and Russia being carved out, the Discovery fee looks small considering the Olympic Games is one of the world's most high-profile sporting events.

The IOC is hopeful of reaching €1.6bn in total European earnings for 2018-24 once it has sold on rights in Russia. That would represent an increase of about 11 per cent compared with the 2010-16 period.

The €1.3bn from Discovery is thought to be split about €500m for 2018-20, and €800m for 2022-24.

The 2010-2012 Games were worth €672m in deals with the European Broadcasting Union and Sky Italia.

The 2014-2016 Games were worth €771.5m in deals with the Sportfive agency and individual broadcasters in six markets – France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Turkey and the UK.

Market value?

The deal is widely considered a good one for Discovery; some experts believe the IOC could have earned more.

One expert said: "This looks like a great deal for Discovery. They have got four Games at a very good price, even allowing for the rights that have been sold in the UK and France. By selling 100-200 hours to a big free-to-air broadcaster in each market they can go a long way to refinancing the deal."

In an era of sports-rights inflation, especially for top properties, the fee looks small – but the deal offers the IOC financial security.

The increase should be seen in the context of weakening economies in big

European markets since the last deals were signed – notably Greece, Italy and Spain.

The European total of €771.5m for 2014-16 is seen as a strong one, up almost 15 per cent on the €680m total for 2010-12. Most of the deals for 2014-16 were agreed before the recession took hold across Europe. As a result, maintaining the 2010-16 total would be a good outcome.

In Spain, public-service broadcaster TVE paid €70m for the 2014-16 rights. One local expert said the fee was unsustainable, and the rights fee in any new deal was unlikely to be higher than €40m per two-Games cycle.

At least three of the next four Games will be in Asia, where the time difference limits the value to European broadcasters.

The 2018 and 2020 Games will be in South Korea and Japan respectively, while the 2022 Games will be in either Almaty, Kazakhstan, or Beijing, China.

Sublicensing deals

Discovery is required to make at least 200 hours of the summer Games and 100 hours of the winter Games available on free-to-air television. *TV Sports Markets* understands Discovery sees this as a maximum rather than a minimum, and is unlikely to sublicense more.

In some European markets, the Games is a listed event. However, the extent to which it must be shown free-to-air is rarely, if ever, stipulated, leaving any legislation open to interpretation.

Public-service broadcasters are likely to argue the whole Games should be shown free-to-air. Much wrangling is expected over the coming years.

In the conference call confirming the deal last week, IOC president Thomas Bach said: "With this agreement we are reaching more people across Europe than ever before." The IOC says 700m people across Europe will be able to access Discovery channels and Eurosport.

Beyond the IOC requirements, Discovery is yet to decide how it will frame its sublicensing agreements across the region, although they will be done on a territory-by-territory basis.

The media group will sublicense rights in territories where it has no channels. The SBS Nordic channels, owned and run by Discovery, are expected to provide free-to-air coverage in the Nordic region. Discovery could also launch new channels in certain markets.

Discovery could agree barter deals for attractive content with broadcasters. It is known to be keen on Wimbledon tennis rights – it last month acquired rights to the tournament in the Netherlands and has rights in multiple territories to the other three tennis grand slams (*TV Sports Markets* 19:11).

A minimum of 200 hours for a summer Games spread over 16 days equates to 12-and-a-half hours per day, which is still a large amount of content to sell on according to one pay-television source.

Eurosport chief executive Peter Hutton told *TV Sports Markets* this week: "We are

delighted with the deal from three main perspectives. First, it's an amazing opportunity to do something special with a great sporting property. Second, this is the biggest signal we could give that there's a new model at Eurosport. And third, the Games connects perfectly with the history and the roots of Eurosport."

Discovery benefit

The acquisition will give Eurosport major credibility. Just having the Olympic rings on their channel through to 2024 is "a fantastic calling card", one senior media rights executive said.

Discovery hopes the acquisition will also boost the image of its wider portfolio of channels. It will seek more lucrative carriage deals with operators for Eurosport and its other channels following the deal.

However, the Olympic rights alone are unlikely to earn Discovery vastly increased carriage fees as the Games only covers two weeks every two years. And where there is little interest in winter sport, it effectively covers two weeks every four years.

One executive at a pay-television broadcaster said: "The affiliates just don't value it. It is one event every two years, or one big one every four years. The market value, what people are willing to pay, and what broadcasters can refinance, are different things. If you value these rights purely on a P&L basis there will be a big loss on the deal, no question."

Although Discovery will sublicense rights in many territories, its coverage will be differentiated by its digital offering. Discovery is expected to make the whole Games available on Eurosport Player. There will not be an additional charge for Eurosport Player for the Games; the acquisition is part of a wider expansion of the company's OTT business.

"Historically the Games has not been a pay-TV property," Hutton said. "But we are in a new digital world where you can watch multiple events on multiple streams, and this is very attractive to digital operators and pay-TV."

Between the Games

The deal is a big blow to public-service broadcasters who have traditionally shown the Games across the continent.

One former executive of a European public-service broadcaster said: "Considering the importance to public-service broadcasters of the Olympics, and the history they had of broadcasting the Games, you would have thought they would have gone bigger [as part of an EBU offer]." He added he was "surprised" the EBU was not able to match the offer from Discovery. The EBU is reported to have offered €200m less than Discovery, which has baffled some observers.

Several media rights experts this week raised concerns over the future coverage of Olympic sports between Games. If EBU members are showing less of the Games there is a strong possibility they will downgrade their commitment to show Olympic sports. One former EBU member said: "If they don't have the Olympics then they don't have much incentive to cover other events."

Olympic channel

It is not yet known exactly what Discovery's role in the proposed Olympic channel will be. The IOC is yet to fully define the goal or concept of the channel.

The committee will work with its major broadcast partners to establish how it will work in practice once rights have been sold in other territories. The IOC is in advanced talks over new deals in both Asia and the Middle East.

The decision to cooperate on the Olympic channel is a clever move from Discovery. If a third-party had taken the channel it could have been a natural competitor to Eurosport. Discovery has not acquired a stake in the channel as part of the deal, Lumme said.

