

PREMIER LEAGUE

Nordic territories deliver Scudamore and co staggering increases in latest set of deals

By Robin Jellis, Frank Dunne and Richard Welbirg

Strong competition in the Nordics between established media groups and an as-yet unidentified player helped the Premier League double its income in the region – continuing the remarkable start to its new international sales cycle.

Total income from the Nordics in the next three-season cycle, from 2016-17 to 2018-19, will reach €405m (\$455m), or €135m per season. This is 102.5 per cent up on the €200m, or just under €67m per season, the rights are worth in the current cycle, from 2013-14 to 2015-16.

The success in the Nordics mirrors the results the Premier League has produced in its other deals for the cycle so far: in the US, sub-Saharan Africa, Hong Kong, Brazil (see box, page 4) and for its in-ship

and in-flight rights (see box, page 5).

For each, the league has increased its fee by at least 50 per cent, and in some cases it has doubled. The league looks on course to smash its international rights income for the current cycle, which stands at more than \$3.5bn, just under \$1.2bn per season (*TV Sports Markets* 17:15).

The total Nordic fee was driven by aggressive bidding in the two territories where the rights are most important: Norway and Sweden. In both, the league is the key subscription-driving property for pay-television.

English football is popular in Norway and Sweden because its top tier has been broadcast there for more than 40 years.

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FOOTBALL

Government monopoly hurts Russian league

By Callum McCarthy

The Russian government's move to create a sports broadcast monopoly, as well as the depreciation of the rouble, hit the income of the Russian Premier League in last month's deal with Gazprom Media.

The government is thought to have been concerned about competition between state broadcaster VGTRK and NTV Plus, which was driving up rights fees. NTV Plus is owned by Gazprom Media, a subsidiary of state-owned energy company Gazprom. The intention is for Gazprom Media to show all domestic sports on Gazprom-owned media outlets.

Last month, the Russian Premier League, the country's top football league, sold domestic rights to pay-television operator NTV Plus. The deal is for three seasons, from 2015-16 to 2017-18, and is worth a minimum of RUB1.98bn (€26.7m/\$30m) per season.


The deal is an 83-per-cent increase on the value of the league's previous deal with NTV Plus, from 2012-13 to 2014-15, which was worth just over RUB1.08bn per season.

However, as part of the new deal the

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IMG checks rivals to secure international NHL rights

The IMG Events & Media agency took a big step into the winter sports media rights market this week with a deal for National Hockey League rights.

The deal is thought to be for five seasons, from 2016-17 to 2020-21, and is worth just under \$5m (€4.5m) per season. It is for international rights; the deal excludes the US, Canada and the Nordic territories.

IMG agreed the deal directly with the NHL, which has been looking for an agency partner for several months. Until last November the league had a deal covering Europe, the Middle East and Africa with the Medge Consulting and Advisers Media International agencies.

That deal was for five seasons, from 2011-12 to 2015-16, and was worth \$20m per season. It was ended early due to missed payments (*TV Sports Markets* 19:12).

IMG's contract excludes the Nordics as the NHL has since sold rights in the region to multi-territory commercial and pay-television broadcaster Modern Times Group. The deal is from 2016-17 to 2020-21 and is worth just over \$10m per season (*TV Sports Markets* 19:15).

The IMG deal will begin in 2016-17 as the league is honouring deals agreed by AMI and Medge which cover the 2015-16 season. The majority of the value will come from German-speaking territories, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Latvia and Russia – although Russia is currently proving a tough market for rights-holders.

IMG is said to have beaten rival agencies Infront Sports & Media and MP & Silva, as well as US pay-television broadcaster ESPN, to the deal.

MP & Silva is thought to have made an aggressive, unsolicited offer. The offer was rejected because it included the Nordics, which had already been sold.

The NHL is the latest US sports property that IMG has bought or renewed following its acquisition by US

talent agency WME. In the past 14 months it has signed deals with the US Tennis Association, Major League Soccer and Nascar. ■

Fox takes up MLS baton in LatAm

Fox Sports Latin America this week enhanced its football portfolio with a deal for US Major League Soccer. The pan-regional pay-television broadcaster will pay about \$1m (€890,000) per season, from 2015 to 2018.

The deal, agreed with MLS and its sales agent, the IMG Events & Media agency, starts immediately. It covers Latin America and the Caribbean. Pay-television broadcaster Globosat holds rights in Brazil over the same four seasons in a deal worth just over \$1m per season (*TV Sports Markets* 19:7).

From 2016, Fox will show all but one MLS regular-season match per week in Latin America on an exclusive basis.

Rival broadcaster ESPN Latin America holds exclusive rights to the later Sunday match. Parent company 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.

MLS and IMG retain the right to sell matches in other time-slots to free-to-air broadcasters across the region.

The 2015 MLS regular season runs until October 25. Until then, Fox will share the rights with pay-television broadcaster Gol TV Latin America. Gol TV is paying less than \$250,000 for coverage in the 2015 season.

IMG invited expressions of interest from regional broadcasters ahead of the 2015 season. Fox is thought to have made – by some distance – the best financial offer and marketing proposal, but protracted negotiations over the final contract necessitated the stop-gap deal with Gol TV (*TV Sports Markets* 19:13).

ESPN is happy with its weekend football content and saw no need to expand its coverage of MLS. Gol TV could not match Fox's offer. ■

Infront renews key skiing contracts

The Infront Sports & Media agency retained its position as the dominant supplier of skiing rights last month, agreeing international rights renewals with seven national federations.

Infront renewed deals with national federations in Canada, China, Japan, Norway, Russia, South Korea and Spain. Each deal covers rights to Fédération Internationale de Ski World Cup events hosted in the respective territories.

All deals are for five seasons, from 2016-17 to 2020-21, and are extensions of existing five-season deals, from 2011-12 to 2015-16.

The new deal with the Norwegian federation, the Norges Skiforbund, is the most valuable. It is worth about €4m (\$4.5m) per season, almost double the value of the current deal, which is worth just over €2m per season.

The federation is said to have secured such an increase as it threatened to agree a deal with another agency. Infront was willing to up its fee significantly to retain what is a profitable contract.

Infront has international deals with 21 skiing federations. The only major federation it doesn't have a deal with is the Österreichischer Skiverband, the Austrian federation. These rights are held by the European Broadcasting Union in a four-season deal, from 2014-15 to 2017-18, worth just under €8.5m per season. The EBU regards the property as the crown jewel of skiing.

Infront did not face any competition in any of its renewals, although the IMG Events & Media agency is said to have considered bidding.

Infront's deal with the Canadian federation is worth about C\$1.1m (€730,000/\$820,000) per season, up from about C\$1m per season. Infront pays about C\$400,000 per season on top of this toward production costs.

The remaining federations – China, Japan, Russia, South Korea and Spain – are paid depending on the number of World Cup events they host. Fees range from €70,000 to €150,000 per event. ■

PREMIER LEAGUE

Norway and Sweden help drive massive Nordic increase

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The league became popular when local domestic leagues were weaker.

