

# TVSportsMarkets

[www.sportbusiness.com/tv-sports-markets](http://www.sportbusiness.com/tv-sports-markets)

## Inside this issue

Euroleague value almost trebles in new Spanish deals	3
Uefa national team fees steady in France and Germany	6
SRG renews raft of winter sports rights	9
BWF secures large increase from combined Infront deal	12
Swisscom fights back with Swiss Football League renewal	15
Premiership Rugby significantly grows global reach	18
Türk Telekom acquires host of European basketball leagues	21
BBL completes commercial revamp with Perform deal	23
English Premier League rights on the market in China	25
Sports clips	27

## Editorial



### Robin Jellis

Editor  
+44 20 7265 4139  
+44 7846 822175  
robin@tvsportsmarkets.com  
@robinjellis



### Richard Welbirt

Senior Reporter  
+44 20 7265 4233  
+44 7738 421882  
richard@tvsportsmarkets.com  
@richardwelbirt



### Callum McCarthy

Reporter  
+44 20 7265 4244  
+44 7462 149895  
callum@tvsportsmarkets.com  
@clmmcrthy



### Frank Dunne

Chief Sports Writer  
+39 051 523 815  
+39 349 584 6423  
frank@tvsportsmarkets.com  
@frankdunnetvsm



### Lukas Zajancauskas

Analyst  
+44 20 7265 4206  
+44 7761 088741  
lukas@sportbusiness.com  
@LukasZajan



### David Svenson

Analyst  
+44 20 7265 4245  
+44 7540 343332  
david.svenson@sportbusiness.com  
@David2241

## Account Management



### David Hunt

Sales Manager  
+44 20 7265 4115  
+44 7816 856581  
david.hunt@sportbusiness.com  
@davidhuntsb



### Paul Santos

Head of Business Development  
+44 20 7265 4183  
+44 7931 390502  
paul.santos@sportbusiness.com  
@onesantos



### Scott Longhurst

Account Manager  
+44 20 7265 4184  
+44 7500 904656  
scott.longhurst@sportbusiness.com



### Rhiannon Davies

Account Manager  
+44 20 7265 4198  
+44 7583 192269  
rhiannon.davies@sportbusiness.com  
@RhiDavies88



### Patrick Odling

Account Manager  
+44 20 7265 4103  
+44 7921 140713  
patrick.odling@sportbusiness.com  
@patrickodling

## Client Services



### Marie-Louise Ferrigno-Issa

Head of Client Services  
+44 20 7265 4114  
marie-louise@sportbusiness.com



### Max Frew

Client Engagement Executive  
+44 20 7265 4178  
max.frew@sportbusiness.com

### Important Terms and Conditions

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

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

TV Sports Markets, registered office: 2nd Floor, 5 Thomas More Square, London, E1W 1YW © TV Sports Markets Ltd 2016

## BASKETBALL

# Euroleague value bounces back in Spain thanks to new format

By Callum McCarthy

**The Euroleague has earned an increase of almost 170 per cent on the value of its media rights in Spain, reviving the property's fortunes in the territory after a tough sales process last time.**

Basketball's top-tier pan-European club competition will earn an average of about €8m (\$9m) per season for two seasons, 2016-17 and 2017-18, in deals with telco Telefónica and Catalan public-service broadcaster TV3.

The deal was agreed with the help of the IMG agency, which last November created a joint venture with the Euroleague over 10 seasons, from 2016-17 to 2025-26, worth a minimum of €630m (*TV Sports Markets* 19:21). Euroleague and IMG hope both Telefónica and TV3 will extend their deals to cover the 2018-19 season.

The Euroleague's deals in the previous cycle – brokered at short notice by IMG – were worth a total of about €3m per season, from 2013-14 to 2015-16 (*TV Sports Markets* 17:18). IMG previously had an ad-hoc deal to advise the Euroleague in certain markets.

In the new deal, Telefónica will pay an average of about €6m per season for exclusive regular-season third-party rights; non-exclusive rights to the games of Spanish clubs Barcelona, Baskonia and Real Madrid; and the season-ending Final Four.

TV3 will pay an average of about €2m per season for non-exclusive rights to Barcelona, Baskonia and Real Madrid games, as well as non-exclusive rights to the Final Four.

Telefónica will have exclusive coverage of some games involving Spanish clubs as TV3 will generally show two games per matchday. The telco's coverage will also be exclusive outside the north-east and east of Spain: these are the only parts of the country where TV3's channels are available. It will show games on main channel TV3 and new channel Esport3.

The hugely increased fee mirrors the result in Israel where the Euroleague now earns just over \$6m per season over six seasons, from 2016-17 to 2021-22, in a deal with pay-television broadcaster the Sports Channel (*TV Sports Markets* 20:15).

## IMG to the rescue

Basketball rights experts say the Euroleague's previous three-season rights deals in Spain, from 2013-14 to 2015-16, were well below what the league felt its rights were worth.

Pay-television broadcaster Canal Plus – now wholly-owned by Telefónica – paid about €1.5m per season, plus production costs, for exclusive rights to Malaga and Real Madrid games, non-exclusive rights to Barcelona and Baskonia games, as well as exclusive rights to all regular-season games involving non-Spanish clubs.

TV3 paid about €1m per season for free-to-air rights to all Barcelona games – which it produced itself – as well as selected matches of other Spanish clubs and the Final Four.

Basque public-service broadcaster ETB paid about €500,000 per season for free-to-air rights to the games of local club Baskonia.

These deals, worth a total of about €3m per season, were a 45-per-cent decrease on the €5.5m-per-season total the Euroleague was scheduled to earn in the 2010-11 to 2012-13 cycle.

Then, public-service broadcaster TVE paid about €2.5m per season plus production costs for exclusive rights to Real Madrid games; non-exclusive rights to the games of other Spanish clubs; rights to games of non-Spanish clubs; and the Final Four.

TV3 was scheduled to pay about €1.5m per season for the rights to Barcelona games over the three-season cycle. However, it felt its fee was high when compared with TVE's, and negotiated a reduced fee in 2011-12 and 2012-13.

The remainder of the per-season fee was paid by regional public-service broadcasters covering the games of Baskonia (ETB), Malaga (Canal Sur) and Valencia (Ràdio Televisió Valenciana).

The decrease in fee for the 2013-14 to 2015-16 cycle was due to TVE's lack of interest in the rights, leaving the Euroleague with no national broadcaster and no production for the games of clubs other than Barcelona.

IMG was tasked with brokering a last-minute deal to ensure coverage. The agency was able to convince Canal Plus to pay a reduced fee in exchange for it covering TVE's previous production responsibilities.

Canal Plus also surrendered some of TVE's historic exclusivity to TV3, allowing the Catalan broadcaster to show games involving clubs other than Barcelona.

## Negotiations

Negotiations for the new cycle began once Telefónica had bought Canal Plus's pay-television operation. In April 2015, Spain's competition authority – the Comisión Nacional de los Mercados y la Competencia – approved Telefónica's acquisition of the remaining 56-per-cent stake in Canal Plus.

Telefónica was keen on the Euroleague's new round-robin regular-season format, in which 16 teams each play 30 games. It was also encouraged by the prospect of greater exclusivity, as IMG anticipated its asking price would rule out ETB as a possible buyer of rights to Baskonia games.

Telefónica made an offer for exclusive rights to all Euroleague matches, but TV3's offer of €2m per season plus production costs of Barcelona games was enough to keep some Euroleague matches on free-to-air television.

There was no competition from pay-television broadcasters beIN Sports or Eurosport, although conversations were held with both. The Euroleague and IMG's 'plan B' is thought to have been a patchwork deal with national and regional free-to-air broadcasters in Spain.

## Production

IMG will be responsible for the production of about half of all Spanish clubs' home games. TV3 will continue to produce all Barcelona home matches.

IMG is keen to centralise all production, but Catalan law prevents TV3 from outsourcing production of any coverage unless it is unable to carry out production duties itself. One expert believes this could have a negative impact on TV3's ability to renew its rights beyond 2017-18.

