

# TVSportsMarkets

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## FOOTBALL

# Sky wins exclusive Champions League rights, sells on to DAZN

By Robin Jellis

- Sky buys exclusive Champions League rights in Germany for about €190m per season
- Sky also buys Champions League exclusively in Austria, for about €10m per season
- Sublicensing deal agreed with DAZN covering both territories worth about €80m per season

**Uefa turned down a strong bid from incumbent free-to-air Champions League rights-holder ZDF for its next cycle in Germany, instead accepting an offer from pay-television broadcaster Sky Deutschland for exclusive rights.**

Football's European governing body agreed a three-season deal, from 2018-19 to 2020-21, with Sky for exclusive rights worth about €190m (\$213m) per season. This represents an increase of about 48 per cent when compared to Uefa's current deals in the country.

The governing body earns about €128m per season for its Champions League rights in Germany in the current three-season cycle, from 2015-16 to 2017-18. Public-service broadcaster ZDF pays about €60m per season for the right to show 18 matches per season non-exclusively. Sky pays about €68m per season for rights to all matches (*TV Sports Markets* 17:23).

In a separate agreement, Sky also acquired exclusive Champions League rights in neighbouring Austria, from 2018-19 to 2020-21, in a deal thought to be worth about €10m per season.

This is roughly a third more than the €7.5m per season Uefa currently earns for Champions League rights in the country. Public-service broadcaster ORF pays about €4m per season for the right to show 18 matches per season on a non-exclusive basis; Sky pays about €3.5m per season for all matches.

Sky has subsequently sublicensed a significant portion of Champions League rights in both Germany and Austria to OTT platform DAZN over the same three seasons, from 2018-19 to 2020-21. The deal is worth about €80m per season.

## Bidding process

Tenders for Champions League and Europa League rights in both Germany and Austria were sent to broadcasters on March 6, with bids due on April 3. There were two rounds of bidding.

In Germany, bids were received from ZDF, commercial broadcaster RTL and Sky. Sky and DAZN agreed

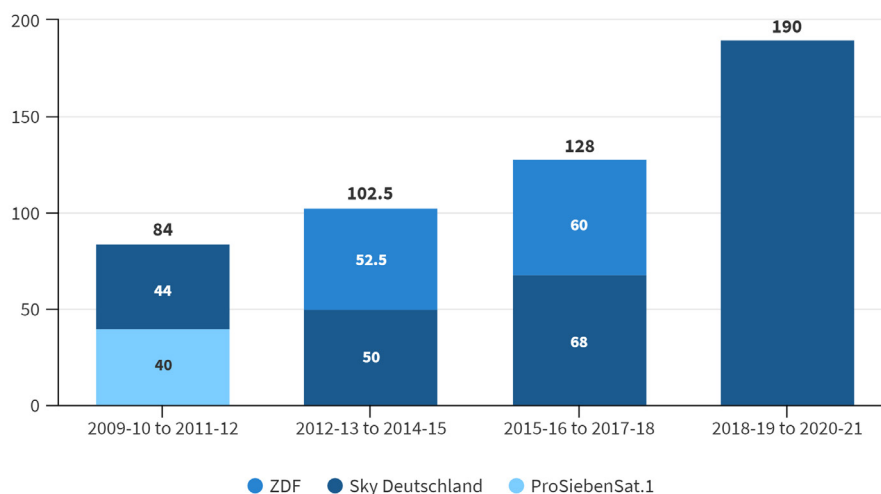
prior to the auction that Sky would sublicense rights to DAZN if it won them exclusively. *TV Sports Markets* understands neither Uefa, nor its sales agent Team Marketing, was aware of the tie-up between the two.

ZDF is understood to have offered at least €70m per season for a similar set of rights in the new cycle. It would have had 15 matches per season in the new cycle rather than the 18 matches per season it currently has. The offer represented a 17-per-cent increase on its current deal, but a price-per-match increase of 40 per cent.

ZDF currently shows the two matches played by a German team in the play-off round, six first-pick group stage matches on Wednesday nights, eight matches from the last 16 to the semi-finals, the final and the annual Super Cup match. From 2018-19 onward, ZDF would no longer have had the two play-off matches played by a German team as four German teams will qualify automatically under Uefa’s new format. Any new deal would also have excluded the Super Cup.

A bid had been expected from OTT platform Amazon, but none materialised. One source close to Amazon said the auction had come about “a year too early”. A rival bidder said “Amazon are always used to drive prices up” but that “next cycle they might be a threat”.

**Champions League deals in Germany, 2009-10 to 2020-21**



Source: *TV Sports Markets Rights Tracker*

Sky is understood to have been prepared to pay an increase for several reasons. First, as the Champions League is its second most important property after the Bundesliga. Second, as it wanted to take coverage off free-to-air and drive customers to pay-television. Third, because increased kick-off slots mean more matches can be broadcast live.

Uefa is under pressure to secure large increases for its club competition rights following the threat last year from Europe’s top clubs that they would form a breakaway league.

Uefa is targeting income of €3.2bn per season from Champions League and Europa League media and marketing rights in the 2018-19 to 2020-21 cycle. This would be 28 per cent more than the €2.5bn per season it earned in the 2015-16 to 2017-18 cycle (*TV Sports Markets* 20:22).

Many observers believe Uefa's best way of achieving this target is to agree deals with pay-television broadcasters granting them greater, or total, exclusivity.

## Sky/DAZN coverage split

Sky is understood to have been prepared to share coverage with DAZN for two main reasons. First, it didn't want to enter a bidding war which would have pushed the price extremely high. Second, it felt a joint deal was the best way to get coverage off free-to-air.

Both Sky and DAZN believed taking the rights off free-to-air would be beneficial. Pay-television penetration in Germany is the lowest of the big five European markets, at about 15 per cent. Having such a premium property on pay-television is expected to drive subscriptions in the country.

However, the deal is not thought likely to presage a wider agreement between the two. It is thought they may consider bidding together in future, but only for certain properties on a case-by-case basis.

From 2018-19 onward, Sky will show 34 live matches per season and DAZN will show 104 live matches per season. Sky's matches will generally be of better quality as it will have superior picks to DAZN. Sky will also show all matches of German teams, although some of these will also be available on DAZN.

Under the sublicensing deal, Sky will also produce a 'conference' programme around the matches shown on DAZN. This means Sky can switch between these matches to show key moments, although it cannot show more than 30 minutes of coverage from any match. Both will show the semi-finals and final live. A full explanation as to how coverage will be split between Sky and DAZN is expected to be provided at a press conference in August or September.

## Free-to-air coverage

Sky's exclusive deal, and subsequent sublicensing agreement with DAZN, means no matches will be shown on free-to-air television in the new cycle, other than if a German team reaches the final. This will obviously have a negative impact on discussions with companies over sponsorship deals.

Although regulations prohibit ZDF from showing sponsor advertising after 8pm – and most matches kick off at 8.45pm – on Champions League match-days, ZDF currently shows a 20-minute magazine show at 7.25pm which provides sponsors with exposure. Sponsors are also visible in advertising boards on stadiums.

A source close to ZDF said the media value of its coverage was between €20m and €35m per season. A source close to Uefa said the direct impact on the value of sponsorship deals was less – probably between €10m and €20m per season.

## Champions League final

A Champions League final with German participation must be shown free-to-air in accordance with

local listed-events legislation. In this instance, Sky has two options: to show it on its free-to-air Sky Sport News channel, or to sublicense it to a free-to-air broadcaster.

Uefa's preference is for Sky to sublicense coverage to one of the larger free-to-air broadcasters, such as ZDF or RTL. There is a verbal agreement between Uefa and Sky, but nothing in writing.

A sublicensing deal would be a good way for Sky to claw back some of its increased investment in the rights. German rights experts say a free-to-air broadcaster may be willing to pay up to about €10m for a Champions League final involving a German team.

## Subscription rationale

German industry experts don't think Sky will add many subscribers from the deal given it has held Champions League rights in the country for many years.

However, they do believe Sky was much more keen to share the competition with a nascent player like DAZN, with a relatively small subscriber base, rather than a public-service broadcaster.

For DAZN, this was an opportunity to get "a foot in the door", as one source put it.

Although DAZN has acquired rights to a number of top European football leagues, it missed out on domestic live rights to Germany's Bundesliga – the country's top subscription-driving product – in June last year, winning only clips rights (*TV Sports Markets* 20:11).

The OTT platform does not publicise its subscriber numbers, but most observers believe it has at least 100,000. The consensus is this will increase significantly, although growth due to the Champions League deal will not be obvious for another year, when its deal begins.

DAZN currently costs €9.99 per month and is available on a monthly rolling subscription. Some sources have suggested DAZN will have to increase its subscription cost in order to refinance the sublicensing deal with Sky.

Sky has many different subscription models, but a subscription to its full pay-television service would be much more expensive. Sky has about 5m subscribers.

## Europa League still being negotiated

RTL is understood to be in advanced negotiations with Uefa over free-to-air Europa League rights in Germany in the next cycle, from 2018-19 to 2020-21.

RTL and sports broadcaster Sport1 bid strongly for free-to-air rights. Sport1 is the incumbent in a three-season deal, from 2015-16 to 2017-18, worth about €9m per season (*TV Sports Markets* 19:1).

RTL's offer was slightly ahead of Sport1's. RTL is now in exclusive talks with Uefa over a deal, although an agreement is not certain.

## Blow for ZDF

The loss of Champions League rights is a further blow to ZDF, which has failed to secure rights to several significant sports properties in recent years.

In July 2013, it lost its grip on German national team football qualifier matches. RTL bought European Qualifier rights, from 2014-15 to 2017-18, for a total of about €110m after ZDF and fellow public-service broadcaster ARD refused to increase their offer to Uefa (*TV Sports Markets* 17:13).

In November, media group Discovery Communications announced it would keep exclusive coverage of the Olympic Games in Germany, from 2018 to 2024, for use on its own channels after months of negotiation with ARD and ZDF (*TV Sports Markets* 20:21).

On the loss of the Champions League rights, ZDF's director general Thomas Bellut said in a statement that the broadcaster had "submitted a very good offer" but "as a broadcaster financed by a licence fee there is a clearly-defined limit".

