

## FOOTBALL

### EBU and Uefa on verge of big Euro 2016 deal as agencies are shut out of process

By Robin Jellis

The European Broadcasting Union is in advanced stages of negotiations with Uefa over a deal for Euro 2016 football rights in 27 territories, *TV Sports Markets* understands.

The EBU, the consortium of public-service broadcasters, is understood to have offered about €150m (\$165m) for the rights, up from its fee of €130m for Euro 2012 (*TV Sports Markets* 13:9).

Uefa, European football's governing body, tendered the rights in a host of European countries on September 16, with bids due on October 24. Agencies were not invited to bid. Broadcasters were encouraged to bid in parallel with the EBU.

A deal is thought to have been agreed in principle shortly before Christmas, but

exact terms are now being finalised. The process is being handled by the CAA Eleven agency. The deal is expected to be completed before the summer.

When the Euro 2012 rights were sold to the EBU, several of the biggest markets were excluded.

These were: France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the UK, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, the Netherlands, and co-hosts Poland and Ukraine. The same 11 territories will be excluded from the EBU deal for Euro 2016.

The Euro 2012 deal covered 36 territories. In 29 of these, the rights were awarded to EBU members. In seven other territories, where the EBU offer

*Continued on page 3 ►*

## AGENCIES

### One big deal down, one to go for Lagardère

By Frank Dunne

The rights-trading subsidiaries of sports marketing company Lagardère Unlimited look set for a double boost. World Sport Group is close to renewing its contract with the Asian confederation, while Sportfive remains favourite to renew its deal for African confederation rights.

Winning both contracts would send a strong message to the industry that Lagardère is still a player to be reckoned with in the rights market.

Through a combination of losing business and deliberately avoiding high-cost, short-term rights deals, the

company's role in the market has shrunk in recent years. In 2012, 40 per cent of its business was in media rights. By 2014, that had fallen to 19 per cent.

Staying at the table, however, comes at a price. Both deals are understood to be based on a significant uplift for the confederations in terms of minimum guarantees and based on remuneration structures which are less generous for the two agencies.

Sportfive currently pays the Confédération Africaine de Football a

*Continued on page 4 ►*

## CONTENTS

- 1 EBU set to renew Euro 2016 deal
- 1 WSG nails Asia, Sportfive sweats on Africa as Lagardère Unlimited fights to stay in rights market
- 2 Fastrack 1: Polish league to launch channel; Infront up in skiing deals
- 3 IMG securing big increase in exposure for MLS in Brazil
- 5 Rai mops up domestic football and is favourite for Euro 2016
- 6 Uefa benefits from telco bids in Balkans but struggles in Malaysia
- 7 PCB sees the positives in new deal
- 8 Athletics keeps faith with EBU
- 9 Fastrack 2: Payday for Pro D2; Nascar fills the F1 gap for Fox
- 10 Sports Clips

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## FASTRACK 1

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Polish Ekstraklasa set to fall back on channel launch plan

The Polish football league, the Ekstraklasa, is to launch a league channel in a joint venture with its media-rights adviser MP & Silva after offers from broadcasters fell below expectations, *TV Sports Markets* understands.

In September, the MP & Silva agency agreed an advisory deal with the league for the six seasons from 2015-16 to 2020-21. The agency guaranteed an average income of about PLN150m (€37.5m/\$40.5m) per season (*TV Sports Markets* 18:17).

The league had initially turned down the option of creating a league channel, rejecting an offer from channel syndicator Fox International Channels, before agreeing a deal with MP & Silva. Fox had planned to form a similar channel to Fox Sports Eredivisie, the pay-television channel which shows the Dutch Eredivisie in the Netherlands.

MP & Silva held talks with local pay-television broadcasters NC Plus and Polsat, as well as pan-regional sports broadcaster Eurosport and Fox. Multi-territory commercial and pay-television broadcaster Modern Times Group was also involved in early discussions.

The agency is thought to have been seeking a deal worth PLN140m per season for the first three seasons. However, it is understood that offers fell short of the agency's expectations.

It is thought that NC Plus, facing no strong competition for the rights, was not willing to increase its offer from the PLN110m it pays for 2014-15.

Consolidation has taken much of the competitive edge out of the Polish pay-television market. In 2009, there were four operators: Polsat, Canal Plus, N and Orange. Canal Plus and N merged to form NC Plus in 2012.

Polsat, meanwhile, has built the largest pay-television platform without premium sport, and does not see the need to change its approach now.

MP & Silva split the rights into six

packages, three of which were for live rights. Package One was for picks one and three. Package Two was for picks two and four. Package Three was for picks five, six, seven and eight.

The remaining packages were for digital rights, some free-to-air rights, and news access rights. Production costs were to be part of any bids. Production of all matches is handled by Live Park, which the league bought in 2012. ■

### Infront enjoys jump in skiing fees

The Infront Sports & Media agency has secured fee increases in skiing deals with public-service broadcasters in both Austria and Norway.

In Austria, ORF bought rights to the 2019 and 2021 Alpine and Nordic World Championships from Infront for close to €11m (\$12.1m). This is up from a contribution of €10m which ORF paid as part of the European Broadcasting Union deal for the same championships in 2015 and 2017.

Sources close to ORF, however, said there is no increase in rights fee in real terms between its deals for 2015 and 2017, and for 2019 and 2021.

ORF will contribute towards the production costs of the 2019 Nordic World Championship which will be held in Seefeld, Austria.

The state broadcaster also renewed World Cup skiing rights, excluding events in Austria, in an output deal with Infront. The rights include alpine, freestyle, Nordic and snowboard events.

The deal is understood to be for three seasons, from 2016-17 to 2018-19, with an option to extend for the 2019-20 and 2020-21 seasons. One winter sports expert put the value of the deal at about €6m per season. That would represent an increase of about 10 per cent on the value of the existing five-season deal, from 2011-12 to 2015-16.

ORF is thought to have faced little competition for the rights, although commercial broadcaster ATV is understood to have shown some interest. The rights are must-have

content for ORF, which helped keep the rights fee up. Skiing is hugely popular in Austria and provides the broadcaster with very strong audiences.

There was no formal tender process for the rights. The deal was agreed in direct talks between Infront and ORF.

ORF also holds rights to World Cup events held in Austria in a five-season deal with the Austrian ski federation, the Österreichischer Skiverband, from 2012-13 to 2016-17. ORF pays a rights fee of €3m per season and production costs of about €2.5m per season.

Deals are yet to be signed off in Norway, but NRK is set to retain rights to the Alpine and Nordic World Championships and World Cup events.

NRK held rights to the 2015 and 2017 Alpine and Nordic World Championships as part of the wider EBU deal. Its contribution to the deal was about €10m. In a new deal with Infront, for the championships in 2019 and 2021, NRK is expected to pay about €12m.

The Norwegian state broadcaster is set to renew rights to alpine, freestyle, Nordic and snowboard World Cup events in a five-season deal with Infront, from 2016-17 to 2020-21.

The new deal is expected to be worth close to €6m per season, up from about €5m per season in the existing five-season deal, from 2011-12 to 2015-16.

The fee for both properties increased as there was strong interest in the rights from commercial and pay-television broadcasters TV2 and Modern Times Group, basic-tier broadcaster SBS Discovery Media and pan-regional sports broadcaster Eurosport.

NRK had a matching-rights clause in its World Cup deal, meaning it was always likely to retain its rights.

Infront holds global media and marketing rights to the 2019 and 2021 World Championships in a deal with the Fédération Internationale de Ski worth €110m. It holds global rights to all World Cup events, apart from those taking place in Austria. ■

## FOOTBALL

## EBU to pay more for fewer territories in expanded Euro 2016

Continued from page 1 ►

was below Uefa's expectations, the rights were sold on jointly by the EBU and Uefa. The EBU created a subsidiary to sell the rights in these seven territories, called Mediator Servicing.

The new deal is thought to cover 27 territories. The rights in nine of the 36 territories which were part of the EBU deal for Euro 2012 have been carved out. Insiders say this is because Uefa was not happy with the fee offered in each. They are: Albania, Finland, Greece, Iceland, Israel, Kazakhstan, Romania, Russia and Turkey.

Deals have already been agreed in five of these markets. These are: Finland, with public-service broadcaster YLE; Iceland, with media company Skjárninn; Israel, with pay-television broadcaster Charlton; Kazakhstan, with the Saran Media agency; and Romania, with telco Telekom Romania.

The absence of Turkey, an increasingly valuable sports rights market, from the Euro 2016 deal makes the increased fee look like a strong offer from the EBU.