In addition, some matches will be produced by Spanish agency Mediapro, which will be paid a per-game fee by IMG. ◆

## FOOTBALL

# Uefa stands still in new national team deals for France & Germany

By Frank Dunne

**Uefa has failed to secure any meaningful uplift in value for its national team competitions in deals agreed recently in France and Germany. The deals underline that, while Europe remains the bedrock of value for Uefa, it has become a difficult region in which to achieve growth for its national team properties.**

In Germany, public-service broadcasters ARD and ZDF this month acquired the rights to Euro 2020, jointly paying about €145m (\$162m). This is the same fee the two broadcasters paid for Euro 2016.

In France, commercial broadcasters M6 and TF1 jointly acquired rights to France national team matches in European Qualifiers for Euro 2020 and the 2022 Fifa World Cup, as well as Nations League matches in 2018-19 and 2020-21, in a combined deal worth about €140m.

This works out at €3.5m per match, fractionally higher than the €3.4m per match TF1 pays in its deal for European Qualifiers from 2014-15 to 2017-2018 (*TV Sports Markets* 18:1).

Deals in both markets were agreed by the CAA Eleven agency, Uefa's sales agent for its national team competitions.

## Germany

In Germany, Uefa's only real hope of a competitive process laid with commercial broadcaster RTL. However, RTL did not bid aggressively as it has spent heavily on qualifier and friendly matches of the German national team.

RTL comfortably outbid ARD/ZDF on the last two occasions rights to Germany matches came on the market.

In July 2013, it paid €110m, or €5.5m per match, for 20 European Qualifier matches between 2014-15 and 2017-18 (*TV Sports Markets* 17:13).

In June this year it paid €250m, or €8.9m per match, for 28 national team matches between 2018-19 and 2021-22, including 20 European Qualifier matches and eight friendly matches. Rights to 12 Nations League matches are yet to be sold (*TV Sports Markets* 20:10).

Historically, the benchmark value of Germany matches has been about €4.5m to €5m each, above which it is said to be very difficult to refinance the investment from advertising.

One German rights expert said that while RTL may have paid above market rate for its matches, there is stronger commercial logic in investing heavily in quality content over four years than in a four-week competition.

Experts say there were two mitigating factors for the value of Uefa's European Championship rights staying steady. First, the higher-than-expected fees RTL paid in deals for Germany matches gave the governing body a strong overall position in what has traditionally been a tough market.

Second, the €145m ARD/ZDF paid for Euro 2016 was considered to have been a very good result, on which substantial growth would have been difficult to achieve.

The Euro 2016 fee represented an increase of 30 per cent on the €110m ARD/ZDF paid for Euro 2012. Much of this was due to the expansion of the tournament from 31 matches to 51, but Uefa was unable to secure similar percentage increases in many other European markets (*TV Sports Markets* 16:5).

## France

In April, Uefa offered five packages of rights to the market. It asked for bids by the end of May. The packages were:

- Package A: 12 matches of the France men's national team in the Nations League, including the Final Four if France is involved
- Package B1: 14 France national team matches in either European Qualifiers or friendly matches from 2018-19 to 2021-22
- Package B2: a further 14 France national team matches in either European Qualifiers or friendlies from 2018-19 to 2021-22
- Package C: the top 40 third-part matches (not involving France) over the period, including the Final Four of the Nations League if France is not involved
- Package D: all other matches not involving France, plus delayed coverage of all matches.

It quickly emerged that much of the competitive tension would be removed from the process by the decision of M6 and TF1 to bid together and share the rights. The two bid against each other for France matches in the 2014-18 cycle.

M6 and TF1 offered €3.3m per match in a first round of bids, with Uefa aiming for at least €4m per match. Public-service broadcaster France Télévisions is not thought to have bid.

All competitive France matches are listed and must be shown on free-to-air television, meaning the games are of little value to pay-television broadcasters such as beIN Sports and Canal Plus.

However, one local source said beIN was interested in a deal for all packages in which it would have

been the 'gatekeeper' for France matches, sublicensing coverage to free-to-air broadcasters. BeIN played a similar role for Euro 2016, sublicensing some matches to TF1 (*TV Sports Markets* 19:19).

Uefa is thought to have agreed a deal in principle with M6 and TF1 in June for packages A, B1 and B2 worth €3.5m per match. The parties are still finalising long-form agreements. Both the fee and the coverage are expected to be split evenly between the two broadcasters.

Uefa's best hope of a good overall result in the market now lies with package C. This was designed to appeal to both free-to-air and pay-television broadcasters. M6/TF1, beIN and Canal Plus are all said to be interested.

Package D, which contains all other third-party matches (those not involving France), is aimed at pay-television broadcasters. To secure a decent fee, Uefa will need beIN and Canal Plus to bid against one another.

In the current cycle, all third-party matches were offered in a single package which was acquired by Canal Plus for €16m, or €4m per year. BeIN offered €15m (*TV Sports Markets* 18:14).

One rights expert said France was still a difficult market for properties which have traditionally been shown free-to-air. Since the financial crisis of 2008 the advertising market has rallied, but broadcaster appetite to pay more than they can recoup from advertising sales – for 'halo' effects and other strategic advantages – has diminished greatly.

## Current deals

In the current cycle, from 2014-15 to 2017-2018, TF1 holds the rights to 40 France matches in a deal worth €135m, an average of €3.4m per match.

That was seen as a reasonable outcome for Uefa given that, as host of Euro 2016, France had no competitive matches in the first two years. It also explains why Uefa was convinced it could get at least €4m per match this time.

In its previous deal, from 2010-11 to 2013-14, TF1 paid €4.1m per home match. In the four-year cycle before that it paid €5m per home match.

Until 2014, when Uefa centralised national team rights, TF1 acquired home matches from the national football federation, the Fédération Française de Football, and away matches from various sports-rights agencies.

Rights to Euro 2016 were sold to M6, TF1 and beIN in separate deals worth a total of €110m. M6 and TF1 both had live free-to-air rights to the Euro 2016 final between France and Portugal but did not want to share the match. M6 won the right to show the match on the toss of a coin. The match was watched by an average 20.84m viewers – a 71.7-per-cent share and an all-time record for M6.

Euro 2020 rights in France will be sold at a later date. ◆



## TV SWITZERLAND

# SRG renews raft of key winter sports properties in Switzerland

By Robin Jellis

**Swiss public-service broadcaster SRG has renewed a host of winter sports rights in recent weeks for a combined investment of about CHF62m (€57m/\$64m).**

SRG has renewed rights to:

- Fédération Internationale de Ski World Cup skiing events held in Switzerland
- international Fis World Cup skiing events (excluding Austria)
- the Alpine and Nordic World Ski Championships
- the Freestyle Ski and Snowboard World Championships
- the International Ice Hockey Federation World Championship
- the Champions Hockey League
- International Bobsleigh and Skeleton Federation World Cup and World Championships
- European and World Curling Championships.

Fis World Cup rights in Switzerland were sold by Swiss-Ski, the Swiss skiing federation. Rights to all other properties were sold to SRG by the Infront Sports & Media agency.

SRG also last week extended its deal to show one live match per week from the Swiss top-tier football league, the Super League. SRG sublicensed the rights from telco Swisscom following the latter's deal for domestic Swiss Football League media rights (see separate story, page 15).

## Swiss-Ski renewal

SRG renewed its rights to Fis World Cup events held in Switzerland in a six-season deal, from 2016-17 to 2021-22. SRG is understood to be paying a rights fee of about CHF1m per season.

The public-service broadcaster will also cover hefty production costs, which sources close to SRG say are more than CHF3m per season. Swiss-Ski was advised on the deal by the Profile Partners agency.

There was little competition for the rights. Pay-television broadcaster Teleclub, owned by telco Swisscom, told Swiss-Ski in January 2014 it would not bid.

Regardless, few other broadcasters would be willing to pay for production of events, while SRG has a long history of broadcasting winter sport in the country and has significant expertise.

Swiss-Ski and SRG disagreed over some production responsibilities which delayed the completion of the deal. In the previous agreement, SRG had rights for all Swiss-Ski events but did not produce snowboard and freestyle races. In the new deal the rights will revert to Swiss-Ski if SRG declines to show any events – the federation can then either sell them on or exploit the rights themselves.

SRG's previous five-season deal with Swiss-Ski, from 2011-12 to 2015-16, was for domestic and international rights. That deal was worth slightly more than CHF5m per season plus production costs.

International rights made up most of the rights fee; SRG sublicensed these to Infront for about CHF4m per season.