Despite these losses, *TV Sports Markets* understands ARD/ZDF will acquire rights to 12 matches of the German national football team in the Nations League in 2018-19 and 2020-21 in a deal with Uefa. The deal is expected to be worth between €8.5m and €9m per match, but is awaiting approval from the broadcasters' boards.

## Formula One coming up

*TV Sports Markets* understands Formula One Management, the commercial rights-holder of the motorsport series, was waiting for the Champions League process to finish before selling its own rights.

Formula One rights in Germany are currently held by RTL and Sky. Both have the right to show all Formula One content non-exclusively in two-year deals, covering 2016 and 2017. RTL pays just under \$50m per year; Sky pays just under \$20m per year (*TV Sports Markets* 19:15).

Rights in a new cycle are expected to be offered to broadcasters after the summer.

When it last sold its rights, FOM turned down an offer of between \$110m and \$120m per year from Sky for exclusive rights. Its new owner, Liberty Media, is seeking large increases in media-rights fees following its takeover in January.

Some German experts believe ARD/ZDF will bid as the loss of Champions League rights will free up some of its budget. However, FOM's best option to increase its revenue significantly appears to be via an exclusive pay-television deal. ◆

## FOOTBALL

# Italy delivers Uefa uplift but Serie A must face down regulator

By Frank Dunne

- Uefa to earn at least €300m per season for Champions League and Europa League in Italy
- Sky will pay about €275m per season and €25m per season for UCL and UEL respectively
- Serie A and Infront have to go back to the drawing board but need greater freedom

**Pay-television platform Sky Italia is thought to have agreed to pay just over €300m (\$336m) per season for exclusive rights to the Uefa Champions League and Europa League from 2018-19 to 2020-21.**

In the current cycle, from 2015-16 to 2017-18, the rights to both competitions are worth about €260m per season. Media group Mediaset, which owns free-to-air channels and the Mediaset Premium pay-television platform, pays just under €230m per season for all Champions League rights (*TV Sports Markets* 18:3). Sky pays just over €30m per season for all Europa League rights.

In the new deal, Sky will pay about €275m per season for the Champions League and about €25m per season for the Europa League. The value of the Champions League has increased by about 20 per cent, but this has been partially offset by a similar percentage drop in the value of the Europa League.

The revamp of the Champions League from 2018-19 onward, which will give England's Premier League, Germany's Bundesliga, Italy's Serie A and Spain's LaLiga four guaranteed places, was always going to make the competition more attractive to broadcasters. Uefa's belief was that this would not be at the expense of its second-tier tournament (*TV Sports Markets* 20:22).

Both the current and new deals were negotiated on behalf of Uefa by Team Marketing, the governing body's sales agency for its club competitions.

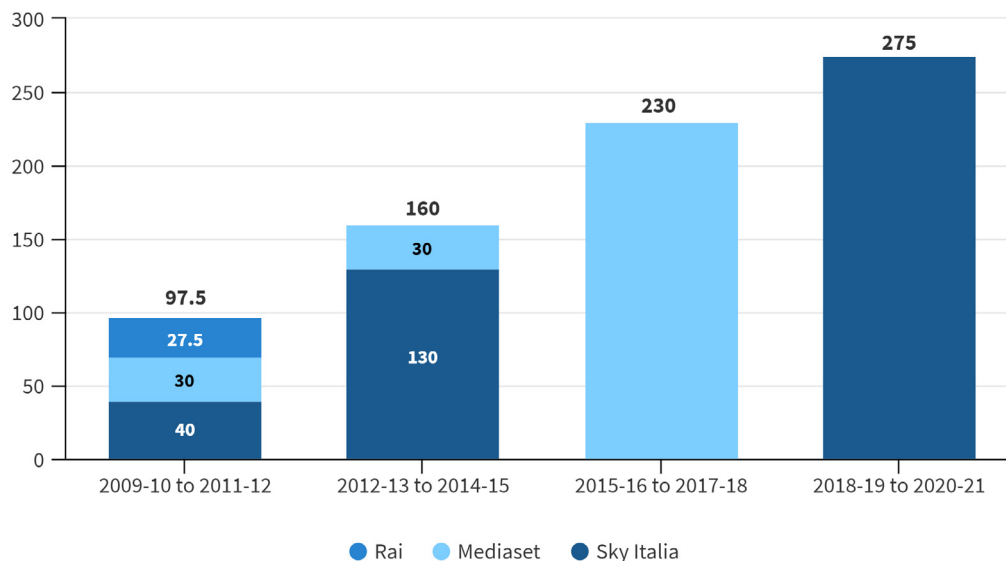
## Unexpected increase

Consensus among independent experts prior to the auction was that retaining the existing fee or earning a small increase would be a good result for Uefa. The overall increase of just over 15 per cent is better than many had predicted for three reasons.

First, Uefa enjoyed an increase of about 44 per cent in the value of the Champions League when it sold its rights for the 2015-16 to 2017-18 cycle due to a short period of ferocious competition between Sky and Mediaset. The market has cooled since then, meaning a repeat was always unlikely.



### Champions League deals in Italy, 2009-10 to 2020-21



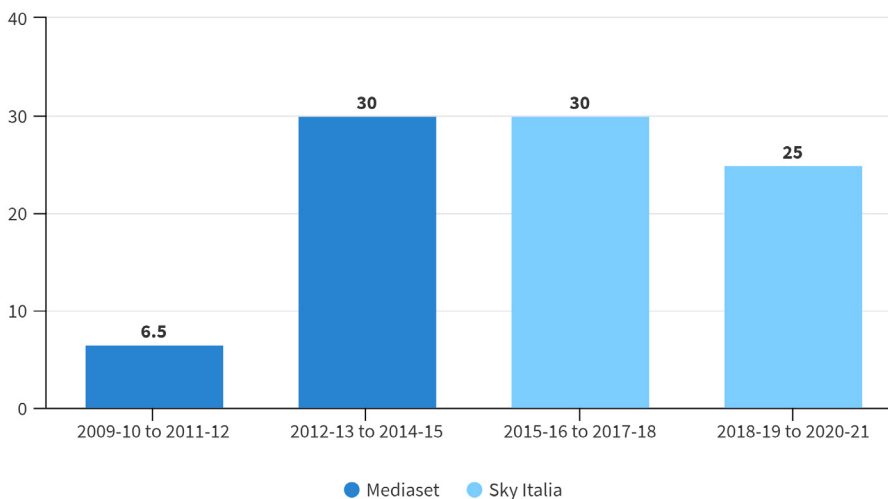
Source: TV Sports Markets Rights Tracker

Second, loss-making Mediaset had said publicly it was going to take a much more opportunistic approach to investing in rights and was even considering operating Mediaset Premium without any sports rights at all. It was not expected to fight hard to hold on to the rights.

In the end, Mediaset bid more than it currently pays, with some putting its offer at about €240m per season for the Champions League and about €10m per season for the Europa League.

Third, Sky had publicly played down the importance of the Champions League to its business, pointing out that the loss of the rights to Mediaset last time had not hit its subscriber base and had enabled it to make substantial savings. The impression it gave was that the Champions League was not a must-have property. Its aggressive bid suggests this was either a bluff or it views the new format differently to the current format.

### Europa League deals in Italy, 2009-10 to 2020-21



Source: TV Sports Markets Rights Tracker

It is thought that DAZN, the OTT service operated by digital media company Perform, looked very carefully at the property and held talks with Team. DAZN has in recent weeks secured Champions League rights in Austria, Germany and Japan (see story, page 3).

It is not clear whether DAZN made a formal bid for the rights in Italy, but some local sources say there was no real competition to Sky and Mediaset.

The deal with Sky was agreed after one round of bidding, within 48 hours of the June 12 deadline. Uefa is understood to have been irritated by Serie A's determination to beat it into the market by rushing an invitation to tender out with a bid deadline two days before Uefa's (*TV Sports Markets* 21:10).

In the end, the Serie A auction flopped, which arguably worked in Uefa's favour. With the Serie A auction being put back until the end of the year, broadcasters could focus their budgets on the Champions League. Any broadcaster securing exclusivity would be in a stronger position going into the more important Serie A bidding process.

## Serie A hamstrung

Mediaset's decision to stay out of the bidding for Serie A rights for the next three seasons, from 2018-19 to 2020-21, scuppered the auction held earlier this month. But many local experts believe the process was hamstrung from the beginning by interference from the antitrust authority.

The immediate challenge facing the league, and its media-rights adviser Infront Sports & Media, is to find a way to bring Mediaset back to the table. This now looks certain following Mediaset's failure to hold on to its Champions League rights. The broadcaster said last week it would take part.

The deeper challenge for the league lies in facing down the regulator and securing greater freedom in how it constructs its packages. In particular, experts argue, the league needs to be freed from the authority's outmoded insistence on the sale of rights by technology platform.

It was also the authority that demanded the creation of OTT packages similar in attractiveness to the satellite and digital-terrestrial packages. The league duly created two OTT packages and had little option but to price them aggressively, at €100m per season each for non-exclusive rights to four teams. DAZN is said to have bid €25m per season for each, but the bids were rejected.

Sky bid €230m per season for Package A – satellite rights to eight teams – against a reserve price of €200m per season. The broadcaster also bid €210m per season for Package D – platform-neutral rights to 12 teams – against a reserve price of €400m. It is thought to have bid a further €30m per season for the ancillary rights to both packages.

The total value of the bids amounted to €520m per season. The league had been seeking at least €1bn per season. A league assembly held the afternoon the bids were received voted unanimously to reject the offers. No date has been set for the new auction. It is expected to take place before Christmas. ◆

## OTT

# Sportradar unveils OTT model as it plans to target second-tier

By Robin Jellis

**The Sportradar agency launched its B2B OTT service this month – agreeing its first deal with the European Handball Federation – as it plans to roll it out to multiple rights-holders.**

It is understood Sportradar's deal with the EHF will run for a minimum of three seasons, from 2017-18 to 2019-20. The EHF was reluctant to agree a longer-term deal as it will tender its media and marketing rights to all its competitions from 2020-21 onward (see story, page 30).