The main reason for the increase is that more teams will be involved at the tournament, meaning there is more chance of each country's national team qualifying. Euro 2016 will be contested by 24 teams, rather than the previous 16.

### Romania

In Romania, the rights have been sold to Telekom Romania. The offer from public-service broadcaster TVR, as part of the EBU bid, was considered too low.

The telco has acquired rights to all 51 matches at Euro 2016, but only 28 will be on an exclusive basis. Uefa has held back a package for a free-to-air broadcaster, which would cover non-exclusive rights to the remaining 23 matches.

The free-to-air package is for the best match each day, including matches of the Romanian national team should it qualify,

plus a share of the quarter-finals, both semi-finals and the final.

TVR is thought to have offered about €4m as part of the EBU offer, and was willing to increase its offer to about €5m. Local sources say Telekom Romania will pay Uefa about €6m.

German telco Deutsche Telekom is the largest shareholder in Greek telco OTE, the majority owner of Telekom Romania. Telekom Romania bid aggressively to acquire Champions League and Europa League rights in January (*TV Sports Markets* 19:1).

### Euro 2012 deal

When bidding for the Euro 2012 rights in 2009, the EBU beat rival offers from the Sportfive agency, the Ufa Sports agency, and a joint bid from the IMG Events & Media and the Amaury Sport Organisation agencies.

The EBU increased its initial offer from €110m to €130m. The final offer was only a very small increase on what broadcasters in those territories paid for Euro 2008. Agency offers projected significantly higher rights fees.

At the time, the decision to go with the EBU was seen as a safety-first approach from Uefa in a tough economic climate.

The benefit for Uefa of doing a deal with the EBU is that it has the security of state-backed financial guarantees and extensive free-to-air exposure.

The deal was seen as a good one for the EBU, which was cut out of the bidding for the 2014 and 2016 Olympic Games the year before, and had lost rights to Euro 2008 four years before – both to Sportfive.

The EBU had offered a country-by-country breakdown, enabling Uefa to pick out seven countries where EBU member guarantees did not meet expectations. In these countries, Uefa was at liberty to agree deals with non-members. In those where it did, the EBU guarantee was reduced accordingly. However, in those where EBU members increased their offer, the minimum guarantee increased.

A similar scenario has been avoided in the new deal, with territories simply being removed from the EBU offer and sold directly to local broadcasters. [www.](#)

## FOOTBALL

## MLS adds Globosat to ESPN coverage and looks for more

By Richard Welbirt

Major League Soccer will enjoy a substantial increase in exposure in Brazil in the 2015 season, which got under way at the end of March.

MLS, the top US football league, is in the process of moving from having one live match per week shown in the country to having at least four live matches shown every week across three different platforms.

Under last month's deal with pay-television broadcaster Globosat, the broadcaster will show two live matches per week from the regular season.

This is in addition to the Sunday afternoon match shown by rival pay-television operator ESPN Brasil.

The league, with its global rights partner, the IMG Events & Media agency, is also in talks with a number of free-to-air channels about the live rights to one further match per week. A deal is expected soon.

The league's only previous coverage was the one match per week shown by ESPN Brasil. In 2014, ESPN Brasil also acquired six matches involving Toronto from the MP & Silva agency, then MLS's international rights-holder.

The matches were in the lead-up to the 2014 World Cup in Brazil, and the acquisition was driven by the presence of Brazil national team goalkeeper Júlio César at the club.

Globosat's agreement is worth just over \$1m (€910,000) per season for four seasons, from 2015 to 2018.

The broadcaster's interest in MLS was increased by the entry into MLS from 2015 of Orlando City. The club is part-owned by Brazilian businessman Flávio Augusto da Silva, and acquired former Brazilian national team player Kaká as its first major signing.

There was also interest in the pay-television rights from Esporte Interativo and cable network BandSports.

Protracted negotiations over commercial airtime and the level of promotion given to MLS delayed the completion of the deal, which began three weeks after the 2015 season kicked off.

IMG and MLS are in negotiations with a number of broadcasters over rights to the free-to-air match. RedeTV or Bandeirantes are thought the most likely to do a deal. There is no specific time slot for the match: IMG and MLS can sell whichever slot most suits the buyer.

Under the terms of the Globosat deal, the free-to-air game may not be sold to a sport-only channel. This prevents MLS doing a deal with Esporte Interativo, the free-to-air broadcaster which plans to expand into pay-television later this year.

ESPN Brasil has held the rights to its one weekly match as part of parent company ESPN's deals with MLS in the US. In the most recent US deal, from 2015 to 2022, ESPN and the Fox network pay a combined \$75m per season for English-language rights.

ESPN's agreement also includes international rights to its Sunday 5pm match in any country where it has a wholly-owned, ESPN-branded subsidiary.

Rights to the MLS All-Star Game and the MLS Cup final in Brazil will alternate between Globosat and ESPN Brasil. Each will broadcast one of the MLS Cup semi-finals per season. ■

## AGENCIES

# Lagardère fights to hold on to Asian and African football deals

*Continued from page 1 ►*

minimum guarantee of \$160m (€146m), or \$20m per year, over the eight years from 2009 to 2016. The deal covers the media and marketing rights to all Caf competitions. Most of the value is in the Africa Cup of Nations (Afcon). The agency has made a big profit on the deal.

The existing World Sport Group deal with the Asian Football Confederation is based on a minimum guarantee of \$600m,

or \$75m per year, over the eight years from 2013 to 2020, when it was signed in 2009. On sales of \$1bn over the cycle, the agency is paid \$250m for costs and a further \$150m as a margin. It also shares in the upside above \$1bn.

The new AFC deal is understood to be for eight years, from 2021 to 2028, and includes a renegotiation for the final four years of the existing contract, from 2017 to 2020, with a substantial uplift in the minimum guarantee. In the eight-year extension, the minimum guarantee WSG will pay is thought to be about \$1.25bn, or just over \$156m per year.

Neither contract has yet been signed off. Insiders say the WSG deal is agreed in principle and could be signed off at the end of the month at the AFC annual congress in Bahrain. Caf is said to have still not completely ruled out a bid by the Infront Sports & Media agency.

This week Caf renewed a separate joint deal with Sportfive and Marco Bianchi's B4 Capital agency for the African qualifier matches to the 2018 Fifa World Cup. The deal with the two agencies covering qualifiers for the 2014 World Cup was worth \$23m (*TV Sports Markets* 16:2).

## Aggressive bid

The two confederations did not operate formal tender processes. Caf held informal talks with a number of parties, including Infront, B4, and the beIN Media Group (*TV Sports Markets* 19:2).

The process in Asia is said to have been kick-started by the IMG Events & Media agency making what one insider called "an aggressive bid" in 2013. IMG held talks with the AFC over a period of about a year. It is thought to have made two offers, one in 2013 and an improved offer – said to be in line with AFC's own valuation of the rights – in 2014.

It is understood that when WSG learned of the IMG offer it approached its minor shareholder, Dentsu, which agreed to help fund a rival bid.

Dentsu, which holds a 10-per-cent stake in the agency, works closely with WSG on the media rights sales to AFC events in Japan, the most valuable single territory for the properties. Before agreeing to commit to the improved terms, advertising agency Dentsu held talks with its existing broadcast partners.

## Informal talks

Between 2013 and 2014, while evaluating the IMG and WSG offers, the confederation also held informal talks with a number of other agencies. These are said to have included Team Marketing, MP & Silva and Infront. It is understood that this was largely an intelligence-gathering exercise rather than a competitive process.

Team could not, in any case, have made a bid under the terms of its agreement with Uefa for the global sale of Champions League and Europa League rights. Sources close to MP & Silva say there were no "high level" discussions between the agency and the AFC; the agency never had the opportunity to bid for the rights.

The discussions were handled by AFC president Salman Bin Ibrahim al-Khalifa, following his election in May 2013.

## Clouds clear over WSG deal

The AFC deal is the jewel in WSG's crown and is vital to the agency's business. Its renewal will be a major relief, even though the new terms will be more onerous.

In 2012, the agency's contract with the AFC came under intense scrutiny as part of a wider investigation into the affairs of former AFC president Mohamed bin Hammam (*TV Sports Markets* 17:2).

Bin Hammam was later banned for life from all football activities by Fifa, world football's governing body, for "repeated violations" of codes of ethics on conflicts of interest in his time as AFC president.

As part of the investigation, the AFC commissioned an audit into its own commercial affairs by accountancy firm PricewaterhouseCoopers. The firm was highly critical of the commercial rights agreement with WSG, and recommended the AFC seek legal advice on whether "sufficient grounds exist to renegotiate or cancel" the deal.