The channel was one of the key pledges put forward by Bach in his presidency campaign. The IOC does not see the channel as a linear broadcast channel; they see it as more of a digital channel which would integrate social media.

Sports rights experts query the validity of the channel if it were only to show Olympic archive footage. One source suggested the IOC could consider a Uefa-style centralisation of its member associations to provide live coverage for the channel, although the majority of these federations have existing deals with different agencies and broadcasters.

Discovery/EBU relationship

Eurosport has been a traditional broadcaster of Olympic sports, mainly through its membership of the EBU, but Discovery's acquisition of the Games turns the relationship on its head.

Discovery/Eurosport will now sublicense to public-service broadcasters the rights it least values, or only where it has to. "Rather than picking up the scraps from the free-to-air broadcasters it will move to a much more equal partnership," one source said.

Eurosport was founded by the EBU in 1989 as a pay-television overflow channel to carry content that EBU broadcasters couldn't fit into their schedules (*TV Sports Markets* 18:2).

Since last November, Eurosport has no longer had automatic access to EBU content due to Discovery acquiring a controlling stake in Eurosport in June 2014 (*TV Sports Markets* 18:22).

The relationship between Eurosport and the EBU was "intrinsically changed" following Discovery's acquisition, one insider said. Discovery is a competitor to EBU members in the Nordics as it owns and runs the SBS commercial channels.

IOC sales process

There were either 14 or 15 bids in total for the rights. Discovery was one of four companies bidding for pan-regional rights. The others were: the EBU, Lagardère-owned Sportfive, and the Infront Sports & Media agency.

There were also offers from individual EBU members bidding independently of the consortium for rights in their respective territories, notably German public-service broadcasters ARD and ZDF. The Saran Media agency bid for rights in Turkey and the former CIS states. Two Israeli broadcasters are said to have bid for the rights in their country.

A tender for the pan-European rights was launched on May 11, with a deadline of June 15. Bidders could make offers for 2022-24 in addition to 2018-20.

The IOC was advised on the sales process by the IMG Events & Media agency. Discovery was awarded the rights after only one round of bidding. ■

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

TENNIS

AELTC maintains global Wimbledon media rights growth

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A renewed deal with Japanese state broadcaster NHK generates about \$7m per year over five years, from 2015 to 2019. This represents a slight increase on the previous deal, which ran for five years from 2010 to 2014. In comparison, NHK's deal for US Open rights is worth about \$3.5m per year, despite the tournament being hosted in a more favourable time-zone for live coverage.

In an exclusive interview with *TV Sports Markets* this week, AELTC commercial director Mick Desmond outlined the club's media rights strategy and the reasons behind its continued success.

"It's about having partners who are willing to work with us and give us oxygen," he said. "It's about coverage reach, going out live, having cooperation and, of course, money. But money is not the key determiner, it's a blend. We measure all those factors together to see who will be the best partner."

Broadcast strategy

The AELTC's strategy is to secure long-term deals in an attempt to create closer relationships with broadcasters. Such relationships give it the opportunity to exercise greater control over how Wimbledon is presented worldwide.

Desmond said the club has moved from agreeing three-year deals to seeking longer-term deals in its key territories. "We moved all our core areas into five-year positions. All of them are now sending crews, focusing on production, discussing marketing strategies," he said.

According to Desmond, long-term deals create trust between broadcasters and the AELTC, leading to better-quality coverage. Broadcasters in each of the key international territories – Australia, Japan, the Middle East, Southeast Asia and the US – send production crews to the tournament.

As well as linear broadcast deals, the

club is keen for Wimbledon to be shown live on other platforms to get the widest reach possible.

The AELTC is advised on the global sale of its media rights by the IMG Events & Media agency. The AELTC and IMG rarely tender rights when agreeing new deals as they want to build and maintain long-term relationships with broadcasters.

There is no set sales cycle, enabling the AELTC and IMG to react quickly to changes in local market conditions.

The AELTC prefers to sell its rights on a market-by-market basis. But it will agree pan-regional deals, as it has with FIC in Asia, if the coverage is tailored to suit audiences in individual markets.

Tradition

The AELTC benefits from the history and stature of the tournament, which appeal greatly to broadcasters.

Broadcasters that hold Wimbledon rights told *TV Sports Markets* this week that the prestige associated with the Wimbledon brand has a positive effect on their own.

The AELTC's advisory deal with IMG is thought to be particularly important in this regard, and the agency's impact on the Wimbledon brand's international success has been lauded by several industry experts.

IMG pushed the Wimbledon 'brand' in overseas territories during the early 1980s, focusing on merchandising and advertising sales. The AELTC then sold Wimbledon's media rights at higher prices in those territories thanks to the greater demand for the property, perhaps making it easier to sell than other sports properties.

"I think it's such a well-known brand it makes it easy," Desmond said. "You never have to explain what it is. As a brand, we've been around since 1877. We have huge history, prestige, tradition, and most of our territories see it as a crossover event. It's the culture, fashion, celebrities, the look, the feel."

Wimbledon's association with wealth and affluence is also very popular with advertisers seeking to target a richer demographic.

The tournament, and the sport of tennis more widely, also benefits from its appeal to a 50:50 male and female demographic.

Pay-TV potential

Like other individual sports, tennis can generate bigger rights fees in markets where there is strong national interest in a particular player.

In addition to its deal in Japan with NHK, the AELTC also has a deal for live rights with local pay-television broadcaster Wowow.

Wowow has seen subscription numbers increase hugely due to its coverage of all four grand slams and the success of Japanese player Kei Nishikori. The broadcaster added over 150,000 subscribers during Nishikori's run to the US Open final in 2014.

In China, the AELTC has a deal with state broadcaster CCTV which is thought to be worth less than \$1m per year over three years, from 2013 to 2015. But it also has a deal with Shanghai Media Group, which industry experts believe is more lucrative.

Desmond says that Chinese interest in Wimbledon was far greater when Li Na, the former women's world number two, was still an active player. She retired last September.