*TV Sports Markets* understands Sportradar will pay the EHF a low minimum guarantee as part of the deal and will split revenues above this with the federation. Revenue will be shared roughly 50:50. The deal was struck with EHF Marketing, the marketing arm and subsidiary of the EHF.

Sportradar will provide the EHF with a host of services, the most significant of which is the re-launching of its OTT platform, EHFTV.com. Sportradar has created a back-end OTT platform which it can roll out for multiple rights-holders. The product will simply be called Sportradar OTT.

Rainer Geier, managing director of Sportradar's digital platforms and services, told *TV Sports Markets* this week: "We have estimated the global market value of OTT to be \$70bn (€62bn) to \$75bn by 2021, and we estimate that 30 per cent of this will be related to sports content.

"We don't want to step into top-tier sport like other companies. We want to establish our OTT service as a B2B offering. We don't want to put forward our own brand. We want to work with rights-holders, clubs, agencies, offering them technical know-how.

"We want to take the first step on second-tier sports – not properties like the Uefa Champions League. The EHF is a perfect example. They are our first customer and a few more will come by the end of the year."

A source at a rival agency said: "OTT is a natural move. It's all about technical solutions, what vehicle you are putting in place. They are doing the right thing. You need to do this if you are to be a full-service agency."

*TV Sports Markets* understands the Sportradar deal does not include lucrative betting streaming rights to the EHF's club competitions – these are included in the federation's global media-rights advisory deal with MP & Silva, from 2013-14 to 2019-20 (*TV Sports Markets* 17:13).

## Wide-ranging agreement

Sportradar's multi-faceted deal with the EHF will include streaming, data, marketing and digital services for the federation's European club competitions.

**Streaming:** Sportradar will provide technical solutions for EHFTV.com. The agency will be responsible for the monetisation of the platform by selling pre-roll advertising and agreeing digital sponsorship deals. The agency will also be responsible for monetising the EHF's desktop and mobile website.

Sportradar and the EHF will consider the introduction of a subscription model. This way, fans in 'dark markets' could still watch matches even if no local broadcast deal is agreed. Options to earn additional revenue, for an ad-free service or one of HD quality, are also being considered.

**Data:** Sportradar will provide scouting data from 650 matches per season from the men's and women's EHF Champions League, EHF Cup and EHF Challenge Cup competitions. It will create products with the data that can be used by the EHF, its clubs and media companies.

**Marketing:** The agency will be responsible for signing up a company as an official betting partner of the Champions League competitions.

**Digital:** After each Champions League round, Sportradar will produce a 26-minute magazine show for the federation. This will then be distributed to the EHF's broadcast partners.

David Szlezak, EHF Marketing's managing director, told *TV Sports Markets* this week: "We have been investing in EHFTV.com for six, seven, eight years. We were one of the first federations in Europe to really get involved in this technology.

"However, we have to say that we have so far not monetised this platform. We think Sportradar is a very good partner that will help us open a new income pool."

## Previous Sportsman deal

*TV Sports Markets* understands the payment mechanism for the digital aspect – the production of a magazine show – is slightly different: the EHF pays Sportradar a fixed fee. Sportradar has been doing this for the EHF for six seasons.

In April 2016, Sportradar bought the Sportsman Media Group agency, which was made up of several different businesses (*TV Sports Markets* 20:7). Laola1.tv was Sportsman's OTT platform, and Unas was its production company.

Geier said: "As Laola, we had a long-term partnership with the EHF. When the acquisition happened last year, of course we thought which existing relationships we could enhance and enlarge. The EHF was the most important."

Sportsman in the past had no control of the monetisation of content, Geier said. This was handled by the EHF.

Sportradar and EHF held talks over a possible partnership for many months. The federation did not speak to other agencies or issue a tender.

## OTT roll-out

It is understood Sportradar's OTT model will generally be offered to other rights-holders on a pure revenue-share basis, with the parties equally sharing all revenue. Sportradar has created a "scaleable back end" which can be rolled out to multiple rights-holders, Geier said.

Each Sportradar OTT customer will be able to customise the front end of the service, including using the rights-holder's branding and that of its sponsors. Significant changes would require a service charge to be paid to Sportradar.

Geier said: "We are in very final negotiations with other international and European federations, and also with one broadcaster and big football clubs." ◆



*For the full interview with Rainer Geier, visit*  
[www.sportbusiness.com](http://www.sportbusiness.com)

## FOOTBALL

# SuperSport and Kwesé to share spoils yet again in Uefa deals

By Callum McCarthy

- Uefa is set to earn just under \$70m for national team rights across sub-Saharan Africa
- SuperSport and Kwesé Sports to share the cost, Kwesé paying slightly more
- The total is up from \$40m at present, although the Nations League is now included

**SuperSport and Kwesé Sports will once again share the spoils of a major national-team football property in sub-Saharan Africa, this time via a simulcast deal on an unprecedented scale.**

Outside South Africa, pay-television broadcaster SuperSport and sports broadcaster Kwesé will share English-language pay-television rights to Uefa's entire inventory of national-team properties – the Euro 2020 tournament; European Qualifiers from 2018-19 to 2021-22; and the Nations League competition in 2018-19 and 2020-21.

Uefa will earn a total of just under \$70m (€62.5m) from the deals. A direct comparison with previous deals is difficult due to the addition of the Nations League, but Uefa's income for its national-team properties has increased by about 70 per cent compared to its previous deals across sub-Saharan Africa.

SuperSport paid \$20m for free-to-air and pay-television rights to Euro 2016 in the region, while pay-television operator StarTimes is paying a total of \$20m for free-to-air and pay-television European Qualifier rights, from 2014-15 to 2017-18 (*TV Sports Markets* 18:15; 20:21).

The total fee in the new deal will be split almost equally, but it is thought Kwesé will pay slightly more than SuperSport for its rights: non-exclusive English-language pay-television rights across sub-Saharan Africa, excluding South Africa; and exclusive free-to-air rights across the region, excluding South Africa.

SuperSport will hold exclusive free-to-air and pay-television rights in South Africa; non-exclusive English-language pay-television rights in the rest of sub-Saharan Africa; and exclusive French-language pay-television rights across the region.

Commercial terms are thought to have been agreed in January, but wrangling over certain details since has meant its completion was delayed for months.

Uefa's income for its national-team properties is similar to the amount Fifa, football's global governing body, earned for rights to the 2018 World Cup. Fifa earned about \$67m for these rights in deals with SuperSport, Kwesé, StarTimes, French-language pay-television operator Canal Plus Afrique, and South African public-service broadcaster SABC (*TV Sports Markets* 21:6).

Uefa's new deals were negotiated by the CAA Eleven agency, Uefa's sales agent for its national team competitions.

## Uefa sales process

The SuperSport and Kwesé deals were agreed in private negotiations after bids made in the second round made clear to Uefa that simulcast deals would be the best solution.

It is thought StarTimes progressed past the second round, but could not get a deal done in private negotiations with Uefa. Pay-television operator Azam TV, which is focused on its home market of Tanzania, is also thought to have bid.

SuperSport is all but certain to sublicense French-language rights to Canal Plus Afrique. Canal Plus paid about \$2.5m for rights to Euro 2016 in a sublicensing deal with SuperSport. SuperSport has no French-language broadcasting capability and its pay-television operator DSTV has no footprint in Francophone territories.

It will also sublicense free-to-air rights in South Africa, though SuperSport is increasingly reluctant to deal with SABC as the public-service broadcaster is plagued by instability at board and executive level. SABC paid SuperSport about \$700,000 in a sublicensing deal for a package of 12 key Euro 2016 matches (*TV Sports Markets* 20:10).

Kwesé will exploit Euro 2020 free-to-air rights either: on its commercial Kwesé Free Sports channels (in markets where it is present); on public-service and commercial broadcasters with which it has a content distribution deal; or by sublicensing rights.

For European Qualifier and Nations League matches, Kwesé is likely to exploit these on its own free-to-air and pay-television channels, and via branded blocks on its broadcast partners. Demand is unlikely to be sufficient for European Qualifier matches to be sublicensed separately, although there may be interest in play-off matches. ◆

## AMERICAN FOOTBALL

# Bell commits to NFL despite Super Bowl advertising cull

By Callum McCarthy

- Bell extends NFL rights in Canada, and will pay \$40m per year in 2017 and 2018
- The telco paid just under \$35m per year from 2014 to 2016 for two packages of rights
- New deal sees addition of Thursday night games, for which Rogers paid \$5m per year

**Canadian telco Bell has completed its set of exclusive linear NFL rights after picking up its one missing set of games, on Thursday nights, from rival telco Rogers.**

Bell's new deal – which includes English- and French-language rights to games played on Thursday, Sunday and Monday nights – will run from 2017 to 2021. Its existing deal for English- and French-language rights to games at 1pm and 4pm ET on Sunday afternoons runs from 2014 to 2018.

It is thought Bell will pay the NFL close to \$40m (€35.7m) per year in the 2017 and 2018 seasons for all NFL linear rights in the country. After this, it will have to renew its rights to another package of rights to maintain its linear exclusivity.

From 2014 to 2016, Bell is believed to have paid just under \$35m per year for two packages of rights: one covered games on Sunday afternoons, shown on its commercial channel CTV; the other covered games on Sunday and Monday nights, shown on its pay-television channel TSN.

The NFL's income from linear rights in Canada is understood to have barely increased, if at all, when compared with last season. It is thought Rogers paid about \$5m per year for English- and French-language rights to games played on Thursday nights – including the NFL's three-game Thanksgiving package – from 2013 to 2016.

Bell also had exclusive rights to the NFC and AFC playoffs and the Super Bowl. The deal for games on Sunday and Monday nights is thought to have been of greater value than that for Sunday afternoons.

NFL deals in Canada are agreed in US dollars. At the time previous deals were done – in 2012 and 2013 – the Canadian dollar's value was roughly equal to that of the US dollar. The Canadian dollar is now worth roughly \$0.74. Bell earns revenue in Canadian dollars, so it has effectively paid an increase of about 34 per cent. One informed source told *TV Sports Markets* the agreement took about a year to finalise, and said it was a “fair deal”.