Commercial and pay-television broadcaster TV2 renewed its deal in Norway, while multi-territory commercial and pay-television broadcaster Modern Times Group renewed deals in Denmark and Sweden. MTG also picked up rights in Finland, displacing commercial and pay-television broadcaster MTV3. All deals are for local-language rights only.

Local experts say a telco was involved in the bidding process, another factor which may have helped the league to such large fee increases. Some media reports have suggested that Norwegian telco Telenor may have been the bidder.

Telenor currently has no sports rights, although it does own the Canal Digital pay-television platform. Canal Digital is available in all four Nordic countries. Telenor also operates in Asia and Eastern Europe. Telenor's revenue in 2014 was NOK107bn (€11.1bn/\$12.5bn).

Norway

TV2's fee in Norway is thought to have risen by about 144 per cent in the new deal, to €195m over the three seasons, or €65m per season – up from about €80m, or just under €27m per season.

TV2 paid such a big increase for two reasons. First, strong bidding from pan-Nordic basic-tier broadcaster SBS Discovery Media. Discovery's final offer is said to have been about €165m. There were three rounds of bidding in Norway – MTG also bid in the first round, but the strongest rival to TV2 was Discovery.

Second, TV2's business is heavily reliant on the Premier League. The league forms the bedrock of coverage on the TV2 Sumo channel. It is thought that at least half of the broadcaster's profit derives from its Premier League coverage, via subscription sales and advertising. In 2014, TV2 made a NOK285m profit.

Premier League international sales, 2016-17 to 2018-19

Market	2013-14 to 2015-16		2016-17 to 2018-19		
	Buyer	Per-season fee	Buyer	Per-season fee	Percentage increase
US	NBC	\$83.3m	NBC	\$166.7m	100
Sub-Saharan Africa	SuperSport	\$113m	SuperSport	\$180m	59
Hong Kong	PCCW	\$65m	LeTV	\$130m	100
Brazil	ESPN/Fox	\$16.6m	ESPN	\$25m	51
Denmark	MTG	€13.3m	MTG	€15m	13
Sweden	MTG	€21.7m	MTG	€50m	130
Finland	MTV3	€5m	MTG	€5m	0
Norway	TV2	€26.7m	TV2	€65m	143
Source: TV Sports Markets Rights Tracker					

In February, TV2 acquired the C More pay-television operation in Norway. It hoped the deal would help it renew Premier League rights by boosting its subscriber base (*TV Sports Markets* 19:6).

Sweden

In Sweden, the total MTG fee is thought to be about €150m over three seasons in the new cycle, or €50m per season – an increase of more than 130 per cent on the €65m total, or just under €22m per season, the league earns in the current cycle.

MTG's head of sport, Peter Nørrelund, told *TV Sports Markets* this week: "In both Denmark and Sweden the Premier League is very important and has a serious impact on the business – it's crucial."

MTG also has Uefa Champions League and Formula One rights across Denmark, Norway and Sweden. Nørrelund said its most important properties were now tied up well into the future.

The broadcaster is said to have increased its offer hugely from the first to the second round of bidding to land the rights.

Pay-television broadcaster C More, owned by media group Bonnier, is thought to have been MTG's strongest competitor. Discovery did not bid as aggressively in Sweden – its focus was on Norway.

C More did not bid as strongly as MTG feared. C More is happy with its rights to the top four domestic properties: the top two football leagues, the Allsvenskan and the Superettan, and the top two ice hockey leagues, the Swedish Hockey

League and the HockeyAllsvenskan.

Local experts say MTG was desperate to retain the Premier League rights having recently lost other sports properties.

It notably lost its grip on Olympic Games rights in Sweden. It held rights to the 2014 and 2016 Games in a deal worth about €27m. However, in June, Discovery acquired rights across Europe to four Games, from 2018 to 2024, in a €1.3bn deal with the International Olympic Committee (*TV Sports Markets* 19:13).

Local media reports suggest that MTG's owner, Swedish investment firm Kinnevik, may be looking to sell its 20.3-per-cent stake in the business. It is the largest shareholder – the remaining shares are held by banks and insurance companies.

MTG's free-to-air channels – notably TV3, which is available across the region – have suffered a fall in audience share in recent months. In August, MTG announced it will cut about 300 jobs.

One source close to the broadcaster said a potential sale could be the only reason why MTG was willing to increase its fee so substantially. MTG is unlikely to add many subscribers on the back of the deal as it was the incumbent rights-holder.

The only other possible explanation, the source said, was that subscription fees will increase in order to refinance the deal.

Renewing rights to one of its most important sports properties, in both Denmark and Sweden, would make MTG a more attractive proposition to a prospective buyer.

Denmark

The fee in Denmark rose by about 12.5 per cent in the latest MTG deal. Rights in the territory will be worth about €45m over the three seasons in the new deal, or about €15m per season – up from €40m, or €13.3m per season, in the current deal.

The fee increase was lower in Denmark because MTG faced little competition for the rights. The rights are also less popular than in Norway or Sweden.

Nørrelund said the renewal of the Premier League means the broadcaster has a “full house” of football in Denmark, as it also holds Champions League and domestic top-tier Superliga rights.

The deal gives MTG exclusive Premier League rights, but it will seek the league’s approval to sublicense some matches.

MTG is highly likely to sublicense some rights to SBS, as it does in the current cycle. Presently, MTG shows up to 280 matches per season exclusively. The remaining 100 matches per season are shown non-exclusively by MTG and SBS.

Flat in Finland

The fee the league will earn from MTG in Finland is thought to be the same as it earned in the previous cycle: €15m over the three seasons, or €5m per season.

Incumbent rights-holder MTV3, owned by Bonnier, is in financial difficulty and is understood to have bid less than it pays in the current deal.

MTV3’s main rival, commercial and pay-television broadcaster Nelonen, is not thought to have been interested. Nelonen pays heavily for rights to the top-tier domestic ice hockey league, the SM Liiga. Its five-season deal, from 2013-14 to 2017-18, is worth €17m per season.

MTG’s move for the Premier League follows its acquisition of Champions League pay-television rights in April (*TV Sports Markets* 19:8). MTG also has Kontinental Hockey League and National Hockey League rights in the country, and is building a strong portfolio.

Nørrelund said MTG is “really well-off” in Finland and has “a strong hand” following the Premier League deal.

Football is not hugely popular in Finland; the SM Liiga and Formula One are the most important properties.

Formula One rights are currently on

Mixed feelings for Premier League after Brazil deal

Despite securing a large increase from the Brazilian market the Premier League was not able to match the success of other European football properties.

International pay-television broadcaster ESPN acquired exclusive Premier League rights from 2016-17 to 2018-19 in a deal worth \$25m (€22.3m) per season.

This is 51 per cent more than the league earns in the current cycle, from 2013-14 to 2015-16, in which ESPN shares rights with pay-television broadcaster Fox Sports Latin America. The existing deal is worth \$16.6m per season (*TV Sports Markets* 17:15).

But the Premier League’s earnings from the country look less impressive when compared to the success of Spain’s LaLiga or Uefa’s Champions League.

LaLiga will earn about \$44m per season for its rights in Brazil between 2015-16 and 2019-20, in a deal also with ESPN (*TV Sports Markets* 19:15).