In the US, the dominance of the women's game by Serena Williams and the country's appetite for British culture has kept the AELTC's media rights revenues high. The club has a lucrative 12-year deal with pay-television broadcaster ESPN worth \$40m per year, from 2012 to 2023 (*TV Sports Markets* 15:13).

In the Middle East, pay-television broadcaster Abu Dhabi Media currently holds Wimbledon rights in a five-year deal, from 2011 to 2015, worth an average of \$1.7m per year.

In a departure from their usual strategy, the AELTC and IMG will tender the rights in a new cycle, as competition between ADM and rival pay-television broadcaster beIN Sports is expected to deliver a handsome fee increase.

The domestic stardom of Andy Murray has meant the potential of Wimbledon appearing on pay-television in the UK is the subject of much controversy. Only the men's and women's finals are listed for free-to-air broadcast under British law, and rights experts believe a switch to pay-television could be on the cards.

Public-service broadcaster the BBC has held rights to the tournament since 1927 and pays £42m per year for rights over the three years from 2015 to 2017. This is only slightly more than the £40m per year it paid from 2010 to 2014.

Media rights experts believe the AELTC could earn a far bigger fee from selling Wimbledon rights to a specialised sports channel in the UK.

One tennis expert told *TV Sports Markets*: "One-hundred per cent they would get more from pay-TV. But it all depends on whether it becomes a more socially acceptable avenue for the AELTC."

The club this week said: "We are very happy with our relationship with the BBC. It's a very strong relationship. They understand us and we understand them and it works for both of us. We can't see any reason why it would change." ■

[www.](#) For the full interview with Mick Desmond, and a table of Wimbledon deals in selected territories, visit our website.

FOOTBALL

Uefa finalises Euro 2016 deal with EBU; UK deal getting close

By Robin Jellis

The European Broadcasting Union signed off a deal for the Euro 2016 tournament in 26 territories late last month in a contract worth close to €120m (\$134m).

The EBU, the consortium of European public-service broadcasters, was awarded the rights after two rounds of bidding. A deal was agreed in principle last December (*TV Sports Markets* 19:7).

The EBU's head of football, Pascal Fratellia, told *TV Sports Markets* this week: "We are delighted not only to have renewed the TV rights, but to have broadened the cooperation to include non-exclusive radio rights.

"The EBU has now managed to get all national team premium football from the 2014 Fifa World Cup to the 2018 Fifa World Cup."

The EBU has rights to the 2018 World Cup in 37 territories and the European

Qualifiers, over the four years from 2014-15 to 2017-18, in 30 territories. It paid between €310m and €315m for the World Cups in 2014 and 2018, and about €90m for the European Qualifiers (*TV Sports Markets* 16:7; 17:11).

The rights had been tendered on September 16 last year, with bids due by October 24. The CAA Eleven agency sold the rights on behalf of Uefa, European football's governing body.

Territories

The Euro 2016 deal covers 26 territories and 27 broadcasters as there are two EBU members in Belgium: RTBF in Wallonia and VRT in Flanders.

The main guarantors are understood to be: ORF in Austria; RTBF and VRT in Belgium; RTÉ in Ireland; RTP in Portugal and SRG SSR in Switzerland.

As part of its offer, the EBU bid for rights in Greece on behalf of its member, Nerit, but was unable to get confirmation of its offer from the broadcaster. As a result, Greece was left out. The rights are unlikely to be sold soon in Greece due to ongoing economic turmoil in the country.

A like-with-like comparison with the EBU deal for Euro 2012 is complicated as different territories are included. For Euro 2012, the EBU paid €130m for the rights in 36 territories.

The fee in the new deal has fallen as fewer territories are included and some big markets are excluded – notably Romania, Russia and Turkey. The other excluded territories are Albania, Finland, Greece, Iceland and Luxembourg.

The rights in Albania were sold to the Straightforward in Sports agency, who have since sold the rights to pay-television broadcaster Digitalb and free-to-air broadcaster Top Channel.

In the other territories, rights have been bought by: public-service broadcaster YLE in Finland, media company Skjárninn in Iceland, and Romanian telco Telekom Romania. Of the excluded territories, rights are unsold in Luxembourg, Russia and Turkey, as well as Greece.

For Euro 2012, of the 36 territories in which the EBU acquired rights, 29 were immediately awarded to EBU members. In the remaining seven, where the EBU offer was below Uefa's expectations, the

rights were sold on jointly by the EBU and Uefa. The EBU created a subsidiary to sell these: Mediator Servicing.

The seven territories were: Azerbaijan, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Israel, Kazakhstan, Portugal and Slovakia.

In the new deal, Israel and Kazakhstan are excluded entirely. Rights in these territories were acquired by pay-television broadcaster Charlton and the Saran Media agency respectively. In the five other territories, EBU members directly acquired the rights.

The 2016 deal covers: Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Macedonia, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Portugal, the Republic of Ireland, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Switzerland.

Broadcaster meetings

The EBU was keen to announce the deal ahead of this week's World Broadcaster Meeting in Bordeaux, France.

All broadcasters that have acquired Euro 2016 rights will attend the workshop. There are two meetings ahead of a European Championships. One is roughly one year before the tournament starts, the second is after the main draw. The second will be held in Paris in mid-December.

UK deal imminent

TV Sports Markets understands a deal for Euro 2016 in the UK is close, with the rights set to be jointly awarded to public-service broadcaster the BBC and commercial broadcaster ITV.

The deal will be worth about £60m (€85m/\$95m), with the cost to be shared equally between the two broadcasters. This is up from the joint BBC/ITV fee of about £50m for Euro 2012.

UK listed-events legislation stipulates that the entirety of the European Championships must be shown free-to-air, limiting the number of potential bidders. Commercial broadcasters Channel 4 and Channel 5 are not thought to have bid.