## CRTC catastrophe

The NFL's income from linear rights has stayed steady in Canada for three main reasons – two were limiting factors, while the third mitigated any potential decline.

First, issues surrounding Bell's ability to sell advertising around the Super Bowl. The Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission decreed that, from the 2017 Super Bowl onward, 'simultaneous substitution' – the ability to sell advertising in Canada to replace the original American advertising – would no longer be enforced on Super Bowl broadcasts in Canada.

All other programming, including other NFL games, must still substitute US adverts for Canadian ones.

The raw American feed, including the adverts, is now shown on the channels of Super Bowl rights-holders, and US NFL rights-holders Fox, CBS and NBC are available on Canadian basic cable. This has caused viewership on Bell's channels to decrease by almost 40 per cent in 2017 compared to 2016. Simultaneous substitution regulations generate extra advertising income of about \$250m per year for Canadian broadcasters. It is estimated Bell lost \$8m from the sale of advertising revenue around its Super Bowl coverage compared to 2016.

Second, a lack of competition. Bell was the only bidder for NFL rights. Rogers holds exclusive English-language rights in Canada to the NHL – by far the most popular property in the country – from 2014-15 to 2025-26 (*TV Sports Markets* 17:22). It also holds exclusive rights to show games of MLB's Toronto Blue Jays, from 2014 to 2021.

As a result, Rogers decided Thursday night NFL games were more of a hindrance than a help, as it made scheduling its Sportsnet pay-television channels difficult.

Third, Bell's need for NFL rights. Its loss of English-language NHL rights before the 2014-15 season was a blow. Its additional NFL rights make it the exclusive home of American and Canadian football, as it also holds Canadian Football League rights until the end of the 2021 season (*TV Sports Markets* 19:12).

## Perform will take digital rights

While Bell will hold exclusive linear rights in 2017 and 2018, digital media company will Perform hold the NFL's digital rights in Canada as part of a wider, multi-territory five-year deal, from 2017 to 2021.

Perform will pay an average of about \$14m per season for its rights across more than 100 territories, but must wait for deals to expire in certain territories before taking ownership of the rights. The deal is heavily back-loaded, with Perform paying a relatively small fee in 2017 (*TV Sports Markets* 21:9).

It is widely thought Perform will use these digital rights in Canada for its DAZN OTT service, which is expected to launch in the country in the coming months. It is also understood Perform will hold exclusive rights to the NFL RedZone, a live highlights package usually included in deals with linear broadcasters. ◆

## FOOTBALL

# Sale of Italian World Cup rights waits on Fifa/MP & Silva talks

By Frank Dunne

- Still unclear if MP & Silva will terminate its deal for 2018 and 2022 Fifa World Cups in Italy
- Deal was based on a soft guarantee of €380m: €185m for 2018 and €195m for 2022
- Agency always likely to struggle to earn more than €340m paid by Rai for 2010 and 2014

**The attempt by MP & Silva to terminate a €380m (\$426m) deal with Fifa for the 2018 and 2022 World Cups in Italy is being challenged by football's global governing body, just months after the two appeared to have reached a settlement.**

The agency tried to pull out of the deal in summer 2015, saying the rights had been devalued by the Fifa corruption scandal – the FBI investigation into media and marketing deals involving officials from Conmebol and Concacaf, the governing bodies for football in the Americas (*TV Sports Markets* 19:22).

Fifa initially rejected the agency's arguments, believing the scandal gave MP & Silva no legal grounds to quit the deal. Experts also say taking the rights back would have created an unwelcome precedent, weakening Fifa's position in future negotiations with agencies. However, with both sides wanting to avoid an expensive and lengthy legal case, discussions over settlement terms began which would enable the agency to return the rights to Fifa.

In October, broad terms are said to have been agreed in principle between the agency's senior management and Fifa's television rights department, which was headed at the time by Niclas Ericson. However, following Ericson's departure in December, the agency was notified by Fifa the termination would not be accepted.

Since then, the two parties have been in negotiation. Several options are thought to be on the table, including taking the case to independent arbitration.

## MP & Silva's soft guarantee

The agency agreed the deal in October 2013 after Fifa had failed to secure satisfactory offers from local broadcasters (*TV Sports Markets* 17:18).

The deal was based on a 'soft' guarantee of €185m (\$207m) for 2018 and €195m for 2022. MP & Silva would not have to underwrite the fee with a bank guarantee, but if it secured less than these amounts

from broadcasters it would pay the difference. Once it reached those targets, it would be paid commission of 12.5 per cent on the full amount it secured from any sales. There was also a mechanism for sharing any upside above the guarantees.

Hitting those targets will not be easy. Fifa earned €340m in Italy for the 2010 and 2014 World Cups. State broadcaster Rai paid €165m for 2010 and €175m for 2014. Since those deals were signed, the market has become much more difficult.

Rai has been cutting costs and would not offer anything like those amounts now.

Pay-television broadcaster Sky Italia has largely moved away from investing in one-off events. It is showing this month's Confederations Cup through a deal agreed directly with Fifa but the rights fee is understood to be low.

Media group Mediaset is struggling financially, having been dragged down by the poor performance of its Mediaset Premium pay-television platform.

The best hope of some fresh blood in the market appears to come from the impending takeover of telco Telecom Italia by French conglomerate Vivendi. But even for an aggressive new OTT service, the value of a one-off tournament would be limited.

## Other Fifa agency deals

In 2004, following the collapses of the ISL agency and Germany's Kirch Group, Fifa took its media-rights sales in-house. It has used agencies sparingly since then. In Asia, it has worked with Infront Sports & Media and Dentsu, and in sub-Saharan Africa with Octagon.

The commission level in the MP & Silva deal is slightly higher than the 12 per cent Infront earns in its \$600m deal for the rights in Asia for 2018 and 2022 (*TV Sports Markets* 19:6).

According to an analysis by *TV Sports Markets*, the total costs Fifa has incurred for selling its rights between 2007 and 2016 is just under \$351m, including agency commission and in-house costs. Of this, just over \$229m was for agency commission and just under \$122m for in-house costs. This accounts for just over 3.8 per cent of its total media-rights income over the same period.

### The cost to Fifa of selling media rights to its events, 2007-2016 (\$m)

	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	Total
Sales commission	0.72	3.010	65.162	26.7	12.09	5.939	59.244	38.042	18.285	0	229.192
In-house costs	9.739	10.630	21.022	10.984	9.445	10.249	19.802	11.510	9.559	8.775	121.715
Total: commission and in-house costs	10.459	13.640	86.184	37.684	21.535	16.188	79.046	49.552	27.844	8.775	350.907
TV rights income	96	629	2484	630	561	550	2448	650	556	525	9129
Percentage of TV rights income											3.84

Source: Fifa financial reports 2007-2016, *TV Sports Markets*

Fifa defines in-house costs as those "incurred by Fifa to ensure and provide correct oversight, assistance and promotional activities for rights which have been transferred to commercial affiliates". ♦

## GOLF

# DSport pays huge increase to add US Open to major portfolio

By David Cook

- DSport buys US Open golf in India for \$165,000 in 2017 and \$180,000 in 2018
- Deal represents more than fourfold growth on the \$40,000 paid by Sony in 2016
- Fox holds US Open rights across Southeast Asia in deal from 2014 to 2018

**Pay-television broadcaster DSport has bought rights in India to golf's US Open for more than four times the annual fee Sony Pictures Networks paid in 2016.**

DSport, which launched in February, will pay a total of \$345,000 (€309,000) for the rights in 2017 and 2018. It paid \$165,000 in the first year and will pay \$180,000 in the second.

Rights in the country are distributed by pay-television broadcaster Fox Sports, which holds US Open rights across Southeast Asia in a five-year deal, from 2014 to 2018.

Media group Sony is thought to have paid Fox about \$40,000 to show the event in 2016. The fee was low because Fox was left without many options after pay-television broadcaster Star India decided to cut golf events from its portfolio.

When 21st Century Fox (then News Corporation) bought Walt Disney's 50-per-cent stake in ESPN Star Sports in 2012, Fox had no footprint in India. Star, also owned by 21st Century Fox, was granted rights to any properties held by Fox in India. As a result, it showed the event in 2014 and 2015.

## DSport adds to growing portfolio

The deal was not completed until almost the eve of the tournament, which ran from June 15 to 18. The rights were not tendered.

DSport – a channel established by media group Discovery Communications and Indian broadcast executive RC Venkateish – also has live rights for the Open Championship and the PGA Championship. Both deals are for three years, from 2017 to 2019.

The broadcaster has thus far acquired relatively niche rights in the country, including delayed rights to the FIA World Touring Car Championship as well as live football rights to properties such as the Chinese Super League and Major League Soccer. DSport is expected to attempt to buy more golf rights.

Industry experts have previously said DSport will need to acquire cricket rights in order to compete with main pay-television broadcasters Sony and Star (*TV Sports Markets* 21:3).

A source close to DSport confirmed cricket is very much part of its plans and that it will bid for rights to the Indian Premier League when these are tendered in July. However, industry experts feel it is unlikely DSport would win IPL rights. The next IPL rights cycle will run from 2018 to 2022.

## Star takes a step back

Star also held rights to the Open Championship and the US Masters, but it has decided to stop showing golf. One reason for this is that Star recognised golf is seen as a minority and elitist sport in India.

Star is thought to be unwilling to spend any of its sports-rights budget on non-core properties such as the US Open.

The broadcaster will bid for IPL rights in the new cycle. Star held mobile and internet IPL rights from 2015 to 2017, for which its subsidiary Novi Digital Entertainment paid \$16.2m per year. Sony paid \$77.5m per year for linear rights in a 10-year deal from 2008 to 2017 (*TV Sports Markets* 19:4).

## Can DSport compete?

There are conflicting views as to whether DSport will be able to make significant headway in the market and challenge Star and Sony.

DSport has the backing of Discovery, a company which reported revenue of \$6.5bn for the full year 2016. It is for this reason it could be a realistic challenge to the Star/Sony duopoly.