Uefa will earn \$45m per season from Champions League pay-television rights from 2015-16 to 2017-18, 180 per cent up on the previous cycle (*TV Sports Markets* 18:21).

Competition for Premier League rights was muted. There was no bid from Globo-owned pay-television broadcaster SporTV. The league’s tender is believed to have ruled out

joint bids for the new cycle, and Fox did not bid independently.

ESPN paid a significant amount to secure LaLiga, which became its most important football property after it lost the Champions League to Turner-owned Esporte Interativo.

Those deals limited the ability of both broadcasters to bid for the Premier League. ESPN is understood to have beaten Esporte to the Premier League rights after two rounds of bidding.

Losing to ESPN is a blow for Esporte: the Premier League would have vastly strengthened its weekend football coverage, which mainly consists of lower-league Brazilian football.

Timing also played a part. The Brazilian real has been in long-term decline against the dollar, but fell precipitously over the summer. In July, one dollar bought just over three real; by the start of October, it bought four.

For broadcasters earning in real but paying contracts in dollars, the depreciation severely limits the fees they can pay. In Brazilian real, the value of the new cycle will be 209 per cent higher.

Some local experts believe ESPN will look to mitigate the expense by sublicensing some rights to Fox, but a source close to the broadcaster told *TV Sports Markets* it had no plans to do so at present. ■

the market, with MTV3 keen to renew its existing deal. The broadcaster’s current three-year deal, from 2013 to 2015, is nearing expiry. Any new deal is expected to be for three years, from 2016 to 2018. MTV3 bid only a low amount for the Premier League as it wanted to keep its powder dry for Formula One.

Tender process

Premier League rights across the Nordics in the current cycle were not offered to the market; the league renewed with its existing rights-holders. It did so as negotiations grew out of talks to amend deals in the wake of the European Court of Justice ruling in the Karen Murphy copyright case (*TV Sports Markets* 16:9).

This time the league held an open

tender process. A tender document was issued on September 7. First-round bids were due on September 28. Second- and third-round bids were due on October 2.

There were three rounds of bidding in Norway, and two rounds of bidding in Denmark, Finland and Sweden.

Silva package

With the Premier League rights now sold in the Nordics, the MP & Silva agency will be hoping to agree deals for its European football content.

The agency is selling Italy’s Serie A and France’s Ligue 1 in the region, as well as Spain’s LaLiga. In July, MP & Silva acquired LaLiga rights from 2015-16 to 2017-18 across the Nordics for €13.3m per season (*TV Sports Markets* 19:15).

Value of in-flight and in-ship soars in IMG renewal

The Premier League is thought to have at least doubled the value of its global rights for broadcasts on planes and ships in its renewal last week with the IMG Events & Media agency.

The agency is understood to be paying about \$6m (€5.3m) to \$6.5m per season for the next three seasons, from 2016-17 to 2018-19. In the current three-season cycle, from 2013-14 to 2015-16, IMG is thought to pay just over \$3m per season.

That deal was also worth more than double the value of the previous deal. In the 2010-11 to 2012-13 cycle the agency paid about \$1.3m per season.

The growth in value is not thought to be driven by competition for the rights, which has been limited. But it does reflect IMG's ability to build a business on the content. Historically, live rights on ships accounted for the bulk of the value, but the distribution of IMG's Sport24 channel to airlines has shifted the balance toward airline coverage.

Premier League coverage – live, highlights, magazine programming and archive matches – is the backbone of Sport24's schedule. The deal provides substantial volume and confers prestige on the service; it is considered critical to its continued roll-out.

The package is considered to be virtually a one-buyer market. Presently no other player in the market produces and distributes an in-flight sports

channel with live content. IMG does so through a deal with technology partner Panasonic, which this month renewed its agreement with the agency for a further five years.

US media and entertainment company Discovery Communications distributes its channels to ships and planes and has begun to add Eurosport and Eurosport News to its packages. However, Discovery is not thought to have bid for the rights this time.

Media and technology company Global Eagle Entertainment is also thought to have studied a bid for the league's rights.

Several sports-rights agencies are understood to have looked at the rights as a pure brokerage investment, but none is thought to have bid seriously.

Sport24 is currently carried by 10 airlines. Other content includes live coverage of the Formula One motor racing championship, highlights from the German Bundesliga, and a wide range of golf content including the Ryder Cup, the US Masters, the US Open, and the Open Championship.

Formula One rights are thought to be worth far less than the Premier League rights as there is far less content and motor racing does not have the same level of global appeal as top football. IMG's deal with Formula One Management expires next year. ■

MP & Silva received only lukewarm interest from broadcasters ahead of the Premier League auction.

C More has a two-season deal for Ligue 1 in Finland and Sweden. The deal covers the 2014-15 and 2015-16 seasons and is worth about €4m per season.

Local experts believe Discovery to be the most likely buyer of the MP & Silva rights in the remaining territories after missing out on the Premier League – although its SBS channel is likely to show some coverage in Denmark.

MP & Silva has thus far only secured short-term streaming deals with newspapers across the region. Rights are with *Aftonbladet* in Sweden, *Tipsbladet* in Denmark and several outlets in Norway.

Upcoming deals

The Premier League has started its sales cycle in markets where it is expected to get good increases for two reasons.

First, to help it gauge how close it will get to its internal target. Second, as it believes it sends a message to the market.

The league currently has two live tenders in Asia. The first covers Australia, Malaysia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia. Bids are due by October 27. The second covers Chinese Taipei, Japan, Mongolia, the Pacific Islands, the Philippines, South Korea and Vietnam. Bids are due by November 3.

The league is also close to finalising a deal covering the Middle East and North Africa with beIN Media Group. ■

FOOTBALL

Creation of sports broadcast monopoly hits league income

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league was forced to give up the licence to its in-house subscription channel, Our Football. It is understood that NTV Plus would not have agreed to the deal had it not been awarded the channel licence.

A source close to the deal described the league's position in negotiations as "weak", given the Russian government's determination to press ahead with its plans for a domestic sports rights monopoly in the country.

In the previous cycle the league had two revenue streams: one from the NTV Plus deal, and one from the syndication of the Our Football channel. The league's only source of income will now be from its deal with NTV Plus.

Before, the league syndicated the channel to operators in Russia, earning a 50:50 share of all subscription revenue.

The league is set to receive a share of any revenue above the RUB1.98bn per season from NTV Plus, although it is not likely to earn any further income.

The majority of the league's directors wanted to maintain control of the Our Football channel, which was available on all Russian pay-television platforms.

Transferring ownership of the channel's licence to NTV Plus has been described as a "political rather than a business" decision by a source close to the deal.

The league and its clubs will still have some influence in the running of the Our Football channel. The channel's new supervisory board is comprised of seven representatives from Gazprom and a further seven from the league and clubs. No decisions on the direction of the channel can be taken without the approval of the league and its clubs.

Revenue v exposure

Despite the increase the league has earned in the value of its media rights, the devaluation of the rouble over the last 12 months means the dollar value of the deal

has fallen by about \$3m per season.

The clubs often buy and sell players in dollars and euros, so have reduced spending power due to the depreciation of the rouble. This in turn could make the league less appealing to players, potentially weakening it as a television product.