Euro 2016 will be hosted in France from June 10 to July 10. There will be 51 matches, up from 31 at Euro 2012. ■

RUGBY UNION

Italian federation hails Discovery's 'excellent' support

By Frank Dunne

The Italian rugby federation said this week its recent deals covering domestic and international rights will help the game continue to develop at home and abroad, while providing financial security for the sport in Italy.

Across the two deals, the Federazione Italiana Rugby is understood to be earning about €1.8m (\$2m) per season.

Discovery last month acquired the exclusive domestic rights to national team matches in a four-year deal, from 2015 to 2018, worth about €300,000 per year. The deal covers three matches per year and is a renewal of a one-year deal, in 2014, for three autumn internationals.

Pay-television operator Sky Italia held talks with the federation, but did not value the rights at the same level.

The international rights to Italy home matches were acquired by Marco Bianchi's B4 Capital agency last November in a four-season deal, from 2015-16 to 2018-19, thought to be worth about €1.5m per season. The deal covers all territories outside Italy.

The international rights were previously sold by the IMG Events & Media agency. IMG is thought to have been interested in renewing the contract, but was not prepared to come close to B4's valuation.

Federation president Alfredo Gavazzi told *TV Sports Markets* this week that in both cases the financial offer was not the only factor in the FIR's decision.

Free-to-air exposure

For the domestic rights, Discovery made the best financial offer. But it had another factor in its favour: it can show coverage free-to-air on DMAX, which also broadcasts the Six Nations tournament.

"Having national team games on the same channel is strategically important," Gavazzi said. "Creating loyalty among the viewers of a channel – especially on free-to-air – is definitely an important

aspect in our growth. It is not a coincidence that the years in which rugby in Italy enjoyed the biggest commercial development coincided with the free-to-air broadcasting of both the Six Nations and the Italy test matches by the same broadcaster [commercial channel La7]."

Gavazzi added that the promotional work done by DMAX for the Six Nations in 2014 and 2015 was "excellent" and had "contributed in a significant way to effectively communicating" the sport to an Italian audience.

DMAX is a youth-oriented general entertainment channel. Its investment in rugby has been driven heavily by Marinella Soldi, Discovery president and managing director for Southern Europe. The channel is yet to widen its investment in live sport beyond rugby.

B4 production

B4 outbid IMG and at least one other agency for the international rights. Gavazzi said the offer was "interesting" because B4 will also produce Italy's home matches. "This will enable them to take the brand of the Italian national team around the world with very high production standards," he said.

He said the federation had opted not to continue with IMG because "we wanted a partner that we felt was closer to us and could help us to increase the spread of Italian rugby around the world. The new deal is the most valuable we have ever had for the international rights."

Deals

Because of the timing of the Rugby World Cup, Italy will not play its usual three tests in November. In 2015, the deal covers Italy's World Cup warm-up games. These are against Scotland in Turin on August 22 and Edinburgh on August 29, and against Wales in Cardiff on September 5.

Discovery holds Six Nations rights in a four-year deal, from 2014 to 2017. It pays about €2.5m per season, plus production costs of €50,000 for each home Italy match (*TV Sports Markets* 17:16).

Sky will show the 2015 World Cup, for which it will pay between €1.5m and €2m (*TV Sports Markets* 19:4). ■

[www.italyfootball.com](#) For the full interview with Alfredo Gavazzi, visit our website.

FASTRACK 2

NEWS IN BRIEF

Americas success story drives Formula E renewal

A successful inaugural Formula E season drove Fox to extend its Latin and North American deals ahead of time.

Formula E late last month agreed three-season extensions to its deals with commercial broadcaster Fox Sports in North America and pay-television broadcaster Fox Latin America, covering the 2017-18 to 2019-20 seasons.

Subsidiaries of Fox International Channels hold Formula E rights in more than 80 territories, including Latin and North America over three seasons, from 2014-15 to 2016-17.

Across Latin America and the Caribbean, Fox will pay an average of between \$250,000 (€225,000) and \$350,000 per season over the course of the agreement. Fox pays no rights fee in North America.

In both territories, Fox is guaranteed advertising income from Formula E sponsors, who must spend a certain amount around its programming.

All Formula E's initial three-season deals with Fox were brokered by the MP & Silva agency, which was appointed by the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile, motor racing's global governing body, to advise on Formula E's rights sales from 2014-15 to 2016-17.

MP & Silva paid no minimum guarantee and earned a commission of about 20 per cent on its deals. The renewals were agreed directly between Formula E and the two Fox branches.

Fox moved to extend the deals after just one season because Formula E has shown promise in the Americas.

Across Latin America, it has become a key property for the motorsport-oriented Fox Sports 3 channel. Carlos Martinez, president of Fox Sports Latin America, told *TV Sports Markets* this week: "The difference in ratings between Formula E and Formula One is nothing. The difference is that Formula E attracts younger audiences.

"The problem with Formula One is that the audiences are between 42 and 58, while the Formula E audience is 25-35 years old."

Two of the 10 races in the 2014-15 Formula E season were held in Latin America. It is possible a third may be announced for the 2015-16 season at the FIA World Motor Sport Council, which begins today (Friday) in Mexico City.

Branches of FIC in Europe and Asia have not renewed their initial three-season deals for several reasons. Fox is less bullish about Formula E's prospects in these regions, while Formula E was less keen to agree long-term deals there.

The acquisition of a minority stake in Formula E by US media group Discovery Communications in March is also likely to have had an impact. Discovery has been an aggressive bidder for sports rights since taking a controlling stake in international sports broadcaster Eurosport in June 2014. It is a direct competitor to FIC where it operates in Europe and Asia. ■

Kenyan chaos after 'broadcast war'

StarTimes is seeking to renegotiate its deal with the Football Kenya Federation days after a 'war' with pay-television rival SuperSport at Kenya's Nyayo National Stadium.

Pan-African broadcaster StarTimes believed it held rights to the African Nations Championship qualifier between Kenya and Ethiopia on July 4 as part of its deal with the FKF.

But a challenge from SuperSport on July 2, and a subsequent letter from the Confédération Africaine de Football on July 3, made clear that broadcast rights to all of Kenya's home competitive matches belonged to the Sportfivie agency and SuperSport, and the FKF had no remit to sell these to StarTimes.