In Asia, Lagardère Unlimited is now operating exclusively under the World Sport Group brand. The local operations of the company's other two sports-rights agencies, IEC in Sports and Sportfive, have been wound down and merged into the WSG business, working out of the WSG head office in Singapore. The rebranding is in Asia only. ■ [www](#)

## TV ITALY

## Rai set fair for full house of football rights renewals

By Frank Dunne

Italian state broadcaster Rai is the strong favourite to land the rights for Euro 2016, which were put out to tender this week, and is expected to do so at a substantial discount.

A Euro 2016 deal would give the broadcaster a full house of renewals for its major football properties. In the last 12 months Rai has renewed all of its key Italian football deals, with a total outlay of about €233m (\$255m) over the next four years.

Due to changes in the way rights to Italy matches are sold between the last cycle and the current one, an exact like-with-like comparison is not possible but in broad terms the broadcaster's investment is either flat or just a marginal increase.

Last week, Rai renewed its rights for the domestic cup competition, the Coppa Italia, and the Supercoppa, the season-opener between the league champions and cup winners.

For the three seasons from 2015-16 to 2017-18, the broadcaster will pay an average of €22m (\$24.2m) per season. This is split €21m in 2015-16 and €22.5m in each of the following two seasons. Rai will pay a further €250,000 per season for radio rights.

This is a total increase of about 8.5 per cent on the €20.5m-per-season Rai pays for television and radio rights in the current three-season contract, which expires at the end of the season.

Rai outbid US media group Discovery Communications and Italian commercial and pay-television operator Mediaset to secure the rights.

The deal follows one agreed last month for Italy friendly matches for four years, from 2015 to 2018, which is understood to be worth up to €60m depending on which opponents the federation agrees to play. With 18 friendlies planned over the period, this would work out at an

average of just over €3.3m per match. The deal was agreed with the national football association, the Federazione Italiana Giuoco Calcio.

Rai had already acquired Italy's competitive matches in the European Qualifiers package, paying €70m over four seasons, from 2014-15 to 2017-18. This works out at an average of €3.5m per match. That deal, signed in April last year, was agreed with the CAA Eleven agency, Uefa's sales agent for its national team competitions.

In January, Rai renewed its highlights rights for Serie A. It will pay €12.3m per season for three seasons from 2015-16 to 2017-18 (*TV Sports Markets* 19:1).

This is up on the €11.5m-per-season Rai pays in the current three-season cycle. Rai secured an enhanced level of exclusivity, as the league did not sell a similar package of rights to Sky Italia for its free-to-air channel Cielo.

### Little competition

Experts believe Rai is in a good position to secure the rights to Euro 2016 at a discount on the €106m it paid for Euro 2012, despite the competition having been expanded from 16 to 24 teams. If this were the case, it would represent a second consecutive cut. Rai paid about €110m for Euro 2008. The problem for Uefa is that there is little alternative to Rai.

Mediaset can offer a combination of free-to-air and pay-television coverage, but has shied away from spending heavily on one-off tournaments.

Pay-television operator Sky Italia is also unlikely to bid. The broadcaster is moving away from its strategy of investing in major one-off sports events. It has spent heavily in the past to secure the Fifa World Cup and the Olympic Games, with no increase in subscribers.

Discovery is a theoretical rival. It can offer a combination of free-to-air coverage for the matches protected by listed-events legislation, on its Dmax channel, and pay-television coverage for the rest on Eurosport. However, Eurosport would not earn any incremental revenue from pay-television carriers for a one-off tournament and Discovery would find it almost

impossible to refinance the cost of matches shown on Dmax from advertising. The channel's audience share is below two per cent.

The problem facing Uefa is the same which faced Fifa, football's world governing body, when it tried to sell the rights to the 2018 and 2022 World Cups in Italy in two rounds of bidding in 2013. The highest combined offer from Rai and Sky is understood to have been about 40 per cent below Fifa's asking price. Fifa eventually sold the rights to the MP & Silva agency.

### Coppa revival continues

The Italian football league will earn a total of €68.25m across the three seasons for all rights to the Coppa Italia in the new cycle. This is up almost 11 per cent on the €61.5m in the current cycle, but below the original combined reserve price of €86.5m for the three packages.

The new deal confirms the revival of interest in the competition under its current format. Between the previous cycle, from 2010-2012, and the current cycle, from 2012-2015, the league had enjoyed an increase of 65 per cent in income for the competition after several cycles of dwindling values.

The top Coppa Italia matches have ratings comparable to the qualifier matches of the national team for the World Cup and the Euros.

In 2014, the competition accounted for two of the top five live audiences for sports events, excluding Fifa World Cup matches. The Roma v Juventus match in January was the third-highest event, with 9.33m viewers, an audience share of 30.9 per cent. Fourth was the Fiorentina v Napoli match in May, which drew 8.8m, a share of 36.5 per cent.

The value of the rights fell cycle-on-cycle between the 2005-06 to 2007-08 cycle, when Rai paid €26m, and the 2008-09 to 2009-10 cycle, when the broadcaster paid €8.25m. In that period Rai's main competitor was porn channel Conto TV.

The package of digital rights to the competition, comprising mobile and internet clips and highlights, was won by Telecom Italia. The telco will pay €500,000 per season. 

## FOOTBALL

## Telco aggression fuels Uefa's Balkan rights boost

By Robin Jellis

The aggressiveness of telco Telekom Srbija was a driving factor in increases in the value of the rights to the Uefa Champions League and Europa League in the Balkans.

In recent months, deals have been agreed across the Balkan region in Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia. Deals were also agreed in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. All deals were brokered by Team Marketing, Uefa's sales agent for its club competitions.

Uefa will earn just over €16m (\$17.6m) per season from the Balkans for both competitions over the three seasons from 2015-16 to 2017-18. This is up more than 28 per cent on the €12.5m per season it earns in the current three-season cycle.

Telekom Srbija beat competition from pan-regional pay-television broadcaster Sportklub to land the rights in four territories in the new cycle – Bosnia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia – up from three in the current cycle.

The expansion is another sign that telcos are increasingly recognising the importance of sports rights. One local expert described the rights as “the cornerstone” of Telekom Srbija's business.

In August 2011, Telekom Srbija paid €7.7m to take a 51-per-cent stake in the Arena Sport pay-television channels, on which it will show its coverage.

Another reason the Champions League and Europa League command decent fees across the region is that domestic leagues in each territory are not very strong. There is also interest in some top national players such as Bosnian Edin Džeko, Croatians Ivan Rakitić and Luka Modrić, and Serbian defender Nemanja Vidić.

In Serbia, the value of the Champions League rights alone has increased by 525 per cent over three cycles, from €800,000 per season in the 2006-07 and 2008-09 cycle, to more than €5m per season in the new deal from 2015-16 to 2017-18.

## Tough times for Uefa in Malaysia as Astro rivals shrink

An absence of competition in Malaysia forced Uefa to take a hit in the value of its Champions League and Europa League rights in renewals with Astro last week.

The pay-television broadcaster will pay about \$8m (€7.3m) per season for rights to both the Champions League and Europa League in the three seasons from 2015-16 to 2017-18. Of the total, \$7m per season is for the Champions League and \$1m per season for the Europa League. The deal also covers Brunei.

Astro's broadcast commitment is thought to be unchanged at a minimum of six Champions League matches and at least four Europa League matches per week. It was the only bidder.

For Uefa, European football's governing body, it is a 34-per-cent decrease on the \$12.2m-per-season Astro pays in its current deal, from 2012-13 to 2014-15.

That was a 239-per-cent increase on the \$3.6m-per-season paid by pay-television broadcaster ESPN Star Sports (ESS) between 2009-10 and 2011-12 (*TV Sports Markets* 15:10). The increase then was largely driven by competition between Astro, ESS and telco Telekom Malaysia.

Croatia is the second most valuable territory in the region, and saw growth of more than 20 per cent from the current to the new Champions League cycle.

### Czech Republic

Uefa has earned only a small increase for its Champions League and Europa League rights in the Czech Republic, with the fee propped up thanks to aggressive bidding from local telco O2.

The total for both competitions will be about €3.7m per season in the new cycle, only marginally up from about €3.6m per season in the current cycle.

The Champions League decreased in value from €3m per season to about €2.8m per season, in deals with public-service broadcaster Česká Televize and O2. The Europa League increased in value

For the new cycle, neither Telekom Malaysia nor Fox, the successor to ESS, made a bid. There are a number of reasons why neither company would be interested.