However, one local expert said even if DSport were to attempt to acquire cricket rights, this would likely be for rights to smaller cricket properties. ♦

## MIXED MARTIAL ARTS

# UFC works hard for increase in value of Fox Sports Asia contract

By Callum McCarthy

- Fox Sports Asia deal for UFC from 2019 to 2021 to be worth just over \$3m per year
- Deal represents an increase of about 50 per cent on current \$2m-per-year deal
- UFC continues method of carving out rights in lucrative territories across Asia

**The Ultimate Fighting Championship has turned the tide to earn a significant increase from its pan-regional pay-television rights deal with Fox Sports Asia.**

Fox will pay an average of just over \$3m (€2.7m) per year in a three-year deal, from 2019 to 2021, for rights to over 40 events per year. This is an increase of just over 50 per cent on the current deal, from April 2015 to the end of 2018, worth about \$2m per year (*TV Sports Markets* 21:4). However, the new Fox deal contains rights that weren't included in its previous deal.

Unlike in other markets, where demand and competition has seen UFC rights fees increase substantially, the promotion has had to work hard for an increase from Fox as the broadcaster was the only bidder.

It is thought Fox will be able to show about six more events per year from 2019, as its current deal does not include events carved out for the UFC's Fight Pass OTT service. This included events hosted in Asia.

Fox's new deal will also cover Taiwan – where rights are currently held by the broadcaster in a separate deal – and English-language rights in China for the first time.

The UFC's promise of more Asia-based events was also key to the promotion earning an increase. It held no events in Asia during 2016, but plans to stage three in 2017. It held an event in Singapore last weekend, its first in Asia since November 2015.

The UFC's previous negotiation with Fox in 2014, for its current deal, was described as “tough” by one source close to the situation, as the UFC did not have a coherent strategy for Asia at the time.

The promotion was not broadcast in 11 Asian countries for almost four months at the beginning of 2015, and suffered a 13-per-cent decrease in the value of its rights to secure coverage across those markets.

Fox's new deal covers: Brunei, Cambodia, China (English-language rights), Hong Kong, Indonesia (non-exclusive rights), Laos, Macau, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, the Pacific Islands, Papua New

Guinea, Singapore, Thailand (non-exclusive rights) and Vietnam.

## Lucrative carve-outs

The UFC's new pan-regional deal will be far from its most lucrative in Asia. The promotion carves out rights in certain territories to ensure maximum revenue and exposure.

Fox's deal does not include any rights in Japan, the Philippines or South Korea; provides only partial exclusivity in Indonesia and Thailand; and only English-language rights in China, which are of minimal value. Its rights in all other territories in Asia-Pacific are exclusive.

The UFC's deal in China with online streaming platform PPTV, from June 2016 to the end of 2021, is worth an average of \$7.2m per year. PPTV has almost total exclusivity over live events.

The promotion also has a deal in place in the country with online streaming platform Sina. The deal is thought to run from 2014 to 2018, and provides Sina with live rights to events involving Chinese fighters. This rarely affects PPTV's rights as the UFC currently has just two Chinese fighters on its roster. However, Chinese welterweight Li Jingliang fought at the UFC's most recent event in Singapore on June 17.

The UFC's second-most lucrative deal in the region is in the Philippines with commercial and pay-television broadcaster TV5. The deal runs from 2016 to 2018 and is worth about \$4m per year. This is double the value of previous deals with commercial broadcaster ABS-CBN and now-defunct ABS-CBN-owned pay-television broadcaster Balls TV, worth a combined \$2m per year.

A deal in South Korea with the Eclat Entertainment agency, which expires at the end of 2018, is worth about \$3.1m per year. Eclat passed on rights to SpoTV, its IPTV broadcaster.

As before, Fox's deal is non-exclusive in Thailand and Indonesia. The UFC last week renewed its deal in Thailand with digital-terrestrial broadcaster Channel 8, covering about 30 events per year. Media group MNC receives nine events per year in Indonesia. Both broadcasters carry the UFC's ancillary content.

Compared with rival MMA promotion One Championship, the UFC's strategy focuses less on exposure and more on revenue. However, this strategy is much more lucrative. One Championship earns about \$250,000 per year from its 10-year deal with Fox, from 2012 to 2021.

The deal is designed to underpin One's exposure-focused strategy. One has free-to-air deals in most Asian territories, in which it either earns nominal fees or nothing at all. ◆

## TENNIS

# Fee steady as France Télévisions takes marquee events from M6

By Robin Jellis

- France Télévisions buys finals of Paris Masters and World Tour Finals for €130,000 per year
- Fee is the same as that paid by M6, but that deal included Paris Masters semi-finals
- IMG looking to sell wider package of ATP and Wimbledon rights in the coming months

**France Télévisions prized prestigious free-to-air tennis rights from M6 late last month, despite paying no increase for the rights.**

French public-service broadcaster France Télévisions acquired non-exclusive rights to the final of both the ATP 1000 Paris Masters and the ATP World Tour Finals. The two-year deal, covering 2017 and 2018, is worth about €130,000 (\$146,000) per year.

If a French player reaches either final, the broadcaster has committed to showing the match on either its France 2 or France 3 channel. If not, coverage will be shown on its France 4 channel.

Commercial broadcaster M6 previously held rights to the semi-final and final of the Paris Masters and the final of the World Tour Finals in a three-year deal, from 2014 to 2016, also worth about €130,000 per year. Coverage was shown on digital-terrestrial channel W9.

France Télévisions' deal does not include the Paris Masters semi-finals as the broadcaster would have struggled to pay a higher fee.

Both deals were agreed with ATP Media, the tournaments' commercial rights-holder, which is advised on the sale of its rights by the IMG agency.

The rights were not tendered. ATP Media and IMG instead held direct talks with interested broadcasters. It is thought France Télévisions and pay-television broadcaster Canal Plus – which would have shown coverage on its free-to-air channel C8 – bid for the rights.

M6 is not thought to have bid as it felt its ratings in the previous contract were low. The final of both the Paris Masters and the World Tour Finals each attracted about 200,000 viewers to the channel.

The ATP was happy to agree a deal with France Télévisions as it attracts very large audiences, and also holds domestic French Open rights. It is in the fourth year of a five-year deal for these rights, from 2014 to 2018, which it extended last summer to also cover 2019 and 2020 (*TV Sports Markets* 18:5; 20:14).



France Télévisions also has rights to the Davis Cup and Fed Cup competitions – organised by the International Tennis Federation. It holds these in a four-year sublicensing deal, from 2016 to 2019, with pay-television broadcaster beIN Sports, the ITF's global broadcast partner. M6 has no other tennis rights.

## Other ATP deals in France

The ATP chooses to carve out non-exclusive rights to showpiece matches from certain events for free-to-air broadcast. It has separate deals for other matches.

Pay-television broadcaster beIN Sports holds rights to most World Tour 500 and World Tour Masters 1000 tournaments in a five-year deal, from 2014 to 2018, worth about €6m per year (*TV Sports Markets* 17:21). The Monte-Carlo Masters and the Paris Masters are not included in its deal. BeIN's deal covers the World Tour Finals.

Pay-television broadcaster Canal Plus holds rights to the Monte-Carlo Masters and the Paris Masters. Both deals were agreed with local organisers and are for five years, from 2014 to 2018. The combined value of the deals is about €600,000 per year.

Canal Plus, rather than the ATP, has the right to sell on free-to-air rights to the semi-final and final of the Monte-Carlo Masters. These are sublicensed to France Télévisions in a four-year deal, from 2014 to 2017.

Discussions over new deals for ATP and Wimbledon grand slam rights, from 2019 onward, will begin in the coming months. Wimbledon rights are held by beIN in a five-year deal, from 2014 to 2018, worth about €4m per year.

Wimbledon's commercial rights-holder, the All England Lawn Tennis Club, is also advised on the sale of its rights by IMG. Informed sources believe talks with broadcasters may begin at the Sportel Monaco trade fair in October. ◆

## TENNIS

# French Open grows revenue in China with new Tencent deal

By David Cook

- Tencent acquires French Open digital rights in China for \$500,000-\$560,000 per year
- Its rights will be exclusive in the final three years of the deal, from 2019 to 2021
- CCTV holds linear and digital rights from 2014 to 2018 in deal worth \$750,000 per year

**The French Open secured greater revenue from China in 2017 compared to last year thanks to a deal with online streaming platform Tencent agreed earlier this month.**

Tencent will hold digital highlights rights to the tournament, and digital live rights to the qualifying tournament, in 2017 and 2018. From 2019 to 2021, it will hold exclusive digital rights to all French Open content.

An informed source told *TV Sports Markets* the Tencent deal is worth between \$500,000 (€446,000) and \$560,000 per year. However, a source close to the French tennis federation, the Fédération Française de Tennis, disputed this.

Tencent's deal will take the federation FFT's revenue from the country to at least \$1.25m per year.

Live linear and digital rights are currently held by state broadcaster CCTV in a five-year deal, from 2014 to 2018, worth \$750,000 per year. CCTV's digital rights are non-exclusive (*TV Sports Markets* 20:11).

Online streaming platform Sina Sports held digital highlights rights for the 2016 tournament after rival platform PPTV pulled out of a deal for the same set of rights. PPTV's deal was due to run for three years, from 2016 to 2018 (*TV Sports Markets* 20:11).

Sina picked up the rights for just one year, but did not renew its deal for 2017 as the federation prioritised a live rights partner. The fee for the live rights would have been too high for Sina, making it difficult for the platform to make a profit on the deal.

The FFT plans to discuss an extension of its linear deal with CCTV for 2019 onward. Any deal would exclude digital rights as these are now with Tencent.

It is thought that even if CCTV were to fail to agree a comprehensive linear rights deal, it may still pick up certain matches on an ad-hoc basis.

## Tencent taking a measured approach

Tencent's business model is mostly based on advertising revenue, but some events are shown behind a paywall. It is unlikely the French Open would be shown behind such a paywall.

Tencent also holds rights to the US Open in China in a three-year deal, from 2017 to 2019, worth about \$900,000 per year.