StarTimes is now seeking a reduction of around \$200,000 from its five-year deal with the federation, from 2015 to 2019. The deal is worth \$2.7m – or \$540,000 per year (*TV Sports Markets* 19:10).

SuperSport was eventually cleared to broadcast the qualifier just hours before kick-off, but not before the dispute had reached boiling point.

Local media reports say there was "an all-out broadcast war" at the stadium before the match, with FKF officials physically defending StarTimes's position as host broadcaster of the match.

The federation barricaded the stadium with the help of armed police to prevent SuperSport's production crews from gaining access. The situation was not defused until Caf officials provided proof of ownership to StarTimes on the day of the match.

A letter written to the FKF by Amr Shaheen, Caf's marketing and TV director, said: "The contract concluded with StarTimes should not be valid for any of the Caf competitions and the preliminary rounds of the 2018 Fifa World Cup, knowing that Caf reserves the exclusive right to commercialise the rights in question."

The FKF had also included rights to Kenya's Africa Cup of Nations and Fifa World Cup qualifiers in the deal, which they did not have the right to do. It is thought StarTimes was aware they would not hold rights to these matches, and paid accordingly.

FKF president Sam Nyamweya told *TV Sports Markets*: "The position of Football Kenya Federation is that the contract with StarTimes remains valid and our commitment to the partnership is firmly in place. We will do everything to ensure its running until its end."

It is the second time this year the FKF has had to renegotiate a deal for its media rights.

An advisory deal between the federation and the MP & Silva agency, from 2015 to 2019, included multiple properties to which the FKF did not hold the rights.

The agency is still in the process of renegotiating the deal with the federation. It this week opened an office in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi. ■

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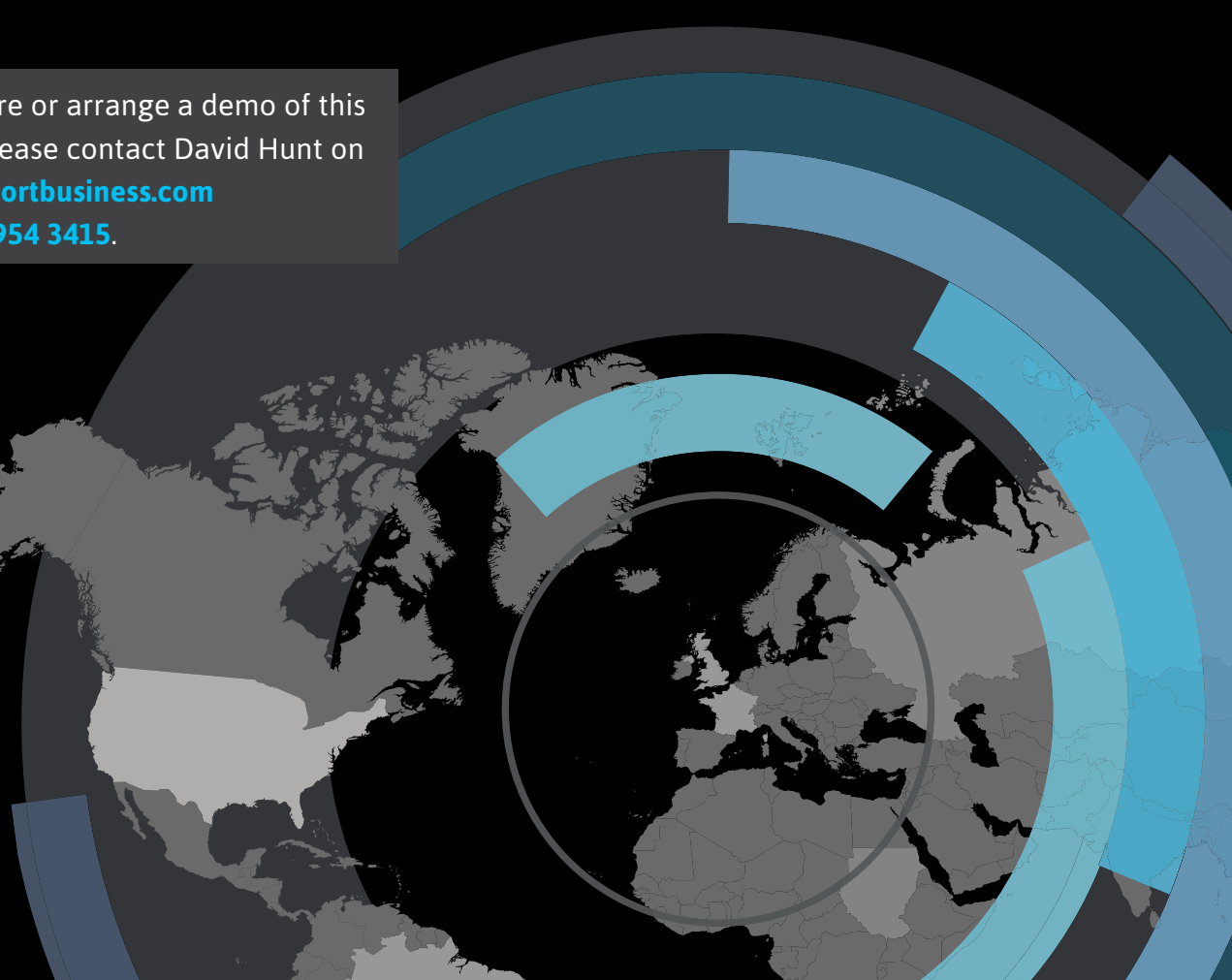
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SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from June 25 to July 8**MEDIA RIGHTS 1****Football: Polish Ekstraklasa, Brazilian football, FA Cup, Serie A and more**