First, the evening kick-offs of the competitions in Europe means matches are broadcast after midnight in Malaysia. As a result, the competitions are much less valuable than the English Premier League or the domestic top tier Super League. Both will come to market within the next year, and broadcasters may have been keeping their powder dry.

Second, the Malaysian currency, the ringgit, has depreciated significantly in recent months, and is at its weakest against the US dollar since late 2008. This has reduced the purchasing power of companies earning in ringgit for a property sold in dollars.

The reduced fee is a blow but it is understood that Uefa was able to negotiate a slight increase from Astro's initial offer. Uefa is thought to regard the value in the new deals for both competitions as fair, after the current cycle exceeded expectations.

The deal was brokered by the Team Marketing agency, Uefa's sales agent for its club competitions.

from just over €600,000 per season to about €900,000 per season in deals with Česká Televize and commercial and pay-television broadcaster Nova.

In the current cycle, two Champions League matches are shown free-to-air each week – the Tuesday match on the Prima Cool channel, part-owned by commercial and pay-television broadcaster Modern Times Group; the Wednesday match with Česká Televize.

Uefa achieves a good level of exposure in the Czech Republic in the current cycle, but having two free-to-air broadcasters is an awkward mechanism.

O2 bid aggressively, encouraging Uefa to give more exclusivity for the pay-television rights. O2 is majority-owned by the PPF financial group, but is allowed to use the O2 brand as it was formerly

owned by telco Telefónica.

O2's aggression saved Uefa from an even bigger decrease – it is understood that Česká Televize is paying less in its new Champions League deal. Česká Televize will continue to show the first-pick match each Wednesday.

Rights to the first-pick Europa League match each week were also renewed by Česká Televize. Nova renewed its rights to all other matches.

### Slovakia

In Slovakia, Uefa secured a 100-per-cent increase, doubling its combined fee for the Champions League and Europa League from €500,000 per season to just under €1m per season.

Public-service broadcaster RTVS renewed its rights to show the first-pick Champions League match on Wednesdays, and the first-pick Europa League match. Telco Slovak Telekom renewed rights to all other Champions League matches, while Nova renewed its Europa League rights for coverage on its Dajto channel.

### Balkan rights breakdown

**Bosnia & Herzegovina:** First-pick Champions League matches on Wednesdays will be shown by commercial broadcaster OBN. All other Champions League matches, plus the Europa League, will be shown by Telekom Srbija. Uefa is close to a deal with public-service broadcaster BHRT for the first-pick Champions League match on Tuesdays and the first-pick Europa League match.

**Croatia:** Public-service broadcaster HRT renewed rights to the first-pick Champions League match on Wednesdays and the first-pick Europa League match. Telco Hrvatski Telekom retained rights to all other matches from both competitions.

**Macedonia:** Public-service broadcaster MKRTV also renewed rights to the first-pick Champions League match on Wednesdays and the first-pick Europa League match. Telekom Srbija displaced incumbent rights-holder Makedonski Telekom for all other rights. Telekom Srbija will provide coverage through its HD-Win platform.

**Montenegro:** Uefa struggled to agree a deal for free-to-air rights, and instead sold

them to the Direct Media agency. Direct Media must now agree deals for free-to-air coverage of the first-pick Champions League match on Wednesdays and the first-pick Europa League match.

In the current cycle, free-to-air rights are held by public-service broadcaster RTCG, but the broadcaster is struggling financially and unable to bid competitively. All other matches were acquired by Telekom Srbija.


**Serbia:** Public-service broadcaster RTS renewed its rights to the first-pick Champions League match on Wednesdays and the first-pick Europa League match. Telekom Srbija renewed rights to all other matches. Provided a deal with BHRT in Bosnia is signed off, Slovenia will be the only territory in the Balkan region where Uefa does not have a deal with a public-service broadcaster.

**Slovenia:** Free-to-air rights to the first-pick Champions League match on both Tuesdays and Wednesdays and the first-pick Europa League match will be shown on commercial channel Kanal A, owned by the Central European Media Enterprises media group. Rights to all other matches were renewed by Sportklub. Kanal A's rights to the semi-finals and finals to both competitions are exclusive.

### Team renewal

Team has renewed its agreement with Uefa to distribute the rights to the Champions League and Europa League for a further three seasons, with an option to extend for three more seasons.

Team's existing contract ends at the end of the 2015-16 to 2017-18 cycle. The new deals runs from 2018-19 to 2020-21, with the possibility of extending the deal until the end of the 2023-24 season if Uefa is satisfied with the agency's performance. Under the terms of the agreement, Team is not allowed to work for any other sports rights-holders.

Until now, renewals have been dependent on Team hitting a certain financial target, which it is understood to have comprehensively exceeded each time. Between the 2012-15 cycle and the 2015-18 cycle, commercial rights revenue for the two competitions is set to increase by about 40 per cent. 

## CRICKET

# PCB sees positives in new deal despite security concerns

By Richard Welbirg

The Pakistan Cricket Board is understood to view this month's five-year deal for its rights as the best that was possible in current market conditions.

Rights to Pakistan's home international matches for five seasons, covering the period 2015-16 to 2019-20, were won by a joint bid from multi-territory pay-television broadcaster Ten Sports and Pakistani state broadcaster PTV. The deal is reported to be worth about \$150m (€136m) over the five seasons.

National team cricket matches must be shown on terrestrial television in Pakistan. PTV will broadcast within the country, while Ten acquired global rights outside the country, including rights in the rest of the Indian subcontinent. Ten is paying the lion's share of the fee.

The PCB received three responses to its initial tender for the rights, which closed on February 27. These were from: PTV and Ten; from pay-television operator Sony for global rights; and from pay-television operator OSN for rights in the Middle East.

All bids fell short of the asking price. The three bidders were invited to submit second offers, with Ten/PTV outbidding Sony and OSN.

The board is satisfied with the new deal for several reasons. First, the value of the rights has been undermined for several years by the fact that Pakistan has to play its home matches in the United Arab Emirates for security reasons, playing in mostly empty stadiums. Second, the pool of bidders was limited. There was no bid from pay-television operator Star India, for example, which appears to have reached the limit of its cricket investment. Third, uncertainty over the security situation is thought likely to have dampened broadcaster enthusiasm, as the planned schedule of matches could yet be disrupted.

Pakistan will play 'home' Test series

against India twice in the new deal: in December 2015 and December 2019.

These two series are understood to represent about 70 per cent of the total value of the deal.

The 2015 series, which will be the first full bilateral Test series between the two since 2007, is yet to be confirmed by the Indian government. Ten believes there is currently no reason – barring unforeseen political events – why the tour would not go ahead.

Ten held PCB rights in a five-season deal, from 2008-09 to 2012-13, originally worth \$140.5m. The Mumbai terror attacks in November 2008 resulted in the Board of Control for Cricket in India cutting relations with the PCB, which reduced the value of its deal with Ten.

The PCB sold rights to each series on an individual basis in 2013 and 2014. The board was blocked from agreeing long-term deals during this period, as its chairmanship was being contested in court.

Ten's major market is India, where it requires cricket content to compete. Its strategy has been to acquire international rights from cricket boards around the world, effectively broadcasting India's overseas tours. It currently holds the rights of cricket boards in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Sri Lanka and the West Indies. ■

## ATHLETICS

# New sports event helps EA hold its value in EBU renewal

By Robin Jellis

The European Broadcasting Union renewed worldwide rights to European Athletics events over four years at a steady rights fee in a deal agreed late last month.

The four-year deal runs from 2016 to 2019 and is thought to be worth about CHF34m (€32.4m/\$35.8m), or CHF8.5m per year. This would be the same value as the current four-year deal, from 2012 to 2015 (*TV Sports Markets* 15:5). One source close to European Athletics, however, said the governing

body had secured a slight increase.

The EBU, the consortium of public-service broadcasters, will handle production of European Athletics events through its subsidiary Eurovision Production Coordination, but will not cover the cost of them. Production costs will be about €8m over the four years. These will be paid by local organising committees and host cities.

It is understood that the rights fee has stayed flat for two main reasons. First, the EBU faced little or no competition for the rights. There is thought to have been some interest in the rights from agencies, but no firm offers.

Second, the Euro has tumbled in value against the Swiss Franc in recent months, meaning that in relative terms the rights fee has increased. When the current deal was agreed, CHF34m was worth €26.6m, about €6m less than in the new deal, or €1.5m less per year.

The deal was agreed directly between the EBU and European Athletics, with no agency involvement. The EBU had a matching-rights clause, but did not need to activate it as there were no other bids.