Another negative of the new deal is that the league will have to cover production costs over the next three seasons. In the previous deal NTV Plus invested about \$7m per season in production. The league will now cover NTV Plus's production costs for matches and ancillary content.

A deal between the league and NTV Plus was reached, in principle, in July. However, a dispute over who would cover production costs slowed negotiations. The 2015-16 season began under the terms of the previous deal.

The league estimates its budget for the 2015-16 season to be about \$38m, a fall of about 37 per cent compared to its budget last season of about \$60m. As a result of the decreased budget the league will no longer give all rights-fee income to clubs.

Instead, it will use a portion of the funds to better market its product and invest in the league's infrastructure.

Senior figures at the league are said to be unhappy with the terms of the new NTV Plus deal. However, the league will receive increased free-to-air exposure over the next three seasons.

The creation of Match TV, a Gazprom Media-owned free-to-air sports channel, will provide the league with wider coverage. Gazprom Media has bought the Rossiya 2 channel from VGTRK for RUB9.3bn. The channel will be rebranded Match TV as of November 1.

Match TV will broadcast at least 45 matches in the 2015-16 season – about two matches per week. In the previous deal, one match per week was broadcast free-to-air on NTV, another Gazprom Media-owned channel.

Until the channel's launch, free-to-air games will appear on NTV. All other matches will be broadcast on the Our Football channel.

Viewing figures for league matches have

been low since NTV Plus first acquired rights in 2006, while unsafe stadiums and a lack of security has scared many casual fans away from attending matches.

A source close to the deal said that although the league has taken a financial hit, increased free-to-air coverage would help promote the league as a product.

He said: "The league believes, in the current conditions, it needs free content in the marketplace. They need to promote the league, and having at least one match and one good weekly highlights show on a free-to-air channel is positive."

Other rights

It is understood that NTV Plus has the option to extend its league deal by three seasons, from 2018-19 to 2020-21.

NTV Plus has also agreed a three-season deal, from 2015-16 to 2017-18, for the league's international rights. The IMG Events & Media agency held the rights from 2012-13 to 2014-15, paying about \$5m per season. NTV Plus is paying no more than IMG did. ■

FORMULA ONE

Eurosport intent drives fee up in Portuguese market

By Robin Jellis

The value of Formula One media rights increased strongly in Portugal last week, thanks mainly to the aggressive intent of sports broadcaster Eurosport.

Eurosport, owned by US media and entertainment company Discovery Communications, signed a three-year deal, from 2016 to 2018, worth just over €2m (\$2.25m) per year.

This is an increase of about 70 per cent on the value of the current Formula One deal in the country with pay-television broadcaster Sport TV. That deal, from 2013 to 2015, is worth about \$1.5m per year. This equated to about €1.2m per year when the deal was signed.

The deal shows Eurosport is now targeting Formula One rights and it is expected to try to secure coverage of the

championship in other territories as and when the rights come on the market.

The rights were sold by Formula One Management, the championship's commercial rights-holder, after direct talks.

Discussions are thought to have begun in the summer. Sport TV is said to have initially sought to maintain or decrease its existing rights fee.

When it became clear Eurosport was bidding, Sport TV increased its offer. Pay-television channel BTV, owned by Primeira Liga club Benfica, did not bid.

Sport TV is Formula One's long-time broadcast partner in Portugal. But the higher financial offer, and the fact that Eurosport is such a well-known brand, persuaded FOM to agree to the deal.

Sport TV has had a monopoly on the Portuguese market for many years, and its position has only come under threat since BTV acquired English Premier League rights in March 2013. That deal, from 2013-14 to 2015-16, is worth €2.3m per season (*TV Sports Markets* 17:5).

Sport TV has since retained Uefa Champions League rights, from 2015-16 to 2017-18, for €14.5m per season (*TV*

Sports Markets 19:8). It also holds rights to the majority of games from the domestic Primeira Liga, the most important sports property in the country.

One industry expert said Sport TV's lack of aggression suggested it was keeping its powder dry in preparation of an aggressive bid for Premier League rights.

Eurosport intentions

The deal marks the first time Eurosport has directly acquired Formula One rights in any territory.

Eurosport did show some coverage of Formula One in France when commercial broadcaster TF1 held rights from 2008 to 2012 in a deal worth €31m per year. TF1 owned Eurosport before Discovery.

TV Sports Markets understands that Eurosport will be looking to add Formula One to its portfolio in other territories.

Eurosport already holds some motorsport rights. It has MotoGP rights in Belgium, France, Germany and the Netherlands. It also has an equity stake in Formula E and holds rights in Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Norway, Poland and Sweden. ■

BASKETBALL

Late deals boost Fiba revenues ahead of calendar revamp

By Frank Dunne

A series of late, one-off deals for last month's EuroBasket tournament are thought to have pushed the global media rights income of the International Basketball Federation (Fiba) to between \$70m (€62m) and \$75m for the 2013 to 2015 cycle.

This represents an increase of between 40 and 50 per cent on the \$50m the federation earned in the 2010-12 cycle.

Fiba is confident that the reform of the sport's international calendar from 2017 – which it will unveil next week at the Sportel convention in Monaco – will lead to a massive uplift in commercial revenues. The governing body is expected to offer its next cycle of rights to the market early next year.

Rights experts say the new calendar is likely to have big benefits for broadcasters by avoiding clashes with football's World Cup, increasing the number of teams competing in basketball's World Cup and spreading qualification matches across the year (*TV Sports Markets* 17:21).

Fiba may not be able to fully exploit one of the factors driving global sports

rights inflation – the ferocious competition between the industry's major channel syndicators: Fox International Channels, Discovery/Eurosport and beIN Media Group. This is because of huge variations in the level of passion for the sport from country to country.

The sport does not have a huge following in all territories, but, as one rights expert put it, "in the markets where basketball is big, it's massive and can drive free-to-air audiences as big as top football".

He said that in European markets like Greece, Serbia and Spain it didn't make sense to put Fiba events on pay-television. Audiences are so big that commercial or public-service broadcasters are prepared to pay a premium for the rights. The free-to-air exposure is also important for Fiba's sponsors.

For last month's EuroBasket final between Spain and Lithuania, Spanish commercial channel Telecinco brought in an average live audience of 6.15m, a share of 44.5 per cent. The average across all matches it showed was 2.66m, a 19.9-per-cent share. The ratings were 89 per cent up on its coverage of the 2013 edition.

In Greece, commercial channel Antenna had a top audience of 1.3m, a 41.5-per-cent share, for the country's quarter-final defeat to Spain.

Serbian public-service broadcaster RTS also recorded strong viewing figures. It achieved a 52.4-per-cent share for the country's semi-final defeat to Lithuania.

from 2018 to 2020. This compares to the £42m per year the BBC pays in its current three-year deal, from 2015 to 2017.

The AELTC was in a good position to push for an increase as the BBC's rights fee has increased only gradually in the past decade. The BBC's current fee is little more than it paid from 2010 to 2014: just under £40m per year. From 2005 to 2009 it paid between £30m and £33m per year (*TV Sports Markets* 12:6).