- **Football:** Polish pay-television operator NC Plus confirmed a four-season deal, from 2015-16 to 2018-19, for global rights to the country's top-tier Ekstraklasa, and struck a sublicensing agreement with international sports broadcaster Eurosport. NC Plus will broadcast six live matches per round on television and will show games via online and mobile platforms. The Eurosport 2 channel will broadcast two live games per round. The MP & Silva agency advised the Ekstraklasa.
- **Football:** The Mediapro agency agreed a deal to market the international rights of properties held by Brazilian media company Globo. The deal, which covers Europe and Asia, will run for four seasons, from 2015-16 to 2018-19. The agreement includes at least 153 games per season from the top-tier Campeonato Brasileiro Série A and the São Paulo State League.
- **Football:** The B4 Capital agency signed an exclusive deal to distribute international rights of the Tunisian Football Federation for three seasons, from 2015-16 to 2017-18. It covers the Tunisia national team's home friendly matches plus the Championnat de la Ligue Professionnelle 1, the country's top-tier league.
- **Football:** Soon-to-launch pay-television broadcaster Eleven Sports Network struck an agreement with the MP & Silva agency for various properties in Belgium, Malaysia and Poland. It includes rights to the top divisions in Italy, France and Scotland – Serie A, Ligue 1 and the Scottish Premiership.
- **Football:** Sony-owned Indian broadcaster Multi Screen Media acquired rights for the English FA Cup knockout competition in a three-season deal, from 2015-16 to 2017-18, in a deal with MP & Silva. Coverage, including the season-opening Community Shield match, will be shown on the Sony Kix channel.
- **Football:** Multi Screen Media acquired rights in India for Serie A in a three-season deal with MP & Silva, from 2015-16 to 2017-18.
- **Football:** Benfica TV, the pay-television channel operated by Portuguese Primeira Liga club Benfica, acquired rights for Serie A, starting from the 2015-16 season.
- **Football:** Benfica TV acquired rights for Ligue 1, starting with the 2015-16 season.
- **Football:** North American pay-television broadcaster One World Sports acquired rights for the North American Soccer League in a multi-year deal. The broadcaster will show one game live per week on Wednesday evenings plus a Tuesday evening highlights programme.
- **Football:** Bleacher Report, a website owned by the Turner Sports division of US cable-television broadcaster Turner Broadcasting Systems, sealed a deal to stream coverage of the International Champions Cup pre-season series.
- **Football:** Russian state broadcaster VGTRK acquired rights for the 2015 International Champions Cup friendly competition. It will show coverage on pay-television channel Sport 1.
- **Football:** The Fox Sports division of US network Fox acquired rights for the 2015 National Women's Soccer League in North America. Fox Sports will show live coverage of 10 games during the 2015 season, including three regular-season matches, all three play-off games and the championship game. Fox Sports will also stream live coverage of three additional regular-season matches via its Fox Sports Go digital platform.

SINCE LAST TIME

- Chinese conglomerate Dalian Wanda completed a deal to acquire a majority shareholding in the Infront Sports & Media agency from private equity company Bridgepoint for €1.05bn (\$1.17bn). Wanda Cultural Industry Group president Lincoln Zhang will take over as chairman. Jack Q Gao, Wanda Group vice-president and chief executive of international investments and business developments, will serve as vice-chairman.
- French media group Vivendi agreed to acquire 80 per cent of video-sharing website Dailymotion from telco Orange for €217m (\$243m). Orange will retain a 20-per-cent stake in Dailymotion.
- German commercial broadcaster ProSiebenSat.1 is in preliminary discussions with publishing house Axel Springer about a possible merger. The 7NXT division of German media company ProSiebenSat.1 is also set to acquire a majority stake in the DOSB New Media arm of the German Olympic Committee (DOSB). DOSB New Media operates the DOSB's online sports television channel, Sportdeutschland.TV. The deal requires the approval of Germany's federal cartel office, the Bundeskartellamt.
- Multi-territory commercial and pay-television broadcaster Modern Times Group acquired a 74-per-cent stake in Turtle Entertainment, an eSports company that operates under the ESL brand. MTG will buy the stake for €78m (\$87m), subject to regulatory approval.
- Norwegian commercial and pay-television broadcaster TV2 completed a deal to take over pay-television broadcaster C More's sports operation in Norway. TV2 will take over C More's sports-rights portfolio, including top domestic football league the Tippeliga, Uefa's Europa League, Italian Serie A and Spanish Liga football.
- The partnership between Concacaf, the governing body of football in the Caribbean, North America and Central America, and the Traffic Sports USA agency, has been curtailed. Traffic Sports USA, a division of the Brazil-based Traffic Group, was responsible for marketing rights surrounding the confederation's biennial Gold Cup national team tournaments until 2021 and the annual Concacaf Champions League club competition until 2022. Aaron Davidson, president of Traffic Sports USA, was among 14 officials and executives included in a US Department

SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from June 25 to July 8

MEDIA RIGHTS 2

Euroleague basketball, India v Sri Lanka cricket, Tour de France and more

- **Basketball:** Pay-television broadcaster Sky Mexico retained rights to the Euroleague club tournament in Central and South America and the Caribbean Basin for an additional five seasons, from 2017-18 to 2021-22.
- **Basketball:** The Euroleague signed a four-season deal, from 2015-16 to 2018-19, allowing the IMG Events & Media agency to market the Euroleague and Eurocup club competitions' live streaming, data and sponsorship rights in the betting, casino and gaming sector.
- **Boxing:** UK commercial broadcaster ITV acquired rights for Northern Irish fighter Carl Frampton's International Boxing Federation world super bantamweight title defence against Alejandro Gonzalez Jr. on July 18 in El Paso, USA. ITV will show coverage via digital free-to-air channel ITV4. The deal was agreed with Frampton's promoter, Cyclone Promotions.
- **Boxing:** Irish commercial broadcaster UTV acquired rights for the Frampton v Gonzalez Jr. fight in a deal with Cyclone Promotions.
- **Cricket:** Sony-owned Indian broadcaster Multi Screen Media acquired rights to the three-match Test series between Sri Lanka and India in August and September. The deal with Sri Lanka Cricket is worth \$3.2m (€2.9m).
- **Cycling:** LeTV Sports, the new sports-rights venture operated by Chinese IPTV operator LeTV, acquired digital rights for the Tour de France over three years, from 2015 to 2017. The agreement was struck with Amaury Sport Organisation, the tour's operator, and includes other events staged by ASO.
- **Gridiron:** UK pay-television broadcaster BT Sport acquired rights for the Canadian Football League. BT Sport will provide coverage until at least the end of the 2015-16 season in the UK and Ireland. The BT Sport 2 and ESPN on BT Sport channels will show live coverage, with BT Sport also broadcasting games on a delayed basis.
- **Ice Hockey:** Swedish public-service broadcaster SVT acquired exclusive platform-neutral rights for events operated by the International Ice Hockey Federation for six years, from 2018 to 2023. The deal was brokered by the IIHF's media and marketing agency, Infront Sports & Media. SVT will show the annual World Championship plus the World Championships Division I Groups A and B.
- **Motorcycling:** Pay-television broadcaster ESPN Brasil agreed a three-year extension, from 2016 to 2018, to its rights deal for the Superbike World Championship. The agreement was sealed with Dorna WSBK, the series' commercial rights-holder. ESPN Brasil will show coverage in English and Portuguese.
- **Motorsport:** International pay-television broadcaster Fox Sports extended rights deals in North and Latin America for the electric car-racing Formula E Championship. The deals will now run until 2019-20. In the US, Fox Sports will show at least eight races per season across the Fox Sports 1, Fox Sports 2 and Fox Sports Go channels. Live racing will also be shown on Fox Sports Racing in Canada and the Caribbean (page 8).

of Justice indictment in May that centred on allegations of bribery, money laundering and wire fraud in relation to certain South American football tournaments.

- Austrian public-service broadcaster ORF welcomed a decision by the country's media regulator, Medienbehörde KommAustria, to reject a complaint from commercial broadcaster Puls 4 over its deal for the Uefa Champions League European club football competition. Puls 4, which was outbid by ORF for the rights for three seasons, from 2015-16 to 2017-18, lodged its complaint in January 2014, arguing that ORF had paid excessively for the rights. KommAustria ruled that ORF did not acquire the Champions League rights at an inflated price, adding that Puls 4's complaint was "unfounded".
- The French Commercial Court ruled that a tender launched in 2010 for rights covering the second tier of football in the country, Ligue 2, was illegal. The court said the sales process run by the French football league, the Ligue de Football Professionnel, was "conducted in a discriminatory manner, non-transparent, and not in line with the sport". The LFP was ordered to pay €200,000 (\$225,000) to French basic-tier broadcaster Ma Chaîne Sport, which took the case to court.

MEDIA INTERNATIONAL

- US pay-television sports broadcaster Universal Sports Network signed a carriage deal with national cable distributor Suddenlink. Universal Sports Network will be part of Suddenlink's new Sports Plus subscription tier, which launched on July 1.
- UK pay-television operator Virgin Media agreed a deal to carry pay-television broadcaster BT Sport's new BT Sport Europe channel from August 1.
- UK pay-television broadcaster Sky offered a free Sky Sports Day Pass for its online streaming service Now TV, to coincide with the opening day of the 2015 Ashes cricket series between England and Australia on July 8.
- Production company Sunset+Vine secured the host broadcaster contract for the International Cricket Council's 2015 World Twenty20 qualifying tournament in Ireland and Scotland from July 9-26. Sunset+Vine will produce live coverage of 20 matches and highlights.
- Telco UPC Ireland, a wholly-owned subsidiary of media company Liberty Global, struck an agreement with UK private equity fund manager Doughty Hanson to acquire Irish commercial

SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from June 25 to July 8**MEDIA RIGHTS 3****Olympic Games, Paralympic Games, para-sports, Wimbledon and more**

- **Olympic Games:** US media company Discovery Communications acquired exclusive multi-platform rights in 50 European territories, excluding Russia, to four editions of the Olympic Games for €1.3bn (\$1.45bn). The deal covers the 2018, 2020, 2022 and 2024 Games (page 1).
 - **Paralympic Games:** Japanese public-service broadcaster NHK acquired exclusive rights for four editions of the Games, from 2018 to 2024, in a deal with the International Paralympic Committee.
 - **Para-sport:** ITV acquired rights in the UK for the inaugural 2015 World Wheelchair Rugby Challenge in London, UK. ITV will show up to five hours of live action per day on ITV4.
 - **Rugby League:** UK public-service broadcaster the BBC acquired rights for the New Zealand national team's tour of England later this year. The BBC Two channel will show the November 1 game in Hull. BBC One will broadcast the second and third games in London and Wigan on November 7 and November 14.
 - **Tennis:** Russian pay-television broadcaster NTV Plus struck a rights deal for the 2015 Wimbledon championships. The deal covers daily live coverage on the NTV Plus Tennis and NTV Plus Sport HD channels plus at least two matches per day on the NTV Plus Sport channel. NTV Plus reached the agreement with tournament operator, the All England Lawn Tennis Club, and its adviser, the IMG Events & Media agency.
 - **Tennis:** Soon-to-launch pay-television broadcaster Eleven Sports Network acquired rights in Belgium, Malaysia and Poland for the men's ATP World Tour 250 series in a deal with the MP & Silva agency.
 - **US College Sport:** The Learfield Sports agency signed a multimedia rights deal with the athletics division of New Mexico State University for seven seasons, from the 2015-16 to 2021-22.
 - **US College Sport:** Learfield Sports agreed a 10-season extension, from 2016-17 to 2025-26, to its rights deal with the MSU Athletics division of Missouri State University. Missouri State Sports Properties, which was created following the acquisition of Nelligan Sports Marketing by Learfield in February 2014, will continue to manage the university's rights.
 - **Volleyball:** The Saran Media agency expanded its deal with the International Volleyball Federation to cover eight new markets. The multi-year agreement includes coverage of the women's World Grand Prix in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.
 - **Volleyball:** Eleven Sports Network acquired rights in Belgium, Malaysia and Poland for the SuperLega, the sport's top division in Italy, in a deal with MP & Silva.
- broadcaster TV3. The deal is worth €80m (\$89m) plus €7m dependent on TV3 hitting certain targets.
- Subscribers of Spanish pay-television operator Canal Plus will be able to access MotoGP motorcycling and Formula One motor-racing programming on the Movistar TV IPTV platform from July 12 and July 26, respectively. Movistar TV is owned by telco Telefónica, which also owns Canal Plus.
 - The WWE wrestling organisation's WWE Network pay-television channel is now available in Italy. Subscribers will have access to the English-language version of the channel for \$9.99 (€9.05) per month, with the first month available for free.
 - International sports broadcaster Eurosport launched the Eurosport Denmark channel on July 1. Eurosport Denmark replaces Canal 8, a general sports channel that was acquired by Eurosport's owner, US media company Discovery Communications, from Swedish pay-television broadcaster C More.
 - US media group Scripps Networks Interactive concluded a deal to acquire a 52.7-per-cent stake in Polish media company TVN. It paid €584m (\$653m) to investment vehicle ITI and the Canal Plus group of French media company Vivendi. Under Polish law, Scripps is required to launch a public tender offer to increase its ownership interest in TVN to 66 per cent within three months.
 - Russian state-owned broadcaster VGTRK was instructed by the country's president, Vladimir Putin, to hand over the frequency utilised by its Russia 2 channel to Gazprom Media Holding by August 1, ahead of the launch of a new state-backed sports broadcaster in September. Gazprom Media Holding is a division of state-owned energy company Gazprom. The new sports broadcaster has been given the working title Sport 360 and will include content currently available through the Sportbox.ru website.
 - The MP & Silva agency opened new offices in the Kenyan capital of Nairobi and Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