The EBU was always thought likely to renew its deal. It is a long-standing partner of the European Athletics governing body, having broadcast coverage of its events since 1981.

The EBU's position was probably strengthened in negotiations following the experience of the International Association of Athletics Federations.

From 2010 to 2013, the IAAF ditched long-term partner the EBU in favour of a deal with the IEC in Sports agency worth \$20m per year. IEC struggled to sell on rights to EBU members after winning the rights. The EBU won back the rights from 2014 to 2017 for about \$20m per year (*TV Sports Markets* 18:17).

European Athletics is also in favour of the wide free-to-air exposure which the EBU guarantees. Outgoing EA president, Hansjörg Wirz, is understood to have been a staunch supporter of the EBU. Wirz was this week replaced by Svein Arne Hansen.

### EBU guarantors

German public-service broadcasters ARD and ZDF are understood to be the main

guarantors of the EBU deal, covering roughly between 20 and 25 per cent of the total fee.

The next biggest guarantors are understood to be UK public-service broadcaster the BBC and French state broadcaster France Télévisions, each paying about 15 per cent of the total.

Rai in Italy and TVE in Spain are each thought to contribute up to about 10 per cent, while SVT in Sweden and YLE in Finland will pay up to about five per cent.

Outside Europe there is little value in European Athletics rights. One athletics expert said the rights outside Europe would be worth no more than \$250,000 across the four years. The EBU will sell on rights outside Europe.

### Content

The new deal includes the same content as the current deal, with the addition of a new competition – the European Sports Championships, a multi-sport event in 2018 to be staged in both Glasgow, Scotland, and Berlin, Germany.

The deal covers the European Athletics Championships in 2016 in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, and in 2018 in Berlin, Germany. These are the most valuable events included in the deal, although there is less interest in the championships taking place in a summer Olympic year.

In 2016, the European Athletics Championships will clash with the Wimbledon tennis championships and football's European Championships, as well as the Olympic Games.

The EBU deal is understood to cover only the inaugural European Sports Championships in 2018. Several European sports federations will host events at the same time to boost spectator interest.

As well as European Athletics, the event will include: the Ligue Européenne de Natation (swimming); the European Cycling Union; the Union Européenne de Gymnastique (gymnastics); the Fédération Internationale de Sociétés d'Aviron (rowing); and the European Triathlon Union.

It is understood that by pooling rights to create a multi-sport event these federations are hopeful of increasing spectator interest in their events. ■ [www.ewb.com](#)



## FASTRACK 2

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Pro D2 taps into rugby boom with massive fee increase

The French second-tier rugby union league, the Pro D2, took advantage of strong competition for its rights to secure a 460-per-cent fee increase in new deals agreed last week.

The league signed off on deals with pay-television broadcaster Canal Plus, basic-tier sports broadcaster Eurosport and public-service broadcaster France Télévisions, worth a total of €31m (\$34.1m) over five seasons from 2015-16 to 2019-20, or an average of €6.2m per season.

This is almost six times the value of the existing deals the league has with the same three broadcasters, which are worth a combined €1.1m per season.

In the new deals, both Canal Plus and Eurosport will pay about €3m per season, while France Télévisions will pay €200,000 per season.

In the existing deals, Canal Plus and Eurosport each pay about €500,000 per season, with France Télévisions paying €100,000 per season.

The Pro D2 is operated by the Ligue Nationale de Rugby, which also runs the Top 14, the top tier. The league was advised by the Cornerplay agency.

Strong interest in the rights from both Canal Plus and Eurosport, as well as basic-tier sports broadcaster Ma Chaîne Sport, was the main driver of the rights fee. The rights were awarded after three rounds of bidding.

The growing popularity of rugby in France also helped the league boost the rights fee. Some experts say the existing fee undervalued the rights, so an increase was inevitable.

The rights are considered 'nice to have' for Canal Plus, which secured Top 14 rights exclusively in January in a deal with the LNR. They are more important for Eurosport, which is increasingly looking to acquire locally-relevant sports content to improve its offering across Europe. Weekend rugby fits in the schedule as Eurosport has no

live European football rights in France.

Canal Plus will show the first-pick match on its Canal Plus Sport channel on Thursday evenings in prime time. Eurosport will show the second-pick match on Friday evenings. Eurosport will also show a third-pick match on Sunday afternoons. France Télévisions will simulcast eight Sunday afternoon matches over the course of the season on its regional France 3 channel.

One semi-final will be simulcast by Canal Plus and Eurosport, while the other will be simulcast by Eurosport and France Télévisions. The final will be shown by all three broadcasters.

The league had planned to sell pay-television rights to just one broadcaster, providing more exclusivity in order to increase the rights fee (*TV Sports Markets* 19:2).

Since the rights were offered to the market, Canal Plus agreed an exclusive carriage deal with Eurosport to carry its Eurosport and Eurosport 2 channels on the CanalSat satellite platform.

The carriage deal, agreed in February, is seen as a sensible move from Canal Plus. It is paying Eurosport a higher carriage fee for an exclusive deal, but this will more than offset what it would have had to spend on rights to prop up its ailing Sport Plus channel. Sport Plus will close in the summer.

Eurosport also acquired international rights to the Pro D2 outside France for the same five seasons, from 2015-16 to 2019-20. Eurosport is not thought to be paying an additional fee for the rights.

Eurosport will show league matches on its linear channels in Asia-Pacific and via its OTT offering Eurosport Player in Europe. Eurosport is understood to be keen to increase its volume of rugby content in Asia-Pacific in particular, where it already holds Top 14 rights. ■

### Nascar helps fill F1 gap for Fox

Restocking its depleted motorsport portfolio with a growing property was a major driver behind Fox Latin America's renewed and lengthened deal

with North American stock car-racing series Nascar last month.

The new deal is worth about \$1.75m (€1.6m) per season and runs for seven years, from 2015 to 2021. The fee is thought to be a small increase on the previous three-year deal, from 2012 to 2014, but Fox is understood to have significantly increased its marketing and promotion commitment. The rights are exclusive and cover all Latin American countries.

The broadcaster sees Nascar as a key part of its motorsport portfolio alongside Formula One and Formula E. Losing half the Formula One races to the Mediapro agency from the 2015 season has only increased its importance (*TV Sports Markets* 18:22).

The Nascar audience is younger than that for Formula One, broadening Fox's audience. The majority of races air in Latin American prime time, unlike Formula One, of which only four races in the 2015 calendar will air in prime time.

Nascar hopes to develop its audience in Latin America and Fox sees itself very much as a partner in that project. In particular, Nascar has identified Argentina and Brazil as countries which have a strong motorsport following which it plans to exploit, either by bringing through local drivers or by establishing local races. These expansion plans persuaded Fox to sign a long-term deal with increased broadcasting commitments.

In its previous agreements with Nascar dating back to 2005, Fox has held the rights to all Nascar properties, but it has primarily broadcast the top-tier Sprint Cup or the Mexico-based Toyota series.

With Fox Sports 3 now a pure motorsport channel, the broadcaster plans to show more content, including the second-tier Xfinity series, the regional K&N Pro Series, and the third-tier Camping World Truck series.

About 50 per cent of the value in the deal derives from Mexico, which has a developed stock car audience and its own domestic Nascar series. ■