The international rights in the new cycle, from 2016-17 to 2021-22, were acquired earlier this year by the European Broadcasting Union, the consortium of public-service broadcasters, for slightly more than CHF7m per season (*TV Sports Markets* 20:8).

The EBU sought a longer term as Swiss-Ski was pushing for a high fee. The SRG deal will run for six seasons so all Swiss-Ski media-rights deals end at the same time.

Swiss-Ski was keen to sell its domestic and international rights separately in a new cycle. It felt its rights were undervalued in the previous SRG deal and that it could increase the total value of its rights by splitting them.

As well as losing its grip on Swiss-Ski international media rights, Infront is also set to miss out on the federation's marketing rights, which it held until the end of the 2015-16 season – the federation will sell them in-house. It has established a company called Swiss-Ski World Cup Marketing which is headed by former Infront employee Diego Zueger.

## Infront skiing deals

In deals announced at the end of September, SRG acquired rights to all international Fis World Cup events, excluding Austria, over five seasons from 2016-17 to 2020-21. The deal with Infront is thought to be worth close to CHF5m per season.

SRG's previous five-season deal with Infront for the same rights, from 2011-12 to 2015-16, is thought to have been worth about CHF4m per season.

Infront doesn't sell international rights to events held in Austria as the Austrian skiing federation, the Österreichischer Skiverband, sold them to the EBU. The consortium's four-season deal, from 2014-15 to 2017-18, is worth just under €8.5m per season (*TV Sports Markets* 18:3).

SRG is thought to contribute between CHF1m and CHF1.1m per season to this EBU deal for rights in Switzerland.

SRG also acquired rights to the Alpine and Nordic World Ski Championships in 2019 and 2021 from Infront for a fee of about €9m. Infront holds global media and marketing rights to the 2019 and 2021

Championships in a deal with Fis worth €110m (*TV Sports Markets* 17:11).

This is up from the EBU fee of €93.5m for the 2015 and 2017 Alpine and Nordic World Ski Championships. SRG is understood to have contributed about €8m to the deal as an EBU member.

SRG also acquired rights to the 2017 Freestyle Ski and Snowboard World Championships from Infront. These are understood to be of limited value: one winter sports expert estimated the value of the rights to be between CHF70,000 and CHF80,000.

## More Infront rights

Last week, SRG and Infront also announced deals for IIHF World Championship rights for six years, from 2018 to 2023; Champions Hockey League rights for six seasons, from 2017-18 to 2022-23; IBSF World Cup and World Championships rights for two seasons, from 2016-17 to 2017-18; plus the World Curling Championships and European Curling Championships until spring 2018.

Of these rights, the IIHF World Championship are the most valuable. One winter sports expert estimated the new deal to be worth between €500,000 and €600,000 per year.

SRG subsequently agreed a six-year sublicensing deal for IIHF World Championship rights with Teleclub. SRG will retain exclusive rights to all matches of the Swiss national team in the group stages. All other games will be shown by Teleclub. SRG and Teleclub will show one quarter-final, both semi-finals and the final on a non-exclusive basis.

CHL rights were sold to SRG and Teleclub, as in the current three-season deal, from 2014-15 to 2016-17. SRG and Teleclub currently pay a combined €100,000 per season in rights fee and cover production costs of about €400,000 per season – Teleclub pays the bulk of the fee. The new six-season deal is thought to be worth slightly more, with Teleclub still covering the majority of the costs.

The bobsleigh/skeleton and curling rights are thought to be of limited value.

## Super League extension

Under its four-season sublicensing deal for Super League rights, from 2017-18 to 2020-21, SRG will pay Teleclub about CHF7.5m per season. SRG will show one live top-tier Super League match each week. This is the same as in its current five-season deal with Teleclub, from 2012-13 to 2016-17.

The renewal maintains SRG's portfolio of football rights. The public-service broadcaster also holds Uefa Champions League and Europa League rights jointly with pay-television broadcaster Sky. Both sets of deals are for three seasons, from 2015-16 to 2017-18.

Champions League rights in Switzerland are worth a total of €4.1m per season, split €3.1m per season from SRG and €1m per season from Sky. The Europa League is worth a total of €1.6m per season, split €1.3m per season from SRG and €300,000 per season from Sky. ◆

## BADMINTON

# Infront's combined offer for BWF commercial rights usurps rivals

By Richard Welbirg

**Infront Sports & Media secured the Badminton World Federation's global commercial rights for eight years after completing a blockbuster deal last week.**

Sources suggest the agency will pay a minimum guarantee of about \$170m (€152m) to the BWF over the eight years, from 2018 to 2025, or \$21.25m per year. It will share revenues above this with the federation. Both the BWF and Infront declined to comment on the value of the new deal.

The deal includes the BWF's major events – the individual and team world championships – and the revamped BWF Series, which will launch in 2018 and encompass the current BWF World Superseries and Grand Prix Gold events.

It is the first time the BWF has sold media and marketing rights in a single deal. In the current four-year cycle, from 2014 to 2017, media rights are held by the IMG agency, which guarantees \$9m per season.

Singapore-based sports marketing agency Enterprise Sports Group holds marketing rights to BWF events in two deals: one, covering the major events, runs from 2011 to 2016; another, for Superseries rights, runs from 2011 to 2017. Marketing rights to Grand Prix events are sold by local organisers.

The BWF reported tournament revenue – including media rights and sponsorship – of \$16.1m in 2015.

Ian Mathie, Infront's managing director (pan-Asia) told *TV Sports Markets*: "Any deal looks challenging in year one but many look great value over four years, or eight in this case. When the Indian Premier League was launched, people thought they [the buyers] were crazy to be paying \$1bn."

Mathie said the deal was not driven by Infront's Chinese parent company Dalian Wanda, which bought Infront in July 2015, but that the property had been identified as one of high potential.

The agency will also work with the BWF on production of the major events, and advise on the federation's digital presence. Mathie said Infront was keen to utilise the experience of Host Broadcast Services, the Infront-owned production company.

## Key countries

IMG has been successful in increasing the reach of badminton in the current 2014-17 cycle. BWF secretary general Thomas Lund told *TV Sports Markets* this week: "IMG has certainly worked hard to

help develop existing key markets and engage new ones.

“It has also helped boost other areas, such as social media, which means badminton is consistently exposed in a wider range of countries in both Southeast Asia and other parts of the world.”

Infront will have to continue IMG’s work of expanding the game’s global reach while maximising its income from China if it is to turn a profit on the new deal.

IMG is believed to be earning about \$55m over the four-year cycle, or \$13.75m per year, of which 85 to 90 per cent comes from Asian markets. Badminton is in the top two or three sports in many Southeast Asian markets.

The sport’s three traditional powerhouses are Malaysia, Indonesia and China. Malaysia is by some distance the most valuable market in the current cycle – a four-year deal with pay-television broadcaster Astro, from 2014 to 2017, is worth \$4.5m per year.

Indonesia has proven a more difficult market. This is in part due to the poor development of the country’s pay-television market, but also because of an unsuccessful period as a badminton nation.

China has enormous grassroots participation in badminton, but the media-rights value has not matched the sport’s popularity. The BWF has not benefited from the rapid growth of the Chinese digital rights market; digital platforms largely view the sport as one followed primarily by an older audience likely to watch on state broadcaster CCTV.

One expert said viewership in most markets was driven by the success of national players, and that the BWF and Infront must create strong narratives for individual players. He said the lack of major stars was holding back the value of the property in some core markets.

This is a particular concern given the imminent retirements of China’s Lin Dan, widely regarded the greatest male player of all time, and Malaysian legend Lee Chong Wei, his long-time rival.

Mathie said the variety of badminton medallists at the Rio Olympic Games gave some indication of where the game could grow. Players representing four countries – India, Japan and Spain, as well as China – won gold medals. Chinese players won every available gold medal at the 2012 Games.

## Previous deals

IMG’s 2014 to 2017 deal was the first time the BWF sold media rights to all its properties to one agency (*TV Sports Markets* 17:11). From 2011 to 2013, major events were sold by IMG while the World Superseries were sold by the TSA agency. IMG guaranteed about \$1.4m per year; TSA guaranteed \$2.5m per year.