Tennis has not historically gained major traction in China, but success for Chinese players has altered tennis' standing in the country. Li Na won the French Open in 2011 and the Australian Open in 2014, and there are currently five Chinese players inside the top 100 of the WTA rankings. ◆

## TENNIS

# Discovery opts to earn return on French Open rights in Spain

By Robin Jellis

- Mediaset sublicenses French Open rights in Spain from Discovery for €750,000
- Eurosport holds free-to-air rights as part of its pan-European deal worth €20m per year
- French Open value in Spain has plummeted from €4.6m per year from 2008 to 2011

**Discovery Communications chose to sublicense free-to-air French Open tennis rights in Spain this year after previously keeping coverage for its Dmax channel in the country.**

Sports broadcaster Eurosport, owned by Discovery, holds pan-European French Open rights – outside France – in a seven-year deal with the MP & Silva agency, from 2015 to 2021, worth about €20m per year (*TV Sports Markets* 17:19).

Earlier this month, Discovery sublicensed rights to the semi-final and final of the 2017 men's singles tournament to media group Mediaset in a deal worth a total of about €750,000 (\$840,000). Mediaset's interest in the rights was driven by Spanish star Rafael Nadal, who secured his 10th French Open title. This year's tournament ran from May 28 to June 11.

The French Open is the most important tennis tournament for Spanish fans, which is reflected by the participation of Spanish players in the semi-finals and final being covered by listed-events legislation.

Discovery tendered the rights, receiving interest from Mediaset and public-service broadcaster TVE.

Discovery kept the rights for use on Dmax in 2014 (when Nadal won) and 2016 (when Garbiñe Muguruza won the women's singles tournament). Dmax didn't show any coverage in 2015 as Nadal was knocked out in the quarter-finals and no Spanish women reached the semi-finals. Dmax paid no fee for the rights.

Discovery agreed to sublicense rights to Mediaset this time as the money offered was considered too good to turn down.

Mediaset previously held the rights in 2012, for which it paid about €1.5m (*TV Sports Markets* 17:10). It paid about €1m for rights in 2013. Nadal won both tournaments.

Prior to this, TVE paid €4.6m per year for rights from 2008 to 2011 as part of a deal agreed by the European Broadcasting Union, the consortium of European public-service broadcasters (*TV Sports Markets* 16:8). During this period, Nadal won three of the four French Open tournaments.

## MP & Silva in Europe

Pan-European French Open rights – outside France – are sold by MP & Silva. It sells French Open rights on behalf of the French tennis federation, the Fédération Française de Tennis.

The agency pays the FFT about €22m per year in a deal that initially ran from 2012 to 2016, and was later extended to cover 2017. Following the agency's deal with Eurosport, its own agreement with the FFT was extended to run from 2018 to 2021.

MP & Silva had initially expected Spain to deliver up to €10m per year in rights fees before the collapse of the advertising market in the country.

Prior to Eurosport's deal from 2015 onward, free-to-air rights in certain markets were sold by MP & Silva. These are now included in the broadcaster's deal. ◆

## HANDBALL

# EHF seeking large uplift this autumn for unified offering

By Robin Jellis

- EHF to offer national team and club competition rights together in September tender
- MP & Silva holds club competition rights for €7.5m-€8m per year from 2013-14 to 2019-20
- Infront has rights to the 2014, 2016, 2018 and 2020 European Championships for about €30m

**The European Handball Federation will be seeking a large increase in the value of media rights to its competitions when it offers them to the market this September. The EHF announced it would centralise national team and club rights earlier this month.**

The federation will offer rights to the men's and women's biennial European Championship tournaments together with rights to its annual European club competitions: the men's and women's EHF Champions League, EHF Cup and EHF Challenge Cup. These rights are currently worth a combined average of €11.25m (\$12.6m) to €11.75m per year.

The tender will run from 2020-21 onward. The rights are planned to be available from this date for 10 years. However, the EHF has not yet finalised the tender and this may change dependent on feedback from interested parties. The process is likely to be completed in November. The rights will be sold by the EHF together with its marketing arm subsidiary, EHF Marketing.

EHF Marketing managing director David Szlezak told *TV Sports Markets* this week: "We are hoping for a kind of leverage impact. I would say European handball is a strong property, these are strong rights. None of the big players can afford not to look at it."

Men's and women's club competition media rights are currently held by the MP & Silva agency in a seven-season deal, from 2013-14 to 2019-20, for which the agency pays a minimum guarantee of between €7.5m (\$8.4m) and €8m per season (*TV Sports Markets* 17:13).

Both media and marketing rights to the men's and women's European Championships are currently sold by the Infront Sports & Media agency. The deal covers four sets of tournaments: 2014, 2016, 2018 and 2020. The agency is thought to pay about €30m in total. The men's Euro is far more valuable than the women's Euro.

Independent experts believe selling the rights together is a good decision. They say such a set of rights would attract significant interest. Both Infront and MP & Silva will bid, but offers are also likely from other agencies such as IMG and Lagardère Sports.

The federation has chosen to merge its rights as it believes doing so will be far more valuable. The centralisation is possible as many of its most important agreements end at the same time.

Its media-rights deals with MP & Silva and Infront end in 2019-20 and 2020 respectively, while a sponsorship deal with Velux and a hosting deal with the Lanxess Arena in Cologne for the Champions League Final Four competition both end in 2019-20. Media and marketing rights could be sold together in the new deal.

Rights will be offered in a 'modular' way, meaning bidders could acquire all EHF rights, but also have the option to bid for rights to individual EHF competitions. The Euros and the Champions League will also be available in separate packages. ◆

## BOXING

# BoxNation and BT partnership expands to international bouts

By Callum McCarthy

**BoxNation's carriage and simulcast deal with BT Sport has been further enhanced after the two broadcasters acquired rights to the middleweight world title fight between Gennady Golovkin and Saúl Álvarez – the partnership's first major acquisition since it began in February.**

*TV Sports Markets* understands BoxNation has agreed a revenue share deal with UK rights-holder Golden Boy Promotions – the company that represents Álvarez – which is weighted towards the promotion. No fee will be paid upfront.

The fight, which takes place on September 16, will see BT and BoxNation show the fight on pay-per-view – a first for both broadcasters.

Boxing experts estimate the fight will generate pay-per-view buys in the low tens of thousands at a price of about £15 (€17/\$19). The ability to show fights on pay-per-view is essential for the two to compete with Sky for international bouts.

The partnership had until now been based around Frank Warren Promotions events – Warren owns BoxNation. BoxNation's three-year carriage deal with BT, from 2017 to 2019, is described by sources close to both parties as an output deal, with BT paying a fee for each event shown on its channels.

BoxNation is available to all BT Sport subscribers via BT TV, Sky and telco TalkTalk's pay-television operations at no extra charge. Customers of telco Virgin Media pay £11 per month. Non-BT Sport subscribers pay £12 per month.

Prior to its deal with BT, BoxNation is thought to have had about 130,000 subscribers. As a result of the BT deal, it is now thought to be available in about 5m UK households.

## Bigger boxing battles ahead?

As well as paying BoxNation for events it shows on its channels, BT will assist with production on Warren events. BT will broadcast 20 Frank Warren Promotions events over the course of 2017.

BoxNation will handle most international rights negotiations, but the two broadcasters will bid together for bigger events, such as Golovkin v. Álvarez.



The BoxNation/BT tie-up means BT is in a stronger position to battle against Sky for rights to international world-title fights. However, one source said BT is “not about to make a lot of boxers rich” while a source close to BT said they didn’t see the deal “as a way to battle Sky for big-name boxers”.

Warren is keen to use BT’s platform to attract bigger names to his stable of boxers and push his promotion into the mainstream. The deal’s purpose is to weaken Sky’s hold on premium boxing rights in the UK. Sky’s deal with Matchroom Boxing, from summer 2016 to summer 2021, makes it the dominant boxing broadcaster in the country. ◆

## HORSE RACING

# Sina pays small fee for Ascot as it tries to grow interest in China

By David Cook

**The Ascot Racecourse has earned just under \$50,000 (€45,000) from online streaming platform Sina Sports for exclusive rights in China to this year's Royal Ascot festival.**

This is the third consecutive year Sina has held rights to the event in the country. This latest one-year deal, agreed in May, grants Sina rights to the last three days of the festival. This included the Gold Cup, the festival's main event, which took place on day three of the festival. It began on June 20.

Most of Sina's deals do not include a fee, with the rights-holder usually taking a share of advertising revenue. A source close to Sina said this had been the case for the first two single-year deals with Ascot, but the platform is now paying a guarantee. However, a source close to Ascot denied the revenue-share model had previously been in place.

Sina acquired Ascot rights as they appeal to viewers outside the traditional horse-racing audience. Sina is attempting to generate interest in the sport by streaming marquee events which celebrities attend, and fashion events held at these races.

A new aspect of this year's deal is it involved an event in Beijing, held on June 22, featuring a fashion show. The Ascot festival runs until June 24.

Sports betting is illegal in China, with the exception of the state-owned sport lottery, meaning horse racing cannot rely on gambling as a means of generating interest.

Sina also holds rights to the Melbourne Cup and the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe race, as well as highlights rights for all Fédération Équestre Internationale events. Its horse racing deals are agreed on a year-by-year basis, whereas the FEI deal is a three-year deal, from 2016 to 2018.

Sina's Ascot deal was agreed with the Pitch International agency, which sells Ascot's international non-betting rights in a three-year advisory deal, from 2017 to 2019. Pitch advised Ascot on its previous one-year deals with Sina in 2015 and 2016.

Sina was chosen as Ascot's broadcaster in China due to its reach – it falls under the same umbrella as Weibo, a majority-owned subsidiary of Sina. Weibo is China's equivalent of social media platform Twitter. ♦

## FOOTBALL

# Star gets Indian national team rights in first long-term deal

By David Cook

**The All India Football Federation agreed its first long-term domestic deal with Star India last month, although it will not earn a rights fee.**

The deal with pay-television broadcaster Star, agreed last month, covers 15 competitive matches – including eight matches held in India – between March 2017 and March 2018. Star has the right to show India matches either live or delayed.