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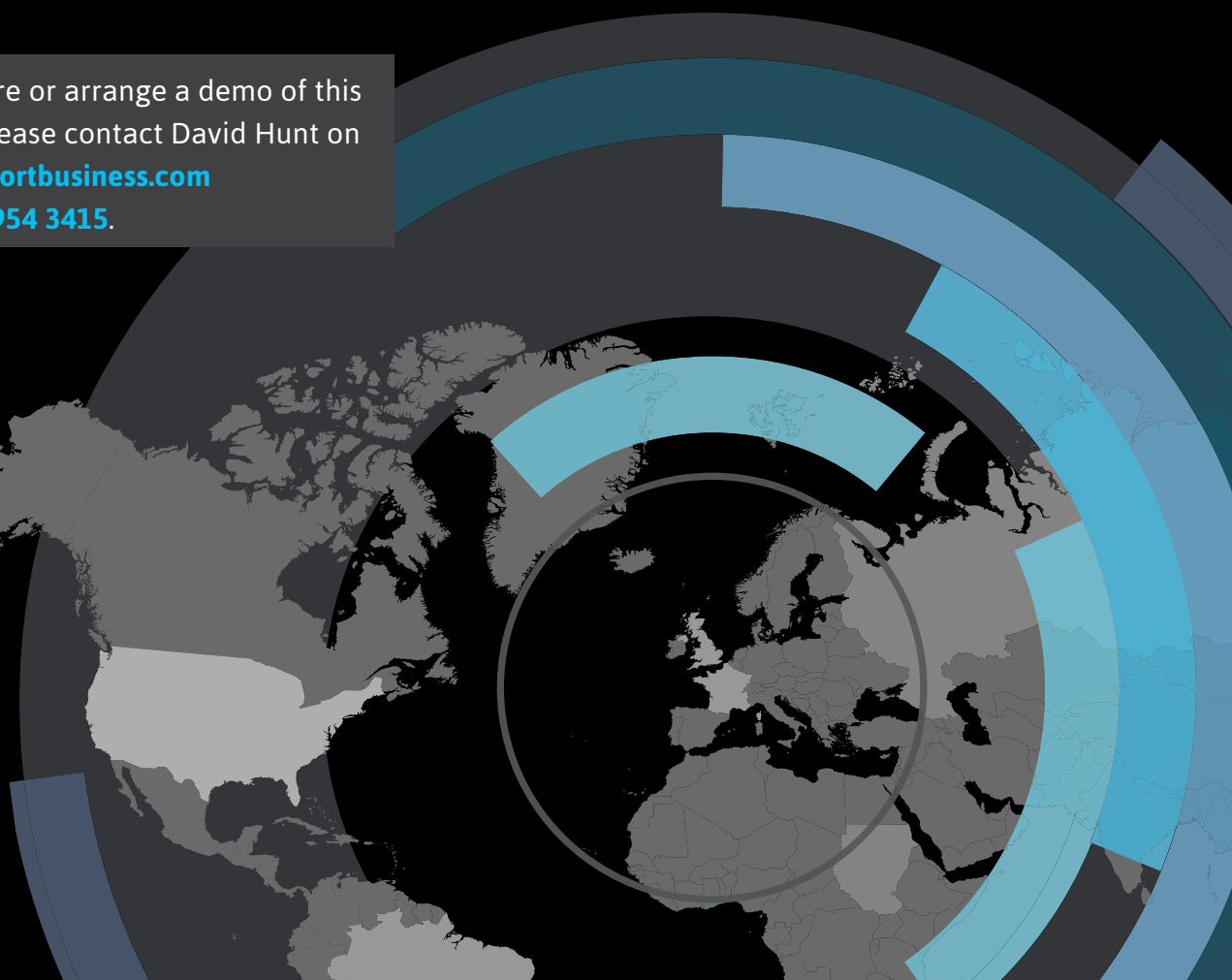
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**SPORTS CLIPS:** News from TVSM Daily from March 26 to April 15**MEDIA RIGHTS 1****Football: Italian national team, Champions League, Europa League and more**

- **Football:** Italian state broadcaster Rai agreed a four-year extension, from 2015 to 2018, to its rights deal with the Italian football federation. The agreement covers Italy's friendly games plus competitive and friendly home matches of the U-21s. It covers television, online and mobile rights (page 5).
- **Football:** Pan-African pay-television operator StarTimes struck a five-year rights deal, from 2015 to 2019, with the Kenyan Football Federation. The agreement, brokered by the MP & Silva agency, will cover all Kenya national team games and is worth a total of Sh270m (€2.6m/\$2.8m).
- **Football:** AspireInfront, a joint venture between the Infront Sports & Media agency and the Aspire Katara Investment vehicle, was appointed by the Qatar Football Association as the exclusive distributor of international media and marketing rights for Qatar home matches. The agreement includes worldwide media rights across all platforms and territories on an exclusive basis, except for Qatar where the rights are non-exclusive. The deal begins on June 1.
- **Football:** Portuguese pay-television broadcaster Sport TV retained rights for the Uefa Champions League and Europa League for three seasons, from 2015-16 to 2017-18. The deal includes live coverage of 145 Champions League and 87 Europa League matches per season. The deal was brokered by Team Marketing on behalf of Uefa.
- **Football:** Commercial and pay-television broadcaster Modern Times Group acquired rights for the Uefa Champions League in Finland in a three-season deal, from 2015-16 to 2017-18, in a deal brokered by Team Marketing. MTG will show every game via its Viaplay online streaming service and a new television channel, Viasat Sport Finland, which will be available on pay-television, IPTV and digital-terrestrial television platforms.
- **Football:** Finnish public-service broadcaster YLE retained rights for the Uefa Champions League in a three-season deal brokered by Team Marketing, from 2015-16 to 2017-18. YLE will show first-pick games on Tuesday evenings and will also show highlights plus live coverage of the final and four editions of the annual Super Cup game between the reigning Champions League and Europa League winners, from 2015 to 2018.
- **Football:** Malaysian pay-television operator Astro retained rights to the Uefa Champions League and Europa League in Malaysia and Brunei for three seasons, from 2015-16 to 2017-18 (page 6).

**SINCE LAST TIME**

- The European Commission is likely to confirm proposals on May 6 to scrap geoblocking, which prevents users in specified territories from accessing certain content online. The decision was reached in principle by the European Union executive on March 25. European Commission vice-president Andrus Ansip said that scrapping geoblocking would be "an uphill struggle" due to pressure from the media industry, with the practice commonly used by sports properties that sell digital rights on a market-by-market basis.
- Media and entertainment company Discovery Communications increased its stake in the Eurosport France division of international sports broadcaster Eurosport from 20 per cent to 51 per cent. The deal follows the completion of Discovery's takeover of Eurosport International's operations in Europe and Asia last year from French media company TF1.

**FOOTBALL**

- The English Premier League pledged to distribute at least £1bn (€1.36bn/\$1.49bn) from the next cycle of its UK media-rights income, from 2016-17 to 2018-19, to divisions below the top tier of football in the country. The league's decision to redistribute a minimum of 20 per cent of the UK domestic rights income represents a 40-per-cent increase on the arrangement in the current cycle. Ahead of the UK general election on May 7, the opposition Labour party pledged to ensure that five per cent of the league's domestic rights income is allocated to grassroots football programmes across the country.

- The Spanish football league, the Liga de Fútbol Profesional, criticised Angel Maria Villar, the president of the Spanish football federation, the Real Federación Española de Fútbol, for allegedly not representing the interests of the country's clubs as they try to push through government legislation that would introduce a collective rights model in the domestic league. League president Javier Tebas blamed Villar for failing to respect a deal brokered by the league, federation and clubs on March 6 to work towards the centralisation of rights. Clubs from the top two divisions in Spain postponed talk of a strike to give the government more time to make progress on the matter.

**MEDIA INTERNATIONAL**

- US pay-television provider Dish Network agreed a multi-year extension to its carriage deal with Major League Baseball. The deal covers the league's pay-television platform, MLB TV, and the MLB Network Strike Zone service, plus digital rights for those channels on DishAnywhere.com and the Dish Anywhere application. The contract includes the launch of out-of-market package MLB Extra Innings on Dish, including authenticated access to the live streaming service, MLB.tv.
- BeIN Media Group will launch a beIN Sports channel in Spain on August 1. The channel will be distributed in the country by the Mediapro agency.
- Outdoor sports broadcaster Outside Television agreed a multi-year carriage deal with US pay-television provider Dish Network. Dish will offer the channel for free until May 6 before it is added to its Multi-Sport subscription package.

## SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from March 26 to April 15

### MEDIA RIGHTS 2

## Football: Europa League, Coppa Italia, English Conference and more

- **Football:** Maltese telco Melita extended rights for the Uefa Europa League in a three-season deal, from 2015-16 to 2017-18, brokered by Team Marketing.
  - **Football:** Italian state broadcaster Rai retained live rights for the Coppa Italia and Supercoppa Italiana in a three-season deal, from 2015-16 to 2017-18, with Italy's Lega Serie A, which operates the club tournaments. The deal covers all platforms (page 5).
  - **Football:** Italian telco Telecom Italia Media acquired digital rights for the Coppa Italia and Supercoppa Italiana in a three-season deal, from 2015-16 to 2017-18, with Lega Serie A. The deal includes near-live highlights and interviews (page 5).
  - **Football:** UK pay-television broadcaster BT Sport extended a rights deal with the Conference, which comprises the two tiers below the English Football League. The agreement will run for three seasons, from 2015-16 to 2017-18. BT will continue to show live coverage of games plus a weekly highlights programme.
  - **Football:** Abu Dhabi Media acquired free-to-air and pay-television rights for North America's Major League Soccer in the Middle East and North Africa. The deal will run for four years, from 2015 to 2018. The Abu Dhabi Sports channels will provide coverage of two MLS regular-season games per week plus the All-Star game, the MLS Cup and the MLS Cup play-offs. The deal, which was brokered by the IMG Events & Media agency, the league's global media-rights distribution partner, covers television and digital rights in 25 countries.
  - **Football:** Brazilian pay-television broadcaster Globosat acquired MLS rights in a four-year deal, from 2015 to 2018 (page 3).
  - **Football:** International pay-television sports broadcaster ESPN extended a global rights deal for the 2015 season of the NASL, the sport's second-tier competition in North America. ESPN will show live coverage of at least 120 matches via its ESPN3, ESPN Play and ESPN Player digital and online platforms in 75 countries.
  - **Football:** US pay-television channel GolTV acquired rights for the Taça de Portugal knockout club tournament. The deal runs for two years, from 2015 to 2016, and covers live coverage of every round, including the final.
  - **Football:** International sports broadcaster Eurosport acquired live rights for the Italy v England friendly match on March 31 in 33 European countries and 16 territories in the Asia-Pacific region.
- 
- German telco Deutsche Telekom made its Telekom Basketball online channel available via internet-connected television services for the first time with a subscription price of €14.95 (\$16.44) per month. Telekom Basketball was previously only available to customers of Deutsche Telekom's IPTV service Entertain.
  - French media group Vivendi entered exclusive talks to acquire 80 per cent of video-sharing website Dailymotion from telco Orange for €217m (\$238m). Vivendi's offer secured the support of the "large majority" of Orange's board ahead of a rival bid from German media company ProSiebenSat.1. Orange would retain 20 per cent of Dailymotion, which has partnerships with a number of sports properties.
  - French pay-television broadcaster Canal Plus plans to close its Sport Plus channel this summer.
  - US pay-television broadcaster Fox Sports agreed a multi-year video content deal with media company AOL. The deal includes video highlights of various sports shown by Fox Sports and covers Fox Sports' digital properties such as @TheBuzzer and Garbage Time. The agreement includes the possibility of co-producing content for major sporting events.
  - UK-based digital media company Copa90, which acquired Major League Soccer's global media platform KickTV in January, agreed a strategic partnership with the Pitch International agency.
  - Sony-owned Indian broadcaster Multi Screen Media launched Sony Kix, a new pay-television sports channel, to coincide with its coverage of the 2015 edition of Twenty20 cricket tournament the Indian Premier League.
  - Telefónica is in talks to sell a significant stake in Spanish pay-television operator Canal Plus to beIN Media Group after Spain's competition regulator, the Comisión Nacional de los Mercados y La Competencia, and the European Commission expressed concerns about deals struck by the Spanish telco to increase its shareholding in Canal Plus to 100 per cent.
  - Talks are at an advanced stage for beIN Media Group to acquire 100 per cent of Turkish pay-television operator Digiturk. In December, it was reported that the group's chief executive, Nasser Al-Khelaifi, had agreed to pay \$820m (€745m) for a 53-per-cent stake in Digiturk, which has exclusive media rights for the country's top-tier football league, the Süper Lig, until the end of the 2016-17 season.
  - Norway's competition authority, the Konkurransetilsynet, approved commercial and pay-television broadcaster TV2's deal to take over pay-television broadcaster C More's sports operations in the country. TV2 will acquire 12 C More pay-television channels in Norway and will assume the latter's sports-rights portfolio, which includes the top domestic football league, the Tippeliga, plus Uefa Europa League, Italian Serie A and Spanish Liga football.

### MEDIA RIGHTS NEGOTIATIONS

- Uefa, football's European governing body, launched an invitation to tender for rights in Italy to Euro 2016. Bids must be submitted by May 12. Uefa also launched a rights-sales process in Germany for Euro 2020. Bids must be submitted by May 13. The CAA Eleven agency is handling both sales processes on behalf of Uefa.

**SPORTS CLIPS:** News from TVSM Daily from March 26 to April 15**MEDIA RIGHTS 3****MLB, NBA, British Basketball League, Mayweather v Pacquiao and more**

- **Baseball:** BeIN Media Group acquired rights in France for the 2015 Major League Baseball season. The deal includes one regular-season game per week on a delayed basis on Mondays plus live coverage of the play-offs, all-star game and World Series.
  - **Basketball:** Caribbean telco Digicel acquired rights for the NBA in a five-season deal, from 2015-16 to 2019-20. The Digicel SportsMax pay-television channel will show live coverage of 48 regular-season games and up to eight play-off games plus highlights show NBA Action, content from league-owned service NBA TV, and archived content.
  - **Basketball:** US pay-television sports broadcaster ESPN struck a deal to expand its coverage of the NBA's Development League to show the post-season campaign in a two-year deal, from 2015 to 2016. The rights will be exploited on the ESPNU and ESPNNews channels.
  - **Basketball:** The British Basketball League agreed a deal for the BBC to broadcast live coverage of the 2015 edition of its play-off final via the UK public-service broadcaster's website and red button digital service.
  - **Basketball:** BeIN Media Group acquired rights in France to North American women's league the WNBA. BeIN Media Group will show 20 games in 2015.
  - **Boxing:** Pay-television broadcaster Solar Sports sublicensed rights in the Philippines for the welterweight world title clash between Manny Pacquiao and Floyd Mayweather Jr. in Las Vegas, USA, on May 2 to free-to-air broadcasters ABS-CBN, GMA-7 and TV5. The fight will also be available on the Cignal and Sky Cable pay-per-view channels and the Solar Sports pay-television channel. Pacquiao has an exclusive rights deal with GMA-7, but the broadcaster agreed to share coverage after a personal request from the Filipino boxer.
  - **Boxing:** German pay-television broadcaster Sky Deutschland acquired rights for the Mayweather Jr. v Pacquiao fight. Sky Deutschland will offer live coverage via its pay-per-view Sky Select service.
  - **Boxing:** Polish public-service broadcaster TVP acquired rights for the Mayweather Jr. v Pacquiao fight, paying \$135,000 (€125,000) for the rights.
  - **Boxing:** SuperSport, the pay-television broadcaster that operates in sub-Saharan Africa, acquired rights for the Mayweather Jr. v Pacquiao fight. Live coverage will be shown on the SuperSport 2 channel in South Africa and the SS2 and SS6 HD channels across the rest of the continent. The deal, which was agreed with the Mayweather Promotions and Top Rank boxing promotional companies, covers all platforms in 44 countries. The coverage will be available via SuperSport's DStv Premium package for no extra fee.
  - **Boxing:** Modern Times Group, the multi-territory commercial and pay-television broadcaster, acquired exclusive rights in the Nordic region for the Mayweather Jr. v Pacquiao fight. MTG will make the fight available on a pay-per-view basis through its Viasat satellite platform and its online streaming service Viaplay in Norway, Denmark and Finland. In Sweden, the bout will be available on Viaplay only.
  - **Boxing:** UK pay-television broadcaster Sky acquired exclusive rights for British fighter Kell Brook's defence of his International Boxing Federation world welterweight title against Frankie Galvin on May 30. The fight will be shown on pay-per-view channel Sky Sports Box Office.
  - **Boxing:** Time Warner-owned US pay-television entertainment channel truTV acquired rights for a new series of Friday night fights promoted by the Top Rank agency. The series will launch on May 1 and will include eight events in 2015.
  - **Cricket:** The Pakistan Cricket Board sold its rights to the country's public-service broadcaster PTV and pay-television broadcaster Ten Sports (page 7).
  - **Cricket:** Nepalese state-owned broadcaster NTV extended a rights deal for events operated by the Nepal Cricket Association by three seasons, from 2015-16 to 2017-18. NTV will show at least four domestic or home international matches per season.
  - **Golf:** Australian pay-television broadcaster Fox Sports secured extensions to exclusive live rights deals for the US Open Championship, USPGA Championship, PGA Tour, European Tour, Asian Tour and Ladies Professional Golf Association Tour for four years, from 2015 to 2018.
- 
- Racecourse Media Group, which is responsible for the rights of horse racing events at 34 UK racecourses, launched a tender for live rights in betting shops across a six-year period, from 2018 to 2023. The winning bidder will broadcast every race live via its own channel.
  - Red Bull co-founder Dietrich Mateschitz played down talk of Servus TV, the German commercial broadcaster owned by the energy drinks brand, acquiring Austrian rights for the Formula One motor-racing world championship. Mateschitz expects ORF to renew its deal beyond the end of the 2016 season despite budget reductions at the public-service broadcaster.