Rights to Grand Prix events were held by the national federations, which sold them to IMG, TSA or the IEC in Sports agencies, with the events shared roughly evenly among the three. These deals are believed to have been worth a total of about \$500,000 per year.

The BWF paid national federations upward of \$60,000 per year to bring the Grand Prix rights in-house during the 2014 to 2017 cycle, depending on the importance of the event.

## Process

ESG is thought to have had a 'soft clause' enabling direct negotiations over a renewal of its marketing rights with the BWF, but no deal was agreed. Instead, the BWF tendered its rights in December last year and closed the bidding in late January this year.

Lund said: "The options to do a longer-term deal and covering both media and marketing rights were all part of the tender. We were, however, also open for shorter-term deals and the possibility that media and marketing rights could be handled by two different agencies as per our existing structure.

"We wanted to have a flexible approach where we would consider different options and decide on the best way forward."

ESG bid to renew its existing rights, as did IMG. The latter's sponsorship division is understood to have decided against joining the media-rights arm in a comprehensive bid. The BWF also received a bid for media and marketing rights from the MP & Silva agency.

MP & Silva's offer is thought to have been disregarded early on. The federation considered IMG and ESG's offer seriously, but neither were invited to revise their bids as the BWF opted for Infront.

Infront's financial offer is thought to have been some way ahead of the combined value of the IMG and ESG bids, and the BWF preferred to work with a single partner.

Mathie said: "One of the key strengths of our bid was our willingness to invest above and beyond what was required in the tender, in terms of growing the sport and making it more available to a wider group of people."

The deal was agreed in principle in late June, but the announcement was delayed due to negotiations over the terms of the long-form contract and the Rio Games.

## Sponsorship

The first year of Infront's deal will overlap with energy company Total's four-year sponsorship deal, from 2015 to 2018. The deal is worth between \$3m (€2.6m) and \$5m per year, according to regional sports marketing experts. The deal covers title sponsorships of BWF major events and second-tier sponsorship of the World Superseries.

Title sponsorship of the Superseries is held by global insurance firm MetLife in a four-year deal, from 2014 to 2017, worth between \$2m and \$2.5m per year.

The simplification of the calendar by merging the Superseries and Grand Prix events is aimed at making the BWF Series more appealing to sponsors. ◆

## FOOTBALL

# Swisscom fights back against UPC with domestic league deal

By Robin Jellis

**The Swiss Football League last week announced the sale of all media and marketing rights worth a total of CHF40m (€37m/\$41m) per season.**

The SFL sold domestic media rights to telco Swisscom for just over CHF30m per season, marketing rights to the InfrontRingier Sports & Entertainment agency for about CHF9m per season, and international media rights to the Lagardère Sports agency for about CHF500,000 per season.

The three deals each run for four seasons, from 2017-18 to 2020-21, and cover the top-tier Super League and second-tier Challenge League.

The total value represents an increase of about 67 per cent compared to the league's current revenue for the same rights. In its current five-season cycle, from 2012-13 to 2016-17, the league sold all media and marketing rights to Swisscom for about CHF24m per season.

Swisscom kept domestic media rights and sold marketing rights to InfrontRingier. The agency's deal to sublicense the rights from Swisscom was backed by the bank Raiffeisen, which sought title sponsorship of the Super League. InfrontRingier sold the other marketing rights. The marketing rights are thought to have been sold to InfrontRingier for close to CHF9m per season.

In the current cycle, clubs receive direct payments from Swisscom and InfrontRingier – on top of the fees paid to the league – for exposure on advertising boards in club stadiums. These payments take the current total investment in SFL rights closer to CHF32m per season (*TV Sports Markets* 20:13).

In the new cycle, the league said there will be “direct investments in the clubs and various contributions in kind” on top of the rights fees. It is unclear how much this will amount to.

In the current cycle, the league sold international rights to Lagardère separately in a four-season deal, from 2013-14 to 2016-17. The league's international rights in the 2015-16 season were worth about CHF375,000.

All SFL media rights in the new cycle were tendered on April 25 by the league and its adviser, the Profile Partners agency, with bids due by May 20. The league sought to sell media and marketing rights separately this time.

The league announced on June 9 it had come to a decision over the destination of its media rights, but

didn't announce a winner. Swisscom and the league finalised a long-form contract after the summer.

It is understood Swisscom was up against a strong bid from telco UPC for domestic media rights. A source close to the league described UPC's offer as "compelling", but Swisscom's need for the rights led to it tabling a bigger offer. SRG is also thought to have bid.

## Swisscom fightback

Holding on to SFL rights is a statement of intent from Swisscom, which lost its grip on the Swiss ice hockey league in July. Those rights were jointly acquired by UPC and SRG in a five-season deal, from 2017-18 to 2021-22, worth an average of CHF35.4m per season.

In August, Swisscom acquired non-exclusive National Hockey League rights in a three-season deal, from 2016-17 to 2018-19, worth about \$500,000 per season. The acquisition was partially driven by the loss of domestic ice hockey rights to UPC (*TV Sports Markets* 20:16).

Swisscom further bolstered its ice hockey portfolio last week, agreeing a six-season deal for Champions Hockey League rights, from 2017-18 to 2022-23, together with SRG.

The deal is thought to be slightly more valuable than the current three-season deal, from 2014-15 to 2016-17, in which SRG and Swisscom split a fee of about €100,000 per season and production of about €400,000 per season (*TV Sports Markets* 18:11).

Swisscom has also sublicensed from SRG rights to the International Ice Hockey Federation World Championship over six years, from 2018 to 2023 (see separate story, page 9).

Additionally, Swisscom acquired rights to the Swiss Ice Hockey Cup in a deal with InfrontRingier that will run from 2017-18 to 2022-23. SRG has a deal covering the same six seasons for the final, with an option to show the semi-final. Swisscom will offer broader coverage.

As well as these acquisitions, *TV Sports Markets* understands Swisscom is set to launch a free-to-air channel on which it will show one live Challenge League match per week, on Mondays.

The planned channel will be sport-focused and will predominantly show magazine programming, plus some live sport. Details are still to be finalised.

## Football coverage

Swisscom will exploit Super League rights on its Teleclub pay-television channels. It will show all 180 live Super League matches per season, 144 of which will be exclusive.

The telco has agreed a sublicensing deal with public-service broadcaster SRG for rights to one live Super League match per week – 36 per season – to be shown on Sundays, plus highlights rights.

The deal is for the full four-season cycle, from 2017-18 to 2020-21, and will be worth about CHF7.5m



per season. This is a similar value to the sublicensing deal between the two in the current five-season cycle, from 2012-13 to 2016-17. The value has stayed flat as there was little alternative for Swisscom: no other broadcaster could compete for the rights.

Rather than separating free-to-air and pay-television rights, the league sold all domestic rights to Swisscom as it felt it was easier to deal with just one partner. The SFL inserted a clause into Swisscom's deal which stipulated it had to sell on 36 Super League matches per season to a free-to-air broadcaster.

Swisscom will spend about CHF25,000 per match on production – it uses the NEP production company. SRG will spend slightly more than this, about CHF30,000 per match; its coverage is handled by its production subsidiary TPC.

Swisscom's new deal includes rights in Austria, France, Germany and Italy as well as Switzerland – as in its current deal. It acquires rights in these territories and warehouses them to protect its pay-television business from overspill. Lagardère's new international rights deal covers all other territories, as in its current agreement with the league.

## Carriage deals

Last week Swisscom announced carriage of telco Altice's SFR Sport channels, which give its subscribers access to English Premier League football in Switzerland. Altice bought these rights from 2016-17 to 2018-19 for €120m per season. Its rights are exclusive in France and Monaco, and non-exclusive in Andorra, Luxembourg and Switzerland (*TV Sports Markets* 19:22; 19:23).

Under the carriage deal Swisscom subscribers will have access to the SFR Sport 1, SFR Sport 2 and SFR Sport 4K channels. The deal runs until 2018-19, when Altice's Premier League deal ends. Although Altice's coverage is in French, the carriage deal covers all of Switzerland.

Swisscom also has a carriage deal with pay-television broadcaster Sky Deutschland. The telco pays Sky a minimum guarantee and there is an additional per-subscriber fee.

The most important content Swisscom receives from Sky is coverage of the German Bundesliga. Sky's deal covering Switzerland expires at the end of 2016-17, but it is in advanced talks over a new deal (*TV Sports Markets* 20:11).