Star's deal represents the first time a broadcaster has committed to show a considerable number of matches. Matches were sold by the federation on an ad-hoc basis.

It is believed India's rise in the Fifa rankings has increased interest in matches of the national team. India is currently ranked 100th, up from 171st at the end of 2014.

India is currently participating in qualifying for the 2019 AFC Asian Cup. It is top of its third qualifying round group after winning its first two matches. This has given India a realistic chance of qualifying for the competition for the first time since 1984.

AIFF media rights are sold by Football Sports Development Ltd, a joint venture between Star and IMG Reliance. As such, Star faces no competition from the Sony Pictures Networks media group, its main rival in the country.

Rights to national team matches are a much harder sell than domestic club football rights. By comparison, Star pays \$24.6m per year for Indian Super League rights in a 10-year deal, from 2014 to 2023 (*TV Sports Markets* 18:4).

Interest in the ISL does not translate to the national team as each ISL team is allowed to play six foreign players in its starting 11, improving the quality and attractiveness of the league. ◆

## FOOTBALL

# IMG signs off on FA Cup long-form contract after lengthy talks

By Frank Dunne

**IMG has finally signed off its long-form agreement with England's Football Association for FA Cup international rights after months of negotiation.**

An agreement was reached on the compensation due to the agency for any reduction in income caused by FA Cup matches having to be rescheduled as a consequence of Fifa moving the 2022 World Cup to the winter (*TV Sports Markets* 21:6).

It is understood that none of the critical terms of the contract, including the minimum guarantee of \$730m (€650m) over six seasons IMG will pay, have been changed (*TV Sports Markets* 20:19).

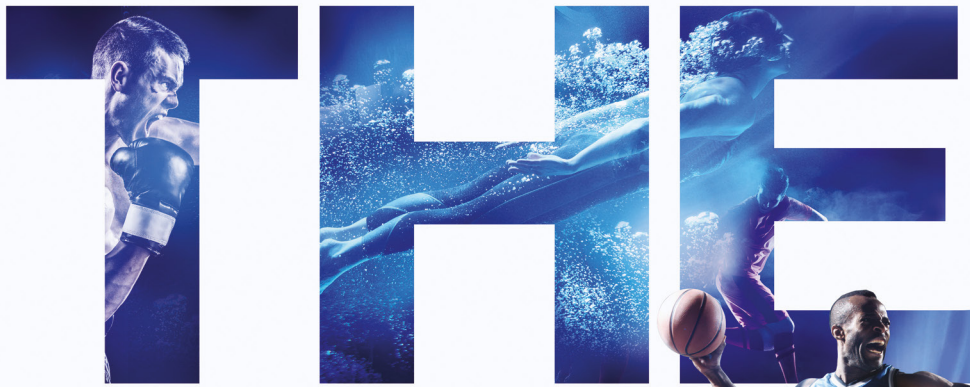
Despite the protracted nature of the negotiations, informed sources say the deal was never in jeopardy.

In October 2016, IMG won international FA Cup media rights in selected territories for six seasons, from 2018-19 to 2023-24, with a bid of \$121.7m per season. The rights are global but exclude the UK, the rest of Western Europe, the Middle East and North Africa.

Shortly afterwards, IMG signed a memorandum of understanding with the FA agreeing to the key terms, reflecting the conditions in the original invitation to tender issued on September 12.

Negotiations on the long-form agreement quickly hit an impasse on the compensation issue and were only resolved last month.

The 2022 World Cup will take place between November 21 and December 18, in the middle of the European football season. ◆



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# DEALS ROUND-UP

## JUNE 8 TO 21

### FOOTBALL

◆ Telco Telefónica will add football content to its mobile service offering in Brazil and Chile.

Movistar, Telefónica's pay-television broadcaster, will show live coverage of Fifa's 2018 World Cup, as well as this year's Confederations Cup and U-17 World Cup.

◆ Fifa awarded rights for the 2017 Confederations Cup to the 2SPORT2 consortium, which includes Russian broadcasters Channel One, VGTRK and Match TV. The deal was first reported in *TV Sports Markets* 21:10.

◆ German commercial broadcaster ProSiebenSat.1 acquired rights for the July 15 edition of the Telekom Cup pre-season tournament, featuring Bundesliga clubs Bayern Munich, Borussia Mönchengladbach, Hoffenheim and Werder Bremen.

◆ Pay-television broadcaster Sky renewed rights to the Uefa Champions League in Germany and Austria, and agreed a deal to sublicense coverage to DAZN, the OTT service operated by digital media company Perform (page 3).

◆ Pay-television broadcaster Sky Italia acquired exclusive rights to the Champions League and Europa League (page 8).

◆ Football Federation Australia agreed a six-season international media-rights distribution deal, from 2017-18 to 2022-23, with the IMG agency. IMG will sell rights to the men's A-League, the women's W-League, the FFA Cup knockout competition and selected national team matches.

◆ Online streaming platform Tencent struck a deal with Fifa for exclusive digital rights to the Confederations Cup in mainland China. The deal also includes rights to the U-17 World Cup.

◆ Pre-season club tournament the International Champions Cup agreed a four-year deal with Chinese state broadcaster CCTV, from 2017 to 2020.

◆ Pan-African pay-television broadcaster SuperSport and pan-African sports broadcaster Kwesé Sports acquired rights to Uefa's national-team properties (page 14).

### OTHER SPORTS

◆ **American Football:** Canadian telco Bell Media expanded its deal with the NFL to become the exclusive linear broadcaster of the league in Canada (page 16).

◆ **Archery:** World Archery, the sport's global governing body, agreed a four-year deal with the NBC Sports Group division of US media company NBCUniversal, from 2017 to 2020. The deal includes exclusive rights to four Archery World Cup seasons and two World Championships in 2017 and 2019.

◆ **Baseball:** The MP & Silva agency was appointed as the exclusive media-rights adviser for the Colombian Baseball League and the Serie Latinoamericana pan-continental competition, from 2017 to 2022. The deal includes domestic and international rights.

◆ **Basketball:** Finnish public-service broadcaster YLE acquired rights to national-team

# DEALS ROUND-UP

## JUNE 8 TO 21

events operated by the International Basketball Federation (Fiba) in a five-year deal, from 2017 to 2021.

◆ **Basketball:** Online streaming platform Sina Sports acquired rights to the final of the 2016-17 Liga ACB, Spain's top-tier division.

◆ **Basketball:** Greek public-service broadcaster ERT acquired rights to Fiba national-team events for five years, from 2017 to 2021.

◆ **Boxing:** Filipino commercial broadcaster ABS-CBN acquired rights to the WBO world welterweight title fight between Manny Pacquiao and Jeff Horn.

◆ **Boxing:** US sports broadcaster ESPN acquired live rights to the Pacquiao v. Horn fight.

◆ **Boxing:** UK pay-television broadcaster BoxNation acquired rights to the world middleweight title fight between Gennady Golovkin and Saúl Álvarez (page 32).

◆ **Cricket:** Media company Discover Digital's new DEOD IPTV platform acquired exclusive near-live and short-form content rights to all International Cricket Council events until the 2019 World Cup.

◆ **Cycling:** International sports broadcaster Eurosport expanded its deal for the Tour de France in 54 European markets, from 2017 to 2019. The deal with the European Broadcasting Union consortium of public-service broadcasters and Amaury Sport Organisation, organiser of the Tour, will allow Eurosport to broadcast every minute live across all markets for the first time.

◆ **Darts:** UK public-service broadcaster the BBC agreed a deal with the Professional Darts Corporation to continue showing live coverage of the Champions League of Darts competition. The BBC will show the tournament until at least 2019.

◆ **Fencing:** German public-service broadcasters ARD and ZDF extended their deal with the German fencing federation, from 2017-18 to 2020-21. The deal includes coverage of the 2017 World Fencing Championships.

◆ **Golf:** Indian pay-television channel DSport acquired rights to the US Open in 2017 and 2018 (page 20).

◆ **Hockey:** DAZN, the OTT service operated by digital media company Perform, acquired exclusive rights for events operated by the International Hockey Federation (FIH). The deal covers Germany, Austria and Switzerland and will run until the end of 2018.

◆ **Hockey:** The FIH agreed a deal with international sports broadcaster ESPN. The ESPN Player digital service will stream over 350 hours of live and on-demand coverage of various FIH events in Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

◆ **Hockey:** The CBC Sports division of Canadian public-service broadcaster CBC agreed a deal with the FIH to stream live coverage of all games during the Hockey World League semi-finals.

◆ **Hockey:** Japanese commercial broadcaster TV Tokyo agreed a deal with the FIH to show all matches featuring the country's men's and women's teams at the Hockey World League semi-finals.

## DEALS ROUND-UP

JUNE 8 TO 21

- ◆ **Hockey:** Polish public-service broadcaster TVP agreed a deal with the FIH to show the Polish women's team's matches at the Hockey World League semi-finals.
- ◆ **Hockey:** The International Olympic Committee's Olympic Channel agreed a deal with the FIH to stream live coverage of all matches at the Hockey World League semi-finals.
- ◆ **Mixed Martial Arts:** The Ultimate Fighting Championship extended a rights deal in Canada with pay-per-view distributor Premium Sports. The deal covers all Canadian provinces, except for Quebec.
- ◆ **Mixed Martial Arts:** Thai digital-terrestrial broadcaster Channel 8 renewed its deal with the UFC.
- ◆ **Mixed Martial Arts:** Fox Sports Asia, the regional subsidiary of 21st Century Fox's broadcast arm, Fox Networks Group, extended its deal with the UFC (page 22).
- ◆ **Motorsport:** Danish commercial broadcaster TV2 renewed its deal for the 24 Hours of Le Mans ahead of the 2017 edition.
- ◆ **Motorsport:** Middle Eastern pay-television operator OSN acquired rights to the International Motorcycling Federation's (FIM) Endurance World Championship. The deal initially covers the remainder of the 2017 season.
- ◆ **Motorsport:** Portuguese commercial broadcaster TVI acquired rights to the World Touring Car Championship series. TVI will cover the Race of Portugal, which takes place from June 23-25. The agreement also includes highlights of all races for the remainder of the 2017 season.
- ◆ **Speedway:** International sports broadcaster Eleven Sports agreed a sublicensing deal for rights in Poland to domestic competition the Ekstraliga. The three-season deal, from 2019 to 2021, was agreed with Polish pay-television operator NC Plus. Eleven will show two live meetings every Friday, while Sunday events will remain on the nSport Plus channel.
- ◆ **Speedway:** NC Plus extended its deal for the FIM Speedway World Championships. The new deal expires at the end of 2021 and grants NC Plus exclusive rights to the Speedway Grand Prix series and Speedway World Cup.
- ◆ **Table Tennis:** Pay-television broadcaster Star Sports acquired rights to Ultimate Table Tennis, a new franchise league being launched in India.
- ◆ **Tennis:** Australian public-service broadcaster SBS agreed a free-to-air deal with pay-television broadcaster ESPN for rights to the 2017 edition of the US Open grand slam tournament. SBS's coverage will begin with the quarter-finals on September 6-7.
- ◆ **US College Sport:** Sports marketing and media firm Van Wagner Sports and Entertainment agreed an exclusive long-term deal with the athletics division of Liberty University.
- ◆ **US College Sport:** The Fox Sports division of US network Fox secured rights to this year's Holiday Bowl American football game on December 28.