The club could also point to the buoyant UK pay-television market, with intense competition between Sky and BT Sport, which would have provided it with an even bigger increase. Rights fees for most top properties have risen significantly in the UK.

Late deals

Fiba tried wherever possible to close deals for the entire 2013-2015 cycle but was unable to in many territories. This had one major advantage: it meant it was able to tap into the competition for rights which has exploded in China in recent months.

Fiba agreed a deal with online streaming company LeTV Sports thought to be worth several hundred thousand dollars. State broadcaster CCTV is Fiba's long-time broadcast partner in the country but it showed no interest in acquiring EuroBasket rights.

It also agreed late deals for EuroBasket 2015 elsewhere. In Germany, Deutsche Telekom bought rights to matches not involving Germany, a deal thought to have been worth about \$50,000. Public-service broadcasters ARD and ZDF had earlier agreed a deal worth about €500,000 for Germany matches.

In Italy, Fiba agreed a deal with pay-television operator Sky Italia worth about €600,000. Italy reached the quarter-finals, delivering record basketball audiences for the broadcaster.

State broadcaster Rai drew some criticism from basketball fans for not bidding for the rights after Italy's qualification. Local sources say the broadcaster will definitely bid for rights in the next cycle, from 2017.

Fiba also agreed a last-minute deal in Russia with pay-television broadcaster NTV Plus. ■

The BBC could not countenance losing Wimbledon rights, and has a good relationship with the AELTC. Alongside the Premier League highlights, which support its *Match of the Day* programme, Wimbledon is the broadcaster's most important property.

Budget cuts have limited the BBC's ability to spend on sports rights: the licence fee, its main source of income, has been frozen at £145.50 per household since 2010, and will remain at the current price until at least April 2017. The BBC responded to the freeze in late 2011 with a commitment to cut its spending on sports rights by 15 per cent by 2016-17.

Despite the licence fee difficulties, the broadcaster was in a better position to

TENNIS

BBC pays big to keep hold of key Wimbledon deal

By Richard Welbirg

The BBC is thought to have paid an increase of about 45 per cent to retain rights to the Wimbledon tennis championships, one of its crown jewels, despite cuts elsewhere in its sports budget.

The UK public-service broadcaster will pay the All England Lawn Tennis Club about £61m (€83m/\$93m) per year for Wimbledon rights in a three-year deal,

increase its fee. In July, it reduced its spend on the Six Nations international rugby tournament by about £18.5m per year following the sharing deal agreed with commercial broadcaster ITV (*TV Sports Markets* 19:14).

The BBC also last week announced it would surrender rights to golf's Open Championship one year early. Pay-television broadcaster Sky, which will pay £15m per year from 2017 to 2021, will now begin coverage in 2016.

The R&A, the Open's commercial rights-holder, said it will not earn additional revenue next year. Its current deal with the BBC is worth about £7.5m per year, plus production costs of up to £2.5m per year (*TV Sports Markets* 19:3).

The BBC faced no real competition for

Wimbledon rights fees in the UK, 2005 to 2020

Cycle	Annual fee
2005 to 2009	£30m-£33m
2010 to 2014	£40m
2015 to 2017	£42m
2018 to 2020	£61m

Source: *TV Sports Markets Rights Tracker*

Wimbledon. Sources say the AELTC could earn more money by selling some rights to pay-television, as the Fédération Française de Tennis does for the French Open (*TV Sports Markets* 18:5).

But the club believes the tournament must be shown free-to-air and had no

engagement with pay-television broadcasters Sky or BT.

While it was theoretically open to an approach from another free-to-air broadcaster, the only realistic candidate was commercial broadcaster ITV, which is not thought to have bid. ■

FOOTBALL

B4 recoups much of Tunisian rights fee in Abu Dhabi deal

By Callum McCarthy

The B4 Capital agency has refinanced almost all of its spend for Fédération Tunisienne de Football rights thanks to a three-season deal with Abu Dhabi Media.

Pay-television broadcaster ADM has agreed a three-season deal with B4, from 2015-16 to 2017-18. The deal covers rights to home Tunisian national team friendlies, the top-tier Championnat de la Ligue Professionnelle 1, and the domestic Coupe de Tunisie competition. The deal covers the Middle East and North Africa.

B4 is believed to have initially acquired the rights from the federation on the basis it would sell them on to ADM. The B4/ADM deal is thought to be worth at least \$1m (€890,000) per season.

B4's three-season deal with the FTF is for all federation properties from 2015-16 to 2017-18. It is paying a minimum guarantee of \$1.25m in 2015-16. Any revenue above this will be split 75:25 in favour of the federation. B4's fee is likely to rise in the 2016-17 and 2017-18 seasons as B4 will then hold fully exclusive international rights.

Pay-television rights to home friendlies are exclusive to ADM throughout the deal. However, ADM will only have non-exclusive rights to domestic competitions during the 2015-16 season as pan-regional pay-television broadcaster Al Kass had already agreed a deal for these rights.

More money, more problems

Al Kass's deal was agreed with Télévision Tunisienne. The state broadcaster holds international rights to the Championnat de la Ligue Professionnelle 1, Coupe du Tunisie and Tunisian national team home friendlies as part of a three-season deal with the federation, from 2013-14 to 2015-16.

Despite this existing deal, B4 signed a pre-deal with the FTF in June for exclusive international rights to all its properties, from 2015-16 to 2017-18.

In July, Télévision Tunisienne claimed the agreement with B4 violated its own deal with the federation. The broadcaster was unhappy with the FTF as it already had a deal in place with Al Kass.

Télévision Tunisienne claimed it should have been consulted on the deal, and that it was only informed by the federation once a deal was in place. The federation said it had intended to consult Télévision Tunisienne before the deal was finalised.

Until now, the deal with Al Kass was the only deal Télévision Tunisienne had secured for the federation outside

Tunisia. The deal, which includes 12 top-tier matches, as well as the semi-finals and final of the Coupe de Tunisie, is for the 2015-16 season only. It is worth \$350,000.

ADM changes course

In recent times, ADM has shown a reluctance to involve itself in bidding wars for major European football rights.

Its acquisition of Tunisian football rights is indicative of its wider strategy – acquiring relatively cheap second-tier content that appeals to a local audience.

The deal will bolster ADM's portfolio of international friendlies, as well as providing it with live club football to help fill its Abu Dhabi Sports channels.

ADM will take a feed, when available, from Télévision Tunisienne, which currently acts as the host broadcaster for home friendlies and domestic competitions. ADM can also produce and show matches not intended for broadcast by Télévision Tunisienne.

ADM doesn't believe it can profit – either financially or politically – from prying expensive European football rights from pay-television rival beIN Sports.