Swisscom subscribers also get coverage of the DFL-Supercup, Wimbledon tennis, PGA Tour and European Tour golf, and Formula One motor racing from the deal. ◆

## RUGBY UNION

# Premiership Rugby significantly grows global audience reach

By Richard Welbirg

Increasing the number of live Premiership Rugby matches broadcast had an “immediate and tangible” impact on its international distribution and income, the league’s commercial director Dominic Hayes told *TV Sports Markets* this week.

In new deals starting from the 2016-17 season the league is distributing a feed for all 135 matches per season for the first time. Hayes said this had made the property more attractive to broadcasters.

“One thing that’s happened is broadcasters want to deploy content across multiple channels and consequently we have created a property that enables them to populate those other platforms,” he said.

Premiership Rugby estimates its household reach has increased from 65m to 175m in the new deals starting this season, which began on September 2.

The league – English rugby union’s top tier – sold its international rights for five seasons, from 2016-17 to 2020-21, to international telco Altice and the RDA TV agency, though it carved out rights in the US (*TV Sports Markets* 19:15).

Altice and RDA agreed a buyout deal worth about \$5m (€4.5m) per season for the league’s rights. Most experts believe Altice is bankrolling the agreement.

Carving out rights in the US was a success for Premiership Rugby. It struck a three-season deal, from 2016-17 to 2018-19, with media company NBCUniversal that guarantees coverage of 24 regular-season matches on NBCSN, reaching 83m pay-television households. The previous rights-holder, beIN Sports, reaches 24m according to research company Nielsen’s data in June 2016.

Not only did the deal create the largest single increase in its exposure, but it will earn \$300,000 per season – one of the highest fees paid for its rights (*TV Sports Markets* 20:12).

## Hard sell

Under the terms of their joint venture, Altice is exploiting Premiership rights in countries where it operates its SFR Sport channels – Belgium, France, French-speaking sub-Saharan Africa, Israel, Luxembourg, Portugal and Switzerland – while RDA sells rights elsewhere.

In the Premiership's previous sales cycle, from 2013-14 to 2015-16, international rights were distributed by the Pitch International agency, which paid a minimum guarantee of \$2m per season (*TV Sports Markets* 17:11).

RDA's task of distributing rights in the new cycle was made trickier by the fact that beIN Media Group made no attempt to renew its rights in Australia or the Middle East and North Africa.

BeIN had bid against Altice/RDA in the tender for the league's international rights. With Altice intending to broadcast matches in France, one of beIN's key territories, the media group is thought to have ended its interest in acquiring the rights in other territories in which it operates.

Hayes said RDA had been "very aggressive in going to market and selling very hard". A source close to the situation said that – accounting for the values assigned to the rights in Altice's territories – Altice and RDA had exceeded the \$5m per season they paid for the rights.

## RDA deals

The most notable area of growth in the new cycle was in sub-Saharan Africa, where the competitive environment helped English-language rights almost quadruple in value.

Pay-television broadcaster SuperSport acquired rights in South Africa alone from 2016-17 to 2018-19, with telco Econet Wireless buying rights across the rest of the region from 2016-17 to 2020-21 (*TV Sports Markets* 20:12).

Across Asia-Pacific, fees are thought to have increased despite little competition in several markets. Rights across Asia (excluding Japan) were acquired by US media group Discovery Communications, from 2016-17 to 2020-21, and will be shown via pay-television broadcaster Setanta Sports Asia and OTT service Rugby Pass.

The previous deal across the region with Setanta, from 2013-14 to 2015-16 cycle, was worth about \$200,000 per season.

Rugby-focused Setanta was acquired by Discovery in June last year. Discovery has also taken a 23.5-per-cent stake in Rugby Pass, with an option to acquire a controlling interest. Eurosport, Setanta and Rugby Pass share the same shareholder, limiting competition for rugby rights in the region (*TV Sports Markets* 20:5).

In the key Oceanian rugby-playing nations there was also little competition. In New Zealand, Sky is the major buyer of sports rights following the exit of OTT provider Coliseum. Sky acquired the rights in a five-season deal, from 2016-17 to 2020-21, worth about \$280,000 per season.

In Australia, RDA struck a five-season deal, from 2016-17 to 2020-21, with pay-television broadcaster Fox Sports, thought to be worth about \$200,000 per season. Setanta Sports Australia – now owned by and branded as beIN Sports – acquired rights from 2013-14 to 2015-16 for about \$150,000 per season.

In the Middle East and North Africa, a five-season deal was struck with pay-television broadcaster OSN.

RDA agreed deals with the Perform Group for its DAZN OTT platforms in both Japan and Germany, Austria & Switzerland. The deal valued the rights at just over \$100,000 per season in the former territory and at just under \$100,000 per season in the latter.

RDA has yet to agree a deal in Italy, which has become a difficult market for rugby rights-holders. There is currently no deal in the country for this season's Pro12 club rugby union league, despite the participation of two Italian teams.

Deals have also been struck with:

- pay-television broadcaster Go in Malta
- pay-television broadcaster Flow Sports in the Caribbean
- pay-television broadcaster ESPN Latin America
- telco Rogers in Canada
- commercial broadcaster Fiji TV in the Pacific Islands, which has sublicensed to Tonga TV
- commercial and pay-television broadcaster Nova in Czech Republic and Slovakia.

All deals are for five seasons, apart from those with Go, Nova and Rogers. RDA also agreed a deal for in-flight and in-ship rights with Global Eagle Entertainment, the league's first deal of this type.

## Production

Premiership Rugby introduced eight-camera high-definition coverage of all matches about three years ago in order to ensure the television match official system could be implemented in all matches. This season it added live commentary at all grounds for the first time, allowing it to distribute all matches to broadcasters.

Production is handled by Premiership Rugby Productions, owned by Perform. The league bears the additional production costs from this season, which Hayes described as an important investment. ◆

## BASKETBALL

# Türk Telekom buys up host of European basketball leagues

By Callum McCarthy

**Türk Telekom has acquired rights to an assortment of European basketball leagues in recent weeks to compensate for its lack of Euroleague and Turkish domestic league coverage.**

The telco bought rights to the top-tier leagues in Spain (Liga ACB) and Italy (Serie A) from the MP & Silva agency in a two-season deal, from 2016-17 to 2017-18. The deal is thought to be worth a total of about €150,000 (\$168,000) per season, with the Liga ACB being the more expensive property.

Türk Telekom also acquired rights to Germany's top-tier Basketball Bundesliga from the Sportsman Media Group agency for 2016-17 only, and rights to the VTB United League – which includes 10 teams from Russia and one from each of Belarus, Estonia, Kazakhstan and Latvia – from the Lagardère Sports agency for 2016-17 only.

The telco acquired VTB United League rights from Lagardère as part of a package including ATP World Tour 250 tennis events and some minor athletics rights. The value assigned to the VTB United League is thought to be no more than €30,000.

The deals for the Bundesliga and VTB United League are for one season only as Türk Telekom is uncertain about each league's appeal to its subscriber base.

The telco is monitoring the production quality of the VTB United League in the hope it will improve, and is observing ratings for the Bundesliga to gauge interest in the league. The Bundesliga feed received by Türk Telekom has thus far omitted the games of bigger clubs.

Finally, the telco acquired rights to games between Olympiacos and Panathinaikos in the top-tier Greek Basket League, along with the semi-finals and finals of the league play-offs. These rights were acquired from Greek pay-television broadcasters Nova and OTE.

Türk Telekom will exploit all these basketball rights on its pay-television Tivibu Spor channels, which are exclusive to the telco's IPTV Tivibu service and its mobile TV Tivibu Go service.

The Liga ACB, Serie A and Basketball Bundesliga were all shown by commercial broadcaster Sports TV in the 2015-16 season. Neither VTB United League nor Greek Basket League matches were broadcast in Turkey last season.

## Value for money

Türk Telekom's entire collection of European basketball rights is worth about €230,000 in the 2016-17 season, and is a cost-effective way for it to cater to basketball fans.

Tivibu will mainly seek to show clubs playing in the Euroleague, basketball's top-tier pan-European club competition. Its portfolio of European basketball rights allows it to show the domestic games of nine Euroleague clubs – three from Spain, two from Russia, two from Greece, one from Italy and one from Germany.