# DEALS ROUND-UP

## JUNE 8 TO 21

### MEDIA RIGHTS NEGOTIATIONS

- ◆ The CAA Eleven agency launched tenders in Greece, Japan and Vietnam for rights to Uefa national-team properties. The tenders include European Qualifiers from 2018-19 to 2021-22, the 2018-19 and 2020-21 Nations League competitions and international friendly matches. Rights to Euro 2020 have also been tendered in Greece and Japan, but not in Vietnam.
- ◆ The English Football League, which operates the three divisions below the top-tier Premier League, decided against extending its domestic live rights deal with pay-television broadcaster Sky to the end of 2019-20. The EFL's current agreement with Sky runs until the end of the 2018-19 season.
- ◆ Lega Serie A, which operates the top football division in Italy, is set to launch a new rights auction in the coming months after Mediaset refused to participate in the latest tender and the only bidders did not meet the league's expectations. Mediaset refused to participate in protest after filing a complaint to Italy's antitrust authority, the AGCM, over the structure of the sales process, which the broadcaster claimed favoured pay-television broadcaster Sky. Bids for the rights covering three seasons, from 2018-19 to 2020-21, were due on June 10. However, following a meeting, the Lega's commissioner, Carlo Tavecchio, confirmed the rights would not be awarded (page 8).

## INDUSTRY NEWS IN BRIEF

JUNE 8 TO 21

- ◆ US pay-television broadcaster Univision Deportes partnered with Spanish-language sports media platform Juanfutbol to launch a digital channel. The channel will focus on football and will be distributed on social media platform Facebook. It will primarily feature English-language content and will target young sports fans.
- ◆ US media company NBCUniversal said the new Olympic Channel: Home of Team USA platform will launch on July 15. It will initially reach more than 35m homes in the US.
- ◆ The NFL entered into a partnership with global sports marketing company Bruin Sports Capital and advertising/PR company WPP to drive expansion of its Game Pass OTT service throughout Europe. Bruin-owned sports media and technology firm deltatre will operate NFL Game Pass across 61 European territories. Digital media services will be led by WPP-owned sports marketing agency Two Circles.
- ◆ US media company 21st Century Fox, pan-European media group Sky and US media group Scripps Network Interactive participated in a \$55m (€49m) funding round for US OTT streaming service fuboTV.
- ◆ North America's Major League Soccer regained full control of Soccer United Marketing after repurchasing the stake in its media and marketing arm held by private equity firm Providence Equity Partners. Providence originally made the investment in January 2012, acquiring a 25-per-cent stake for about \$150m (€134m). The Bloomberg news agency said the private equity firm tripled its initial investment.
- ◆ Average audiences for English Premier League football matches suffered a significant drop on pay-television during the 2016-17 season, but increased markedly on streaming services. Pay-television broadcaster Sky reportedly registered a 14-per-cent fall in viewing figures on its television channels, with total viewing hours also slumping six per cent. Telco BT saw average viewing fall two per cent. Sky said the total number of people watching Premier League coverage was its highest in three years, pointing to a 31-per-cent increase in viewing through its Sky Go streaming service.
- ◆ The El Español news agency reported that Chinese investment fund Orient Hontai Capital is the remaining bidder in the race to acquire Imagina, the parent company of Spanish agency Mediapro. The vehicle is said to be in talks to acquire up to 76 per cent of the agency.
- ◆ The Comisión Nacional de los Mercados y La Competencia (CNMC), Spain's competition regulator, hit LaLiga, the organising body of Spanish club football, with a €250,000 (\$280,000) fine after upholding a complaint lodged by media group Mediaset. In March, LaLiga maintained Mediaset was in breach of its broadcast regulations after the CNMC opened proceedings against the league. The CNMC took action after Mediaset and commercial broadcaster Atresmedia were prevented from accessing LaLiga stadiums.
- ◆ Media company Discovery Communications, the gatekeeper of Olympic Games rights in Europe, expressed its support for Paris' bid for the 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

## INDUSTRY NEWS IN BRIEF

JUNE 8 TO 21

- ◆ German media company Constantin Medien launched a bidding process with the aim of selling all its shares in German sports broadcaster Sport1 and the Sport1 Media advertising sales agency. The shares are held by the media company's wholly-owned subsidiary, Constantin Sport Holding. Constantin said it is "conducting a structured and competitive bidding process with several potential buyers in view of such a sale". Constantin has reportedly held talks with media company Axel Springer, pay-television broadcaster Sky, internet company Freenet and other investment vehicles.
- ◆ Germany's Handball-Bundesliga has taken the marketing of its international broadcast rights in-house, with Scandinavia identified as a key target market. The MP & Silva agency was previously responsible for marketing the club competition's international rights, from 2013-14 to 2016-17. The league will assume responsibility from 2017-18 onward. This was first reported in *TV Sports Markets* 21:6.
- ◆ Lega Serie B, the governing body of the second tier of Italian football, approved guidelines for the sale of its next set of broadcast rights. The guidelines for the three seasons from 2018-19 to 2020-21 will now be presented to antitrust authorities ahead of a tender launch.
- ◆ Lega Serie B assessed proposals from three bidders to become its new centralised marketing advisor. The Lega said it had assessed proposals from RCS Sport, as well as joint proposals from the Infront Sports & Media agency and GroupM, and advertising agency Havas and financial auditor PwC.
- ◆ Italian media group Mediaset secured full control of its pay-television platform, Mediaset Premium, after acquiring the 11.1-per-cent stake held by Spanish telco Telefónica.
- ◆ Discovery Communications agreed a new carriage deal with Finnish telco Telia. The previous deal between the two expired on June 7. Telia had said it would no longer offer Discovery's channels to its television customers in the Nordic markets from June 8 as talks over a new deal reached an impasse.
- ◆ Chinese retail giant Suning Holdings is reportedly in talks to invest in China Sports Media, which holds media rights for the Chinese Super League domestic top-tier football league. The Bloomberg news agency reported that the proposed transaction could include part or all of CSM, although the company's chairman, Li Yidong, suggested Suning could acquire up to 56 per cent of the media firm.
- ◆ Media group Sony Pictures Networks India is to rebrand a number of the Ten Sports pay-television channels it acquired from media group Zee Entertainment Enterprises. The channels will be rebranded in July. Sony controls the Ten 1, Ten 1 HD, Ten 2, Ten 3 and Ten Golf HD channels after completing the first stage of its purchase of Ten Sports in February.
- ◆ ATP Media, the broadcast arm of professional men's tennis circuit the ATP World Tour, launched a joint venture with the IMG Studios division of the IMG agency. IMG Studios will oversee the output of an enhanced world feed, which a number of broadcasters around the world will have access to.

## INDUSTRY NEWS IN BRIEF

JUNE 8 TO 21

- ◆ Australian commercial broadcaster Channel Ten's shares have been placed in a trading halt amid reports it could enter voluntary administration. The future of Ten, a major sports broadcaster in the country, has been uncertain for some time. The company posted a half-yearly loss of A\$232m (€156m/\$175m) in April. Ten's administrator KordaMentha said the broadcaster would not change its coverage plans despite ongoing financial concerns.
- ◆ Saudi Arabia's General Commission for Audiovisual Media banned the import of Qatar-based pay-television broadcaster beIN Sports receivers and stopped the sale and renewal of subscriptions to its channels.
- ◆ Up to 11 new sports channels that will be based in Egypt and funded by Saudi Arabia will be launched in the coming weeks and months, according to Muflih Al-Hafatah, chairman of the Saudi Media City complex. The channels will reportedly be launched under the PBS Sport brand.
- ◆ BeIN Sports confirmed its channels had been dropped by PlayStation Vue after an "impasse" over the pay-television broadcaster's contract with the video-game platform. The beIN Sports and beIN Sports en Español channels are no longer available on PlayStation Vue. BeIN Sports said Sony, which operates PlayStation Vue, had "refused to renew" the contract even though the broadcaster "made every possible effort to reach a deal".
- ◆ The World Bridge Federation agreed a content partnership with the Olympic Channel.
- ◆ The International Federation of American Football agreed a content partnership with the International Olympic Committee's Olympic Channel.
- ◆ Organisers of the 2017 World Para Athletics Championships will stream live coverage of the event through the WorldParaAthletics.org website. Coverage will be available across all 10 days of the Championships, from July 14 to 23.

### INDUSTRY MOVES

- ◆ Peter Campbell is to leave his position as general manager of media and broadcasting at Aussie rules football league the AFL to become chief commercial officer at pay-television broadcaster Fox Sports.
- ◆ Motorsport Network, the automotive and motorsport digital technology business that operates international motor-racing media platform Motorsport.tv and the Motorsport.com website, hired Colin Smith as its new chief executive.
- ◆ Motorsport Network appointed Kevin Annison as president of the Motorsport.tv platform.