**ALSO SINCE LAST TIME**

- North American stock car-racing series Nascar extended its partnership with FanVision, which offers technology that allows spectators at the track to watch live and tailored race coverage on handheld devices, for four years, from 2016 to 2019.
- European club basketball's Euroleague tested out the use of micro-cameras on playing jerseys for the Real Madrid v Zalgiris Kaunas play-off game on April 10. The footage, taken from cameras on two Zalgiris players, was shown in real time as part of Spanish pay-television broadcaster Canal Plus's coverage.

# SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from March 26 to April 15

## MEDIA RIGHTS 4

### EuroHockey, Royal Ascot, UFC, Bamma, Formula One, Le Mans and more

- **Hockey:** German sports broadcaster Sport1 acquired rights for the 2015 and 2017 EuroHockey Championships national team event and struck a three-year deal, from 2015 to 2017, for the EuroHockey League club competition. The Mediapro agency awarded the rights on behalf of the European Hockey Federation. The rights to both competitions include live, highlights, and on-demand coverage in Germany, Austria, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg and Switzerland. The rights are exclusive in Germany.
- **Hockey:** Dutch public-service broadcaster NOS acquired rights for the EuroHockey League for four years, from 2015 to 2018, in a deal with Mediapro. NOS will show the tournament's most important matches, with a particular emphasis on the Dutch teams, plus highlights, via television and online platforms.
- **Horse Racing:** Australian commercial broadcaster Seven acquired rights for the UK's Royal Ascot. The deal includes free-to-air television, online and mobile coverage plus hybrid broadband broadcast television. Seven will show the final three days of the five-day event, from June 18-20.
- **Mixed Martial Arts:** UK free-to-air digital-terrestrial television channel Pick acquired rights for the Ultimate Fighting Championship Fight Night Gonzaga v Cro Cop 2 and Fight Night Berlin events on April 11 and June 20.
- **Mixed Martial Arts:** Pay-television broadcaster Extreme Sports Channel acquired UFC rights in Poland for four years, from 2015-16 to 2018-19. The channel will show exclusive live coverage of more than 40 events per year.
- **Mixed Martial Arts:** International pay-television sports broadcaster ESPN struck a deal to show live coverage of Britain-based Bamma series events in Europe through digital streaming service ESPN Player. The agreement, which excludes the UK, includes three events.
- **Motorsport:** Greek commercial broadcaster Alpha TV and pay-television broadcaster OTE were awarded rights extensions by the Asset Ogilvy agency for the 2015 season of the Formula One world championship.
- **Motorsport:** CytaVision, the IPTV service operated by Cypriot telco CyTA, acquired rights for live coverage of every Formula One race in a two-year deal, from 2015 to 2016, with Asset Ogilvy.
- **Motorsport:** Free-to-air broadcaster RTV renewed rights in Macedonia for Formula One coverage for three years, from 2015 to 2017, in a deal with Asset Ogilvy.
- **Motorsport:** Free-to-air broadcaster Top Channel renewed Formula One rights in Albania for three years, from 2015 to 2017, in a deal with Asset Ogilvy.
- **Motorsport:** Pay-television broadcaster Fox Sports acquired rights for the World Endurance Championship in the US and Canada. Fox Sports will broadcast live coverage of every round of the 2015 series on television and online platforms plus a 52-minute highlights show after each event.
- **Motorsport:** Pan-European pay-television channel Motors TV retained rights for all five of the 2015 European Le Mans Series endurance races. The deal includes live coverage and highlights in 42 countries.
- **Motorsport:** UK pay-television broadcaster BT Sport acquired rights for all five races of the 2015 European Le Mans Series.
- **Motorsport:** Danish commercial broadcaster TV2 acquired rights for all five races of the 2015 European Le Mans Series.
- **Motorsport:** SRO Motorsports, the promoter of the GT Series, agreed deals in a number of territories. The CBS Sports division of US network CBS renewed rights for coverage of the GT Sprint and Endurance Series acquired live rights to the Sprint Series and highlights of the Endurance Series in a three-year deal, from 2015 to 2017. Deals were also struck with pay-television broadcaster BT Sport in the UK, beIN Media Group in the Middle East and North Africa, pay-television broadcaster Fox Sports Latin America, and pay-television broadcaster SporTV in Brazil.
- **Multi-sport:** Seven acquired rights in Australia for the inaugural 2015 European Games in Baku, Azerbaijan.
- **Multi-sport:** Hong Kong commercial broadcaster TVB acquired exclusive free-to-air and pay-television rights for the 2015 European Games.
- **Paralympic Games:** Seven acquired rights in Australia for the 2016 summer Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Seven acquired free-to-air, pay-television and digital rights in a deal with the Australian Paralympic Committee. Seven will show 14 hours of live coverage per day.
- The Basketball Bundesliga, the top division of the sport in Germany, will continue to offer near-live clips of games via social media platforms Facebook and Twitter following a successful trial carried out in collaboration with its rights partner, telco Deutsche Telekom.
- International pay-television channel Fightbox HD launched an online subscription platform, FightboxLive.com. The service will provide live coverage of the channel's European mixed martial arts and kickboxing events.
- SportAccord, the umbrella organisation for more than 100 international sports federations and organisations, linked up with the IEC in Sports agency to launch a new media production and distribution service. SportAccord Media House will provide host broadcasting, digital distribution, online video archive, broadcast operations and production services to the organisation's members.
- Sony-owned Indian broadcaster Multi Screen Media started offering Bengali-language coverage of the Indian Premier League during the 2015 edition of the Twenty20 cricket tournament via its entertainment channel Sony Aath.

**SPORTS CLIPS:** News from TVSM Daily from March 26 to April 15**MEDIA RIGHTS 5****Henley Royal Regatta, Rugby World Cup, Pro D2, skiing and more**

- **Rowing:** UK sports production and media company Sunset+Vine struck a deal to stream live coverage of all five days of the 2015 Henley Royal Regatta on the River Thames in England. The coverage will be shown on the regatta's official channel on video-sharing website YouTube, as well as via the regatta's website. Sunset+Vine will show eight hours of live coverage per day as well a daily 20-minute highlights programme.
- **Rugby Union:** The French division of pan-European sports broadcaster Eurosport, pay-television broadcaster Canal Plus and public-service broadcaster France Télévisions were awarded rights to the Pro D2 second division in France (page 9).
- **Rugby Union:** Pan-regional broadcaster Eurosport acquired international rights for the Pro D2 (page 9).
- **Rugby Union:** International pay-television broadcaster ESPN Latin America and sister broadcaster ESPN Brasil acquired rights for the Rugby World Cup. The rights, which were acquired from the World Rugby global governing body, cover the 2015 World Cup in England and the 2019 tournament in Japan. The ESPN Latin America and ESPN Brasil channels will broadcast live coverage of at least 16 matches per tournament plus support programming on television, online and mobile platforms. The rights are exclusive, with ESPN Latin America's deal covering Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela.
- **Rugby Union:** Pay-television broadcaster Sky acquired exclusive live rights in Ireland and the UK to the Ireland national team's Rugby World Cup warm-up matches against Scotland and Wales on August 15 and 29. Irish public-service broadcaster RTÉ will show a one-hour highlights programme following both matches and is hopeful of striking similar deals for Ireland's away matches against Wales on August 8 and England on September 5.
- **Skiing:** Austrian public-service broadcaster ORF renewed and expanded a rights deal for various events run by the International Ski Federation (page 2).
- **Surfing:** Brazilian pay-television broadcaster Globosat agreed a multi-year rights deal for the World Surf League.
- **Volleyball:** The NBC Sports Group division of US media company NBCUniversal acquired rights for all seven regular-season men's and women's tournaments on the Association of Volleyball Professionals' Pro Beach Volleyball Tour. A total of 17.5 hours of coverage will be shown on the NBC network, the NBC Sports Network pay-television channel and the NBC Sports Live Extra digital service in 2015.
- **Wrestling:** Pay-television channel USA Network acquired rights for the WWE organisation's weekly show Smackdown. The deal will begin in the first quarter of 2016 following the conclusion of the WWE's existing deal with pay-television channel SyFy.

**INDUSTRY MOVES**

- Carsten Schmidt, formerly chief officer of sports, advertising sales and internet at Sky Deutschland, will replace Brian Sullivan as chief executive of the German pay-television broadcaster, with the latter stepping down on June 24. Schmidt will work as deputy chief executive before Sullivan's departure. • John Learing was named as managing director and Bruno Rocha was

appointed as executive vice-president of WTA Media, the newly-established broadcast production and distribution partnership between the Women's Tennis Association and digital sports media company Perform. • Vanessa Velazquez, who served as programming and acquisitions manager at Mexican production and distribution company PCTV, was appointed as the head of sports media-rights agency Spring Media's new office in Mexico City.

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