Pay-television operator Digiturk currently holds Euroleague rights in a five-season deal, from 2014-15 to 2018-19, worth about €3m per season (*TV Sports Markets* 18:11).

As part of its deal, Digiturk must sublicense at least one match per round involving a Turkish club to a free-to-air broadcaster. In the 2016-17 season, these rights have been acquired by state broadcaster TRT. In 2015-16, the rights were held by commercial broadcaster NTV Spor.

There are a total of four Turkish clubs competing in the Euroleague in the 2016-17 season. Two Turkish clubs are guaranteed participation each season: Fenerbahçe and Anadolu Efes Istanbul.

Rights to Turkey's top-tier domestic league – the Turkish Basketball Super League – are held by Digiturk and NTV Spor in a joint three-season deal, from 2015-16 to 2017-18, worth about €4m per season. The deal was struck with the Infront Sports & Media agency. ◆

## BASKETBALL

# Perform deal completes BBL's revamp of its commercial rights

By Richard Welbirg

**The British Basketball League's six-season deal with the Perform Group last month marks the completion of the league's commercial revamp and sets a clear course for its future.**

Perform has bought the league's global rights from 2016-17 to 2021-22. The digital specialists are understood to be paying the league just over £300,000 (€344,000/\$385,000) in the first season; its fee will increase slightly each year thereafter.

The majority of Perform's fee covers the production of feeds from every BBL game. This represents a huge increase in production costs: in the 2015-16 season, only a handful of regular-season games were produced for streaming on pay-television broadcaster Sky's website.

Perform sees the acquisition as fitting with its strategic focus on basketball. Its 17-season, €500m deal with the International Basketball Federation (Fiba) is one of the company's biggest deals (*TV Sports Markets* 20:3).

Betting rights are the focus of the BBL deal in the short term, though Perform's rights in this area will not be wholly exclusive in the 2016-17 season.

Sports technology company Genius Sports has a two-season data collection contract with the league, covering the 2015-16 and 2016-17 seasons, which allows it to distribute data rights to betting operators.

Production is handled by the Televideo company, the BBL's long-term partner. Each BBL game comes with commentary, with each team providing an in-house pundit. It costs about £1,200 to produce the average game with a single camera.

Perform is not handling production as its resources are focused on its production commitment to Fiba's Basketball Champions League.

The single-camera coverage is sufficient quality for Watch&Bet, Perform's distribution platform for betting streaming rights, but is short of broadcast quality.

In the long-term, Perform and the league aim to steadily increase the production quality to at least five-camera coverage – good enough to broadcast more games on Perform's streaming platform LiveBasketball.com.

There is no set timeline for the improvement. Perform will also informally advise the league on its development.

## Strategy

The deal completes the revamp of the league's media and sponsorship strategy following the appointment of Bob Hope as commercial director in July 2015.

Hope's first move was to close subscription streaming service BBL TV, which was launched ahead of the 2013-14 season, but had suffered from streams of varying quality and was consistently loss-making. In the 2014-15 season, its last, BBL TV showed 45 games.

Ahead of the 2016-17 season the BBL sought a broadcast partner in order to maximise its visibility and appeal to sponsors. In July, public-service broadcaster the BBC agreed to expand its coverage.

The BBC has broadcast live coverage of the BBL play-off final online and via its Red Button service since the 2014-15 season; in 2016-17 it will stream 24 BBL games and eight games from the Women's British Basketball League via the BBC Sport website. Its live stream will be available globally.

The BBC is not paying a rights fee but will cover the cost of eight-camera production, which is produced by both the BBC and Televideo. The public-service broadcaster has also committed to promoting the league via social media.

The deal with Perform covers all other BBL media rights. Perform will be involved in future domestic rights deals and is responsible for international media-rights deals, although interest from international broadcasters is currently minimal. ◆



## FOOTBALL

# Premier League moves early to reap rewards of Chinese market

By Richard Welbirg

**The English Premier League has launched an early tender in China in order to reap the benefits of the country's buoyant media-rights market.**

The tender covers platform-neutral rights for all 380 matches per season over three seasons from 2019-20 to 2021-22. It was issued in late September with a deadline for bids of November 1.

Bidders are required to submit plans for how they would exploit some or all the rights on linear broadcast channels, but does not require a set number of matches. Agencies can bid, but must have a clear plan for how they will sublicense the rights. No joint bids are allowed in the first round.

Premier League rights in China and Macau are currently held by the Super Sports Media Group, which pays \$18m per season over six seasons, from 2013-14 to 2018-19 (*TV Sports Markets* 18:4). This was the first time the league agreed a six-season deal.

SSMG's model has been to show a certain number of matches via its own pay-per-view stream, and make available a larger package of non-exclusive rights for digital players at a fixed price.

For 2016-17, SSMG demanded from each digital player \$38m for 230 matches, up from the \$18m paid by each of LeSports, Sina Sports and Tencent for rights in the 2015-16 season. LeSports and PPTV agreed deals, earning SSMG \$76m, while Sina and Tencent balked at the 111-per-cent increase in SSMG's asking price.

SSMG also sublicenses rights to several regional broadcasters, to IPTV broadcaster BesTV, and since the 2015-16 season, to CCTV. BesTV exploits OTT rights to the Premier League from 2013-14 to 2018-19. It has a 14-per-cent shareholding in SSMG.

Since the league's deal with SSMG, the market for digital rights in China has grown enormously. Alongside basketball, football is China's most popular sport. The top basketball property, the NBA, sold its rights in February 2015 for \$500m over five seasons (*TV Sports Markets* 19:3).

The market has since reached new peaks as deals for the Chinese Super League were agreed with China Sports Media and LeSports in turn (*TV Sports Markets* 19:19; 20:4).

Industry experts say a new deal in the country will be worth hugely more. Richard Scudamore, the league's executive chairman, was in Beijing as *TV Sports Markets* went to press. ◆

# TV SPORTS AWARDS



WWW.TVSPORTSAWARDS.ORG

MONDAY  
OCTOBER **24<sup>TH</sup>** 2016

**FAIRMONT  
MONTE CARLO**

12 AVENUE DES SPÉLUGUES, 98000 MONACO

IN SUPPORT OF



# MEDIA RIGHTS DEALS

SEPTEMBER 29 TO OCTOBER 12

## FOOTBALL

- ◆ Sports broadcaster Eurosport agreed a deal in Norway with the English Football League, which operates the three divisions of English football below the top-tier Premier League. The deal includes rights to the second-tier English Championship and the League Cup knockout competition.
- ◆ Australian commercial broadcaster Nine acquired free-to-air rights to the Australian men's national team's qualifying campaign for the 2018 Fifa World Cup. Nine will simulcast matches alongside pay-television broadcaster Fox Sports, from which it sublicensed the rights.
- ◆ German public-service broadcasters ARD and ZDF acquired rights for the Uefa Euro 2020 national team tournament. The deal with Uefa, football's European governing body, was brokered by ARD and ZDF's representative agency, SportA. The deal includes linear, digital and radio rights (page 6).
- ◆ Telco Swisscom signed a four-season extension to its deal with the Swiss Football League for rights to the top-tier Super League and second-tier Challenge League (page 15).
- ◆ The Lagardère Sports agency signed a four-season extension to its contract with the SFL for international rights to the Super League and Challenge League (page 15).
- ◆ Campeonato Brasileiro Série A club Internacional sold its media rights to media group Globo in a four-year deal, from 2021 to 2024.

## OTHER SPORTS

- ◆ **Badminton:** Chinese conglomerate Dalian Wanda, through its subsidiary the Infront Sports & Media agency, signed an eight-year deal for the media and marketing rights of the Badminton World Federation (page 12).
- ◆ **Baseball:** International channel syndicator Fox Networks Group agreed a digital rights deal with Major League Baseball in Chinese Taipei. The agreement will run from 2017 to 2020.
- ◆ **Basketball:** Vietnamese pay-television operator Vietnam Cable Television (VTVcab) acquired exclusive NBA rights in the country. The deal will run for three seasons, from 2016-17 to 2018-19. VTVcab will broadcast live coverage of almost 200 matches each year.
- ◆ **Basketball:** The Perform Group agreed a six-season media-rights deal with the British Basketball League domestic club competition (page 23).
- ◆ **Basketball:** German commercial broadcaster ProSiebenSat.1 agreed a deal to sublicense rights to club competitions operated by Euroleague Basketball from telco Deutsche Telekom. Free-to-air channel ProSieben Maxx will show one live game from the second-tier Eurocup competition on Wednesday evenings, and selected games featuring German champion Brose Bamberg in the top-tier Euroleague.
- ◆ **Basketball:** Chinese media company Ali Sports agreed a deal for the Australian National Basketball League club competition. Ali Sports will show every game of the 2016-17 season live

# MEDIA RIGHTS DEALS

SEPTEMBER 29 TO OCTOBER 12

on its Youku Tudou streaming platform, with Mandarin commentary.