Rights fee inflation in Mena, and beIN's dominance of the market, has forced ADM to rethink its once aggressive strategy. It paid the huge sum of \$350m for Premier League rights, from 2010-11 to 2012-13 (*TV Sports Markets* 13:13). ■

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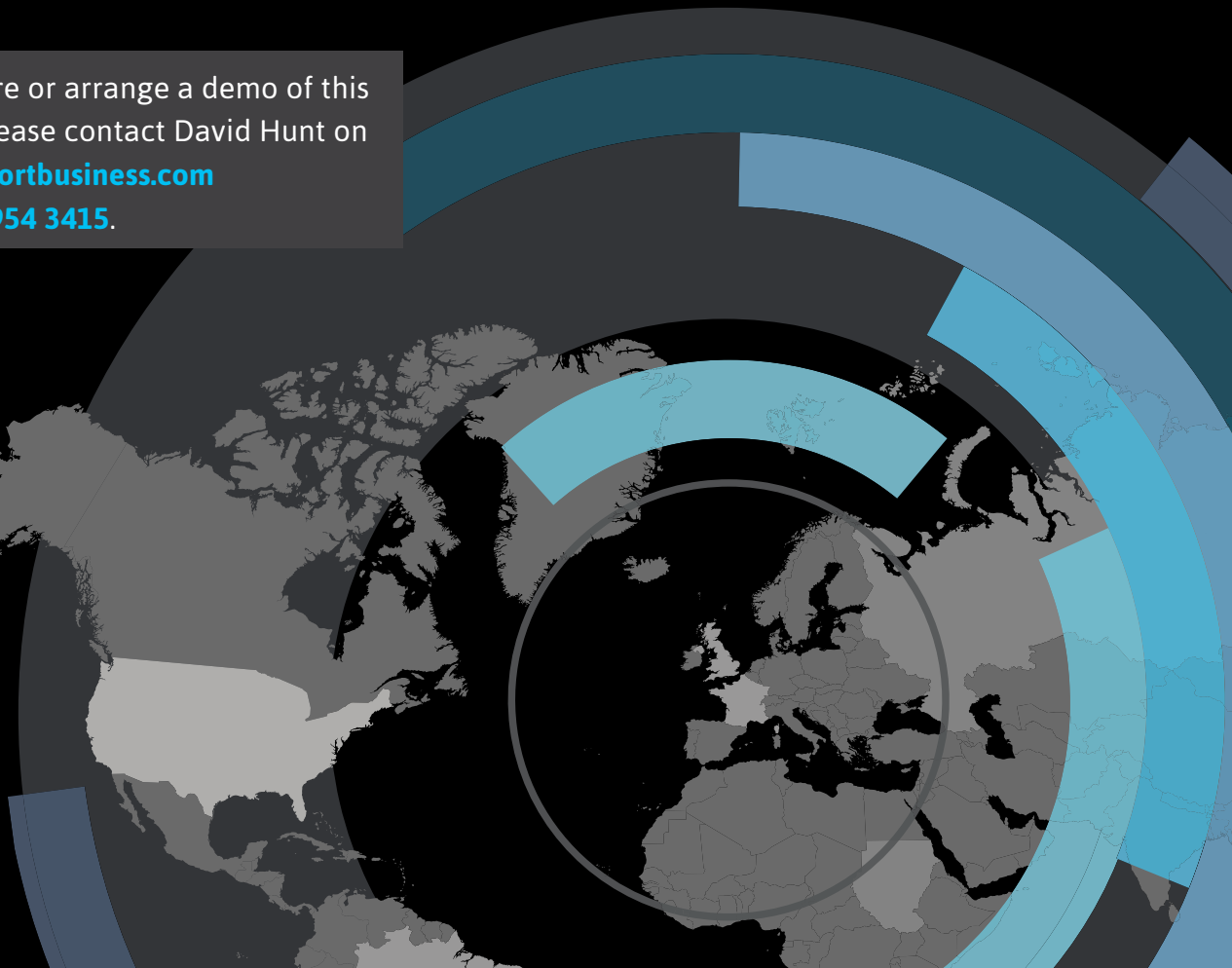
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SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from September 24 to October 7**MEDIA RIGHTS 1****Football: Premier League, Chinese Super League, Euro 2016 and more**

- **Football:** International pay-television broadcaster ESPN extended a rights deal in Brazil for the English top-tier Premier League club competition. The agreement runs for three seasons, from 2016-17 to 2018-19. The deal includes live coverage, highlights and support programming (page 4).
- **Football:** Chinese media group Ti'ao Power acquired domestic broadcast and production rights to the Chinese Super League club football competition in a five-season deal, from 2016 to 2020. The Yutang Sports website said the deal will be worth a total of CNY¥8bn (€1.1bn/\$1.26bn).
- **Football:** BeIN Media Group agreed to sublicense rights to an additional 11 games from the Uefa Euro 2016 national team football tournament to French commercial broadcaster TF1. BeIN holds live rights to all games for Euro 2016 in France. TF1 already held rights to show 11 Euro 2016 matches under a previous sublicensing deal with beIN. Fellow commercial broadcaster M6 also holds rights to 11 games. Rights are non-exclusive in both cases.
- **Football:** Sports and betting-related services company Sportradar acquired betting rights to club football competitions in Greece, Turkey and Romania. The deals include the Greek top-tier Superleague, Romania's Liga 1 top division and Cupa Ligii knockout cup competition, as well as Turkey's domestic knockout cup competition, the Türkiye Kupas.
- **Football:** The Russian Premier League top-tier domestic club competition finalised a three-season deal with pay-television broadcaster NTV Plus. The deal runs from 2015-16 to 2017-18 and includes international rights. The deal was approved in September (page 1).
- **Football:** The IMG Events & Media agency extended a deal with the English Premier League for in-flight and in-ship media rights. The deal runs for three seasons, from 2016-17 to 2018-19. The agreement includes live and recorded coverage of matches on Sport 24, the live sports channel produced and distributed by IMG exclusively for the in-flight and in-ship markets (page 5).
- **Football:** Modern Times Group, the multi-territory commercial and pay-television broadcaster, extended its rights deal with the Premier League in Denmark and Sweden, and acquired rights in Finland for the first time. Norwegian commercial and pay-television broadcaster TV2 also extended its contract with the league. All the deals run for three seasons, from 2016-17 to 2018-19 (page 1).
- **Football:** Pay-television broadcaster Sky Mexico agreed a three-season extension, from 2016-17 to 2018-19, to its deal with the Premier League. The agreement covers Mexico, Central America and the Dominican Republic.
- **Football:** Brazilian public-service broadcaster TV Brasil acquired rights to the Campeonato Brasileiro Série B, the second division of domestic club football. TV Brasil sublicensed the rights from media company Globo, Série B's broadcast partner. The deal will commence from the 2016 Série B season.
- **Football:** North American club football competition Major League Soccer agreed a deal with pay-television broadcaster Fox Sports Latin America covering Latin America and the Caribbean, excluding Brazil. The deal commences immediately and runs until the end of the 2018 season (page 2).