MEDIA RIGHTS NEGOTIATIONS

- UK public-service broadcaster the BBC teamed up with commercial broadcaster ITV to submit a joint bid for the rights to the Six Nations rugby union national team tournament from 2018. The bid is reported to be £50m (€71m/\$79m) per year and was lodged in an effort to keep the tournament on free-to-air television, with pay-television broadcaster Sky having submitted a higher offer than the BBC's individual bid.
- Spanish telco Telefónica submitted an unsolicited offer of €450m (\$503m) per season for the international rights for LaLiga, the new brand name for the Spanish Football League, from 2015-16 to 2017-18. LaLiga president Javier Tebas expects the

SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from June 25 to July 8

- international rights, which are being marketed by the Mediapro agency, to generate €600m per season. LaLiga will also proceed with a tender process for its domestic rights after it was approved by the country's competition regulator, the Comisión Nacional de los Mercados y La Competencia.
- The German Football League will introduce new game windows on Monday evenings and Sunday afternoons for the Bundesliga's next domestic rights tender, which is currently awaiting approval at the Bundeskartellamt, the country's federal cartel office. The four seasons from 2017-18 to 2020-21 will involve five games on Mondays at 8.15pm plus five Sunday games at 1.30pm.
 - Andrea Radrizzani said his new pay-television sports channel Eleven Sports Network will not compete for the rights in Singapore to football's English Premier League as they do not represent value for money. Telco Singtel has rights for the league in a three-season deal, from 2013-14 to 2015-16.
 - The Australian National Basketball League's new executive director and controlling shareholder, Larry Kestelman, is "cautiously optimistic" about securing a domestic rights deal for the 2015-16 season, which begins in October. Kestelman, who wants a new rights partner to commit to more than one season and show every game live, appointed media rights consultant Shane Mattiske to try to broker a deal.
 - Benfica TV will face a "violent battle" to retain rights to football's English Premier League beyond the 2015-16 season, according to director Domingos Soares de Oliveira.
 - German commercial broadcaster ProSiebenSat.1 will show live coverage of 43 regular-season games during the 2015-16 NFL American football campaign. The ProSieben Maxx channel will broadcast two live games per week and will share coverage of the play-offs with sister channel Sat.1. The Pro Bowl game will be broadcast in Germany for the first time by ProSieben Maxx, while Sat.1 will show the Super Bowl championship game.
 - The US national team's victory over Japan in the final of the 2015 Fifa Women's World Cup on July 5 attracted a record US television audience for a football match. The game, which the US won 5-2, was watched by 26.7m viewers on the Fox Sports division of US network Fox.
 - Hugo and Mariano Jinkis, the controlling principals of the Full Play agency, were placed under house arrest after their appeals against extradition to the US was denied. Hugo and his son, Mariano, were among 14 individuals indicted in the US in May on charges of racketeering and corruption.
 - The Velon umbrella group of WorldTour cycling teams agreed a partnership with US camera manufacturer GoPro under which on-bike footage will be provided from races, starting with the 2015 Tour de France.
 - The International Federation of Sport Climbing teamed up with extreme sports media company Epic TV to produce a new series of six monthly online programmes. These will be distributed by the Broadreach Media agency.

ALSO SINCE LAST TIME

- ESPN agreed a partnership with fantasy sports operator DraftKings, which will integrate content into the US pay-television sports broadcaster's digital and television programming.
- Vivendi increased its stake in telco Telecom Italia to 14.9 per cent under a deal in which the French media group replaced Spanish telco Telefónica as the largest shareholder. Vivendi received 8.24 per cent of Telecom Italia, which has mobile and online rights to top Italian football division Serie A, as a part-payment for selling Brazilian broadband group GVT to Telefónica.

INDUSTRY MOVES

- Ingrid Deltenre secured another three-year term as the director general of the European Broadcasting Union, the consortium of European public-service broadcasters, from 2016 to 2018. • US media company 21st Century Fox appointed Brian Sullivan, the former chief executive of German pay-television broadcaster Sky Deutschland, to the newly-created role of president of digital for its Fox Networks Group division. • Danny Menken was appointed as group managing director of new international sports broadcaster Eleven Sports Network, owned by Andrea Radrizzani, which plans to launch in Belgium, Malaysia, Poland and Singapore this summer.

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