◆ **Basketball:** Chinese media company Sina Sports agreed a deal for the Australian National Basketball League. It will stream every game of the 2016-17 season live with Mandarin commentary via its website, mobile site and Sina Sports application.

◆ **Basketball:** Digital media company Veqta acquired exclusive rights in India to the Australian National Basketball League. The five-season deal runs from 2016-17 to 2020-21.

◆ **Basketball:** French pay-television broadcaster Canal Plus acquired rights to the Basketball Champions League European club tournament, from 2016-17 to 2018-19. Canal Plus will broadcast a minimum of 56 regular-season games each year, as well as the play-offs and Final Four.

◆ **Basketball:** The NBA extended and expanded its rights partnership with Chinese IPTV provider BesTV. Under the new deal, nearly 1,300 games and other programming will be made available across the platforms of BesTV and parent company Shanghai Media Group.

◆ **Basketball:** The NBA signed a multi-year extension to its partnership with Italian pay-television broadcaster Sky Italia. Under the expanded deal, a dedicated NBA web portal, [www.nba.com/italia](http://www.nba.com/italia), will launch in Italy.

◆ **Basketball:** Catalan public-service broadcaster TV3 extended a rights deal for the Euroleague (page 3).

◆ **Basketball:** Spanish telco Telefónica extended a rights deal for the Euroleague (page 3).

◆ **Basketball:** Israeli pay-television broadcaster the Sports Channel extended its deal for the Euroleague. The six-season deal runs from 2016-17 to 2021-22 and includes the option for a further three seasons. The deal was first reported in *TV Sports Markets* 20:15.

◆ **Basketball:** US regional broadcaster Comcast SportsNet Mid-Atlantic renewed its platform-neutral rights deal for games featuring the NBA's Washington Wizards. The deal will reportedly run until the end of the 2031-32 season.

◆ **Basketball:** Greek pay-television broadcaster Nova extended its deal with the Euroleague by three seasons, from 2017-18 to 2019-20.

◆ **Bobsleigh/Skeleton:** Swiss public-service broadcaster SRG acquired rights to the International Bobsleigh & Skeleton Federation's World Cup and World Championships, up to and including the 2017-18 season (page 9).

◆ **Curling:** SRG bought World Curling Championships and European Curling Championships rights until spring 2018 (page 9).

◆ **Golf:** The Asian Tour awarded live rights for the 2016 Manila Masters to pay-television provider Cignal TV in the Philippines. The deal also includes coverage of the Shinhan Donghae Open, BNI Indonesian Masters, Venetian Macao Open and Hong Kong Open.

◆ **Handball:** The MP & Silva agency agreed a deal to distribute global rights of the South East Handball Association Liga, a competition which

# MEDIA RIGHTS DEALS

SEPTEMBER 29 TO OCTOBER 12

gathers together clubs from seven Southeast European national associations. The deal excludes territories which have clubs competing in the league – Belarus, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Hungary, Macedonia, Slovakia and Slovenia.

◆ **Hockey:** International sports broadcaster Eleven Sports Network acquired exclusive live rights in Belgium, Luxembourg, Poland, Singapore and Taiwan to the Euro Hockey League club tournament. Eleven agreed the five-season deal, from 2016-17 to 2020-21, with the Mediapro agency.

◆ **Hockey:** Eleven Sports Network, through an agreement with Mediapro, acquired live and exclusive rights in Belgium, Luxembourg, Poland, Singapore and Taiwan to the 2019 and 2021 editions of the EuroHockey Championships national team tournament.

◆ **Horse Racing:** The NBC Sports Group division of US media company NBCUniversal acquired live rights in the country to the inaugural edition of the Pegasus World Cup Invitational event. The deal was agreed with horse-racing company the Stronach Group, whose Florida-based Gulfstream Park racecourse will host the event on January 28, 2017.

◆ **Horse Racing:** The Racing Partnership, which represents 22 racecourses across the UK, agreed a multi-year rights deal with betting operator Paddy Power Betfair. Through the agreement, all Paddy Power Betfair shops in the UK and Ireland will take TRP content. Meets at TRP racecourses will be provided by the operator from January 1.

◆ **Ice Hockey:** UK pay-television broadcaster Premier Sports announced a new deal for NHL rights over five seasons, from 2016-17 to 2020-21. Premier Sports will broadcast 15 regular-season games a week, with 11 on an exclusive basis. The deal was first reported in *TV Sports Markets* 20:14.

◆ **Ice Hockey:** SRG acquired exclusive media rights in Switzerland to the International Ice Hockey Federation's World Championship from 2018 to 2023 (page 9).

◆ **Ice Hockey:** SRG and Teleclub purchased media rights for pan-European club competition the Champions Hockey League for the 2017-18 to 2022-23 seasons (page 9).

◆ **Ice Hockey:** Swiss pay-television broadcaster Teleclub agreed sublicensing deals with SRG for rights to the IIHF World Championship (page 9).

◆ **Ice Hockey:** US regional broadcaster Comcast SportsNet Mid-Atlantic renewed its platform-neutral rights deal for games featuring the NHL's Washington Capitals. The deal, which covers television and digital platforms, will reportedly run until the end of the 2031-32 season.

◆ **Ice Hockey:** German sports broadcaster Sport1 extended a deal for NHL rights. The four-season deal covers the 2016-17 to 2019-20 seasons and grants Sport1 platform-neutral rights on an exclusive basis in Germany, and non-exclusively in Austria and Switzerland. A deal was reported to be close in *TV Sports Markets* 20:16.

◆ **Olympic Games:** US media group Discovery Communications agreed to sublicense free-to-air Olympic Games rights to Belarus's National State

# MEDIA RIGHTS DEALS

SEPTEMBER 29 TO OCTOBER 12

Broadcasting. The deal will cover the 2018 winter Games and the 2020 summer Games.

◆ **Rowing:** The International Rowing Federation extended its rights deal with the European Broadcasting Union consortium of public-service broadcasters. The four-year deal will run from 2017 to 2020. The deal was first reported in *TV Sports Markets* 20:4.

◆ **Rugby Union:** Irish pay-television broadcaster Eir Sport acquired live rights to the rugby union Test match between Ireland and New Zealand, which will be staged in the US city of Chicago on November 5. Eir Sport will also broadcast Irish rugby union team Munster's game against the Maori All Blacks on November 11.

◆ **Tennis:** Pay-television sports broadcaster ESPN Brasil extended its rights deal with the International Premier Tennis League. The new contract will cover the 2016 edition of the franchise-based competition.

◆ **Volleyball:** Brazilian commercial broadcaster RedeTV expanded a rights deal for the country's top-tier Superliga. RedeTV pledged to show live coverage of men's and women's volleyball in primetime on Thursday evenings. It will also continue to show live coverage of games at 2pm on Saturdays.

◆ **Wrestling:** ProSiebenSat.1 agreed a new multi-year rights deal with the WWE. From April 2017, the ProSieben Maxx channel will have exclusive rights in Germany to the WWE's *Raw* series, complementing its existing coverage of *SmackDown*.

## MEDIA RIGHTS NEGOTIATIONS

◆ French pay-television broadcaster Canal Plus rejected a request from the French Football League (LFP) to pay compensation for a planned change to its coverage of the top-tier Ligue 1. Canal Plus had sought to broadcast two of its three main matches per week on the Canal Plus Sport channel, a change to its original agreement with the LFP. The LFP said Canal Plus could do so if it paid a compensation fee to make up for the channel's smaller audience, but the broadcaster refused.