SINCE LAST TIME

- Eurosport chief executive Peter Hutton said sublicensing fees will cover 70 per cent of the cost of the international sports broadcaster's acquisition of rights to the Olympic Games. US media and entertainment company Discovery Communications and subsidiary Eurosport in June acquired multi-platform rights in 50 European territories for four Games, from 2018 to 2024, in a deal worth €1.3bn (\$1.46bn).
- Spain's LaLiga approved the incorporation in its statutes of the Royal Decree that regulates the centralised sale of media rights and revenue sharing in the domestic game. The incorporation was backed by most clubs across the top-tier Primera División and second-tier Segunda División, with Real Madrid the only club to vote against.
- Social media platform Facebook simulcast its first live sports programming by covering the NBA Real Training Camp featuring the North American basketball league's Cleveland Cavaliers. The show was simulcast on Facebook, NBA.com and NBA TV, the cable and satellite television broadcaster operated by the league.
- The Uruguayan Football Association (AUF) signalled its intention to appeal after a civil court judge ruled it should maintain its broadcast deal with the Full Play agency. The AUF wants to end its deal with Full Play, which has rights for Uruguay national team qualifying matches until 2018, after the agency was implicated in the corruption scandal surrounding football's global governing body Fifa.
- The International Paralympic Committee, the global governing body of Paralympic sport, will distribute the global broadcast rights for the 2018 Paralympic winter Games in Pyeongchang, South Korea.
- Spanish LaLiga football club Real Madrid was awarded a licence that will enable its official television channel, Real Madrid TV, to broadcast on digital-terrestrial television in the country, according to Spanish newspaper *El Mundo*. Real Madrid was assigned one of three new high definition DTT licences by the government, along with commercial broadcasters Atresmedia and Mediaset.
- German sports broadcaster Sport1 will restart broadcasting its free-to-air channel via digital terrestrial television. The Broadband TV News website said NLM, the media authority of the state of

SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from September 24 to October 7**MEDIA RIGHTS 2****Australian basketball, Euroleague, Liga ACB, Sri Lankan cricket and more**

- **Basketball:** Sky New Zealand extended a domestic deal for coverage of the Australian National Basketball League. The deal covers the 2015-16 season. Sky will broadcast live coverage of three games per round while all other contests will be broadcast on a delayed basis.
- **Basketball:** German telco Deutsche Telekom acquired rights for the Euroleague Basketball club competition. The deal will run for the 2015-16 season. The deal covers pay-television and free-to-air rights as well as internet and mobile rights plus public-viewing and sports-bar rights in Germany.
- **Basketball:** Australia's National Basketball League agreed a multi-year domestic rights deal with commercial broadcaster Nine. Nine will provide a weekly Sunday afternoon game on free-to-air television and broadcast five NBL finals matches.
- **Basketball:** The Movistar Plus broadcast platform of Spanish telco Telefónica agreed a three-season rights deal with Liga ACB, the top division of basketball in Spain. The agreement runs from 2015-16 to 2017-18. Movistar Plus will share rights with public-service broadcaster TVE in the first year of the agreement before taking the contract on an exclusive basis from 2016-17.
- **Cricket:** British Eurosport, the UK arm of pan-regional broadcaster Eurosport, acquired rights to the international cricket series between Sri Lanka and the West Indies in a deal with pay-television broadcaster Ten Sports, which distributes international rights to Sri Lanka home matches. Live coverage will commence on October 14 with the opening day of the first Test in Galle. British Eurosport is not thought to have paid a fee.
- **Cycling:** The British Cycling national governing body agreed a deal for Eurosport to become the broadcast partner for its Revolution Series track cycling league for the remainder of the 2015-16 season. Eurosport will broadcast live coverage of the Revolution Series on its various television platforms.
- **Equestrian:** Chinese IPTV service LeTV Sports agreed a five-year rights deal, from 2015 to 2019, with the International Equestrian Federation covering China, Hong Kong and Macau. The Yutang Sports website said that under the deal, LeTV Sports will hold rights to more than 50 FEI events including the World Equestrian Games and World Cup Jumping.

Lower Saxony, granted Sport 1 a slot on DVB-T serving the Hannover/Braunschweig region. A competing application from commercial broadcaster ProSiebenSat.1 for its women's channel Sixx was rejected. ProSiebenSat.1 may challenge the decision.

- The Infront Sports & Media agency secured broadcast coverage for the European Volleyball Confederation's 2015 men's and women's European Championships in almost 130 territories around the world. The men's and women's Championship will both be broadcast into a total of 128 countries and territories by 27 television networks.

MEDIA INTERNATIONAL

- Sports broadcaster ESPN will return to the Indian market after agreeing a partnership with Indian broadcaster Multi Screen Media. ESPN and MSM will bring new offerings including new Sony ESPN sports channels and a multi-sport website and app.
- The Fox International Channels broadcast subsidiary of media company 21st Century Fox launched a new service dedicated to global cross-platform media buying and sponsorships. Fox Media, which will include Fox Sports in its portfolio of brands, aims to enable innovative ad sales partnerships.
- Fox International Channels will launch its Fox Sports channels in Greece via an exclusive carriage deal with pay-television operator Nova. Forthnet, parent company of Nova, said the operator will soon offer Fox Sports HD exclusively to its subscribers.
- YouTube is reportedly stepping up preparations to launch a subscription-based service in the US. The Re/code website said YouTube issued a letter to content creators asking them to agree to new site licensing terms. YouTube is said to be readying the launch of an advertising-free version of its service for a monthly fee, with new service terms to be enabled by the end of October.
- US media and entertainment company Discovery Communications took full control of Eurosport after French commercial broadcaster TF1 sold its 49-per-cent stake in the international sports broadcaster. Discovery announced in July that it would assume full ownership of Eurosport through a €491m (\$551m) deal with the French broadcaster.
- German-based pay-television broadcaster Motorvision TV secured carriage deals in Chinese Taipei and Serbia, with telcos Chunghwa Telecom and Telekom Srbija respectively. The channel also extended existing carriage deals in France, Romania and Slovenia.
- European broadcast facilities and services company Euro Media Group acquired Netco Sports, a provider of second-screen applications for sports properties.
- Equestrian sports and lifestyle television channel Horse & Country will expand into Germany. Horse & Country will partner with telco Deutsche Telekom to launch a German channel. The channel will be carried on Deutsche Telekom's Entertain IPTV platform.
- Online video distribution and marketing company Rightster said it is looking at options to secure additional investment in the fourth quarter of 2015 to ensure it has enough working capital to move towards a breakeven mark in cashflow. The announcement came after Rightster reported a widened pre-tax loss of £11.5m

SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from September 24 to October 7

MEDIA RIGHTS 3

Hockey World League Finals, NHL, Formula E, Formula One and more

- **Hockey:** The International Hockey Federation (FIH) unveiled broadcast partners for its 2015 men's and women's Hockey World League Final national team events, which will be held in Raipur, India and Rosario, Argentina, respectively. Pay-television partners include Star Sports in the Indian subcontinent, Astro in Malaysia, Willow TV in the US, OSN in North Africa and the United Arab Emirates, and SuperSport in South Africa. In Argentina, the Netherlands and Pakistan, the FIH has deals in place with respective public-service broadcasters Canal Siete, NOS and PTV.
- **Ice Hockey:** American Sports Network, the college sports platform operated by US television broadcasting company Sinclair Networks Group, secured deals with various US collegiate ice hockey organisations. ASN will broadcast live up to 30 games per year from the various leagues and conferences. ASN also renewed its deal with cable-television broadcaster the Big Ten Network for Big Ten Conference ice hockey.
- **Ice Hockey:** The IMG Events & Media agency struck a multi-season deal to market and distribute media rights for North American ice hockey league the NHL outside the US, Canada and Nordic countries. From 2016-17, IMG will also distribute rights to the 2016 World Cup of Hockey national team tournament (page 2).
- **Motorsport:** UK pay-television broadcaster BT Sport extended its rights deal for the Formula E electric car-racing championship. BT Sport will air highlights of all 11 rounds of the 2015-16 season.
- **Motorsport:** Eurosport acquired exclusive television and digital media rights in Portugal to the Formula One motor racing world championship. The deal runs for three years, from 2016 to 2018. The agreement covers the live broadcast of all races as well as qualifying and practice sessions (page 6).
- **Multi-sport:** The Mid-American Conference US collegiate sports competition struck a multi-year rights deal with the Buckeye CableSystem Sports Network regional sports broadcaster. Rights were acquired through a sublicensing deal with ESPN. The deal comes into effect from the 2015-16 season.

(€15.6m/\$17.5m) for the six months ending June 30, 2015.

- Swiss IPTV platform Zattoo struck a deal to carry Eurosport in German-speaking Europe. Zattoo will offer Eurosport for free through its basic package. Eurosport broadcasts coverage of various major sports events such as the Tour de France cycling race and the FA Cup, the major club football knockout competition in England.
- ProSiebenSat.1 continued its investment in digital sports media ventures by acquiring a minority stake in US media group EverSport and global football network 90min.
- UK specialist boxing pay-television channel BoxNation is drawing together investors to support a drive into Asia and eastern Europe. *The Sunday Times* newspaper said the channel is seeking £10m (€13.6m/\$15.4m).
- Organisers of the 2015 Abu Dhabi Tour said the inaugural edition of the cycling event will be shown in 169 countries across 10 television networks. Pay-television broadcaster Abu Dhabi Media will serve as host broadcaster and provide coverage across the United Arab Emirates and 22 other Middle Eastern and North African nations. Other partners include Eurosport, Italian state broadcaster Rai and SuperSport, the pay-television broadcaster that operates in sub-Saharan Africa.
- to remain on the former's pay-television platform, Now TV. The Premier League in September confirmed an exclusive three-season rights deal in Hong Kong with LeTV, from 2016-17 to 2018-19.
- UK pay-television broadcaster Sky will assume live coverage of the Open Championship golf major from 2016 after a proposal from public-service broadcaster the BBC to end its existing deal a year early was accepted. The R&A, which operates the tournament, said it was approached in recent weeks by the BBC to discuss being released from its contract to provide live coverage of the 145th Open Championship at Royal Troon in 2016.
- The German Volleyball Federation agreed partnerships for its Volleyball Bundesliga club competition with media company ProSiebenSat.1 and online sports channel Sportdeutschland.TV. ProSiebenSat.1 will become the marketing partner of the VBL, while Sportdeutschland.TV will provide live streaming in high definition of all the league's games.
- The Mediapro Asia division of Spanish agency Mediapro was appointed the exclusive distributor of media rights on the Indian subcontinent and in southeast Asia to the 35th America's Cup sailing events from 2015 to 2017. The deal covers the Asian territories of Cambodia, Chinese Taipei, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Laos, Macau, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. Mediapro Asia will also sell the rights in the Indian subcontinent markets of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.
- Tom Mockridge, chief executive of UK pay-television operator Virgin Media, told *The Telegraph* newspaper that the current model for the English Premier League is "anathema" to real markets. He

MEDIA RIGHTS NEGOTIATIONS

- Hong Kong telecommunications company PCCW and Chinese internet company LeTV Sports said they had reached an agreement that will allow English top-tier Premier League club football rights

SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from September 24 to October 7

- said broadcasters competing over the lucrative deal has resulted in consumers paying more for access to fewer matches.
- The Australian Football League intends to divide revenue from its new broadcast rights deal in a “group co-ordinated manner” rather than dealing with clubs and players separately, according to *The Age* newspaper. The AFL in August awarded its next cycle of domestic rights to commercial broadcaster Seven, pay-television operator Foxtel and telco Telstra. The deal will run for six years, from 2017 to 2022.
 - Inverleigh struck an enhanced partnership with youth channel provider Trace TV to supply sports content to Trace Sports Stars channels. Inverleigh will produce over 100 hours of content each year of the deal, which runs from 2015 to 2018.
 - Swiss pay-television broadcaster Teleclub extended its content deal with German pay-television broadcaster Sky Deutschland. Teleclub will offer subscribers channels from Sky Deutschland via cable, satellite and IPTV. Teleclub customers will have access to Sky’s coverage, including European club football competitions the Uefa Champions League and Europa League.
 - DSI by Inverleigh, the commercial arm of Australian television content group Inverleigh, rebranded as ‘Inverleigh’ in order to move in line with all other divisions operated by its parent company.
 - The Formula E Championship electric car-racing series agreed a partnership with broadcast and production company Little Dot Studios. Little Dot will create and distribute Formula E video content across social media platforms including YouTube, Twitter, Snapchat and Periscope.
 - The International Paralympic Committee will live stream all 70 hours of action from its forthcoming 2015 IPC Athletics World Championships in Doha, Qatar from October 21-31. Coverage will be streamed live with commentary at www.doha2015.org.
 - The IMG Events & Media agency extended a deal with Panasonic for the Japanese electronics company to provide technology for Sport 24, the live sports channel produced and distributed by IMG for the in-flight and in-ship markets. Sport 24 is exclusively available on the Panasonic eXTV live television system, which is broadcast via satellite to more than 250 planes from 10 airlines around the world.
 - BeIN Media Group will launch movie channels in the Middle East and North Africa, according to reports. The Broadcast Pro Middle East website said sports-focused beIN has released promos on its channels announcing the launch of beIN Movies 1 and beIN Movies 2. The website said the movie channels are thought to be among several non-sports platforms planned as part of an entertainment bouquet that will be rolled out in phases.

ALSO SINCE LAST TIME

- Fina, the global governing body of aquatic sports, revealed its 2015 World Championships attracted a record aggregated global television viewership of over 6.84bn. Fina also said there was a total of 5,728 hours of dedicated coverage for the event this year, compared to 5,156 in 2013.
- United World Wrestling, the global governing body of amateur wrestling, said the 2015 Wrestling World Championships was the most-viewed non-Olympic event in its history. Broadcasters from 16 countries provided the event to an estimated potential worldwide audience of over 1bn.
- World Rugby, rugby union’s global governing body, said the Japanese national team’s 26-5 win against Samoa set a new Rugby World Cup national television audience record. The game was watched by 25m people, eclipsing the previous record of 20.7m, set in France when commercial broadcaster TF1 televised the first semi-final of Rugby World Cup 2007 between France and England.

INDUSTRY MOVES

- The NBC Sports Group division of US media group NBCUniversal appointed Jennifer Storms as chief marketing officer. • North American basketball league the NBA appointed Jennifer Chun as senior vice-president of global media distribution. • Kelly Butler resigned as senior vice-president of the Fox Sports Europe and Africa arm of Fox International Channels, the broadcast subsidiary of media company 21st Century Fox. • Golf’s European Tour said Mark Lichtenhein will step down as its head of television, digital media and technology with immediate effect.

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