◆ Vivendi remains hopeful it can salvage an agreement to acquire the Mediaset Premium division of Italian broadcaster Mediaset, according to the French media company's chief executive Arnaud de Puyfontaine. Mediaset is seeking damages from Vivendi after it stepped away from an April agreement to take full control of Mediaset Premium. Puyfontaine said he was "optimistic" an agreement would be reached.

◆ European Professional Club Rugby, the organising body of the Champions Cup and Challenge Cup competitions, said it would seek to have one Irish pay-television partner and one free-to-air partner in its next sales cycle, from 2019-20. EPCR director general Vincent Gaillard conceded that the current broadcast model in Ireland is "not working very well".

◆ World football's governing body, Fifa, launched a tender process for media rights in the UK to the 2019 edition of the Women's World Cup, which will be hosted in France. The invitation to tender covers television, IPTV, internet, mobile and radio rights.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

SEPTEMBER 29 TO OCTOBER 12

- ◆ Swedish cable-television operator Com Hem completed its acquisition of pay-television broadcaster Boxer. Com Hem confirmed the value of the deal would be SEK1.3bn (€139m/\$156m) – four times Boxer’s estimated 2016 ebitda.
- ◆ Two men who supplied illegal access to live coverage of English Premier League football matches were ordered to pay back nearly £1m (€1.1m/\$1.3m). Simon Hopkins and Leon Passlow were found to have defrauded pay-television broadcaster Sky, the primary domestic live rights-holder in the UK.
- ◆ French stock market regulator the AMF blocked telco Altice’s bid to secure full control of its SFR subsidiary, claiming Altice had set out “imprecise” information about how SFR would compensate its parent company, which made the deal difficult for minority shareholders to judge. The proposed deal would have seen Altice take over the 22.5 per cent of the company it does not already control in an all-share offer, while also withdrawing SFR’s separate stock market listing. Altice chief executive Michel Combes described the AMF’s move as “totally incomprehensible”.
- ◆ Spanish agency Mediapro moved into the esports sector by acquiring a majority stake in Fandroid, the organising body of the domestic Liga de Videojuegos Profesional. Mediapro said its investment is intended to professionalise, expand and promote the LVP competition.
- ◆ Monumental Sports & Entertainment – the parent company of NBA basketball team the Washington Wizards and NHL ice hockey team the Washington Capitals – became an equity shareholder in the Comcast SportsNet Mid-Atlantic regional broadcaster, part of NBC Sports. The deal will reportedly give Monumental a stake of about one-third in the broadcaster. In return, NBC Sports Group will acquire an undisclosed shareholding in Monumental Sports Network, the regional broadcaster launched by Ted Leonsis, Monumental’s majority owner and chief executive. Monumental will take two of the six seats on the CSN Mid-Atlantic board, while NBC Sports Group will take two of the six seats on the MSN board. The agreement requires the approval of the NHL and NBA.
- ◆ UK pay-television broadcaster Sky launched a new virtual-reality app, Sky VR. The app will showcase sports content including documentaries on world heavyweight boxing champion Anthony Joshua, UCI WorldTour cycling’s Team Sky and Formula One motor racing team Williams.
- ◆ UK telco TalkTalk agreed a multi-year extension to its deal with Sky for carriage of its Sky Sports channels.
- ◆ Vincent Bolloré increased his 15-per-cent stake in French media company Vivendi to more than 20 per cent.
- ◆ Vivendi and its pay-television broadcaster, Canal Plus, agreed a partnership with the ESL esports league. A new esports league will be launched in France as part of the deal, with coverage of the tournament and other ESL events to be shown on Canal Plus platforms and Vivendi’s video-sharing website, Dailymotion. A new magazine programme, *Esports Canal Club*,

## NEWS IN BRIEF

SEPTEMBER 29 TO OCTOBER 12

and a documentary, *Game Fever*, will also be shown on Canal Plus.

◆ German pay-television broadcaster Sky Deutschland will close down its 3D channel next year as it switches its focus to ultra-high-definition coverage. The Sky Sport Bundesliga UHD channel will launch with the match between Borussia Dortmund and Hertha Berlin on October 14. The Sky Sport UHD channel will launch on October 18 with the Uefa Champions League match between Bayer Leverkusen and Tottenham Hotspur.

◆ Sky Deutschland will mark the switch of Sky Sports News HD to a free-to-air channel by live broadcasting the Bundesliga match between Mainz 05 and Bayern Munich on December 2.

◆ Maltese telco Go gave new subscribers to its sports package the option to back out of the plan at no extra cost after its coverage of football's English Premier League changed. Fans had expressed their disappointment at the lack of matches broadcast during the Saturday afternoon slot on Go's premium sports channel.

◆ The Tajikistan Football Federation signed up to the Asian Football Confederation's recently-launched live-streaming platform. The first match to be streamed was the Tajik League match between FK Khujand and Regar-Tadaz.

◆ Australian commercial broadcasters Seven and Nine plan to increase their advertising rates for the AFL Aussie rules football league and the NRL rugby league competition in a bid to cover the cost of rights, according to *The Australian* newspaper. Seven West Media's chief revenue

officer Kurt Burnette said Seven plans to introduce an increase of up to 15 per cent in advertising rates next season as the new AFL rights deal takes effect.

◆ Football Federation Australia chief executive David Gallop said the body must secure an increase in media-rights income for the A-League in order to support the expansion of the domestic top tier.

◆ Australian digital television service Freeview unveiled plans for a new mobile app that will make domestic free-to-air channels available through one centralised platform. Freeview FV is due to launch in November and will provide more than 15 free-to-air channels live and on-demand from Freeview members.

◆ Pay-television broadcaster Star India partnered with US virtual-reality company Voke to deliver its sport coverage in VR. The long-term deal started with Star's coverage of the 2016 Kabaddi World Cup.

◆ A live stream of the opening tee of the Ryder Cup was made available via the event's official website and various other digital platforms. RyderCup.com streamed the '1st Tee Experience', which utilised multi-camera Pixellot technology to stitch together four unmanned camera angles. The stream was produced through a collaboration between broadcasters Turner Sports and NBC Sports, and the PGA of America.

◆ Lagardère Sports, the sports marketing division of conglomerate Lagardère, agreed a three-year distribution deal with in-flight and in-ship entertainment specialist Global Eagle



## NEWS IN BRIEF

SEPTEMBER 29 TO OCTOBER 12

Entertainment. GEE will distribute more than 10,000 hours of live and produced sports programming to commercial flights and ships through its global VSAT networks.

◆ Dugout, a new digital-media platform supported by a host of elite European football clubs, will launch in November. The free platform will feature exclusive interviews and behind-the-scenes video content. It will launch on desktop, tablet and mobile devices, initially in eight different languages – Catalan, English, French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish.

◆ US sports broadcaster ESPN reported the NFL will impose new restrictions on its teams' social media activity. From October 12, NFL teams will reportedly no longer be allowed to record videos inside a stadium and post the game on social media. Teams will also be barred from streaming any live action from a game via platforms such as Facebook Live and Periscope, and will not be able to post highlights directly to social media. They will also be banned from turning highlights into animated GIFs. Teams that break the new rules will be fined.

◆ NBA basketball franchise the Orlando Magic hosted coverage of its pre-season game against the San Antonio Spurs on October 12 via the Facebook Live social media platform. Coverage of the game was made available to viewers within 75 miles of the Amway Center, which staged the game, to conform to NBA rules.

### INDUSTRY MOVES

◆ Philippe Le Floc'h, a former marketing director at Uefa, football's European governing body, was appointed as the new chief commercial officer at the sport's global governing body, Fifa. Le Floc'h assumed the role on October 11 after leaving his position at Dubai-based Customised Solution FZ. Le Floc'h will report directly to the deputy secretary general Marco Villiger and will be part of Fifa's management board.

◆ International sports broadcaster Eleven Sports Network appointed Shalu Wasu as its managing director for Singapore. Wasu will report directly to group managing director Danny Menken.



**Sportel**  
MONACO

Sports Marketing & Media Convention

**MEET**

[sportelmonaco.com](http://sportelmonaco.com)

24 - 27  
OCT 2016

**THE ELITE**

With the support of the



INTERNATIONAL  
OLYMPIC  
COMMITTEE

#sportel

PRINCIPALITY  
OF  MONACO

PLAYING A SPECIAL ROLE IN THE WORLD.